

Urban Agendas on discussion



Sciences Po Capstone Project

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON URBAN AGENDAS

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better urban future"

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P F V T

**WORLD
URBAN
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ELEVENTH SESSION



KATOWICE, POLAND | 26-30 JUNE 2022



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This deliverable is the synthesis of our collective project between the GETEC (Governing Ecological Transition in European Cities) master's degree of the Urban School of Sciences Po and the FNAU (Fédération Nationale des Agences d'Urbanisme). The aim of this project is to produce a critical and comparative reflection on Urban Agendas: to understand their functioning, their content, their governance and their application. We are using our academic profile to produce a report of analytical wonder. Although there are a multitude of Urban Agendas (UAs), here the comparison will mainly focus on the New Urban Agenda, the European Union Urban Agenda, and French urban policies in order to put UAs at different scales and contexts into perspective.

Urban agendas are multiplying and are an opportunity, as at the World Urban Forum, to present a vision of the contemporary urban, with its challenges and its innovations. However, UAs are often a little known tool, not always understood or used. This does not mean that they are without interest, far from it. Our aim is to help in the understanding of UA, notably through a comparative reading of the latter.

This deliverable is thus aimed at a variety of actors wishing to understand UAs and their functioning, in particular city actors, policymakers, urbanists, urban lawmakers, scholars etc.

We would like to thank all the supervisors of the Urban School of Sciences Po - Guillermo Martin and Cyriel Pelletier - for their support, the FNAU team - Adeline Fauré and Brigitte Bariol Mathais - who trusted us and gave us a great deal of intellectual freedom, and our tutor Mauricio Fontanetti Aguiar for his very instructive advice. Additionally we would like to thank all the people who gave us an interview for their time and inspiring insights on the matters of sustainable urban governance. This collective project has been a great opportunity to delve into the international urban agendas and achieve a critical view through a comparative analysis of the documents.

Agathe Petiot, Alice Duret, Gaëlle Peschoux and Rocio Calzado



Glossary of terms

AMI = Appel à manifestation d'intérêt (call for manifestations of interest)

AFINUA = Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda

ANCT = Agence Nationale de la Cohésion des Territoires (National Agency for Territorial Cohesion)

CEMR = Council of European Municipalities and Regions

CGDD = Commissariat Général au Développement Durable (General Commission for Sustainable Development)

CoR = Committee of the Regions

CRTE = Contrat de Relance de la Transition Écologique (Contract for the Recovery of the Ecological Transition)

DGALN = Direction Générale de l'Aménagement, du Logement et de la Nature (Directorate-General for Planning, Housing and Nature)

DSIL = Dotation de Soutien à l'Investissement Local (Local Investment Support Grant)

EU = European Union

ERDF = European Regional Development Fund

ET = Ecological Transition

FNAU = Fédération Nationale des Agences d'Urbanisme

FVD = France Ville Durable (France Sustainable City)

NUA = New Urban Agenda

RFSC = Referentiel Framework for Sustainable Cities

SD = Sustainable Development

SDGs = Sustainable Development Goals

TCSP = Transport Collectif en Site Propre (Public transport on exclusive right-of-way)

UA = Urban Agenda

UAEU = Urban Agenda for the European Union

UIA = Urban Innovative Actions

UN = United Nation

WUF = World Urban Forum



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WHAT IS AN URBAN AGENDA

Within our study about Urban Agendas, the very first conclusion that we probably extracted was noticing that there seems to be no consensus on the definition of what is understood as an “Urban Agenda”. For this term, however, there are several interpretations, and each urban actor seems to have a different vision of what this type of document is. Within our research we cross the multiple definitions of Urban Agenda, in order to identify common characteristics and therefore provide a generic definition of this document. As a part of our study we are also interested in finding out the nuances and differences between the different Urban Agendas.

In general terms, the urban agenda can be defined as an instrument for articulating urban public policies and promoting the development of cities (Casado, V., Huete, M. Á., Rodr, R. M., & Medina, M. G. 2018). It is a guideline document- not legally binding- for the actors involved. It can be established at different levels of government whether it is the New Urban Agenda by UN-HABITAT, the Urban Agenda for the European Union classified by the European Commission, the Spanish Urban Agenda developed by the Spanish government or even some cities starting to develop and implement urban programmes at local level.

The use of urban agendas is of growing interest for two main reasons. Firstly,

it is the first time that the same instrument is used by all levels of government to articulate urban public policies, so there is an intense process of alignment at different scales of the same public policy instrument.

Secondly, the Urban Agenda was presented as the instrument for implementing and developing the sustainable development objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda in the field of cities, as a territorial reality (Casado, V., Huete, M. Á., Rodr, R. M., & Medina, M. G. 2018). Indeed, cities are often better able to solve social and economic problems in their territory than a state, especially if the state is highly centralised (Colombo, C. M., & Groenleer, M. L. P. 2020). However, the city is usually legally dependent on higher levels of governance, and mainly on the state, although many states are increasingly granting powers to cities to make governance more bespoke. Indeed, even as influential cities emerge, the state and its accompanying statist constitutional vision is reluctant to cede governance power.

It is imperative that city leaders align their interests with those of the wider state, not out of respect for the national collective identity, but solely out of a subordinate



relationship to the sovereign state. Within the framework of the prevailing national constitutional models, they have little room to redefine and renegotiate their powers and competences. As a result, tensions emerge between the spatial hegemony of the state and the demographic, social and politico-economic rise of large cities (Hirschl, R., & Shachar, A. 2019).

Cities gain power playing a role at different levels whether they be regional, national, or international but they are very weak in terms of legal state. To counter that, they are using alternative governance mechanisms (common declaration, action plan, international conferences, urban agendas) and more and more city networks to promote themselves. This goes even further as there is a correlation between the two: these quasi-legal arrangements are made mainly by city-networks (Nguyen, T. M. P., Davidson, K., & Coenen, L. 2020). These are defined as associations of cities willing to share experiences, strategies, forge public-private partnerships, enhance their capabilities in different domains such as health, governance, democracy, infrastructure, and environmental policies. At the worldwide stage, networks permit

municipalities to impact the international discussion and struggles on diverse topics, to stimulate strategy understanding and power developing, and to advertise itself through commitment. Cities use networking as a way to overcome difficulties and raise the ambition of national and international sustainable governance. This shows leading by example.

City networks and urban agendas reframed the problem to carve out a role for cities which are allow than to scale up their efforts and play a role through declarations and the creation of new norms to influence the implementation of global efforts on climate change. Cities are becoming transnational law makers, that is why the “Urban Climate Law” term is more and more current (Addaney, M. 2019). This is visible through the augmentation of compliance tools, partnership, reflexivity, and norms diffusion. These rules include practices and ‘standards on the appropriate behaviour’, with a quality of ‘oughtness’, to help cities transitioning towards a more sustainable city.

Common features

- Written document
- Sets out a vision, a strategy, for the urban area and associated policies
- Sets objectives
- Proposes solutions, tools or instruments to achieve the objectives
- More than a simple document, destined to evolve over the long term

Differences

- Format: document may or not be formally called an Urban Agenda
- Content: topics addressed and their intensity
- Elaboration: level of participation and involvement of different actors
- Governance: competences framing the agenda, what impact and influence does it have?
- Implementation: instruments, use by the actors to whom it is addressed
- Evaluation and monitoring



HABITER LA FRANCE

FRENCH MINISTRY OF HOUSING

At the national level, the urban agenda does not necessarily exist. In France, there is no urban agenda, unlike in other European countries such as Spain. So in France, there is an urban strategy rather than an urban agenda.

There has been a real change in French policies with the Plan Ville Durable (2010) following the Grenelle de l'environnement (2007), which aimed to implement and define a certain number of actions that could accompany the transition to sustainable cities. The new roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow" (Habiter la France de demain) - an initiative launched in 2021 - is a new approach with a more holistic view of the issues: gives an ambitious vision of what an urban agenda should be in France. The main goal is to change the way we look at housing and make the sustainable city desirable. This is an update of this plan to support virtuous projects and promote new solutions in response to the challenges of the city and the territories. The roadmap supports the European and international Urban Agendas by respecting the planetary limits and rejecting the paradigm of "sustainable development".

Co-constructed by all stakeholders, the "Living in the France of tomorrow" approach brought together local elected officials, citizens, professionals and experts (urban planners, researchers, etc.). The idea is on the one hand to share observations and expectations in order to draw up solutions for the future and on the other hand to experiment with solutions and then deploy and replicate them, such as the existing eco-district system. **This is based on the manifesto drawn up by France Ville Durable (FVD) which defines the challenges to be met for a sustainable city: sobriety, resilience, inclusion and creativity.**

This is in line with the context of a new philosophy of action through the decentralisation laws via the ANCT. The State has redefined its action, by being at the service of the communities (partnerships) and by keeping national visions by associating the local level (the State supervises, helps via its regalian position). The logic has been reversed, starting from the local level to reach the national level.



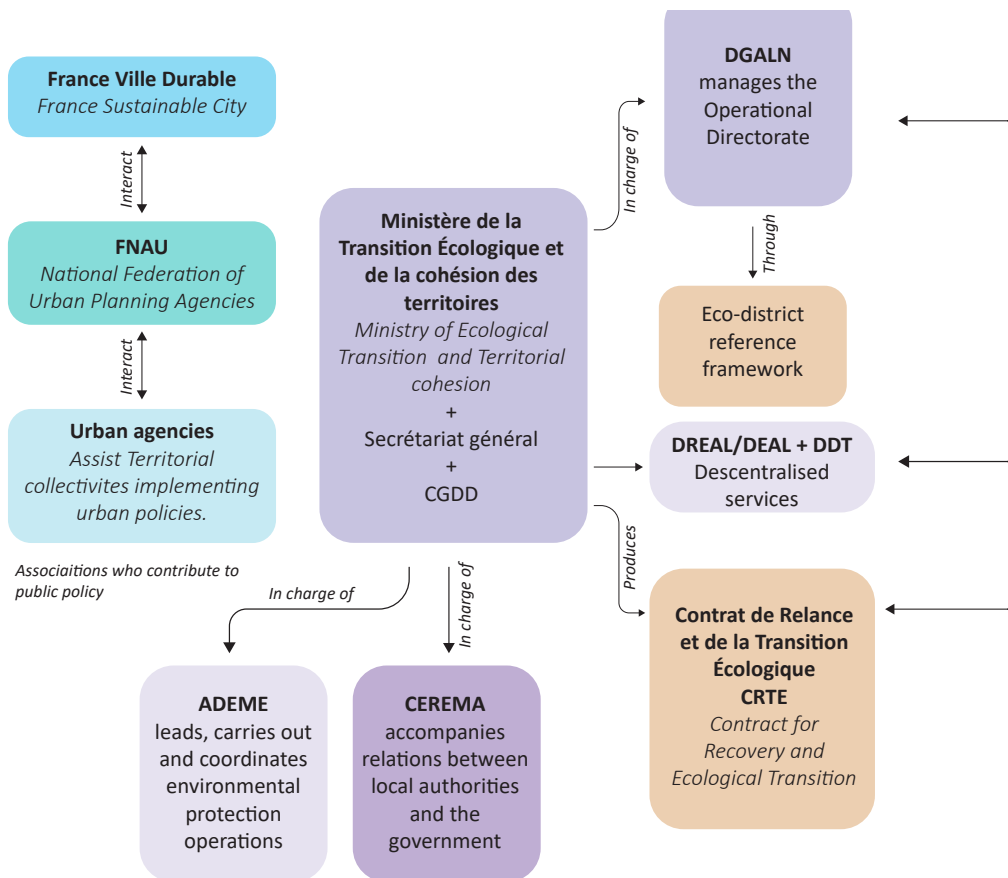
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In referenced to:

Feuille de route "Habiter la France de demain" 2021 Ministère chargé du logement

ORGANIZATION CHART

OF URBAN POLICIES AND SUSTAINABLE CITY IN FRANCE





Non-institutional actors who contribute to public policy

Citizen concertation for Living in the France of Tomorrow

CCC Citizens' Climate Convention

NGOs

Artists collectives

Citizen associations

Funding actors who contribute to public policy

Caisse des dépôts (CDC)

