



Background document for applicants

Thematic Partnership Greening Cities



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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) **Greening Cities** and (ii) **Sustainable Tourism**.

This Call is preceded by **Ex-Ante Assessments (EAA)** on the Greening cities and Sustainable tourism themes ([Urban Agenda for the EU: Ex Ante Assessment | Futurium \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/UAEUGreeningCitiesTP2022)). The EAA was proposed as a new step towards the creation of Partnerships and Other forms of cooperation in the scope of the new phase of the UAEU established by the Ljubljana Agreement. The EAA were launched in January 2022 as an exploratory process, 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.

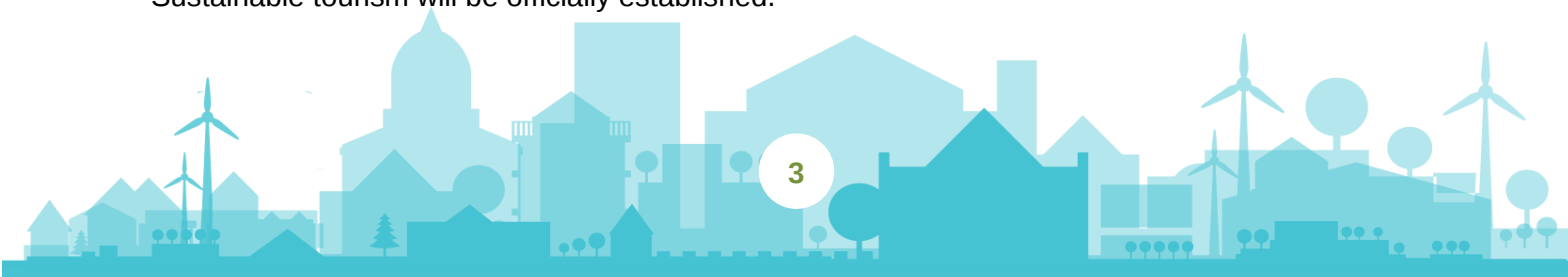
Both reports highlight the importance of a launch of the Partnerships and propose recommendations for a possible thematic focus of the Thematic Partnerships in relation to Better Knowledge, Better Funding and Better Regulation pillars. The final EAA reports were welcomed during the meeting of the **Directors General on Urban Matters (DGUM) in Paris on 24 June 2022** and a decision was taken to launch the Call for the selection of Partners and to give the Urban Agenda Technical Preparatory Group (UATPG) a mandate to manage the Call.

As per the Multiannual Working Programme accompanying the [Ljubljana Agreement](#), urban authorities, Regions, Partner States, city consortiums and national city umbrella organisations are able to apply to this call. Moreover, Member States and other stakeholders (Managing Authorities for EU funds, experts/academia, NGOs, economic and social partners, civil society organisations and private sector representatives) are also able to apply to the Call. The eligible categories of Partners are specified under each priority theme, in the corresponding section below.

The Call will remain open from **20 July until 16 September 2022** and the (initial) list of applicants will be presented at the occasion of the Urban Development Group (UDG) meeting on 14 September 2022. The **assessment of applications** will be conducted by the experts responsible for the EAA of themes, in agreement with the UATPG. The presentation of the assessment of applications will be held at a dedicated UDG online meeting on 14 October 2022. The selection criteria used to assess the applications were discussed and agreed in the UATPG meeting on 13 July 2022. These are presented in the relevant section of this note. The Call materialises into two EU surveys to be filled in by applicants, one for each theme. For the Greening Cities theme, the link is: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/UAEUGreeningCitiesTP2022>.

The survey questions are based on the selection criteria described later in this document.

Once the Call is closed, a **proposed list of selected partners** will be presented by the Urban Development Group to the **Directors General on Urban Matters on 26 October 2022**, seeking for their decision. If the DGUM's decision is positive, the Partnerships on Greening cities and Sustainable tourism will be officially established.



2 Background information on the UAEU and partners' responsibilities

2.1 What is the Urban Agenda for the EU?

The following sections aim at identifying the **key objectives and features of the Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU)**. Applicants who wish to have more in-depth knowledge on the UAEU may read the following relevant material which contain more comprehensive information and details.

