



# City-to-city cooperation

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

by, and for, EU cities

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# 1 City-to-city programme

Question	Answer
<p>1.1 What is envisioned for city-pairs to do within the programme?</p>	<p><i>Chosen cities must commit to cooperating intensively with their partner city for at least 18 months, and to share in their progress. Representatives from each city will take part in study tours, staff exchanges, trainings and seminars, etc. In addition, cities will have access to a wealth of resources through an online knowledge-sharing platform.</i></p> <p><i>The experiences the cities gain through these activities and materials will aid them in developing together a joint Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP) on the identified knowledge-sharing priorities. After this period, cities commit to reporting on their progress and on concrete actions to be carried out in the future. Each city will sign a Partnership Agreement to this effect.</i></p> <p><i>The U-CAPs will follow a common methodology, partially inspired by the EU-funded URBACT programme experience and should be developed through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process. These actors should be included in a multi-level and multi-stakeholder (e.g. academia, business, etc.) partnership, through the planning, roll-out and implementation of the U-CAP. Each city will develop its own contribution to the joint U-CAP which must include activities and economically viable pilot projects that are capable of being realised in the short term, thereby opening up market opportunities and encouraging the involvement of research institutions, businesses, other levels of government and the local community.</i></p> <p><i>Participating cities will become part of a larger community of peers and stakeholders engaging on sustainable urban development and sharing experiences with each other.</i></p> <p><i>In order to ensure a successful exchange and roll-out of measures and actions, cities need to commit an adequate amount of time and resources to implement the work. These resources should be sufficient to the ambition of the actions planned.</i></p> <p><i>Measures and actions to be implemented will contribute to achieving the objectives of the UN 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, the Urban Agenda for the European Union, the Sendai framework and the Paris Agreement, enhancing quality of life in urban areas.</i></p>
<p>1.2 How long is the (IUC-funded) city-to-city cooperation intended to last?</p>	<p><i>The cooperation will last at least 18 months, during which the IUC programme will fund incidental costs of selected activities (see question 2.1). In addition, the online knowledge-sharing platform would be available to participating cities thorough the whole duration of the programme.</i></p> <p><i>The programme encourages cities to continue their cooperation beyond this time, by committing their own appropriate resources to continue a fruitful cooperation into the future.</i></p>



<p>1.3 When will the selected cities begin their work as pairs?</p>	<p><i>Indicatively pairings are expected to start their pairing activities within a few months after they have been notified about their selection. The official notification can be expected within a few months after applications were submitted from EU cities. We kindly ask cities to be patient, and to anticipate a few months' delay from their own submission through the whole selection/matchmaking process to the initial launch of the pairing activities. Furthermore, it should be noted that the precise timing of implementing the programme varies across the different Regions and countries, which also have different application timings, therefore resulting in further variations for the initiation of activities.</i></p>
<p>1.4 When is Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP) expected to be drafted and to start being implemented?</p>	<p><i>U-CAPs should be drafted within the 18 months of cooperation. The identification of the pilot projects to be carried out should also take place within this timeframe. Where possible the identified pilots should be kicked off by the partnership within the timeframe of the cooperation. An engagement plan and/or a business plan could be developed for the actions.</i></p>
<p>1.5 How broad or narrow are the topic(s) and mandate of the U-CAP expected to be?</p>	<p><i>The topics of the cooperation should be selected jointly by the cities taking part in the pairings. There is no limit or restriction to the fields of cooperation, granted that they relate to sustainable urban development. A series of exemplary fields for cooperation have been listed in the application form:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Urban poverty, social inclusion and gender equality;</i></li> <li>• <i>Housing;</i></li> <li>• <i>Integration of refugees and migrants;</i></li> <li>• <i>Education, jobs and skills;</i></li> <li>• <i>Sustainable production/consumption;</i></li> <li>• <i>Circular economy;</i></li> <li>• <i>Water, waste management and sanitation;</i></li> <li>• <i>Healthy cities;</i></li> <li>• <i>Smart cities and regional/urban innovation and competitiveness;</i></li> <li>• <i>Urban development and regeneration;</i></li> <li>• <i>Sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions;</i></li> <li>• <i>Urban mobility;</i></li> <li>• <i>Integrated urban-rural development;</i></li> <li>• <i>Culture and cultural heritage and</i></li> <li>• <i>Security in public spaces.</i></li> </ul>
<p>1.6 Is the above list of potential topics to be considered as exhaustive for the IUC programme?</p>	<p><i>No, as mentioned above, it is only exemplary. There are other possible topics which may considered be more important for your city. For example, despite not being explicitly mentioned above, both energy and climate adaptation are still priority themes under SDGs and Urban Agendas, and therefore either could be considered as a valid topic on which to cooperate. The above list simply highlights other topics which may not be as much in the spotlight, but nonetheless are still very important for holistic sustainable urban development.</i></p>