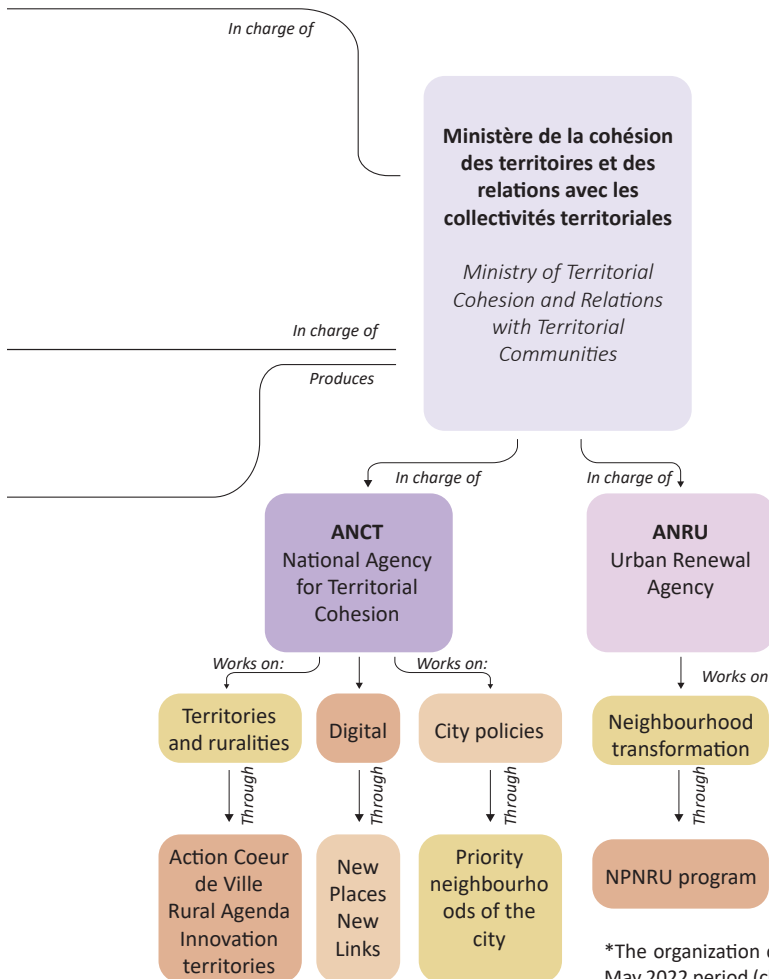
PIA4

ADEME

CEREMA

Action Logement

ANAH



*The organization chart reflects the 2020 and 20 May 2022 period (change to be expected following the change in government)



URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU

PACT OF AMSTERDAM, 2016

The Urban Agenda for the European Union (UAEU) was adopted in 2016 by the Amsterdam Pact at an Informal Meeting of EU Ministers responsible for Urban Matters. It has been revised several times since then, notably in November 2021 at the Ljubljana Agreement. The UAEU is aligned with the major orientations of the UN (Agenda 2030, NUA...), the European Union (Leipzig Charter, Territorial Agenda 2030...) and the EU Member States.

It is aimed at a wide range of urban actors, including urban technicians and experts (architects, planners, developers, etc.), policymakers and politicians from the European institutions, EU Member States and European cities.

The UAEU presents a vision of urban based on an increased involvement of urban and local authorities to enable

better regulation, better funding and better knowledge in the EU.

Thus, this agenda promotes a balanced, sustainable and integrated approach towards the urban environment and its challenges. To this end, a list of priority themes guiding the objectives and actions of the UAEU has been defined, which are reviewed regularly.

The main operational instrument of the UAEU is the Thematic Partnerships, a new form of informal and multi-level cooperation allowing different key actors in the European urban field (EU institutions, Member States, European cities, urban experts) to work together on the UAEU's priority themes. At the end of several years of partnership work on a theme identified as a priority, these thematic partnerships produce action plans intended for key urban actors (institutions, politicians, etc.).



Figure produced by the authors

In referenced to:

Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters, Pact of Amsterdam (2016), Urban Agenda for the EU

Eva Purkarthofer (2019) Investigating the partnership approach in the EU Urban Agenda from the perspective of soft planning, European Planning Studies



NEW URBAN AGENDA

UN HABITAT, 2016

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) was adopted in 2016 during the Habitat III Conference in Quito. Since then, it has been regularly reviewed and discussed at the occasion of World Urban Forums. The NUA is aligned with the major orientations of the UN (Agenda 2030, Sendai Framework...). It is aimed at a wide range of urban actors, including urban technicians and experts (architects, planners, developers, etc.), policymakers and politicians from states and cities all over the world.

The NUA presents a vision of urban based on a socially, economically, spatially and sustainable urban environment. Thus, it contributes to promote Agenda 2030 SDG 11 “make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. To this end, the NUA establishes some

goals and principles around social, economic, environmental and spatial sustainability, and illustrative actions and examples to implement them. The NUA then proposes means of implementation comprising intervention mechanisms, hard measures for infrastructure and services, soft measure and technology and innovation. Thus, **the NUA can be conceived as a toolbox in which the different actors of the city can find ways to implement a common vision of the urban through different instruments** (regulation, education, innovation...). Even if the NUA is not legally binding, states have the possibility to voluntarily evaluate and report on their progress in the implementation of this urban agenda.

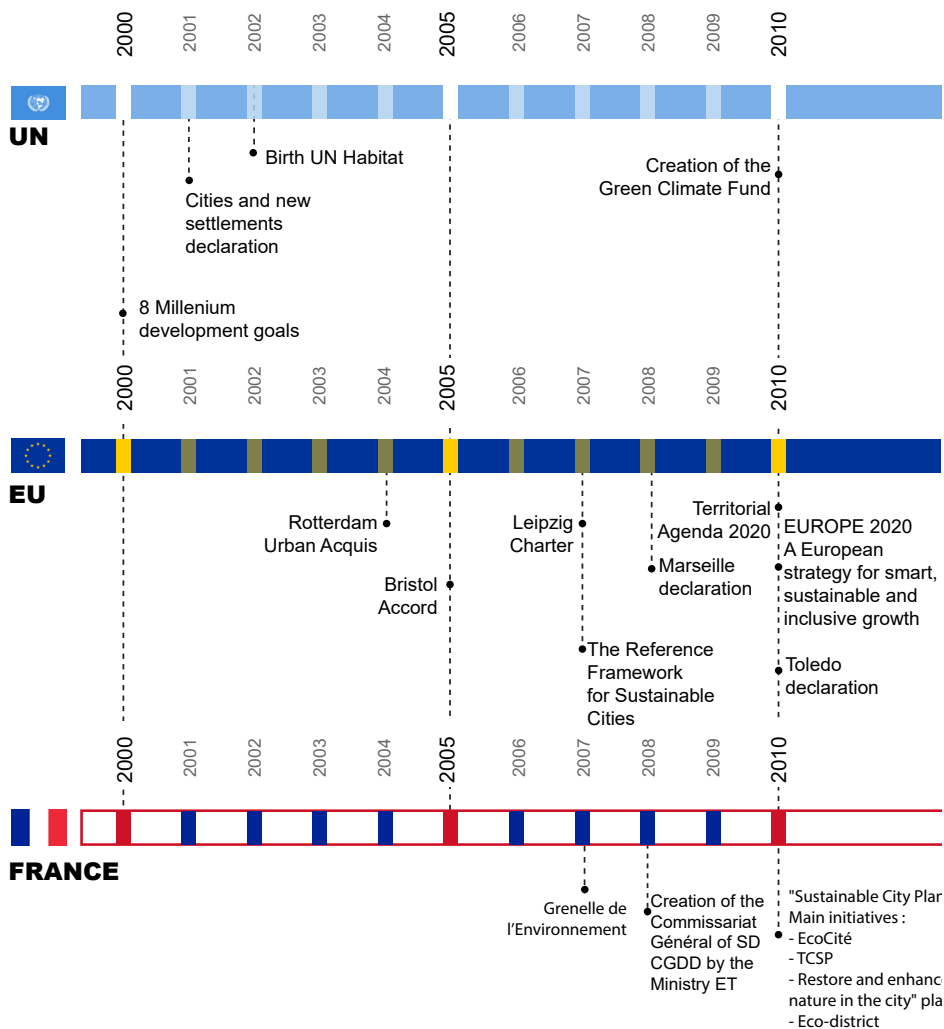


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Casado, V., Huete, M. Á., Rodr, R. M., & Medina, M. G. (2018). La influencia de la iniciativa URBANA 2007-2013 en el desarrollo de la capacidad institucional de la administración municipal. *Gestión y Análisis de Políticas Públicas*

CHRONOGRAM OF DIFFERENT URBAN AGENDAS



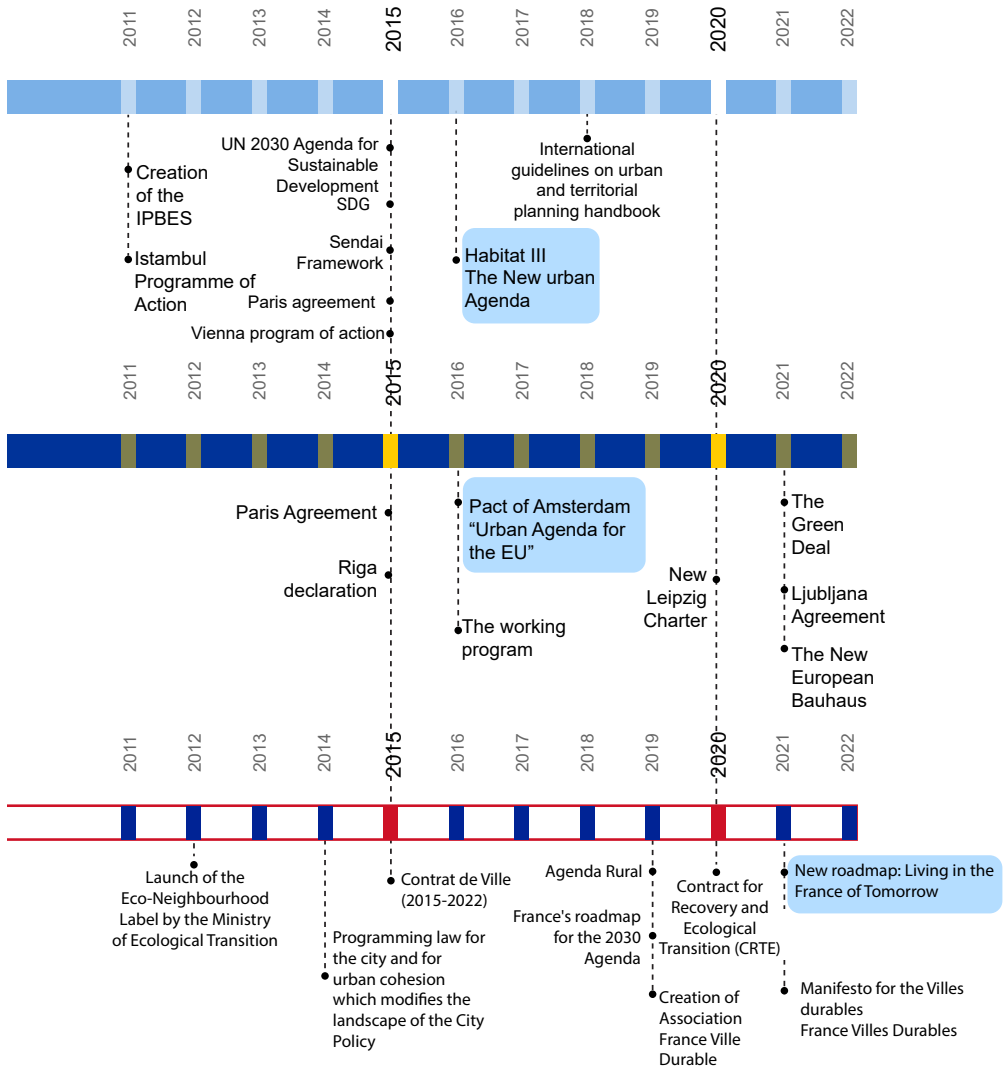


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THE THEMES OF URBAN AGENDAS

We identified 18 main themes that allowed us to make a comparative analysis of the contents and orientations of the different texts as well as their consideration in our field studies. The choice of our themes was the synthesis of a reflection on those which are most apparent in the textual elements and the different themes addressed by the French Partnership for Cities and Territories; and it is thus a question of bringing out all the important themes linked to urban issues, themes which have evolved and continue to evolve over time according to interests, according to the taking into account of climate change and the question of including gender issues. In terms of content, the texts are very much focused on the classic themes of the sustainable development triptych - the limitations of which are widely underlined today: economic development, social welfare, environmental protection. Overall, the urban agendas analysed

all aim to integrate several areas of public policy and territorial governance, including in different fields such as social welfare, economic development and the environment. However, we found differences both in the definition of these areas and in the way they are integrated. Also, as all agendas seek to modulate their content according to the scale, characteristics of the territory where they are implemented. In the case of the NUA, there is a clear orientation towards world peace, equity and inclusion, as well as the eradication of poverty and the management of informality as overarching elements. The European Urban Agenda, on the other hand, is trying to adapt to the European context and has evolved to take into account certain urban issues such as the creative city and the preservation of biodiversity with the Lubiana review in 2021.