- [Pact of Amsterdam](#)
- [Assessment study of the UAEU](#)
- [New Leipzig Charter and Implementation Document](#)
- [Ljubljana Agreement and Multiannual Working Programme](#)
- [Urban Agenda for the EU: Multi-level governance in action \(2021 Update\)](#)

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](#).

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 main aim of the Urban Agenda for the European Union is to **identify and tackle urban challenges** by bringing together Member States, cities, the European Commission and other stakeholders, into a framework for dialogue and finding solutions on policy initiatives that affect urban areas (Pact of Amsterdam, 2016). The Urban Agenda proposes to use a new multi-level, multi-stakeholder working method to better achieve the objectives of the Union and national policy by involving urban authorities in both the design and implementation phases of policy making. This in turn is intended to **strengthen the urban dimension of policies** as well as facilitate their uptake, ultimately leading to a more efficient and effective policy making and implementation process. [...] The Urban Agenda seeks to stimulate action along three key objectives (or "pillars"): **Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge**. In addition, the UAEU aims to address several cross-cutting issues 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' (Assessment study, 2019).

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

'The 14 Partnerships have brought together 25 Member States, 82 cities and/or metropolitan regions, 12 regions and 15 Directorate-Generals of the European Commission, and no less than 44 institutions, ranging from European umbrella organisations, programmes and networks, to civil society organisations and private companies. In total, **326 partners work together**, embodying the principle of shared ownership and multi-stakeholder involvement' (Brochure, 2021). All 14 Partnerships have finalised their (initial) actions plans, comprising in total 139 actions. From the last update of the monitoring table used for tracking the activities of the Partnerships of September 2021, 46 % of the actions were finalised.

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.

In order to reach the final action plan, the Partnership enters a **scoping phase** that includes brainstorming on the themes and challenges, elaborating the objectives of the Partnership etc. This materialised with a scoping or orientation paper. As the two themes on Greening cities and Sustainable tourism have been subject to an **Ex-Ante Assessment**, the scoping phase will be reduced in time and scope. The EAA represents a major contribution to the scoping phase and could be considered as the **baseline document for this phase**. Partnerships will have the flexibility to choose the specific topics they will be working on, considering **the recommended thematic focus**, and will draft an orientation paper that will explain the rationale of their choice.

After this phase, the Partnership enters into the **stocktaking phase**, which entails analytical and research work on the identification of specific bottlenecks, mapping existing solutions and an initial brainstorming on themes and challenges. After this, the Partnership establishes a **shortlist of**



possible actions to work on, and they decide jointly, as Partnership, which actions they select to be included in the action plan. Partners identify the objectives and deliverables per action and draft the **action plan**. Actions should be new, address a real need, be implemented, have visible impact, and concern several cities and Member States.

The action plan goes through a **public feedback** (consultation) on a dedicated portal and relevant colleagues in the European Commission are consulted. The Partnership revises the action plan following comments received and the document is presented to the Urban Development Group who may provide additional feedback. The Partnership revises the action plan accordingly. The action plan is considered final once presented at the meeting of Directors General on Urban Matters (which takes place one time per semester) and the implementation of actions may begin. All these phases, including the implementation phase that follows the finalisation of the action plan, entail a number of Partnership meetings as well as work in between these meetings. The number of meetings depends on the working method of the Partnership.

As mentioned in the Pact of Amsterdam, the UAEU ‘will be taken forward by Member States together with the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the European Investment Bank (EIB), representatives of the European Urban Authorities and other relevant stakeholders.’

‘The strategic steering of the UAEU is provided by the **Directors-General Meeting 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 DGUM meetings may include a range of organisations as observers, such as representatives of Partner States, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), European Parliament (EP), European Investment Bank (EIB), URBACT, ESPON and European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) (European Commission, 2016)’ (Assessment study, 2019).

‘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). Several organisations and networks may act as observers and / or be invited to participate in a particular relevant session, such as Partner States, URBACT, ESPON, JPI Urban Europe and EUKN. The UDG is an informal advisory body to Directors-General’s meeting 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 takes 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 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 until available); three members in total from the European Committee of the Regions, Eurocities and CEMR' (Assessment study, 2019).