1.7	How many pilot projects is each city expected to implement/initiate several during the duration of the pairing programme?	<p><i>There is no specific target, but it is expected that at least 1 pilot project could be initiated during the programme.</i></p> <p><i>The pilot projects outlined in the Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP) are not necessarily meant to be realised within the 18 months of IUC-funded cooperation, but should at least start their implementation in this timeframe and then be fully-implemented within the following 1-3 years. One of our objectives is to show real impacts resulting directly from the pairings.</i></p>
1.8	What would be considered an “economically-viable” pilot project in the IUC programme?	<p><i>By “economically-viable” we mean those actions that can be financed – however, the IUC programme does not supply funding of these pilot projects – and rolled out within a period of 1-3 years from the beginning of the pairing. In this respect, the development of a business plan is recommended.</i></p>
1.9	Are their variations in how the IUC city-to-city programme is implemented across different Regions?	<p><i>Yes. Though the IUC programme, and in particular the Coordination Unit, strives for consistency in the overall programme, the diverse nature of the programme necessitates some degree of flexibility based on the unique contexts from each of the global Regions where IUC is implemented. Therefore, cities might expect certain Regional variations in the pairing programme, such as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i><u>IUC-Asia:</u></i>  <i>Cooperation between European and Chinese cities within the IUC is framed by the <a href="#">EU-China Regional Policy Dialogue</a>, with a strong focus on innovation. The EU supports cities’ cooperation based on an open-pairing (i.e. multiple-partnership) and thematically-clustered approach around five major themes (smart cities; bio-tech and healthcare; mobility; circular economy and energy; and culture, tourism and education). Cities may work in one or more of these clusters in a triple-helix approach, and are therefore encouraged to involve academia, cluster organisations, urban innovation labs, incubators and accelerators, or may entitle them to implement IUC activities.</i>  <i>In practice, cities awarded with participation (10 pairings already active so far) sign a Joint Statement for an 18-month cooperation period. Cities are guided/supported by leading experts from both Regions (through tailored coaching, mentoring, webinars and other innovative formats) to define feasible pilot projects and long-term cooperation mechanisms, both of which are tied to structured actions within the thematic U-CAPs. City representatives may also expect the opportunity to participate in relevant thematic events in China and Europe.</i>  <i>Additionally, innovative pilot projects proposals developed within the IUC-Asia partnerships may apply for funding under the IUC-Asia competitive award, which provides</i></li> </ul>



several categories for funding certain activities. Up to five representatives per EU city (ideally at least three from the triple-helix, academic and/or clusters' communities) may participate in one or several cluster meetings in China (in 2019), also depending on available support by Chinese local governments.

- IUC-India:

From the Indian side, a number of Indian cities have been contacted, in consultation with the national Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, to express their own interest to participate in the IUC program. This selection was made in line with key criteria based upon the local context of each city in terms of their involvement in other national programmes. After ranking submissions from 16 cities all across India, 12 cities have been ultimately identified based on different parameters (e.g. population, geography, ongoing programmes, current commitment/implementation of city activities and finally an endorsement from the national ministry for the selection of the city).