Food systems



Citizenship



Informal city



Affordable housing



Mobility



Digital



Resiliency



Health



Essential services



Creative city



Tourism



Climate change



Energy



Biodiversity



Cross border
cooperation



Social inclusion



Gender



Economic
development



METHODOLOGY OF ANALYSIS

This study is framed within a collaboration between students from the Master of Governance and ecological transition from the Urban School of Sciences Po Paris and the FNAU (French network of urban planning agencies). The study envisions a comparative analysis of Urban Agendas from different levels that allows for an understanding of the difference between the documents, but also the synergies and the common points among them. For this study three documents are selected for further analysis: the NUA, the UAEU and “Habiter la France de demain”. The NUA is the Urban Agenda of the UN, the UAEU is the Urban Agenda of the EU, and “Habiter la France” is a guiding document produced by the French Ministry of Housing. This document can be considered as the closest attempt to develop a guiding urban strategy document, an Urban Agenda, by the French State.

For the analysis and comparison of these three documents, our methodology is divided in three analysis tasks that allow us to properly study the subject. The analysis and comparison of the content of the three different documents, the analysis and comparison of the formal structure of the documents and a series of coordinated interviews with multiple actors. Finally, we develop an on-site study of specific initiatives. This site study takes place at the last part of our study. The different initiatives are chosen on purpose of the previously identified gaps of the different urban agendas. This part of the study is key for the development of the general research as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the practical realm of these documents. The different analysis tasks together with the conclusions from each site visit are combined and contrasted in order to evaluate the final remarks of our research presented in this document.

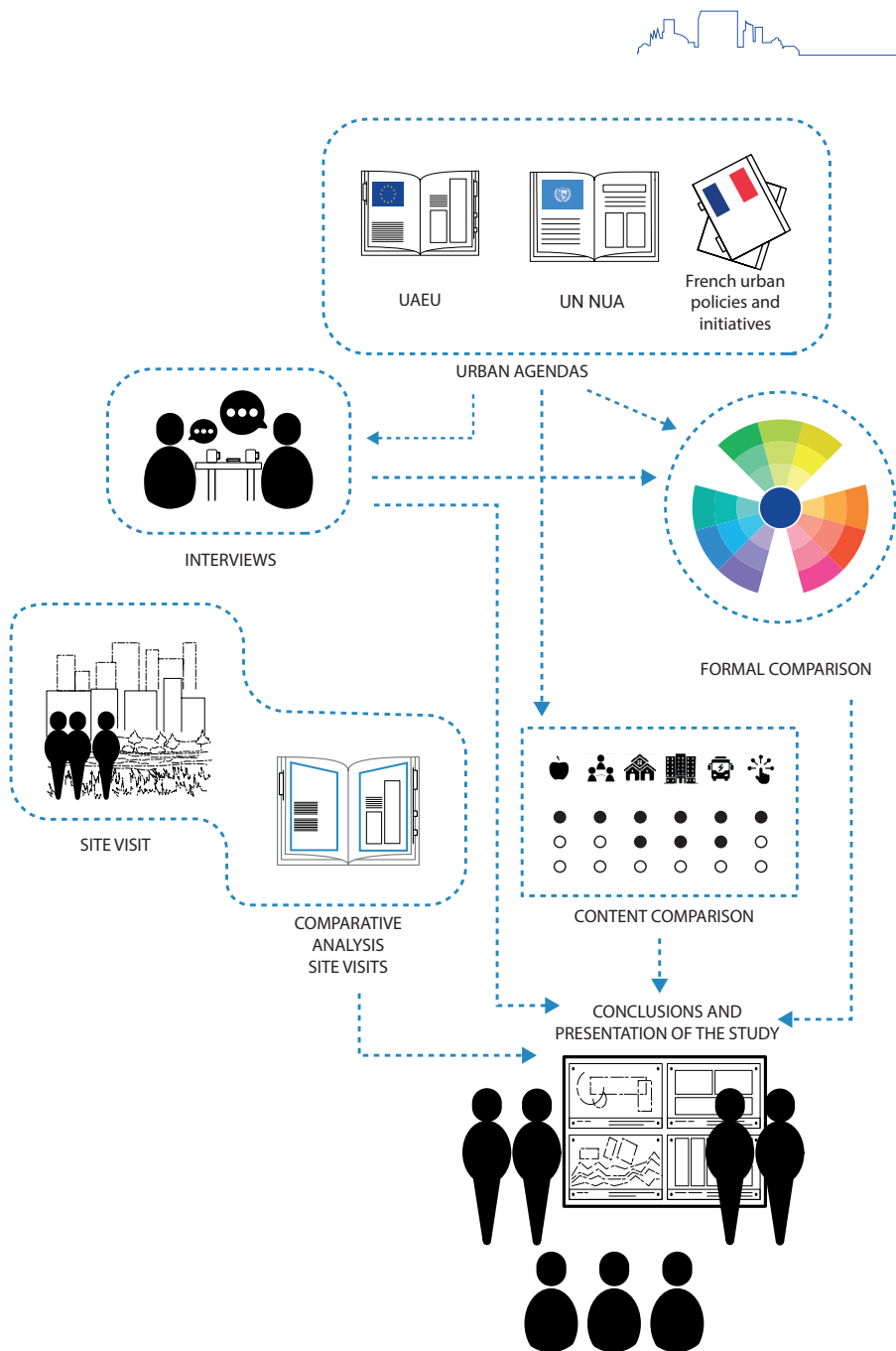
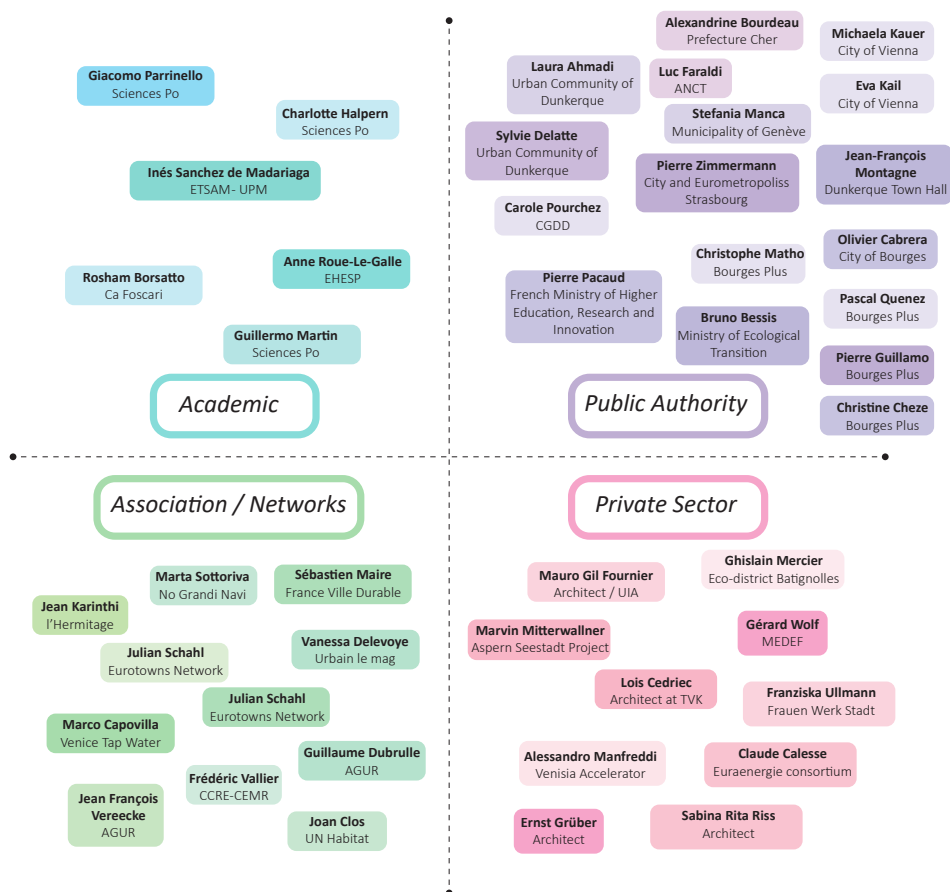


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INTERVIEWS



*Interviews taken for the study, divided into the four areas of influence.
Figure produced by the authors*



During the first stage of the study, which consisted of analyzing and comparing the content of textual urban agendas, we had numerous interviews with all types of actors - French, European and International - which enabled us to understand the functioning and synergy of urban politics - in complement to the scientific articles read on the subject. You can also find on the graph on the left, the interviews conducted during our field studies during the second phase of the project. To make it clearer, we have structured our different interviews in four sections: the academic actors allowed us to have a more global, critical and objective vision of the issues around the agendas. Then, the interviews conducted with actors from public authorities enabled us-and all the more so in France-to understand the functioning and the obstacles encountered in the implementation of urban policies as well as in the synergy and consideration of European and international texts. It has also been necessary to question associative actors, both on their attempts to define a common vision with the public authorities and private actors

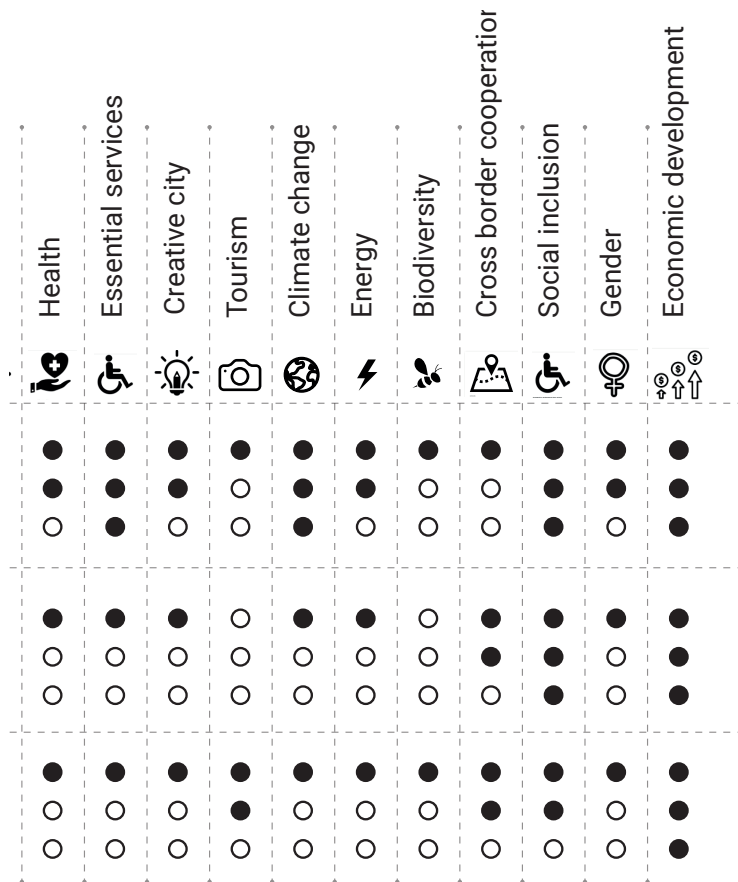
and on their more grassroots and militant approach for some, carried by civil society actors. We also include in this section the different networks of collaboration between cities that we were able to interview, insofar as these networks are gaining in importance at the European level and allow cities to share common values and objectives, to assert themselves and to experiment with alternative tools and mechanisms of governance. Finally, it has also been useful to interview actors from the private sector-both prime contractors and consortia-who are attempting to operate a form of multi-stakeholder cooperation at the local level. The diversity but complementarity of the different types of actors interviewed allowed us to gather different divergent points of view-sometimes even in total opposition-and to make our own opinion based on it.