In 2021, the **renewal process of the Urban Agenda for the EU** started, in line with the directions provided by the New Leipzig Charter and its Implementing document. The renewal of the UAEU was concluded by the adoption of the **Ljubljana Agreement on 26 November 2021**, which lays out the updated parameters for its implementation over the period 2022-2026. It materialised the start of a new phase of the Urban Agenda for the EU, including its operational parameters, work method and steps. The agreement also comprises the addition of four new themes: **Greening cities, Sustainable tourism, Food and Cities of equality**. The Pact of Amsterdam remains valid as a framework document for this intergovernmental multi-level governance initiative.

The Ljubljana Agreement emphasises some new features of the UAEU. The **ex-ante assessment (EAA) of priority themes** is a new step put in place prior to the establishment of the Partnerships to raise the impact of the work developed by the Partnerships, and to better correlate it to the EU policy and regulatory framework. Moreover, **Other forms of cooperation** can be established, besides Partnerships, with a more flexible approach (shorter duration, targeted on a specific angle or question, smaller group etc.). Finally, more attention will be paid to the role and participation of **small and medium size cities**.

2.2 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 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 also liaise with other cities to create bigger impact on the implementation of actions.

City organisations (European and national) and URBACT

City organisation such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), EUROCITIES, other bodies representing Urban Authorities at European and national level, as well as EU programmes dedicated to sustainable urban development such as URBACT, bring their expertise and experience on the exchange of good practices and knowledge. They act as 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

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. They act as 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.

EU Institutions

The **European Commission** acts as facilitator of the UAEU by providing EU funds to support the Partnerships' activities and by making the link with the 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 partner 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 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 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 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 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.

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 other Partnership Coordinators, represent the Partnership in conferences, monitor and report on the Partnership's activities etc. Coordinators act as 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.

2.3 Support to the UAEU

The **support to Partnerships and Other forms of cooperation** is described in the Multiannual working Programme, namely:

Requirements for technical support for Partnerships and OFC:

- Providing templates of Action Plans, securing consultation method for draft Action Plan and facilitate reporting to UDG/DGUM;
- Maintaining a website and social media communication effort for Partnerships/OFCs follow up;
- Providing adequate expert support in cooperation with Partnership/OFC;
- Providing specific support in defined cases, for example in regards to small and medium-sized cities and towns or deprived cities, in order to secure the participation of members in the Partnership/OFC;
- Organising ideally an annual coordinators' – and if relevant – action leaders' meeting (CALM).

Other potential elements of technical support required by Partnerships:

- Translation of finalised Action Plans into national language when organised by an individual Member State;
- Calls for contributions, evaluations;
- Administrative support for Partnerships/ OFC;
- Support for communication and outreach activities, such as:
 - Providing a visual identity for UAEU and corresponding materials to be used by Partnerships/OFC;
 - Hosting webinars and online outreach activities;
 - Surveys and peer reviews;
- Case studies

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 integrating 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 to be provided by the EUI will include, among others:

- (i) the setting up of new Partnerships (including the ex-ante assessments of Partnership proposals), and possibly other forms of cooperation on an ad-hoc basis;
- (ii) the implementation of the UAEU and delivery of actions, with expertise support; and
- (iii) the setting up of capitalisation, communication and dissemination activities on the outcomes/results of the UAEU.



3 The new Thematic Partnership on Greening cities

The objective of this call for Expression of Interest is to select suitable and motivated partners for the UAEU Thematic Partnership on Greening Cities.

The Ex-ante Assessment concluded that there is a good opportunity for launching a Greening Cities Thematic Partnership with a focus on green and blue infrastructure in an urban context and with extensive links to a number of priority sectors, namely the built environment, sustainable transport, water management and urban agriculture. The new Partnership would be of high relevance to the problems and the needs of the cities of all sizes, including small and medium sized cities with regards to biodiversity preservation and adaptation to climate change. The Partnership would be aligned with the objectives of cities to provide higher well-being to citizens through cleaner air, better inclusiveness and more aesthetic environment.

