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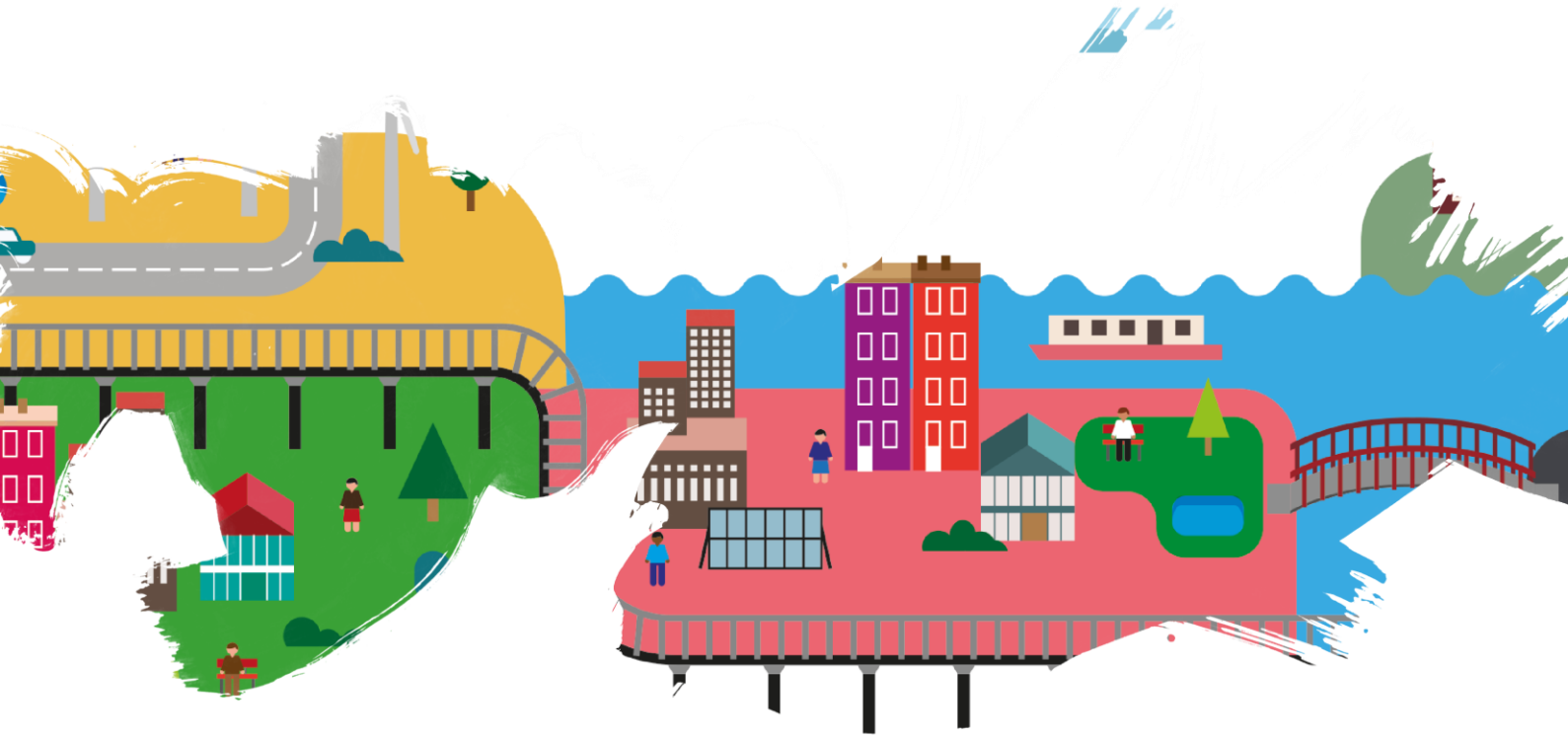


# URBAN DEVELOPMENT

## Perspectives from Europe

**INTERNATIONAL URBAN COOPERATION PROGRAMME**

**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

INTERNATIONAL URBAN COOPERATION
European Union

# URBAN PLANNING

**Perspectives from Europe**

# Sector policy in EU countries:

Since the beginning of this century, the European Union (EU) has promoted specific urban policies. Despite the fact that there is no policy that deals specifically with urban planning tools in the European Union countries, there are policy declarations concerning city development which describe what kind of urban development is envisaged. From these policy declarations, certain qualitative characterizations of urban can be deducted.