Thus, we would like to thank all these people for their participation and our enriching exchanges, without which this research work would not have been possible as semi-driven interviews were a central part of our methodology and our conclusions are partly based on these.



As part of our comparative analysis among Urban Agendas, we develop a comparison on the content of each agenda, based on the presence and the treatment of the main key themes present in these documents. The objective of this comparison is to assess whether there are themes that are more present in some Agendas than others, for driving further conclusions after this. For the

For weighting the presence of a theme, we follow a methodology where the theme is decomposed in relatable nouns, and the number of times each of these nouns appear



in the document is registered in a data set. Additionally, we identify the position of each of these nouns within the original texts. Considering whether they are in the titles, or in the bodies of the text. All this information is compared and weighted up to proceed to a comparison of the importance of each theme for each text.

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OBJECTIVES

The New Urban Agenda is an ambitious programme to make cities and human settlements more inclusive. The EU Urban Agenda is an initiative launched by the European Commission, Member States and cities to address the challenges of urban development. The new roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow" is the synthesis of an inclusive and realistic reflection on urban planning, which gives concrete examples of successes and draws a habitat of tomorrow that is conducive to the challenges of the ecological transition and desirable for the French.

The New Urban Agenda sets out standards and principles for the planning, construction, development and management of urban areas. However, this agenda does not set specific binding targets, but rather is a shared vision that sets standards for transforming urban areas into safer, more resilient and sustainable places.

The Commission, EU bodies, national governments, local authorities and stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations work together to develop action plans to achieve 3 objectives:

- Better regulation: To improve regulation to better take into account the needs of cities in European policies and adopt better laws.
- Better knowledge: Promote exchanges of data, studies and good practices between urban authorities, Member States and the European Commission.
- Better funding: Facilitate the access of cities to European funds and more generally to improve funding programmes.

The new roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow" is structured around four political challenges: Urban Sobriety, Resilience, Inclusion and Production.

These three documents all aim to improve the urban environment for all, but the format and content of the objectives vary greatly. The NUA - broader to serve as a reference for all - contains regulation, funding and knowledge exchange guidelines, principles, illustrative actions and means of implementation. The AUEU - more operational - contains EU vision on urban development and operational tools which is also illustrated during the Biennial cities forum by the European commission. The roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow" - more local - summarises the restitution and synthesis of the citizen's consultation and 4 areas of work through recommendations and 10 key ideas for the future of living in France.

The NUA is intended for all urban actors worldwide and has a huge reaching power while the UAEU addresses mainly policymakers and politicians for the integration of UAEU ideas into city master plans and "Living in the France of tomorrow" addresses politicians and operators. For the NUA and "Living in the France of tomorrow", there is no obligation but the first urges voluntary monitoring and reporting by country while the last is more an advice card.

"Living in the France of Tomorrow" - through its politically ambitious vision - is like a basis for what a French urban agenda could look like. This document, similar to the NUA, aims to influence private and public institutions as well as citizens. The EU intends to influence EU lawmakers, national and local decision makers and EU citizens - through integration of some partnership, recommendation into EU guidelines and laws - while the NUA intends to influence urban planners, urban agencies and national planning law.

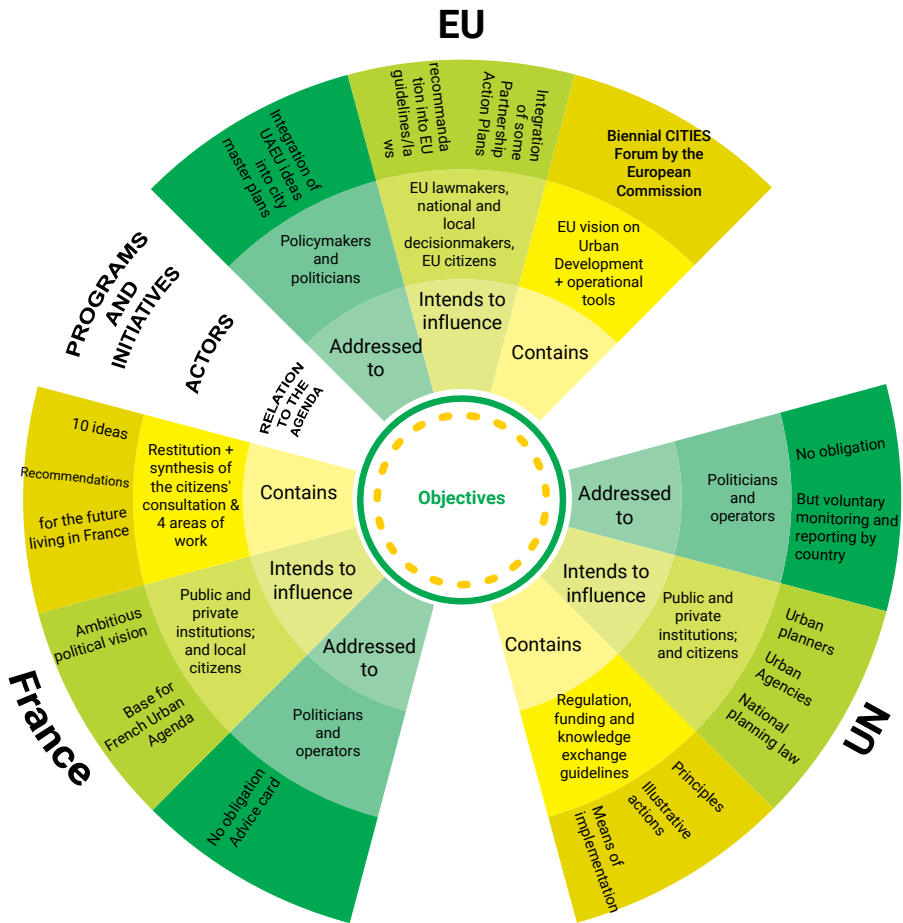


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In referenced to:

Feuille de route "Habiter la France de demain" 2021 Ministère chargé du logement

Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters, Pact of Amsterdam (2016),

Urban Agenda for the EU

The New Urban Agenda - Habitat III



GOVERNANCE

First, this analysis demonstrates the importance of the existence of Urban Agendas in the creation of coherent, clear, and comprehensible urban policies: both the UN Agenda and the EU Agenda are coordinated by a dedicated body and make it possible to formulate common and coherent issues, objectives and solutions. In other cases, such as France, there is no Urban Agenda of its own, but a set of urban programmes and policies: this may allow for more flexibility and reactivity, but risks creating a less clear and coherent whole.

Another essential aspect of the Urban Agendas, although less visible, is their design phase: the interviews and analyses carried out demonstrate the importance of inclusive and participatory governance in the elaboration of UAs to best reflect the needs and concerns of the different actors in the city. Thus, the preparatory processes of the NUA and UAEU involve multiple surveys, workshops and meetings with a diversity of actors: not only the supranational institutions in charge of these UAs (UN Habitat, DG meeting Urban Matters...) but also urban and regional authorities, member states, city networks, research bodies, financial bodies... However, some critics expressed during the interviews regret the lack of inclusion of certain groups in these processes, such as groups representing certain minorities in the urban space or small and medium-sized cities that have difficulty getting involved because of the financial and personal resources involved. Nevertheless, some progress has been made in this direction, for example Ljubljana Agreement which is revising the UAEU recognises the need to take better account of all types of cities and territories, including the smallest. It is also regrettable that there is a certain lack of direct involvement of citizens, who are the ones who expe-

rience the city, in the consultation processes of international agendas, whereas more effort is made in this direction at the level of national urban policies (particularly in France): there are obviously questions of scale facilitating national citizen consultation, but it would be interesting to better integrate this level at international level.

Finally, the issue of financing remains a point of debate. Indeed, the financing of international AUs such as the NUA and UAEU and their implementation are limited because the elaboration of the agenda and the financing of the actions are done by different levels. While these AUs are elaborated at the international level and are not legally binding, it is up to national and urban actors to implement the actions, largely with their own source of financing because the NUA and UAEU do not provide additional funds specifically dedicated to their implementation. This may hamper their implementation, as it depends on the willingness of other actors to channel funds for this. However, there are some programmes attached to the UAs that can help fund certain actions: for example, the UAEU has (limited) funding for the operation of thematic partnerships and various programmes in line with its objectives such as Horizon Europe or 100 climate neutral cities mission. In comparison, national urban policies such as in France are developed, implemented and partly funded by actors at the same level - the national state level - allowing for a more fluid and certain implementation of the objectives. However, even within a rather centralized system, implementation phase can be hampered by a lack of earmarking of funding to lower levels of government, or simply lack of funding. Thus, how and to what extent to fund UA remains a source of debate that should be further explored

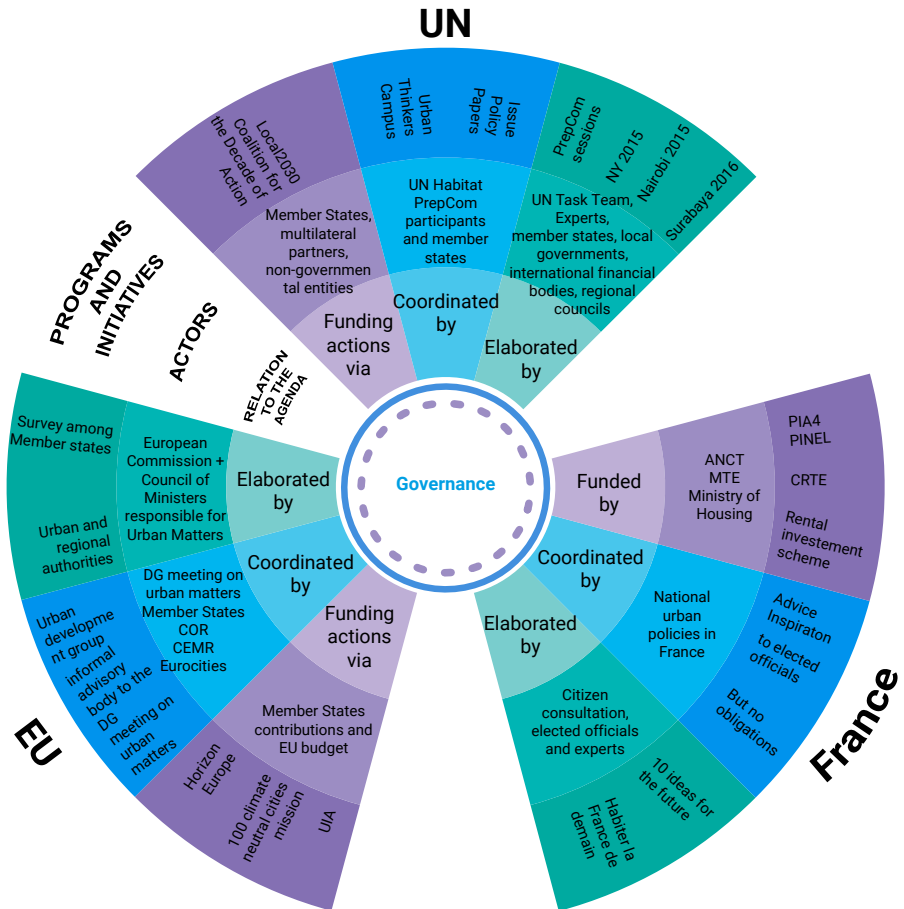


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Urban Agenda for the EU

The New Urban Agenda - Habitat III



ACTIONS

The NUA is in line with the Sendai Framework, the Paris agreement (2015) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals through the UN Economic Social Council. The AUEU is in synergy with the Leipzig Charter, Territorial Agenda, UN 2030 sustainable development and New Bauhaus supported by UN and national urban policies of EU members. The French urban strategy echoes New Urban Agenda and European Urban Agenda even if it does not refer to it directly.