Each of these 12 cities are already now at different stages of implementation in the IUC city-to-city programme, namely: signing of partnership agreements, exchange visits to/from European counterparts, refined identification of cooperation topic(s) city and preparation of the Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP). Furthermore, certain city-pairings have been engaged in other IUC-related activities also, like participating in relevant regional/national workshops, giving/receiving expert advice, etc. In addition to getting access to the solutions being offered by their European/Indian pair, each city also gets the chance to work with other cities in the network to further fulfil any specific needs concerning sustainable urban development.

- IUC-Japan:

IUC cooperation between European and Japanese cities is promoted in the framework of the EU-Japan Urban Policy Dialogue. This cooperation has already accumulated rich experiences and successful records for achieving sustainable development goals on the policy agenda of the respective cities, and there is great potential for the cities to share information and learn from each other. IUC-Japan focuses on the identification of good practices, mutual learning and information-sharing and encourages its cities to develop innovative ideas and insights upon the improved knowledge basis which can be brought to concrete policy actions of the cities.

Japanese cities have been selected twice, based on open calls, first in September 2017 and then in April 2018. As a result, a total of eight Japanese cities have been selected



for cooperation on smart city, energy, urban mobility, social inclusion, climate adaptation and other subjects. Each city conducts study visits to/from its counterpart and all cities meet together at bi-annual Exchange Meetings in Tokyo and Brussels. The pairings from the first and second round are now at different stages of implementation: the first group has completed exchange visits for mutual learning and will take steps to formulate Urban Cooperation Action Plans (U-CAP) by the middle of 2019, while the second group cities will follow a similar model of cooperation, but with a six-month time difference. In view of common communication problems largely due to language, IUC-Japan is willing to assist European cities which wish to cooperate with Japanese cities by providing information and suggestions.

- IUC-Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC):

The selection of LAC cities is being done with the help of country-level networking organisations and other institutions which are partners of the IUC-LAC project. Open calls have been published which explain the eligibility criteria used to rank applications received, which is then assessed and confirmed by a selection committee. The selected LAC cities are then matched with appropriate EU cities, primarily based on mutual topics of common interest.

Usually, the first 4-day working meetings are hosted by the LAC city, with their EU counterparts as guests. During these first meetings work commences on the joint U-CAP. Afterwards, a draft of the U-CAP needs to be prepared to serve as the basis for discussions during the second working meeting, this time hosted in the EU city, in order to work even further on the U-CAP. After the return of the LAC delegation, both city teams finalise the U-CAP at their home base. In order to ensure follow-through of planned measures, the IUC-LAC team strives to provide further assistance to both cities in identifying possible external funding opportunities.

- IUC-North America (NA):

A core activity for the IUC Programme in North America are Learning Exchanges – one hosted and organised by each city pair which takes place in the first few months of the cooperation programme. These exchanges take place over the course of three to four days and include a mix of presentations, public events, workshops, site visits and technical meetings. The visiting city delegation includes three to four relevant stakeholders – usually municipal staff – and the visits are organized according to the agreed thematic area of cooperation of the pairing.

The IUC-NA program covers travel expenses (flights, hotels and per diems) for the delegations and advises the





*host city in developing the agenda for the Learning Exchange. It is also possible to arrange technical visits following the Learning Exchanges to delve more deeply into the cooperation areas of the Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP), which could lead to the development of a pilot project. There are also opportunities for participating cities to attend other relevant conferences, workshops and seminars in accordance with the activities and objectives designated in the U-CAP, which is developed by the city pairs with support from IUC-NA programme experts. IUC-NA currently has pairings with sixteen EU cities including six Canadian cities, four Mexican cities, and six US cities.*