# EU urban policy declarations

The EU has issued several important urban policy declarations, like the 2007 Leipzig Charter, and the 2010 Toledo declaration. The most recent document is the Pact of Amsterdam. This new Urban Policy Agenda has been agreed on 31 May 2016 during the Dutch Presidency of the EU). The most relevant features for eco-city development in these urban policy declarations are as follows:

- **Leipzig charter of 2007 on sustainable European cities.** It promoted greater use of integrated urban development policies, the modernization of infrastructure networks and improved energy efficiency; and lastly special attention to deprived neighbourhoods.1
- **Toledo Declaration.** This document of 2010 was more specific.2 It highlighted general targets to which urban development and the creation of eco-neighbourhoods should contribute:
  - Europe 2020 goals include reducing greenhouse gases by at least 20% compared with the 1990 levels (or by 30% if the conditions are suitable),
  - increasing the percentage of renewable-energy sources in our final energy consumption by up to 20%, and energy efficiency also by 20%,
  - the eco-efficiency of the new urban developments (for example, by means of developing new 'eco-neighbourhoods'. Specifically it proposed:
    - a genuine 'green, ecological or environmental' regeneration of cities must be undertaken, including such key issues as:
    - reducing transport needs by the promotion of proximity and mixed-uses schemes, while at the same time stimulating a more sustainable mobility (on an urban, metropolitan and interurban scale) by: prioritising non-motorised ('walkable', 'cyclable' cities), less pollutant means of transport, supporting affordable and efficient public transport accessible for all-notably for deprived neighbourhoods, where it can play a key role in breaking its physical isolation-, and multimodal transport networks, and optimizing urban logistics;
    - boosting energy efficiency in existing buildings (by improving the thermal insulation of exterior walls, roofs and glazing, and the efficiency of heating and other installations), considering the physical conditions of the building stock;

[1] Source: EU. 2007. *Leipzig Charter.* http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf
[2] Source: EU. 2010. Toledo Declaration. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/newsroom/pdf/201006_toledo_declaration_en.pdf

- improving the management of energy and material resources and flows in the city (urban metabolism), including the whole water cycle, waste, etc., striving to close urban metabolic cycles locally and to reduce the ecological footprint;
- promoting renewable energies and implementing them and their use in cities;
- recycling land (by means of urban regeneration, the redevelopment or reuse of abandoned, derelict or unused areas, etc.) as a key strategy for contributing towards the reduction of land consumption and therefore combating 'urban sprawl';
- promoting the consumption of local green products to shorten consumption circuits and to
- strengthen the local eco-economy;
- protecting natural, landscape, forestry, water resources, agricultural areas, etc. around cities and strengthening their links or articulation with cities (for example, with green belts and/or corridors connected to and in continuity with the network of public parks and spaces), 're-greening' the existing city, etc.
- Finally, it shouldn't be forgotten that besides strategies to mitigate climate change there is a need to begin to stimulate strategies to adapt to it, particularly in coastal or river areas that could be affected by rising sea levels or flooding, or areas where the effects of warming are expected to be the greatest. The new scenarios being considered imply the need for cities to develop proactive strategies to resist these changes ('resilient cities'), to protect them against natural disasters or warming and to improve water management in times of drought.

- **Pact of Amsterdam - Urban Agenda for the EU.3** This political statement recognised the current (European) trend towards urbanisation, the importance of cities and urban areas will continue to grow, the ever greater risk of segregation, increased criminality and environmental problems. Through the Urban Agenda for the EU Member States, cities, European institutions and other stakeholders will be working together for a sustainable, socially inclusive, innovative and economically powerful Europe. The urban agenda of the EU aims to promote cooperation between Member States, cities, the European Commission and other stakeholders, in order to stimulate growth, liveability and innovation in the cities of Europe. The objective is: (i) promoting the involvement of cities in EU policy making and the development, implementation and evaluation of more ´urban friendly´ European legislation ('Better Regulation'); (ii) ensuring better access to and utilisation of European funds; and (iii) improving the European urban knowledge base and stimulating the sharing of best practices and cooperation between cities. As pronounced during the United Nations' HABITAT III Conference in Quito during October 2016, the EU is in the process of developing a "green city tool" which will be utilized for benchmarking of low-carbon development performance. Such a tool will be important for further work that will guide European cities towards the achievement of their low-carbon development goals. 4