Actions advocated by the NUA relies on the UN former initiatives, especially UN Habitat, have been formalised during the Vancouver declaration (1976), the Istanbul declaration, and the Addis Ababa declaration (2015). The UAUEU relies on the European Commission initiative through DG Regio and DG meeting for Urban Matters. The new roadmap "Living in the France of Tomorrow" was created at the instigation of the Ministry of Housing and combines the main principles set out in the France Villes Durables manifesto with the new criteria for quality of life and housing highlighted during the citizens' consultations.

As far as the NUA is concerned, actions are being tested by implementation bodies applying The Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (AFINUA). However, the NUA seems to be less conducive to the implementation of operational actions. De plus, l'UN a une approche plus top-down alors que la France et l'UE en comparaison sont plus bottom-up. The UAUEU is more pragmatic through

thematic partnerships including for instance the circular economy, affordable housing, mobility, and nature-based solutions.

Each EU partnership involves, on a voluntary and equal basis, cities, Member States, the Commission and stakeholders such as NGOs. Together they work on the development and implementation of concrete actions through action plans and an action monitoring tables. Partnerships are an innovative instrument with a new working method: the aim is to ensure the implementation of European policies and to create a link between actors at different spatial scales, from the European to the local level.

They ensure vertical coordination between different actors on priority themes, while recognising horizontal coordination with other policies on cross-cutting issues. Previously,

cities could only participate indirectly in European policy making through networks such as Eurocities or CEMR. However, there is a lack of capitalization of the lessons learnt through the program.

On a national scale in France, there are numerous programmes and initiatives supported by the government expertise, such as eco-districts, the Action Cœur de Ville programme, Tiers Lieux and Ateliers du Territoire. Moreover, France - addresses the specific realities of the territory - is trying to push for rural programmes, which is less the case for the UN and the EU.

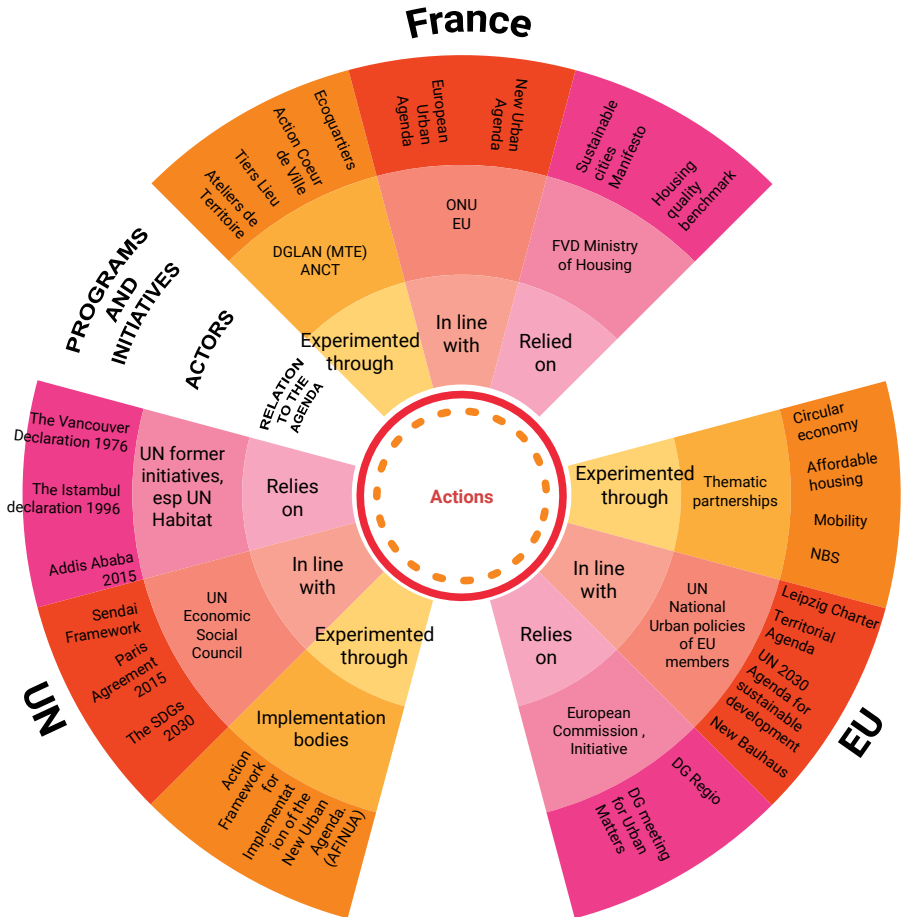


Figure produced by the authors

In referenced to:

Feuille de route "Habiter la France de demain" 2021 Ministère chargé du logement

Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters, Pact of Amsterdam (2016),

Urban Agenda for the EU

The New Urban Agenda - Habitat III



SUCCESS AND LIMITS

We conducted numerous interviews with actors who contributed to the drafting of the Urban Agendas, but also with the actors whom agendas are addressed to. These exchanges enabled us to draw up an overview of the main achievements of each Agenda, but also of the criticisms made of them. We have divided the analysis of these successes and limitations of the UAs into three categories: firstly, in terms of the impact of the UAs on the regulation and orientation of urban policies, then in terms of funding and finally in terms of the dissemination of knowledge.

In terms of regulation, the main success of UAs / national urban policies is to make urban issues more visible and to integrate them more into other policies. For example, in the case of the EU, the UAEU allows the urban dimension and its problems to be better taken into account within the new European regulations. Moreover, it is underlined that the multi-actor and multi-level governance of the UAs is beneficial, because it allows the multiple actors of the urban sector to be linked to reach a common vision. However, most actors regret the lack of force of international UAs, which are not legally binding: their application depends solely on the good will and governance of the actors to whom they are addressed, and are therefore sometimes not implemented. At the level of French national urban policies, top-down implementation is more effective, but often fails to link national policies with international agendas.

In terms of funding, the UAs help guide access to certain funds and initiatives to support urban development. For example, the Action Coeur de Ville

programme in France facilitates access to certain national funds for the selected cities, helping to finance the revitalisation of city centres. In addition, access to supra-national funding (e.g. European Programs as Urban Innovative Actions, 100 Climate-neutral and smart cities Mission) empower local authorities and legitimize their initiatives in sometimes conflicting political contexts. However, many actors regret the lack of proper funding associated with UAs, which limits their effectiveness and the participation of certain actors - particularly small and medium-sized cities - and the complexity of procedure to access funds. Similarly, for national urban policies, although access to funds follows a shorter chain, they are sometimes insufficient and therefore not very effective.


In terms of knowledge dissemination, the AUs make it possible to bring together many urban actors and experts, contributing to building a global and diversified urban expertise. Thus, the AUs allow for the exchange of knowledge and practice, particularly on the occasion of the WUF. These exchanges empower cities and urban authorities and make them lands of innovation, especially in sustainable urban development. This is facilitated by an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-level governance, which guarantees a diversity of skills and points of view on the urban to jointly build a vision of the city. However, some actors regret the lack of capitalisation by some institutions on the achievements of the Agendas and associated programmes, which do not sufficiently value the successes. Moreover, some actors regret the lack of inclusion of certain actors such as small cities, or of certain themes that are still too little studied in the AUs.



Success and Limits of the French Urban Strategy on Sustainable cities



| | Success | Limits |
|------------|---|--|
| Regulation | <p>Multi-stakeholder approach</p> <p>Multi-level governance</p> <p>Cooperation between territories</p> <p>New posture of the State in support of the local level</p> <p>French model very centralized and complex but it permits to be efficient and effective with a strong structuration of the planification tools (e.g. eco-district)</p> | <p>Reinforce the mediating role between the French central administration of the Minister for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, the European bodies and the EAU.</p> <p>Treat European urban issues as a priority: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and CGDD are trying to make the link.</p> |
| Funding | <p>National funding at the local level makes it possible to give political impetus (e.g. the Innovation Territories programme was a major accelerator for the industrial transition in Dunkirk) and helps structure projects or even restructure local governance.</p> | <p>The PIA4 targets one third of the investments in favor of the ecological transition but more than half mobilized for digital or "economic recovery".</p> <p>Raise public funding and make it more suitable</p> |
| Knowledge | <p>France Ville Durable is a key tool for mediating between economic development interests and the construction of the sustainable city</p> <p>RFSC- online tool offers different frameworks to support the vision of integrated, sustainable urban development</p> | <p>Reinforce knowledge in the communities that have more and more competences with decentralization</p> <p>Reinforce cities' capacities in the context of "spatial statism" at the national level (not only in France)</p> |

Success and Limits of the UAEU

| |  | |
|------------|---|--|
| | Success | Limits |
| Regulation | <p>Increases the visibility of urban issues at the European level</p> <p>Better involvement of Urban Authorities in the European decision making process</p> | <p>Increase potential for impact (respect for subsidiarity and division of competences)</p> <p>Reinforce the understanding of initiatives and programmes</p> <p>Regulations can address more the problems of small and medium-sized towns</p> |
| Funding | <p>EU funding gives legitimacy to local urban projects</p> <p>EU funding empowers local urban action programmes directly or indirectly linked to the EUA (UIA, Horizon...) promote innovation and political impetus for the transformation of cities (e.g. Dunkirk)</p> | <p>Reducing the complexity of procedures</p> <p>Increase EUA funding, especially to successful implementation partnerships</p> <p>Procedure can be more adapted for small and medium-sized cities, which are either not eligible or do not have the resources to respond to the AMI.</p> |
| Knowledge | <p>The WUA enables a fruitful exchange of knowledge between different actors and levels</p> <p>Enables the expertise and issues of cities to be highlighted within European policies, strengthening synergies between different levels of governance</p> | <p>More actors can be aware of the Urban Agenda</p> <p>The European Union can use more of the results of European projects and knowledge</p> <p>Some themes can be more highlighted: women in the city, cross-border and inter-territoriality</p> |

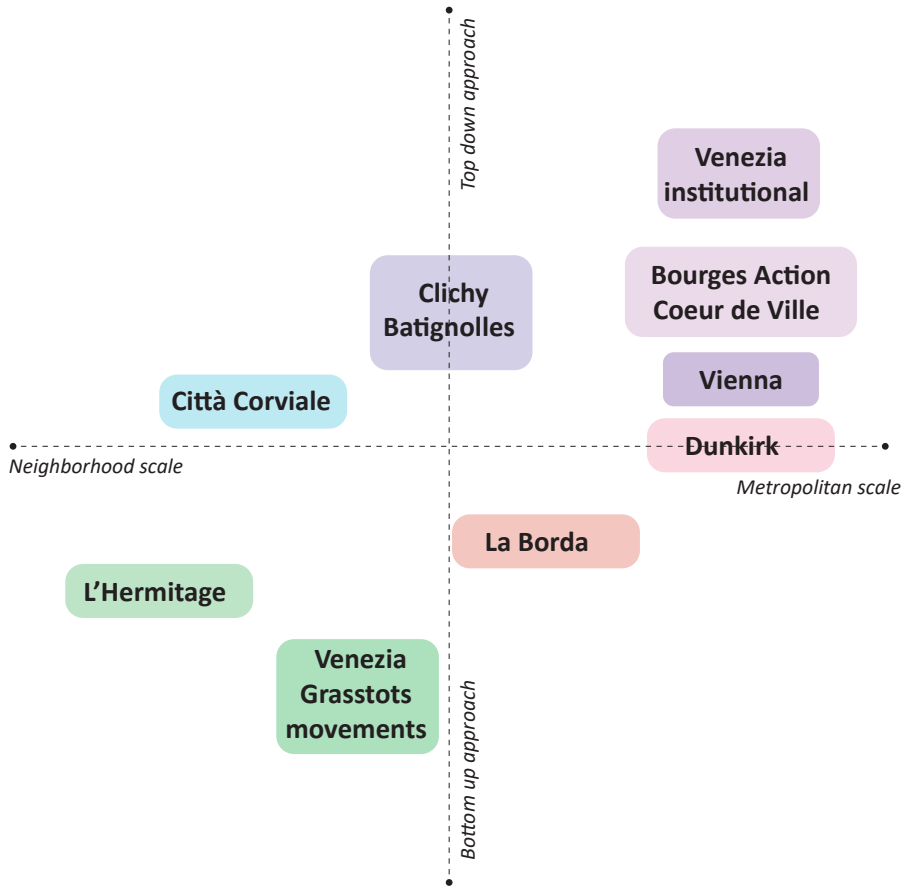


Success and Limits of the UN NUA

| |  | Success and Limits of the UN NUA | |
|------------|---|--|---|
| | | Success | Limits |
| Regulation |  | <p>Recognition of urban issues on a global scale, particularly with regard to the SDGs</p> <p>Highlighting good practices in terms of urban regulation</p> <p>Consideration of the diversity of urban environments through a global and inclusive vision</p> | <p>No legal constraint, only soft law: implementation depends on countries' will</p> <p>Only about 20 progress reports on the implementation of the WUA in the states: weak consideration and implementation</p> <p>Global agenda addressing diverse urban contexts: improve the measures to make them appropriate to the local context</p> |
| | | <p>NUA helps to create a project dynamic and potentially to unlock funding</p> <p>NUA linked to other UN objectives, can be associated with the funding of other programmes (to check)</p> | <p>Increase funding associated with the NUA; role of each state nationally</p> <p>Improve means of some organisations or cities to participate in the WUF</p> <p>The SDGs can be more focused on non-economic issues.</p> |
| | | <p>Allows for the development of expertise in the urban field</p> <p>Important sharing of knowledge on what is being done worldwide with WUF</p> <p>Governance attempts to include a variety of actors in the process of writing and monitoring the NUA</p> | <p>Continue to explore new issues</p> <p>Reinforce the possibility for cities and urban actors to participate</p> <p>Make more easy for small and medium-sized cities to participate</p> |