## 2 Budgetary

Question	Answer
<p>2.1 Which costs are covered by the program?</p>	<p><i>The programme can cover certain incidental costs (e.g. travel or accommodation costs) related to the implementation of the exchange aspects of the city-to-city cooperation, but only during the duration of the pairing (i.e. 18 months).</i></p> <p><i>All other resources (staff capacity, per-diems, salaries, expertise, cooperation with other sectors, co-funding, etc.) will <u>not</u> be covered and will have to be provided or found by the cities themselves involved in the pairings (e.g. through cooperation with private sector actors, financial institutions, community organizations, external funds, etc.).</i></p>
<p>2.2 Is there a set budget for city pairings?</p>	<p><i>No, though there is of course an overall budget planned. However, the budgets are assigned to specific activities carried out by the city-pairings. Ultimately the budgets depend on a variety of factors, such as which Regions are involved (e.g. varying travel costs) and the nature of the activities being conducted within each pairing.</i></p>
<p>2.3 Does the IUC give out grants to cities or other stakeholders?</p>	<p><i>No. As mentioned above, unfortunately the IUC does not fund (pilot) projects, even those being planned within the Urban Cooperation Action Plans (U-CAP) being developed as part of the IUC programme.</i></p> <p><i>Although IUC does not fund such projects/activities, the programme does offer certain types of capacity-building and knowledge-sharing materials which may facilitate cities to find financing opportunities on their own.</i></p>



### 3 Eligibility and calls for submissions

Question	Answer
3.1 Are there size limitations for cities applying?	<i>Yes, and at the moment applicant cities from all Regions, including the EU, should have at least 100,000 inhabitants.</i>
3.2 Will applications be accepted from regional/provincial authorities?	<i>No, at this time, we are only accepting applications from cities, not sub-national provinces or regions. Nonetheless, sub-national governments, such as regions and provinces, are invited to still support cities applying, but they will not be considered eligible applicants themselves. Groups of municipalities will also be eligible to apply, but only if their total population still exceeds 100,000 inhabitants and a clear administrative contact has been identified and provided, as well as the commitment of the others concerned.</i>
3.3 Can groups of (small) towns apply together in a joint application?	<i>Yes, as long as a clear administrative contact has been identified and provided within the application with a mandate to officially represent the consortium of municipalities. It is not necessary that the consortium be a formal, legal body – it is sufficient to have a less-formal agreement providing the group's administrative contact.</i>
3.4 When are calls open for EU cities to pair with global Regions?	<i>The first call for EU cities closed in Spring 2017, the second in Autumn 2017 and the most recent closed in Spring 2018. A fourth round for EU cities has been announced in <a href="#">January 2019</a>, open for one month. At the moment, this is the final call planned for EU submissions to the IUC programme.</i>
3.5 Is there a possibility to expand the global countries involved in city pairings?	<i>At the moment, no. Currently the programme is limited only to EU cities and those from the following countries outside the EU:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Argentina</li> <li>• Brazil</li> <li>• Chile</li> <li>• China</li> <li>• Colombia</li> <li>• Canada</li> <li>• India *</li> <li>• Japan</li> <li>• Mexico</li> <li>• Peru</li> <li>• United States of America</li> </ul> <p><i>* The current call from <a href="#">January 2019</a> is open for pairings with varying numbers of cities from most IUC countries, except India.</i></p>
3.6 Is there a list accessible with available cities and their interests, challenges, etc.?	<i>No. Other than the fact that many global Regions have not yet opened up their own newest calls for applications, the whole selection process will be handled internally. If selected, IUC will match your city with an appropriate one from another Region and notify those cities selected of the pairing option. That said, a few challenges can still be connected to specific Regions, and therefore provide indicative guidance to applicants</i>



