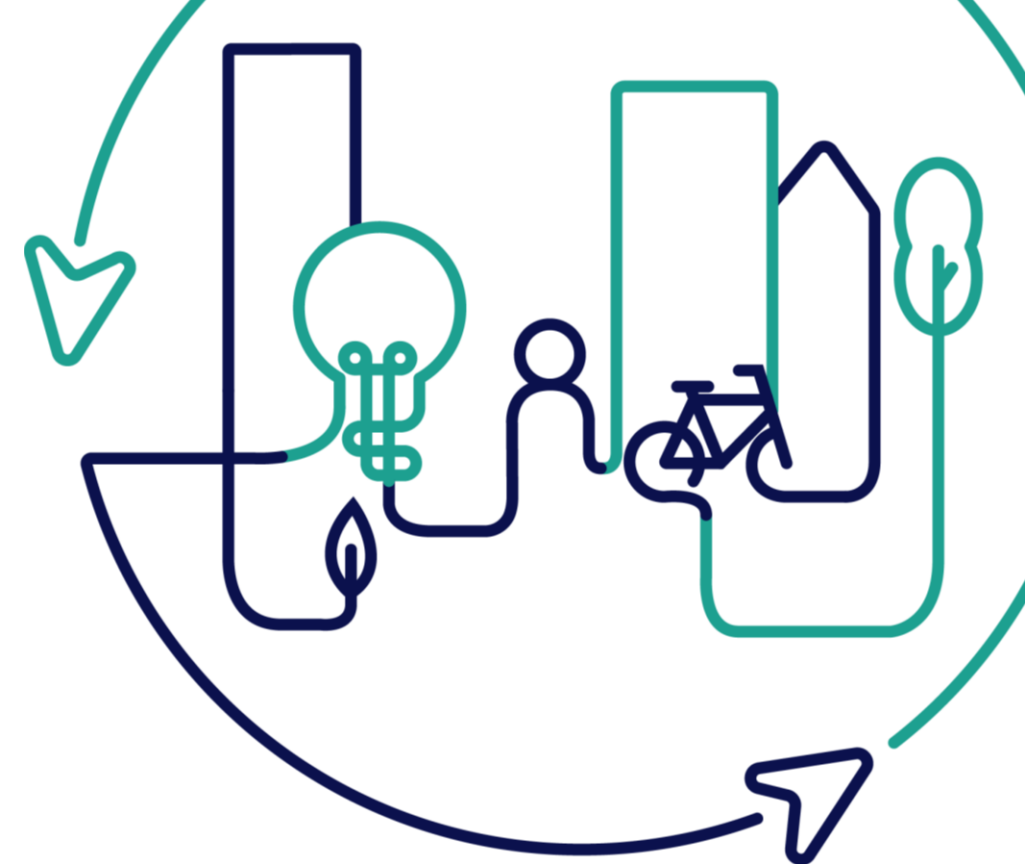


# EUROPEAN U R B A N INITIATIVE

**Jonas Scholze**

Head of Unit - Intergovernmental Cooperation



Co-funded by  
the European Union

A variety of **challenges** are common for the majority of urban authorities in Europe:

- ❖ **climate change** (extreme weather conditions, limited air quality, mobility patterns)
  - ❖ **loss of biodiversity** (provision of green spaces, land-use conflicts...)
  - ❖ **shortage of resources** (circular economy, materials, space, human capital ...)
  - ❖ **migration** (affordable housing, integration, education, equal chances...)
  - ❖ **demographic change** (shortage in skilled workforce, shrinking cities, care facilities for elderly.
  - ❖ **transformation of the economy** (empty inner cities, economy, supporting infrastructure...)
- *urban development is a never ending task*
- *urban authorities need the ability to adapt to new challenges (resilience)*

# What do urban authorities need to tackle global challenges!

## ➤ supporting framework conditions

- ✓ „urban friendly“ legal framework conditions
- ✓ possibilities for investments and funding
- ✓ qualified and skilled labour force
- ✓ possibility to actively shape the digital transformation
- ✓ steering possibility of urban development

## ➤ capacities to implement „good urban governance“

- ✓ urban development for the common good
- ✓ integrated approach
- ✓ participation and co-creation
- ✓ multi-level governance approach
- ✓ place-based approach

## Basic Key Facts

- endorsed on **01 December 2020** during Informal Ministerial Meeting under German EU-Presidency
- New Leipzig Charter is **Member State** driven
- **not legally binding** but agreed by Council Conclusions
- common understanding on urban development in Europe
- Transformation of Cities for a **Common Good**



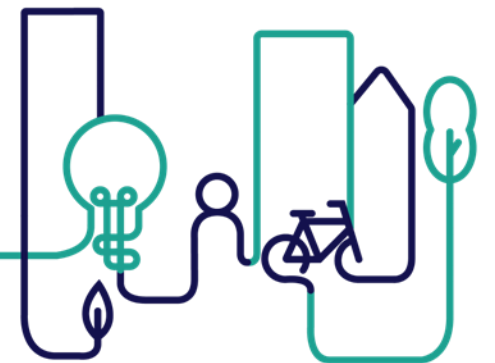
Image: Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR) within the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) / EINSATEAM, Berlin