SITE VISITS



*Sites visited for the study, clasified in a compas with two binomes of scale and approach.
Figure produced by the authors*



Our comparative analysis of the texts was reinforced by our eight field studies, which we conducted between February and May 2022. We tried to bring together a wide range of site studies, in order to cover urban issues that were, for some, present in -or derived from- the texts of the urban agendas, and for others much less present but which seemed to us to be of primary importance. This is the case, for example, of the field studies on gender politics in Vienna or the problem of mass tourism in Venice, issues which are only rarely addressed in the texts of the urban agendas but which are increasingly present in current political debates. The eco-neighborhood of Clichy Batignolles and the Action coeur de ville program are supported by public investments; the first one responding to the objective set by article 7 of the programming law of August 3, 2009 relative to the implementation of the Grenelle de l'environnement, the second one by the national agency for territorial cohesion.

We have placed here our field studies in the form of a quadrant compass - a methodology that allows to show the existing tensions within the visited places: the compass is divided into two perpendicular axes that divide the table into four quadrants or regions. The goal is to find two pairs of tensions among the places we visited. On the x-axis, we have categorized the scale of the project studied: some were small-scale, such as the tiers-lieux L'Hermitage in France or a building-scale like Città Corviale in Italy; while others were city-wide and constituted larger projects, such as the gender policies in the city of Vienne or the Action Coeur de Ville program in the city of Bourges. The y-axis contrasts the approaches that are qualified as "bottom up" because they are carried out by citizens at the local and grassroots level, while others are qualified as "top down approaches" because they are more institutional and carried out at the governmental level. You will find, following the deliverable, the presentation, some pictures and our conclusions about each visit we went to.



MOBILITY AND INDUSTRY. DUNKIRK, FRANCE

Dunkirk is a historically industrial port city in the north of France. In a logic of sustainable and eco-winning development, the Urban Community of Dunkerque has decided to set up a free bus network. In addition, it is reinventing itself together with businesses and industries to decarbonise the local economy and accelerate the energy transition through the creation of a CO₂/H₂ hub, in an inclusive governance approach.

//visited sites

Flanders-Dunkirk Urban Planning Agency (AGUR)
Halle aux Sucres
Dunkerque Urban Community (CUD)

//actors

Laurah Ahamadi // Project Engineer “Innovation Territories” at the CUD

Claude Calesse // Operational Director at Euraénergie

Vanessa Delevoye // Editor-in-Chief of Urbis Le Mag responsible for innovation at the Observatory of Free Cities and Transport



Source: DK'BUS - Coloured buses (70% of which run on natural gas) have been running since 2018 to make transport in the city more visible



Sylvie Delatte // Director of Strategy, European and International Cooperation and Port Relations at CUD

Guillaume Dubrulle // Mobility researcher at AGUR

Martine Monborren // Operational Director at Euraénergie

Jean-François Montagne // Deputy Mayor, deputy of the Rosendaël district

Jean-François Vereecke // Deputy Director General of AGURW

//topics

●●● Mobility

●●○ Energy

●●○ Social inclusion

●●○ Resilience

●●○ Climate Change

●●○ Citizenship

//conclusions

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed

● ○ ○ Marginally discussed

● ● ○ Generally discussed

● ● ● Predominant topic

Economic growth is an omnipresent theme in urban agendas, but industries (partially present in the NUA and the roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow") and mobilities are poorly addressed. On the one hand, it is necessary to relocate industrial sectors in the territories and allow the return of a form of productive activity in dense cities while accompanying more responsible consumption patterns and their logistical implications.

The Dunkirk agglomeration is trying to challenge the opposition between economic growth and ecology by revitalizing its economy while pursuing a just ecological transition; acting simultaneously on industry, energy and mobility. Indeed, Dunkirk as a land of innovation, is looking for different ways to optimise its energy transition: reusing industrial waste by other industries or for the city (fractal heat from Arcelor to heat the city) and investing in a green hydrogen hub. In addition Dunkirk is a forerunner in terms of free bus networks in France, combining economic, social and ecological vitality. It is in this context that the city of Dunkirk has been selected for the European Commission's "100 climate neutral cities" programme. It is a way to share experience, draw inspiration from other practices, notably through international partnerships, attract funding and give an extra boost to local projects.

Dunkirk's challenge is to maintain coherence in their governance and foster their application for innovative projects. The "Innovation Territories" approach has boosted the reorganisation of governance in order to involve all the players in ambitious urban operations and stop compartmentalisation. These progresses were made possible thanks to multi-actor governance at all levels advocating a synergy of citizens, industrial, public and economic actors, while making efforts to democratise and communicate around sometimes controversial measures. However, the communication of all the public actions carried out in favour of the citizen does not allow citizens to understand them at their true value because there is a lack of means.

TIERS LIEUX. L'HERMITAGE, FRANCE

L'Hermitage is a "Tiers-Lieux of rural and citizen innovations", a laboratory of initiatives and experimentations, located at the crossroads of the Aisne and Oise valleys, in a small village of 800 inhabitants. To give a large definition of a "Tiers-lieux" as they diverge a lot between each other, they are spaces in which the will of a community of citizens to move towards a better world is embodied, in order to revitalize their territory, to develop the "doing together" and to reweave links. The project, launched at the end of 2016- end of 2018 with the ambition of creating a place that "can last at least a century", has a very strong political vision, with the ambition of participating in the re-organisation of the local territory in order to make it more resilient and autonomous. Grassroots and involving economic actors at the same time, a tiers-lieux has a hybrid conception- at l'Hermitage, about 14 structures coexist.

//visited sites

Local Organic Association Café " La Mère Mitage" // FabLab // Aquaponic greenhouse
Permaculture gardens // Microfarm

//actors

Jean Karinthe // founding partner of The Hermitage structure, responsible of the public affairs
Armelle De Visme // Director of Association "Hermitage Expérimentations", in charge of the associative life and voluntary work.

Marie Sassi // Home & Site Life Responsible, Association "Séjours inspirants"

Mathieu Karinthe // Strategy & Inspirational Stays



Source: Hermitage le lab (site internet)



Marine Carron // Local Organic Association Café “La Mère Mitage”

Joséphine, project manager at the consulting company “Hermitage impact transition”

Joséphine Delasalle // project manager at the consulting company “Hermitage impact transition”

René Zimmermann // Forest Gardener

//topics

●●○ Biodiversity

●●● Resilience

●●○ Food

●●● Citizenship

●●○ Digital

●●○ Climate change

●●○ Economic development

●●○ Social inclusion

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed

● ○ ○ Marginally discussed

● ● ○ Generally discussed

● ● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

Tiers-Lieux are highlighted in the roadmap "Living in the France of tomorrow" but do not appear in the urban agendas of the EU and the UN, even though they are at the crossroads of digital, ecological, economic and social transitions.

As the front line of urban and rural environments, this tiers-lieux can exert unprecedented power on citizens' awareness and the creation of new breakthrough initiatives. The place hosted the first stage of the Tiers-Lieux tour of the democratic initiative of the Citizens' Climate Convention. It has the power to recreate the collective and the social link, participating in the regeneration of the salient divide between the cities and the countryside. Advocating financial autonomy, their economic model relies on fundraising, crowdfunding, subsidies from the European Union's LEADER Fund, as well as the income generated by all the structures hosted by the tiers-place. It is also a complex legal structure hosting numerous associations and economic entities playing on several levels: associative café, local organic agricultural production, creation of an association for the maintenance of peasant agriculture, a holiday company, a consulting firm offering project management assistance, forestry mediation, popular education initiatives, cultural awareness and a fablab enabling Rural Hacking Formation to be provided so that young people can take up computing and digital technology and many more.

Cities need tiers-lieux but the countryside even more so as tiers-lieux are instruments of rural regeneration. However, "France Tiers Lieux" (a national support programme for tiers-lieux) does not seem to be up to the task because there is no support policy. In a similar way, the "Fabrique des Territoires" programme, which is supposed to support tiers-lieux, does not have enough resources and the follow-up or support is partial. Furthermore, the rural agenda designed to help rural renewal - despite its 200 measures - is not sufficiently adapted to local realities, which limits its use.

ECOQUARTIER. CLICHY BATIGNOLE . FRANCE

Clichy-Batignolles eco-district is an urban projects of 54 hectares located the former SNCF rail yard in the north of the Batignolles neighbourhood (Paris 17th arrondissement). This mixed-use area centres develops around Martin Luther King Park. The project includes mixed housing buildings of up to 50m high. The urban design intends to reduce the physical obstacle of the nearby ring road, will providing urban engenierring solutions, aimed at reducing the energy consumption of the project will providing social mix.

//visited sites

Park Martin Luther King, 147 Rue Cardinet, 75017 Paris
Ecoquartier Clichy Batignole



Source: Photographs, TVK, Julien Hourcade, Cyrille Weiner



//actors

Lois Cedric // Architect Project Leader of the TVK building in Clichy Batignolle
Ghislain Mercier // Responsable Ville durable et nouveaux services SPL Paris
Métropole Aménagement

//topics

●○○ Mobility

●○○ Energy

●●○ Social inclusion

●●○ Resilience

●●○ Climate Change

●●● Citizenship

●○○ Biodiversity

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed

● ○ ○ Marginally discussed

● ○ ○ Generally discussed

● ● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

Clichy-batignolles embodies the challenge of big and long-term urban projects of being up to date with the climate goals: it was met with the difficulty to ally sobriety and urban quality, as well as profitability with the need for affordable housing in a context of housing crisis. The project achieved ambitious goals in energy efficiency through technological innovation and pedagogical efforts in collaboration with the inhabitants.

The success of its development can in part be attributed to innovative instruments for operationalising citizen participation, but also the effectivity of the climate document of the Paris Local Council. In addition, the specific feature of governance around the project led by the SPL Paris Aménagement and a continued collaboration between the various actors (architects, developers...) through meetings and workshops enabled the creation of a coherent and convenient neighborhood. If no references were made to urban agendas during the project, it received the Ecoquartier Label 4, highlighting exemplary sustainable urban projects according to specific criteria, helping to promote good practices in the field.

PROGRAMME ACTION COEUR DE VILLE.

BOURGES, FRANCE

The national Action Cœur de Ville (ACV) program is a cross-cutting, partnership-based and decentralised public policy aimed at revitalising the development and attractiveness of 234 medium-sized towns in mainland France and overseas. Since February 2018, the City of Bourges - the third largest city in the Centre region with a population of 66,500 - and the Bourges Plus Agglomeration Community, have been involved in this approach. The work undertaken over the last few months to revive trade in Bourges has already led to a revival in the streets of the hyper-centre. A commitment to the ACV approach will enable the actions launched to be formalised and continued.