		<p>– notably both waste and water topics seem to be among the most relevant issues for most LAC countries and India. Additionally it is worth mentioning that the linkage between migration/refugee integration and sustainable urban development is being seen as an increasingly important emerging issue in many areas, for example across LAC.</p>
3.7	<p>Is it possible for cities which have already been paired in this IUC programme to apply again?</p>	<p><i>In principle, yes. Previous applicant cities may apply again for selection, as long as it is in a call from a different year (i.e. cities paired in either 2017 call or the 2018 call may still apply now in 2019 as well).</i></p> <p><i>However, it must be emphasised that new applicant cities will tend to be privileged over those already paired in the IUC, which would look to already-paired cities only if there are insufficient appropriate candidates found among new applicants.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, any city still wishing to apply for a second pairing should still give a strong demonstration of administrative capacity to be able to handle simultaneous pairings. Additionally, it would be required for repeat-applicants to aim for new topics not already covered in their current IUC pairing, as well as to work with new countries/Regions than currently.</i></p>
3.8	<p>Are cities which have already applied, but not (yet) been paired in the IUC programme, still allowed to apply again?</p>	<p><i>In general, yes. Those applicants which submitted applications, but were not successfully selected are encouraged to apply again, perhaps looking into their own submission to improve it.</i></p> <p><i>For those cities which have been informed of their reserve-status in 2017 or 2018, but are still waiting to be paired, it is not necessary to apply again, since your still-unpaired 2017 or 2018 submission is still considered valid. However, if you prefer to change the content, priority themes, preferred countries, etc. then we suggest you contact us first in order to determine any need for a new application from you.</i></p> <p><i>Please note that IUC isn't in a position to provide any advice on how to improve your previous submission. For this we can only recommend that you explore for yourselves how to improve it.</i></p>





## 4 Application process

Question	Answer
4.1 Which are the steps for EU cities applying for the city-to-city programme?	<p>1) Check your <a href="#">eligibility</a> and that you truly have a mandate, and overall support, to apply on behalf of your city to this programme.</p> <p>2) Fill in the <a href="#">application form</a>. It includes requests for brief explanations on your city's sustainable urban development interests, any project/action ideas that you have started developing and what capacity you would foresee to be able to commit for their development. It also includes questions related to your city's previous experiences on sustainable urban development (e.g. in programmes such as UIA, Urban Agenda Partnerships, URBACT, Covenant of Mayors...).</p> <p>3) Cities will be notified if they have been selected or not, and potentially about possible pairing options being explored.</p> <p>4) If your city has been successfully selected, your city and your selected city-pair will initiate work together to develop an Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP) to implement measures in the field(s) you chose in your applications for at least 18 months.</p>
4.2 Is preference given to pair together cities which already have established a previous working relationship?	<p>Not necessarily. While IUC may choose to build upon cities' existing connections, such as sister cities, one of our key goals is to bring in added-value that would not have occurred otherwise. We do not plan to exclude already-established connections by any means (so you may freely apply with a preference for a sister city or previous partner), but it is important to our programme that pairings are not simply duplicating efforts already done or planned to be done anyway.</p> <p>In the application form, there is space to clarify your previous city pairings and relate them to how you envision our IUC programme can facilitate new forms of sustainable urban development between you. You should make it clear in your submission how exactly added value would be created if you prefer to work with a previous sister city or partner.</p> <p>Nonetheless, IUC recommends that you should still remain open to the possibility of pairing with totally new cities, if your city is selected at all, since there are of course many benefits to be gained from exchanges with new colleagues as well, and we cannot guarantee that pairings will always be made according to cities' preferences.</p>
4.3 If a city indicates a preferred city, country or Region in its application, does this mean their preference will get fulfilled?	<p>No, not necessarily. Though the selection process aims to accommodate submitted preferences when able, it is not always possible that all cities will get what they want (e.g. multiple cities preferring to pair with the same city).</p> <p>For the selection process, it is much more important that selected city-pairs match each other in terms of their sustainable urban development plans, mutual challenges, similar characteristics, etc. Only after such criteria, will cities' preferences enter the selection process.</p> <p>If you exclusively want to cooperate with only specific cities/countries, we ask you to please provide this information to</p>