[3] EU. Pact of Amsterdam - Urban Agenda for the EU. 2016. Source: http://urbanagendaforthe.eu/urban-agenda/

[4] See also: UN-Habitat - EU. 2016. The State of European Cities 2016. http://unhabitat.org/books/the-state-of-european-ciies-2016-cities-leading-the-way-to-a-better-future/

- **The Freiburg Charter – Universal Principles for Creating a Sustainable City.**[5] The most far-reaching European declaration in support of Eco--Cities is, however, contained in the Freiburg Charter of 2010 of Universal Principles for Creating a Sustainable City which underlines the need for compact urban development, of walkable cities. The 12 universal principles for creating a sustainable city are as follows:

  1. **Diversity, safety and tolerance.** Ensuring city development that respects social and cultural diversity, providing safety for all.
  2. **City of neighbourhoods.** Developing the neighbourhoods as basis of ecological change.
  3. **City of short distances.** Creating compactness and reducing need for travel.
  4. **Public transport and density.** Enhancing the use of public transport, and reduction of travel due to higher density.
  5. **Education, science and culture.** Generating facilities which enhance education, scientific learning and cultural activities for all.
  6. **Industry and jobs.** Arresting the trend to greenfield development and urban fringe urbanisation through the regeneration of existing urban fabric.
  7. **Nature and Environment.** Incorporating nature , nature-based systems, and care for the natural environment into all possible aspects of neighbourhood development.
  8. **Design.** Promoting good design through best possible expertise and mechanisms that enhance creativity, like competitions.
  9. **Long-term vision.** The characteristics of the eco-city shall provide for continuity, quality and awareness of the intricacies of a location are important attributes for a sustainable, future-oriented city.
  10. **Communication and participation.** Citizens' participation is considered a key for city culture.
  11. **Reliability, obligations and fairness.** A citywide concept, with principles of consensus, creates the proper environment within which all the participants in urban development can act with equal rights.
  12. **Cooperation and partnership.** Agreements and contracts with stakeholders, the support of – as well as the demand for – citizen commitments, all make wide-ranging urban redevelopment processes possible.

## European best practices

The most well-known European of eco-districts can be found in:

- **Freiburg, Germany: Eco-District Vauban.** Vauban is a new neighbourhood planned for 5,000 inhabitants and 600 jobs. It is high density as per German standards with a density of 1,497 pers/sqkm. 6

[5] The Freiburg Charter – Universal Principles for Creating a Sustainable City. http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/freiburg-charter/

[6] An Ecological Life Report from Freiburg. 2013. In: *Green.* #3. Beijing. pp. 134- 143; Green City Office (ed.). 2010. *Vauban Quartier Freiburg – A Guided Tour, The vision of a sustainable district becomes reality*, FWTM Management and Marketing for the City of Freiburg, Freiburg; Pouille, J. 2015. Die Stadt von morgen – vielleicht, in: *Stadtbauwelt* 206, Vol. 106. pp. 55-59; Hall, P. 2014. Freiburg: The City that did it all, in: Hall, P. 2014. *Good Cities, better lives: How Europe Discovered the Lost Art of Urbanism.* Routledge. London, pp. 248-276.