//visited sites

Head office of the Bourges Plus agglomeration community
Bourges town hall hosting the municipality
Bourges town centre



Source: City of Bourges - Place Gordaine: characteristic of medieval Bourges with its half-timbered houses, very lively and animated with its many shops and restaurants.



Source: City of Bourges - "ACV - Cœur de Ville softlink: Mixed axis shared between pedestrians and cycles with a total width of 3 metres - Séraucourt area



//actors

Pierre Guillamo // Director of Action Coeur de Ville Bourges Plus

Christine Cheze // Elected representative of the agglomeration for Action Coeur de Ville

Christophe Matho // Cabinet director of the agglomeration

Olivier Cabrera // Deputy Mayor of Bourges, responsible for Action Coeur de Ville, Commerce, Craft Industry, Social and Solidarity Economy.

Pascal Quenez // Head of urban planning for the city of Bourges

Alexandrine Bourdeau // State representative of the Cher department for Action Coeur de Ville

//topics

●●● Housing

●●○ Creative city

●●○ Essential services

●●○ Développement économique

●●○ Social inclusion

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ Not discussed

● ● Generally discussed

● ○ Marginally discussed

● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

Although they are often less studied in the Urban Agendas, it is vital to pay more attention to medium-sized cities, which are a place of life on a human scale where a large part of the population lives.

The diagnostic and initialisation phase is coming to an end for the town of Bourges. It has defined the major orientations of the Coeur de Ville approach to revitalize the city center: the main objective is recreating a mix of uses and social diversity through housing rehabilitation, creation of quality social housing and the reorganisation of public spaces. In addition, Bourges aims to enhance its historical and architectural heritage to capitalize on the assets of the medieval town. Bourges is also an active design pilot city resulting from the collaboration between the Terre de Jeux 2024 label and ACV. This consists of transforming public space, buildings and furniture to encourage free and spontaneous physical or sporting activity for all. The Action Coeur de Ville programme prioritises access to funds (wasteland funds, DSIL, ERDF funds).

However, the ACV program does not provide access to sufficient financial and human resources to make it operational, while medium-sized cities often do not have all the funds necessary to implement these large-scale urban programmes on their own. Thus, this case study highlights the need to better take into account the assets and problems of small and medium-sized cities in urban agendas and programmes.

COOPERATIVE HOUSING. LA BORDA, SPAIN

In 2012, a group of households in Barcelona responded to Spain's growing housing crisis by forming the first housing cooperative to build a block of green homes on public land, in the popular neighborhood of Sants. La Borda is a collective structure and self-organized building by its users to access non-speculative and decent housing. The project is located on a public land, with a leasehold of 75 years (under an innovative "license to use" model, La Borda Cooperative has the right to use the land for 75 years in exchange for an annual fee), in a bordering position of the industrial area of Can Batlló. The building program proposes 28 units (40, 60 and 75m²) and community spaces that allow stretching the fact of living, from the private space to the public space to enhance community life, and sharing "commons" goods.

//visited sites

Area: 3000m² // Date: 2018 // Accompanied by the LACOL architectural cooperative, structure: Six floors of cross-laminated wood, deployed around a large patio, and covered by a glass roof which stores heat in winter, by greenhouse effect and which opens in summer to draw the heat. // Energetic consumption : powered by photovoltaic panels and a biomass boiler. The cost of the project (3,246,557 euros - 3,690,411 dollars) was financed by a combination of personal contributions, ethical loans, and local and national public grants.



Source: Photos taken during the visit of some inner spaces of the building



//topics

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| ●●● Housing | ●○○ Creative city |
| ●●○ Resiliency | ●●○ Energy |
| ●●○ Social inclusion | ●○○ Informal city |
| ●●○ Citizenship | |

Relevance of each topic:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ○ ○ ○ Not discussed | ● ● ○ Generally discussed |
| ● ○ ○ Marginally discussed | ● ● ● Predominant topic |

//conclusions

La Borda echoes some of the main topics of Urban Agendas, from the UAEU, NUA to the roadmap “Habiter la France de Demain”; which aims to restore the image of collective and shared spaces and land sobriety. La Borda is thus a perfect example of the new projects that meet the fundamentals of sustainable construction advocated by the different Agendas, meeting both questions of affordable and sustainable housing, as well as the question of the creation of community through urbanism and architecture.

La Borda has not only provided its members with safe and more affordable housing, but is also an example of responding to urgent housing needs through a more equitable alternative to traditional homeownership and rental models. We have retained three fundamental and cross-sectional principles of the project. First, La Borda is questioning the management of housing by the self-organized civil society trying to redefine collective housing by advocating the right to decent homes. In a city where rents have increased by over 35% in ten years, it reintegrates the commons at the roots of its functioning, to promote an alternative housing model based on participatory and democratic governance and ownership. Secondly, the sustainability objective was to build and consume with the lowest environmental impact possible. Thus, La Borda is a place of innovation, implementing high insulation technics to reduce energy demand, and prioritizing the use of passive energies. Finally, the legal status of La Borda is innovative: as a “cession of use”, it implies that the city of Barcelona (which owns the land) cedes for a long time to the housing cooperative the right to use the 28 apartments. Thus, this legal concept enables to ensure the longevity and stability of the project.

The regulatory and institutional frameworks often complicate the development of non-institutional collective housing. Thus La Borda exemplifies innovative urban development planning tool to promote alternative models of housing ownership fostering affordable housing. This showed that there are many alternatives to the prevailing speculative model, by earmarking land for social housing, implementing innovative public financial tools... However, the implementation of such ambitious tools depends a lot on the willingness of the political decision-makers, and therefore remains marginal. Urban Agendas could be a platform to make these alternative ownership and financing models more visible and widespread.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING. VIENNA, AUSTRIA

The city of Vienna has been at the forefront of gender mainstreaming urban policy since the 1990s to shift the paradigm from the city designed by men for men. Around the “Fair shared city” program, the needs and wants of every population is taken into account especially the marginalized groups - whether they be women, elderly people, single parents, children and so on - often forgotten in urban planning. This commitment can be explained by a specific context combining a deep culture of quality social housing and inclusive public intervention in urban space.

//visited sites

Frauen Werk Stadt Project
Aspern Seestadt Project
City center and transport infrastructures

//actors

Eva Kail: Chief Executive Office of the City of Vienna, Executive Group for Construction and Technology Competence Center Overall Urban Planning, Participation, Gender Planning

Franziska Ullmann: Architect who won the urban design competition for the Frauen Werk Stadt project



Source: Photograph taken during a field visit to the Aspern Seestadt project highlighting important female figures through street names



Source: Photograph taken during a field visit to the Aspern Seestadt project highlighting the use of the spaces under the metro tracks as recreational areas to avoid any form of insecurity.



Ernst Grüber: Architect, Social Housing and Co-Housing Expert

Marvin Mitterwallner: **visitor service of Aspern Seestadt Project**

Sabina Rita Riss: Architect and scholar in gender urbanism, Professor at TU Wien

//topics

● ● ● Housing

● ● ● Gender

● ● ● Social inclusion

● ● ○ Public procurement

● ● ○ Citizenship

● ○ ○ Climate Change

● ○ ○ Health

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed

● ○ ○ Marginally discussed

● ● ○ Generally discussed

● ● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

The gender issue often remains marginal in urban agendas. However, on the ground, Vienna's gender mainstreaming in urban policy is based on the possibility to better design public spaces and housing by shifting the urban paradigm toward a fairer city taking into account the needs of women, but also other vulnerable groups (elderly, single parents).

The success of this policy in Vienna can be attributed to various factors, including the strong culture of quality social housing, the ability of the city to set high quality standards (including gender, playground required by law) in public procurement, and the importance of participatory processes including target groups in urban projects. Faced with the growing attractiveness of Vienna, the municipality wanted to prevent housing from becoming unaffordable and the districts from losing their vitality and sense of community. Thus, Vienna anticipated the needs of all inhabitants with different levels of interventions to implement its vision of a "fair shared city", ranging from changing symbols in urban design, to the use of quality criteria in public procurement, or the design of master plans with the principle of short distance and accessible city.

Areas for improvement: This case study shows different ways of action to implement a more just and inclusive vision of the city. However, this kind of policy is mainly based on the political will of the municipality, and may thus be easily set aside. Moreover, the fact that Vienna is still a moderated-size metropolis (1.9 million inhabitants) makes it easier to experiment such projects at the city scale. The replicability of gender mainstreaming thus depends on the awareness of decision-makers and public officials about this issue, and whether there is a culture of quality assessment policies. Moreover, gender mainstreaming as experimented in Vienna is a rather top-down strategy, which is not always easily embraced by actors on the ground. They may also be missing knowledge on tools and methods: therefore, Vienna city produced in 2013 the manual « Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Urban Development » and 2021 the "Gender mainstreaming made easy" manual to show the method and diffuse it.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING. CORVIALE, ITALY

Corviale, a 1 km slab block, conceived in the late 70s for housing 8500 inhabitants in the outskirts of Rome. Soon after the end of its construction, the building was considered a "social failure", however Corviale avoided demolition and has undergone a long regeneration process, exemplifying a different way of dealing with inherited public housing projects.

The building was built between 1975 and 1984, as a result of the PEEP I (Piano du Edilizia Economica e Popolare) of Rome, approved in 1964. Its outstanding proportions, the austerity of its aesthetics, its location in the periphery of Rome, and the concentration of low income residents quickly fuelled its urban stigmatization. Designed by a group of architects led by Mario Fiorentino, Corviale was influenced by models of collective housing Karl Marx Hof in Vienna and Le Corbusier's Unites d'habitation.

//visited sites

Roma Tre University - Architecture Campus

Corviale Housing Complex

Citta Corviale Lab: Via Poggio Verde, 389, 00148 Roma RM, Italy



Source: *The Corviale Housing Project - We are mutants blog.*



//actors

Sara Le Xuan // Phd. candidate at Roma Tre Urban department

Sara Braschi // Researcher and Coordinator of Citta Corviale Lab

Sofia Sebastianelli // Architect and researcher. Coordinator of Citta Corviale Lab

Marco Cremaschi // Director of Ms. Urbanism in Sciences Po Paris

//topics

●○○ Mobility

●●○ Energy

●●● Social inclusion

●●● Resilience

●○○ Climate Change

●●● Citizenship

○○○ Biodiversity

●●● Governance innovation

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed

● ○ ○ Marginally discussed

● ● ○ Generally discussed

● ● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

The initiative of Regeneration of Corviale is in line with the sustainable development objectives of the UN and the EU Urban Agenda objectives for urban regeneration. The initiative of regenerating instead of demolishing a building that has many times being considered a “social failure” aims at reducing the emissions of demolishing and building from scratch. Additionally, regenerating mass social housing blocks also avoid the social impacts attached to the demolition of this type of building. Key initiatives:

For many years the dialogue between the local authorities and the local population of Corviale has been broken. The establishment of an urban policy lab within the structured of Corviale has contributed, under the role of “mediator” to the reestablishment of the dialogue. This lab is directed by the University of Roma Tre, which adds a new actor to the map of actors involved in the complex governance process of Corviale. The project exemplifies the importance of institutions such as universities to rebuild a trust dynamic among inhabitants and the housing authorities in situations such as Corviale, where the dialogue had been lost for a long time. The work developed by the lab of the University illustrates well through practical examples developed at Corviale, the importance of creative tools for putting in practice new ways of governance, such as ateliers, cultural events and exhibitions. Finally the new public transport lines that connect the building to the city center of Rome have positively contributed to the regeneration of the area. This points out the importance of connecting housing projects with public transport for avoiding ghettoisation and stigmatization.

Although the choice of regeneration of a building as an option in opposition to the decision of demolition is in ecological terms a “good news”, Corviale presents important challenges that may compromise the general regeneration of the project. The lack of funding, the lack of human means and lack of a strong political commitment can jeopardize the success of the project.



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM. VENICE, ITALY

Venice is a city which is suffering a lot from negative externalities of mass tourism. The city works as a worldwide cultural center, welcoming more than 30 millions tourists per year. The city counts with a largely an ongoing process of decreasing population (in only 40 years, the city's population halved, with now only 52,000 permanent inhabitants). This process is explained through the rise in rental prices (through temporary residence platforms), and through the application of public policies aimed at making the most rentable every remaining square meter of the city. Additionally Venice presents an urgent need to transition towards a more resilient model due to its high vulnerability to the rising water level. We thus wanted to understand how the city is handling this mass tourism and the threat of climate change. Our fieldwork in Venice allowed us to put into perspective the militant engagement of grassroots movement in front of the economically-driven public authorities and private actors' politics.