		<p><i>us in the application form in the appropriate section. This way we will not propose any unwanted pairings to you, if your city is selected.</i></p> <p><i>However, if you do not indicate any such exclusivity, then it will be assumed that you are (relatively) open to pairings which IUC might offer. Therefore, in such cases, we would not expect a selected city to decline an offered pairing without clear justification from your side.</i></p> <p><i>Nonetheless, IUC will of course seek to satisfy cities' interests and preferences as much as is truly possible.</i></p>
4.4	<p>Why is it important that the applicant have a clear, official mandate to apply?</p>	<p><i>In order to ensure that there is both adequate technical capacity and political will to follow through in the IUC programme, applicants are asked to confirm near the beginning of the online form their own mandate to apply on behalf of the city.</i></p> <p><i>This is not just a mere formality, but rather to make certain that selected cities will not later, within reason, face otherwise unavoidable administrative, technical, political or other obstacles. To this end we encourage applicants to discuss the application with appropriate city representatives to assess political support and/or obstacles for your intended application. Appropriate municipal department heads, for example, should be aware and approve of the city's submitted content and have mandated staff to work on its application. This helps to ensure smoother cooperation between the cities themselves, which is IUC's goal.</i></p>
4.5	<p>Should the "team leader" be a political or a technical representative?</p>	<p><i>The team leader should be in charge of the cooperation with the paired city. It is up to the city itself to decide who should take this role. The team leader should ideally have a solid track-record of experience in international cooperation, be able to communicate in English sufficiently and should be able to act as a delegate for decision-making on the activities of the project.</i></p>
4.6	<p>Should "team members" be only municipal staff only, or also other stakeholders involved in the Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP)?</p>	<p><i>The make-up of your team should be relevant to your own context and the activities you plan. In some cases, only municipal members are needed, while in others, the inclusion of stakeholders from other relevant sectors would be needed to facilitate activities. Similarly, the size of the team is likewise up to you. Whoever you deem important to include will benefit from the activities (e.g. capacity-building) and those limited costs actually covered by the programme (see question 2.1).</i></p>
4.7	<p>Are formally-planned, but not yet begun, actions to be considered as valid measures within the IUC programme?</p>	<p><i>Yes, those actions based on an official decision and/or strategy, but whose implementation has not yet started, would be valid. The development of the action in cooperation within the pairing will allow for additional opportunities for knowledge-sharing and inspirations between the cities. The important point is that implementation has yet to begin.</i></p>



4.8	What is the "common methodology " which ought to be followed while crafting the Urban Cooperation Action Plan (U-CAP)?	<p><i>An adapted methodology for the implementation of the U-CAPs has been developed by the IUC programme, partially inspired by EU-funded URBACT experiences.</i></p> <p><i>The U-CAP is meant to be a roadmap for the successful participation of your city in the IUC City-to-City Cooperation Programme. As an iterative planning tool, your U-CAP will be developed jointly by both collaborating cities over the course of the cooperation programme and will include objectives and activities to be developed during that period and others that may to be carried out beyond the duration of the IUC programme.</i></p>
4.9	What is meant by the application's question about "proposed actions/measure s/ideas"?	<p><i>If you already have a plan or a specific action in mind that you wish to implement in a sustainable urban development field of your choice, you can briefly explain it. It might be a specific type of exchange activity or engagement plan, or even a concrete action to be integrated into the (still-to-be-developed) U-CAP.</i></p>
4.10	What is the impact of previous involvement in EU sustainable urban development initiatives on the evaluation of submissions?	<p><i>High. The IUC is part of a long-term strategy by the European Union to foster sustainable urban development in cooperation with both the public and private sectors, with the aim to foster better ways to plan, finance, develop, govern and manage cities, and support the New Urban Agenda decided in Quito.</i></p>
4.11	Should a city's best practices, experiences and partnerships from the past agree with the (new) areas of interest to which a city applies?	<p><i>Not necessarily. The idea of these questions is just to establish if the city applying already has a track record in cooperating successfully with other stakeholders – regardless of the specific field. The same applies for the best practices to be shared. The programme is interested to collect and share as many good practices as possible.</i></p>