**Urban Agenda  
for the EU**

# Basic Key Facts

- **Pact of Amsterdam** agreed in 2016 by informal Ministerial Meeting under Dutch EU-Presidency
- EU has **no** legal basis for urban development
  - Indirect impact on **sector regulations** (mobility, EPBD directive .... )
  - Requirements to **funding instruments** (EU-Cohesion Policy, New European Bauhaus ...)
- Avoid contradictory directives/regulation!
- UAEU: adjust **regulatory** - **financial** framing and **knowledge base** to improve urban development



## What is it?

- an **Informal** Intergovernmental Cooperation
- unique working method - **multi-stakeholders** & **multi-level cooperation**
- cities "at the core", Member states, The European Commission & other stakeholders (academia)

# 3 key Pillars of the UAEU



**Better Regulation**

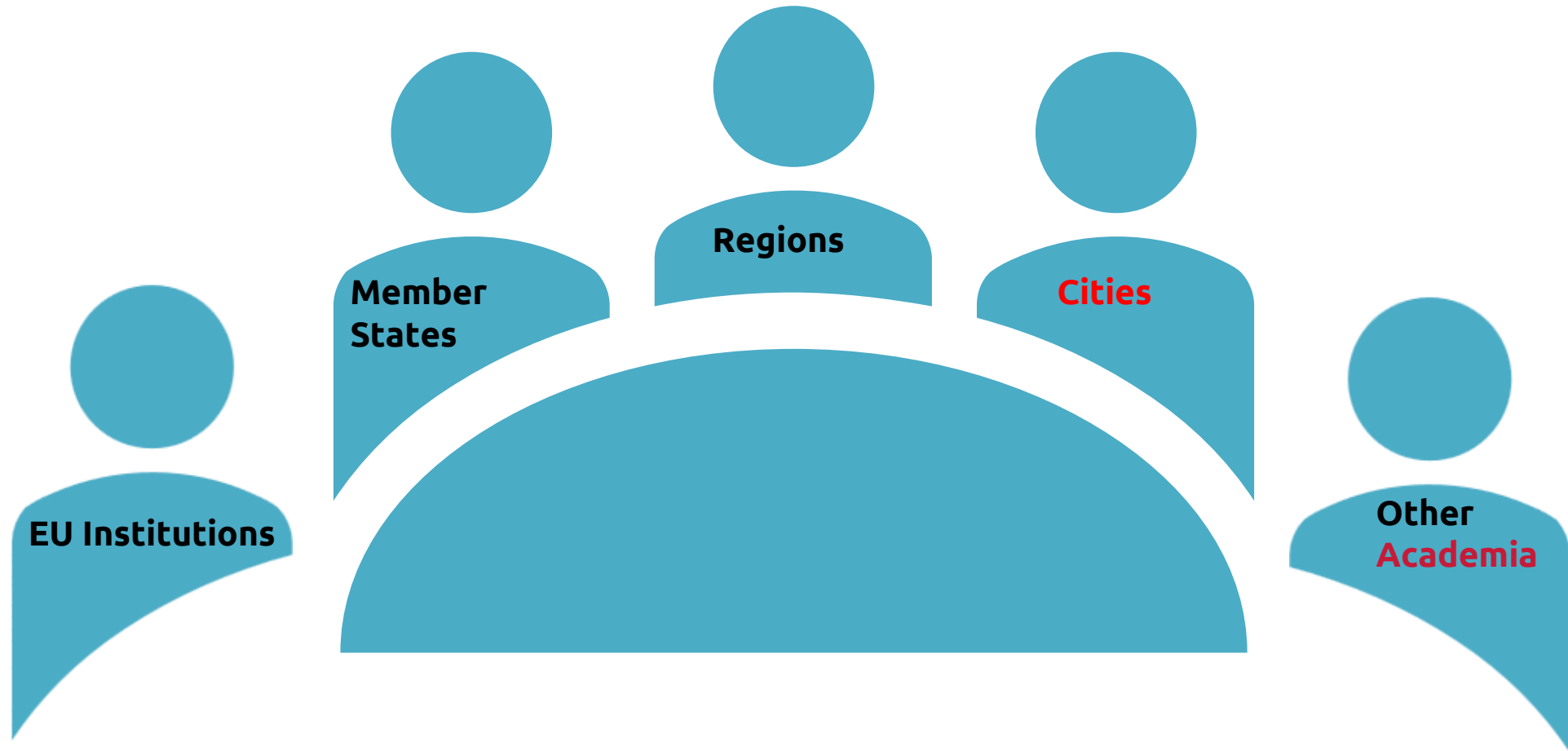


**Better Funding**



**Better Knowledge**

# Thematic Partnerships



# Status of current UAEU Thematic Partnerships

21 Thematic Partnerships in total