- **London, United Kingdom: Eco-District Bed-ZED.** The Beddington Zero Energy Development (BedZED) is an environmental friendly housing development in Hackbridge, London Designed to create zero-carbon emissions, it was the first large scale community to do so. 7
- **Stockholm, Sweden: Eco-District of Hammarby.** Since 1995, the city of Stockholm has developed Hammarby Sjöstad (Hammarby Lake City), built on a previous industrial site at a harbor area which has been cleaned up, developed and converted into a modern and eco-friendly district. Hammarby Sjöstad is Stockholm's largest urban development project with its own environmental programme incorporating energy supply, water and wastewater treatment and waste management. Hammarby is meant to provide 10,000 apartments for 35,000 inhabitants and it occupies 200 ha of land in Southern Stockholm[8]
- **Grenoble, France: Eco-Quartier De Bonne.** The eco-district (¨eco-quartier¨) de Bonne got its name from the late 19th century military barracks, the Caserne de Bonne, which occupied the site until 1994. This small neighbourhood, in between the Grands Boulevards and the historic centre, is noteworthy for its cutting edge ecological features, which follow the French green building codes of the HQE (Haute qualité environnementale (French) or High Quality Environment). This special development area is France's leading eco-district.[9]
- **Helsinki, Finland: Eco-District Viikki.** The eco-district in Viikki, Finland is the result of long-term work aimed at putting ecological principles into practice in actual buildings. Two design competitions were organised for the area and a number of seminars and debates. The master plan competition was won by a proposal based on a finger-like structure with alternating buildings and green open spaces. The layout permits functions to be combined naturally, nutrients and water to be recycled (composting, allotments, collecting surface water run-off), and the utilisation of solar energy. Eco-Viikki is part of the sustainable cities of Europe initiative.[10]
- **Pamplona Navarra, Spain: Sarriguren eco-city.** Sarriguren is Spain´s first eco-city, planned as an expansion of the city of Pamplona, located 3 kms from the city. The eco-city of Sarriguren was promoted by the Navarre Government Department of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Housing, and was designed by Fundación Metropoli. It follows ten principles devised in terms of performance specifications, with specific emphasis on the protection of natural areas, energy saving, integration of renewable energies and healthy construction.[11]

**Comparison of key features of some existing European eco-cities (eco-districts).** The following comparison provides an assessment of the existing European city experiences.

**Comparison of key features of some existing European eco-cities**

[7] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BedZED http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/cl/799017/estocolmo-ya-tiene-su-primer-barrio-sustentable-y-desde-los-90?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Plataforma%20Arquitectura

[9] http://www.durable.com/actualite/article_l-eco-quartier-de-grenoble-recompense_368; and http://www.ecoquartier-strasbourg.net/index.php/transition/quest-ce-quun-eco-quartier/quelques-exemples/ecoquartier-zac-de-bonne-grenoble.html; http://ecoquartiergare-trevoux.over-blog.com/article-l-exemple-de-bonne-en-france-98031281.html

[10] http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/archi/programmes/cost8/case/holistic/viikki.html; see also: The Finnish Association of Architects. 2000. Towards a Sustainable City. The Viikki Eco Neighbourhood Blocks. Eco Community Project. Helsinki; Helsinki City. 1998. Ecological building criteria for Viikki. Helsinki City planning Publications 1998:6; Helsinki City. 1999. Viikki. A Science Park at the Centre of a New University District. City of Helsinki, City Planning Department.

[11] Ryser, J. Ecocities in Action: Sustainable Development in Europe –Lessons for and from China? in: European Union, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, et al. 2014. Eco-Cities - Sharing European and Asian Best Practices and Experiences. EU-Asia Dialogue. Singapore. pp. 107-123 http://www.eu-asia.eu/publications/eco-cities/

| Key features<br><br>European Eco-Cities (districts) | Compact urban design | Green transport | Green building | Green infrastructure services | Other important features |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freiburg, Germany: Eco-District Vauban | High density | Electric tram system | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Integrated infrastructure concept; Waste recycling scheme | Renewable energy; outdoor green |
| London, United Kingdom: Eco-District Bed-ZED. | High density | Public transport | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Rainwater catchment | Renewable energy; zero-carbon emissions |
| Stockholm, Sweden: Eco-District of Hammarby. | Medium to High density | Electric tram system | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Integrated infrastructure concept | Renewable energy |
| Grenoble, France: Eco-Quartier De Bonne. | Medium to High density | Public transport | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Integrated infrastructure concept | Renewable energy |
| Helsinki, Finland: Eco-District Viikki. | Medium density | Public transport | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Water harvesting;<br><br>Waste recycling, composting | Renewable energy |
| Pamplona Navarra, Spain: Sarriguren eco-city. | Medium density | Public transport | Energy-efficient demonstration houses | Integrated infrastructure concept | Renewable energy |

## EU Policies affecting Urban Development and Planning of Cities

- **No universal EU policies existing:** Few EU countries do have a national policy covering 'urban planning', i.e. urban planning tools or instruments, however, the urban policy declarations, like the **2007 Leipzig Charter**, the **2010 Toledo declaration,** the **Pact of Amsterdam. And** the **Freiburg Charter of 2010** of Universal Principles for Creating a Sustainable City offer qualitative descriptions.