The new Partnership is coherent with numerous global (a number of SDGs) and EU policy agendas such as the Biodiversity Strategy, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Climate Adaptation Strategy, the New European Bauhaus Initiative, etc. It is also coherent with a number of other EU initiatives, which represents potential for cross-fertilisation and exchange at policy level. The new Thematic Partnership will build on and complement the results of the previous Thematic Partnerships on Sustainable use of land and nature based solutions, Air quality and Climate adaptation, as well as on the knowledge generated on green and blue infrastructure.

The Partnership lends itself to the key pillars of the Urban Agenda for the EU, namely better knowledge, better regulation and better funding. In terms of better knowledge, while a solid base already exists, the access to knowledge is unequal and significant improvements are possible for the deployment of concrete green and blue infrastructure solutions at city level, following tested methodologies. Concerning better regulation, the Partnership could provide feedback to the European Commission with the objective of strengthening the urban dimension of upcoming EU policies and better integrating green and blue infrastructure (GI) in other sectoral policies. The Partnership could also support cities to better implement relevant EU policies and also better integrate GI into national, local and regional voluntary and mandatory planning documents. In terms of better funding, the Partnership could develop new knowledge and strategies for increasing absorption of funding for GI in an integrated manner. Cities could also be supported in greening their budgets. On one hand, this could be beneficial for the members and other cities across Europe, while it could also feed into the European Commission's process of tailoring different financial instruments through place-based approaches, sensible to the needs of cities of different sizes.

3.1 Thematic focus

The proposed subthemes relevant to Greening cities are presented in Table 1, which also gives an overview of the state of play and thematic bottlenecks pertinent to each subtheme and links to EU policy frameworks.



Table 1: Sub-themes related to green and blue infrastructure; state of play and bottlenecks; contribution to EU policy frameworks

Sub-theme	Current state of play	Thematic bottlenecks vis-à-vis the three pillars of the UAEU	Contribution to EU policy
Types of green and blue infrastructure	- The state of play is different for the different types of GI. - Detailed map of urban green infrastructure is a key for informed decision-making. Few cities make use of European wide or even national datasets for supporting local decision making. (EnRoute project) -	- Scattered data exist on the uptake of individual solutions (see report on urban agriculture) - Better knowledge - Opportunities embedded in the various EU financing instruments have not yet been fully exploited (better funding) - Insufficient integration of GI in spatial planning (better regulation) - Detailed and locally collected spatial data are needed to integrate urban green infrastructure in policy (better knowledge and better regulation)	EU Green Infrastructure Strategy EU Climate Change Strategy EU Biodiversity Strategy (incl. Urban Greening Plans) EU Forest Strategy EU water regulation
Exploring the benefits of GI in an urban context: - Environment (habitats, connectivity, clean air, etc.) - Society (health, well-being, recreation, etc.) - Economy (tourism, job creation, livelihood, etc.)	- Multiple projects and reports explore impacts and benefits of different types of GI on environment, society and economy. - Demonstrating the benefits of urban green infrastructure requires linking ecosystem data with socio-economic statistics. (EnRoute project) - Meeting target 2 of EU Biodiversity Strategy and restoring Natura 2000 to favourable status could further generate respectively up to 50 000 and 140 000 jobs; and up to EUR 4.2 and 11.1 billion of direct outputs annually; as well as a wider range of benefits from ecosystem services (COM:2019:236: FIN).	- Benefits are difficult to quantify while costs are visible (better knowledge) - Insufficient knowledge on integrating green and blue infrastructure dimensions in strategies and plans for Sustainable Urban Development and Integrated Territorial Investment Strategies (better funding) - Insufficient information on local level regarding biodiversity within cities (better knowledge)	Disaster and risk prevention Health and consumer policies Water Framework Directive (WFD) Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) EU policy framework in energy efficiency, built environment, sustainable mobility, etc. EU Mission: Climate Neutral and Smart Cities