Launched  
before 2022



**Culture and  
Cultural Heritage**



**Inclusion of Migrants  
and Refugees**



**Public  
Procurement**

started in 2022



**Sustainable  
Tourism**



**Greening  
Cities**

started in 2023



**Cities of  
Equality**



**Food**

started in 2024



**Water  
Sensitive  
City**

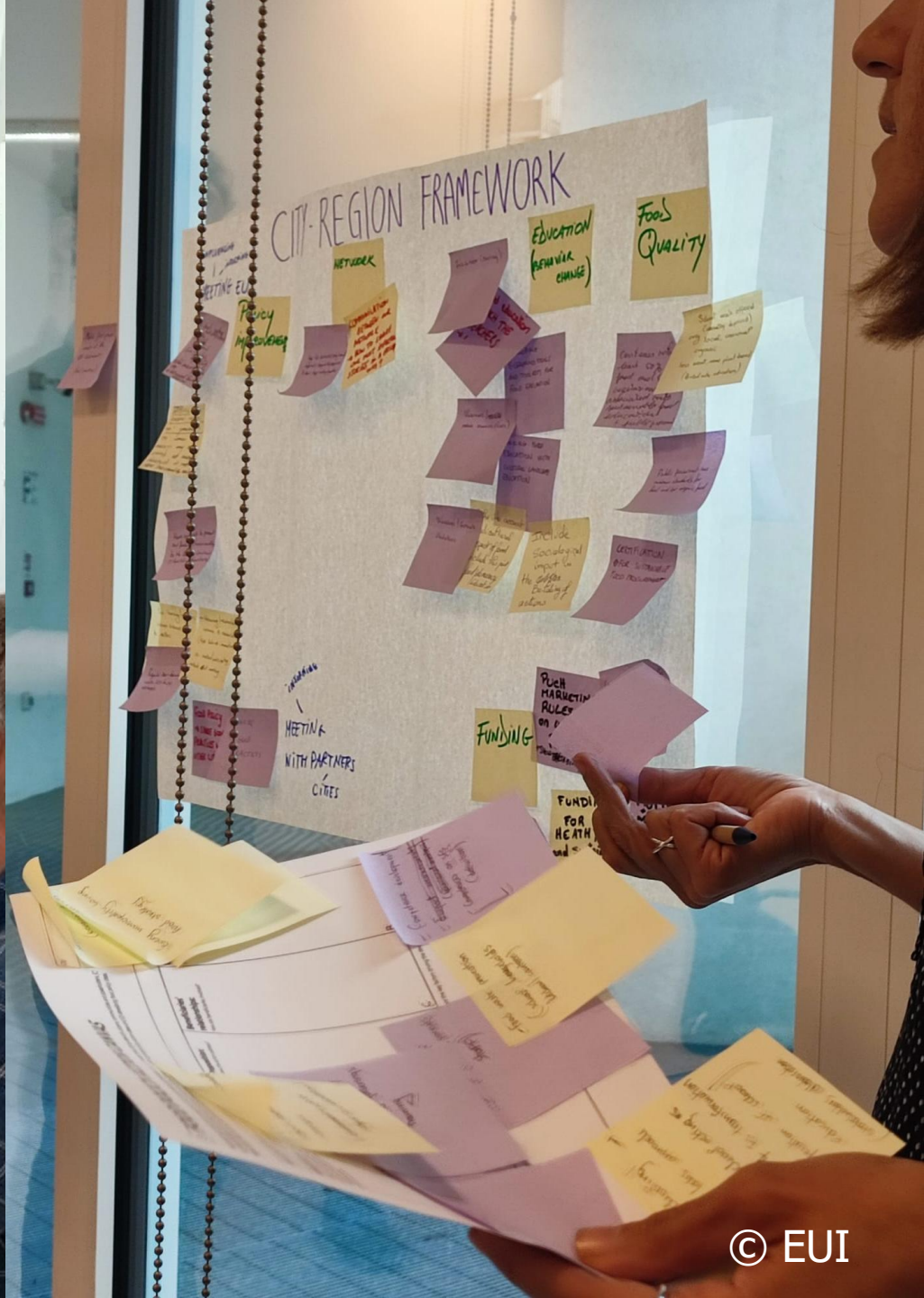


**Building  
Decarboni-  
sation**

Launched in  
2025



**Compact  
Cities**





EUROPEAN  
URBAN  
INITIATIVE



# Outlook for 2026

## 1. European Commission: « EU Agenda for Cities »

**Strengthening multilevel governance** and cooperation by better integrating cities' interests into EU policy making.

Ensuring alignment with **Urban Agenda for the EU**(UAEU) and building on outcomes from its multi-level governance Partnerships since 2016.

## 2. Celebrating 10 years Urban Agenda for the EU

17/18 November 2026 in Rotterdam / Amsterdam

**Thank you and please visit us at:**

[The Urban Agenda for the EU | UA EU](#)