- **None of the EU countries has quantified targets for eco-city development established so far:** the absence of urban performance indicators could be seen as an issue. From a developmental perspective, cities should set themselves developmental targets, which could be drafted as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

**Sector management.**

All EU countries do have statutory urban planning, regulated by law, and local regulations. According to these national planning laws, cities – often supported by provincial / regional planning entities – need to draft their urban development plans. These statutory urban plans become the key documents for urban investment decisions. Since much of this kind of urban planning is mere land-use planning, there is often a disconnect between this urban planning, and local government investment planning.

**Normative issues**

- **Urban planning is celebrating a kind of revival in Europe, after having been in 'disgrace' for about the last 20 years or so.** The need to develop new planning mechanisms that are able to incorporate new developments, like the requirements related to climate change mitigation or adaptation (resilience) will require new dimension in urban planning.

- **Action Planning for Climate Mitigation / Climate Adaptation.** The Covenant of Mayors, promoted by the EU, is introducing Action Planning into urban planning.[12] A supplementary type of plan, the so-called Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP),[13] is being created which will have important implications for the urban planning culture.

- **Urban stakeholders seek a more participatory form of urban planning.** Many urban stakeholders – private sector, non-governmental organisations – consider the conventional urban (master) planning as too restrictive and too inflexible.

# OUTLOOK

The experience of eco-cities or eco-districts in Europe represent work in progress. More detailed assessments need to be done, particularly in terms of energy, buildings and transport performance. So far, the kaleidoscope of eco-cities or eco-neighbourhoods in Europe seems experimental in nature, but in some cases these seems to inform public policy in the areas of energy, buildings, management of basic services (water; waste management), and motorized as well as non-motorized transport.

The performance of eco-districts in terms (i) of energy savings (or net gains in terms of energy production through photovoltaics); (ii) better urban services originating from compact mixed use spatial plans, and (iii) better residential comfort from well-climatised and affordable housing is yet to be done. The economy of these eco-districts need to be studied further, since replicability is important. User feedback and satisfaction surveys will play another important role in these assessments to be made. Both these

[12] http://www.rapid-planning.net/about/ ; and http://future-megacities.org/index.php?id=video&L=1.
[13] http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/actions/sustainable-energy-action-plans_en.html

two dimensions of cost or expenses, and the feedback of customers or users will inform future policy regarding eco-districts.