Integration of green and blue infrastructure into other sectoral policies: - Built environment - Transport - Urban Agriculture - Energy - Health - Air	- In many Member States, objectives or requirements specifically related to GI are included in broader biodiversity and nature conservation policies and legislation (COM:2019:236: FIN) - Interviewed stakeholders have pointed at significant margins for improvement	- Insufficient Integration of different types of GI solutions into local plans, sectoral plans regulations, etc. (better regulation) - Insufficient scaling up of good practices of integration of GI into sectoral policies – better regulation - GI is not widely used by decision-makers and stakeholders as a cost-efficient solution to health issues (COM: 2019:236:FIN) (better knowledge) - Good practices on GI in transport are sporadic (COM: 2019:236:FIN) – better knowledge	
Implementation of green and blue infrastructure: - Quality of design and aesthetics of green public spaces - Quality of implementation	- Increasing number of cities acknowledge that the quality of urban spaces and places, including the green ones contributes fundamentally to our well-being and makes cities more beautiful, inclusive and sustainable. -	- There is no systematised information on the quality of different types of GI across EU cities – better knowledge - GI solutions are not used to their full extent and their potential should be further strengthened at EU level (COM: 2019:236:FIN) better knowledge	New Leipzig Charter EU GI Strategy EU Climate Change Strategy EU Biodiversity Strategy EU Forest Strategy EU Water regulation Disaster and risk prevention New European Bauhaus Renovation Wave Strategy

4 Categories of partners

Eligible applicants include:

- Member States through relevant national level ministries/agencies (e.g. ministries of environment environmental agencies, etc.).
- Partner States;
- Regions and Regional Development Agencies
- Urban authorities;
- European, national and regional city umbrella organisations;
- Other stakeholders, such as:
 - o Managing Authorities of EU Structural Funds
 - o economic and social partners at European and national level;
 - o relevant agencies and authorities at national, regional and local level (e.g. environmental protection agencies, urban planning authorities);
 - o higher education and research institutions;
 - o private sector representatives

5 Selection criteria

5.1 Horizontal selection criteria applicable to the Partnership

The Partnership will represent a diversity of members at different governance levels.

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 “Greening Cities”. These will be considered once the specific selection criteria described below are assessed, in order to make a selection amongst the highest scoring participants.

- i. **Multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach:** As per 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.
- ii. **Size of cities:** *at least* one ‘small-sized city’ and one ‘medium-sized city’ will be part of the Partnership. As per 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.
- iii. **Geographical balance:** During the selection process, one of the aims will be to ensure a relative geographical balance between the members.
- iv. **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.
- v. **Coordinators:** maximum two, at least one from an urban authority. In their expression of interest, applicants should indicate if they would like to be considered for the role of a Coordinator.

5.2 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Partners

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

- i. **Motivation** to become partner, to be involved in the UAEU in the specific theme, possibly with reference to one or more specific sub-

themes and issues. Motivation may include, for instance, the need for assessing sustainability problems experienced by the applicant, some significant experience to be tested and validated at a larger scale, pilot implementations etc. (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.

- ii. **Expertise** and qualifications of the applicant with regards to at least one of the sub-themes and issues included in Table 1 of the background section for applicants. 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

The following types of expertise/experience will be an advantage:

- Different types of green and blue infrastructure including concrete and tested solutions.
- Integration of green and blue infrastructure into urban and spatial planning and local strategic documents.
- Developing blue infrastructure in an urban context with all accompanying organisational, public awareness, technical and other issues.
- Including and coordinating various city stakeholders (such as Regional Development Agencies; universities and research institutions; Civil Society Organisations, etc.) for the implementation of green infrastructure in a context of competing priorities.
- Deploying green infrastructure and/or NBS solutions in various sectors such as mobility, built environment, etc.
- Green infrastructure -related data management.
- Funding green infrastructure from EU funds, from national and local budgets and from private sources.
- Integrating green and blue infrastructure concept in national legal frameworks.
- Establishing national networks of cities with green and blue infrastructure.

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 etc.

- iii. **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 greening cities and/or urban policy issues, as well as the sub-themes and issues included in Table 1 of the background document for applicants.

- iv. **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.

5.3 Specific selection criteria for applicants as Coordinators

All the above specific selection criteria (i-iv) and in addition:

- v. Project management expertise:
 - i. specifically concerning projects and initiatives in multilevel governance and European/international contexts, based on evidence from previous experience
 - ii. including expertise in dissemination and institutional communication at EU and national level
- vi. Commitment of adequate allocation of human and financial resources throughout the lifecycle of the Partnership
- vii. Proposal of a plan for the kick-start of the Partnership's work based on the outcomes of the Ex-Ante Assessment and management of the new Partnership