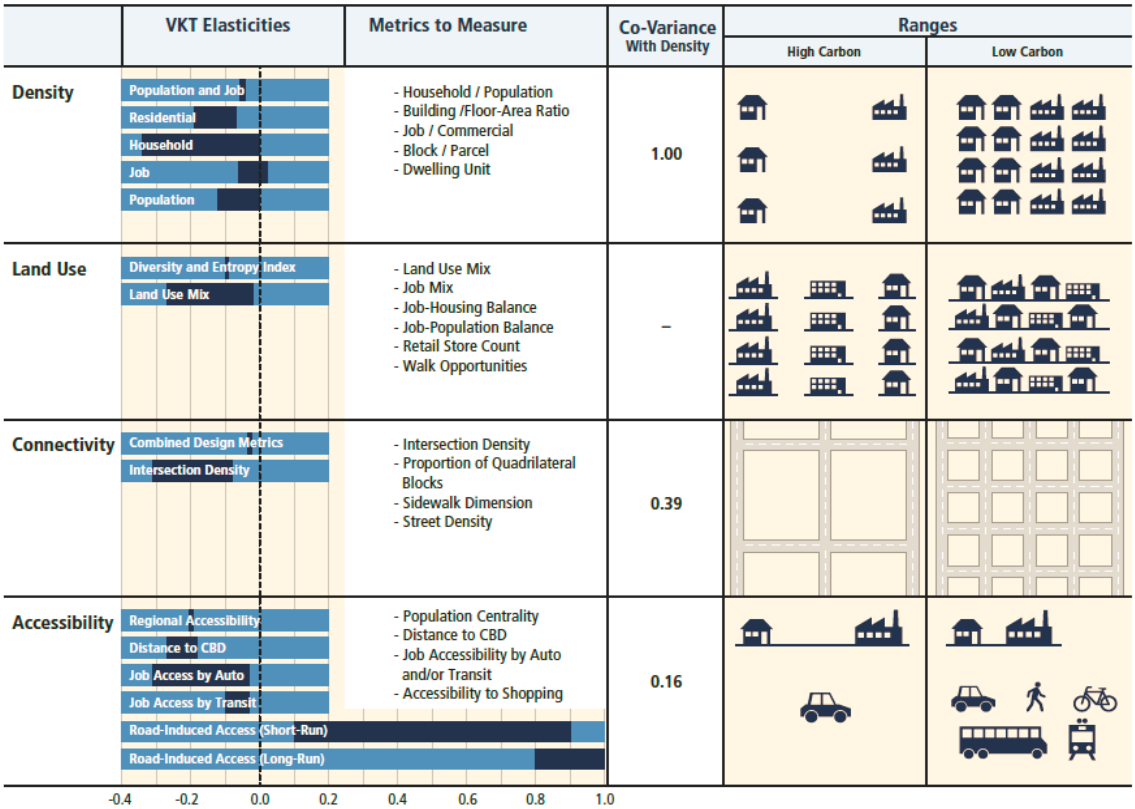
**Key Policy Strategies by OECD for Compact Cities**. The OECD goes several steps further in recommending explicit compact city goals, both for city fringes and for retrofitting of existing build-up areas. The objective is again to enhance diversity and the quality of urban life.

**Five Key Policy Strategies by OECD for Compact Cities – 20 Sub-strategies**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Set explicit compact city goals | • Establish a national urban policy framework<br>• Encourage metropolitan-wide strategic planning |
| 2. Encourage dense and contiguous development at urban fringes | • Increase effectiveness of regulatory tools<br>• Target compact urban development in green-field areas<br>• Set minimum density requirements for new development<br>• Strengthen urban-rural linkage |
| 3. Retrofit existing built-up areas | • Promote brown-field development<br>• Harmonise industrial policies with compact city policies<br>• Regenerate existing residential areas<br>• Promote transit-oriented development in built-up areas<br>• Encourage "intensification" of existing urban assets |
| 4. Enhance diversity and quality of life in urban centres | • Promote mixed land use<br>• Attract residents and local services to urban centres<br>• Promote focused investment in public space and foster a "sense of place"<br>• Promote a walking and cycling environment |
| 5. Minimise adverse negative effects | • Counteract traffic congestion<br>• Encourage the provision of affordable housing<br>• Promote high-quality urban design<br>• Encourage greening of built-up areas |

Source: OECD. 2012. Compact City Policies – A Comparative Assessment. http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/50524895.pdf

Good Practices - Urban Density, Land Use, Connectivity and Accessibility as parameters for Low Carbon Development




Source: IPCC Assessment Report, 2014: Technical Summary, pp.90-93. https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg3/ipcc_wg3_ar5_technical-summary.pdf

**RENUNCIA**

La ilustración de los estudios de caso de IUC-LAC solo fue posible mediante el uso de una amplia gama de materiales publicados, la mayoría de ellos disponibles en línea. Muchas de las ilustraciones (fotografías y gráficos) se originan en fuentes de Internet, y se reproducen aquí con citaciones y referencias adecuadas. El uso de estos materiales es únicamente con el propósito de compartir conocimientos, sin ningún uso o intención comercial.

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# IUC-LAC PROGRAMME

The International Urban Cooperation Programme - Latin America and the Caribbean (IUC-LAC) connect cities in different regions of the world to get in touch and share solutions to common problems. This initiative is part of a long-term strategy of the European Union to promote sustainable urban development in collaboration with both the public and private sectors and with civil groups and citizens. Through participation in the IUC-LAC, Latin American municipalities exchange knowledge with their counterparts in Europe, thus building a greener and more prosperous future.

IUC-LAC activities promote the achievement of political objectives and important international agreements on urban development and climate change, such as the EU Urban Agenda, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

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* All the aforementioned information is based on internet and published source mentioned in footnotes.

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