//visited sites

Ca Foscari campus - Economic Department // VeniSIA Lab // Laboratorio occupato Morion

//actors

Alessandro Manfredi // VeneSIA Sustainable Hub, created one year ago in partnership with the University Ca'foscari

Marco Capovilla // Founder of Venezia Pulita >sustainability Specialist Founder at veneziapulita.com and venicetapwater.co, an initiative to raise awareness against the large consumption of plastic bottle

Roshan Borsatto // Sustainability expert , Sustainability Specialist at Veneto General Secretariat for Programming

Marta Sottoriva // No Grandi Navi Association



Source: The cruise ship MSC Magnifica in the Venice lagoon
Miguel Medina/AFP/Getty Images



//topics

●●● Economic Development
●●● Tourism
●●○ Resilience
●●● Citizenship

●●○ Digital
●●○ Climate change
●○○ Social inclusion

Relevance of each topic:

○ ○ ○ Not discussed ● ○ ○ Generally discussed
● ○ ○ Marginally discussed ● ● ● Predominant topic

//conclusions

During our site visit in Venice we had the chance to encounter different actors involved in the ecological transition decision making process of the city. Through multiple interviews we could observe how there seems to be a lack of coordination between public and private actors, and a lack of flexibility and transversality of disciplines in the public sector on the matter of sustainability. This becomes a limitation when putting together sustainable initiatives. Through our interviews we got to know how public administrators would assess different pillars of the public sectors independently, lacking a motivation to pursue cross cutting assessments. According to our research, this lack of transversability on matters of ecological transition of the public sector represents a strong limitation on the governance of ecological matters.

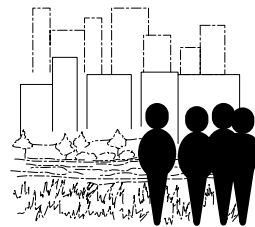
The foundation “Venice, the capital of sustainability” is a consortium of private, public and academic partners that has the possibility of gathering a part of the UE recovery funds that will reach Italy. Some of the grassroots associations of Venice that we have encountered have presented a critical position towards the urban development projects that this organization intends to finance with those funds. We find a weakness in the way the Venice administration is facing conceptually the very notion of “sustainable tourism”. Far from the very basic idea of reducing tourism in order to reduce its impact, the administration seems to be only focused on reducing its impact without lowering the amount of visitors per year. In fact, there are some plans for increasing tourism in other parts of the region. This approach to tourism seemed quite problematic, especially after failing to see any realistic initiative from the municipality or other private actors on how to reduce the ecological impacts of tourism.

During our visit we could also observe how grassroots movements have a strong impact at putting political pressure at the government level in the case of the city of Venice. In particular, No Grandi Navi, an association created from the No Big Ship Committee, has managed to pressure the national government to sign a decree in 2019 forbidding the immense tourist ships that were entering the city.

For its urban characteristics, Venice represents an extreme context of tourism and vulnerability towards climate change. For that reason we found a strong interest in visiting this context and examining the different initiatives and actors involved in the ecological transition of the city, with a particular focus on the point of tourism. We could finally perceive the strength of the grassroots initiatives of the city as key players of this transition.



CONCLUSION SITE VISITS



These case studies have contributed to our research in several ways. Firstly, while the UAs may appear abstract and theoretical, the interest of the case studies is to illustrate these documents in concrete and observable achievements: it enables to materialize the objectives and instruments proposed by diverse UA.

On the one hand, some of the case studies exemplified themes that are widely discussed in the UAs, such as economic development, social inclusion or sustainable urbanism. The case study of the Clichy-Batignolles eco-neighbourhood, for example, illustrates "good practices" in terms of sustainable urban development, combining ecological, social and economic issues. Although the Clichy-Batignolles project is not directly derived from a particular UA, it indirectly illustrates many objectives of both the NUA, the UAEU and French urban policies. The aim was therefore to show what types of practices on the ground can concretise the objectives of the agendas, but also what difficulties are faced by the

actors on the ground who contribute to them, or on the contrary, what are the success factors.

On the other hand, other case studies explored topics less commonly addressed by the UAs. The aim was to show that these issues are relevant and worth putting on the agenda. Thus, the question of gender in urban planning (Vienna), urban regeneration of small and medium-sized cities (Bourges), new mobilities such as free transport (Dunkirk), mass tourism (Venice) and many others make it possible to highlight interesting initiatives carried out on the ground and which could be given greater prominence in the various UAs. Indeed, the city is not only developing around the three main principles of sustainable development, but also around new questions and issues. Without opposing them, it seems that these new questions are just as relevant in the vision of the city of the future and demonstrate the richness of urban issues (and solutions). Thus, some projects invite us to rethink urban issues and our vision of the desirable



city: beyond an economic and social agglomeration, the city is also a place of creation, culture, tourism, biodiversity... It can be of very different sizes and geographies, and integrated into rich and varied territories. Thus, the challenge of the UAs is to integrate the multiplicity of the urban in order to propose a vision that is both inclusive and adapted to the diversity of territorial contexts

More broadly, these case studies have raised some reflections in relation to UA. Firstly, **it seems that UAs are not commonly used by actors on the ground.** While many urban actors do not use UAs directly, they are often indirectly involved in achieving or extending their objectives. Thus, if the UAs do not directly influence the actions of each urban actor, they seem to be able to formalise and transmit to a certain extent the main orientations and priorities towards which the actors should turn. Moreover, it has become apparent that many actors benefit from programmes (e.g. Urban Innovative Actions, 100 Climate neutral cities Mission of European Commission) linked more or less directly to the UAs, enabling them to innovate and finance urban projects in line with the objectives of the agendas.

Despite the diversity of the projects studied, certain factors seem to stand out. First of all, **the governance of the projects seems to be a determining element in the success of the projects:** whether top-down or bottom-

up, the involvement of a diversity of actors in the decision-making and implementation processes appears to be essential for the acceptance and realization of urban projects in line with the expectations of a diversity of publics and the ecological, social and financial realities. This can be easily grasped from the example of Venice, where a grassroots organization scattered a major policy change in the way the city has been dealing with Big Boats mass tourism, and for the case of Rome, where a University in partnership with the regional authorities are pushing for the regeneration of a whole neighborhood that has been going through social struggle for over 30 decades now.

Project financing is another point common to the case studies: it remains in all cases a contentious point and essential to the functioning of any project, sometimes constituting a major obstacle to the implementation of certain programmes (e.g. Bourges) or, on the contrary, becoming a tool for achieving additional objectives (e.g. Vienna). Finally, in most cases, it seems that the sharing of knowledge between cities and urban actors through various networks, forums or projects is beneficial, making it possible to pool knowledge, skills and give the necessary impetus to the implementation of certain projects. However, participation in this type of activity remains a challenge for some actors, requiring additional human and financial resources.



CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

During the eight months of our research, we tried to bring a curious, critical and comparative point of view to the Urban Agendas, in particular the NUA, the UAEU and French urban policies. While this is a subject primarily addressed to urban experts and policymakers, we wanted to take an academic and new look at the issue, in a relationship of astonishment to the subject. We had the opportunity to meet many urban actors (project leaders, local elected officials, urban planners, architects, associations, etc.) with whom we had long discussions on the subject, allowing us to confront various and sometimes contradictory points of view on the subject.

Without passing hasty judgment on the Urban Agendas, our aim was first of all to understand what they are, what they are for and how they work. Then, thanks to the many interviews and documents studied, we were able to critically analyse the contributions and limitations of these agendas, in terms of themes, impact, financing and knowledge

sharing. Finally, we were able to carry out various case studies highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the different agendas studied, and allowing us to highlight the wealth of urban issues and solutions to be envisaged.

What are Urban Agendas for

At first sight, it would be easy to think that Urban Agendas are not very useful since they are non-binding documents, used on a voluntary basis and without significant funding of their own. However, Urban Agendas are not meaningless. As the world's population becomes increasingly urbanised, the development of a common urban vision for desirable, sustainable and just cities is essential. Above all, they allow us to formalize a certain vision, an ideal of the urban area for a territory or an area. Thus, the Urban Agendas help to identify the main urban issues and to set a roadmap for responding to them in an urban project. One can also perceive these UAs as a panoply of operational tools, principles and initiatives from



which the actors of the city can draw inspiration to respond to their specific problems and to concretise their projects. Finally, the AUs and the associated events are a means of promoting know-how in terms of urban planning, architecture and governance for a given space.

Perhaps the aspect that we found most important, the AUs allow a great diversity of urban actors to meet and dialogue: urban governance is complex, and composed of a multitude of actors and levels who sometimes act in silos. Similarly, urban issues are at the intersection of countless policies and challenges, which are often poorly integrated. This study has enabled us to observe that the strength of the Urban Agendas lies in their governance and the attempt to combine the needs, skills and solutions of all these urban actors. The difficulty therefore lies in the capacity of these Urban Agendas to produce a global and inclusive vision of the urban while remaining coherent and comprehensible. Similarly, the integration of the different urban agendas is a challenge for those who formulate and use them.

Success and Limits of Urban Agendas

Urban Agendas represent an effective

tool for introducing new sustainable urban ideas in the global debate of sustainable cities. UAs increase the visibility of sustainable urban issues and promote its inclusion in multilevel governance processes. They have put through a vision for the sustainable city that is now spreading not only within public institutions but also within the private sector. Thanks to the dissemination of this vision, UA's become a tool for raising the interest and attracting funding for sustainable urban projects. Their capacity of sharing knowledge and connecting urban actors plays an important role for empowering local authorities and citizens.

Despite the visible achievements of Urban Agendas, these documents still face some challenges that may reduce their impact. The lack of legal competence from the international bodies that create these agendas in the matter of urban development reduces their action. There seems to be a lack of influence from local or national UAs in the development of international urban agendas, which may limit the dialogue around these documents. Finally we have seen how the lack of inclusion of certain urban actors (particularly rural or smaller cities actors) may reduce the diversity of focus of the UAs.

FINAL TAKE AWAY



We would like to conclude this study with a personal contribution, from our student position. After having conducted this research, it seems to us that it is crucial to distinguish between words and principles enshrined in the Urban Agendas and actual implementation. Urban Agendas have succeeded to grasp the complexity of the "sustainable city" and understand the ecological transition as a cross-cutting issue. They have acknowledged cities as a relevant level of action to address local issues, whether it is adaptation to climate change, creating social cohesion or economic transformation. Despite differences in content, the overall vision of the urban agendas is similar, promoting a shared vision of the city based on sustainable development in line with international Agendas such as the UN 2030 Agenda or the Paris Agreement. Indeed, they have repeatedly demonstrated their commitment to creating a more just, sustainable and ecological environment, and have often displayed objectives and projects that

go beyond national ambitions. Cities are therefore at the forefront of the fight against climate change, and through their dynamism are helping to redefine a new vision of sustainability, sometimes more ambitious than that proposed by the International Agendas or the classic vision of sustainable development. On paper, the UAs have succeeded in proposing a holistic and encompassing vision of the future of the city, evolving more or less in line with the guidelines of sustainable development.

The interdisciplinary approach is still difficult to adopt on the ground since it questions the very organization of public policies, which tend to operate in silos in a specific department, and often in a top-down process.

Whether at the international or at the national level, urban policies need to be thought through in a more coherent and integrated way to be more efficient



and effective. Therefore, we wanted to underline the necessity to adopt urban agendas at all levels of government, including the national level, to promote coherent, clear and integrated urban strategies. This instrument would also allow a better alignment of urban policies with international Agendas and objectives for the sustainable city. Indeed, it is through the mutual articulation and coordination of Urban Agendas at all levels that their goals and principles will be achieved. Finally, it seems important for these Urban Agendas. While one has sometimes the feeling that the urban vision is limited to cities and their administrative areas, Urban Agendas may also take into account the broader notion of territory and therefore the interconnection between the urban and its peri-urban and rural environment, which are deeply interdependent.

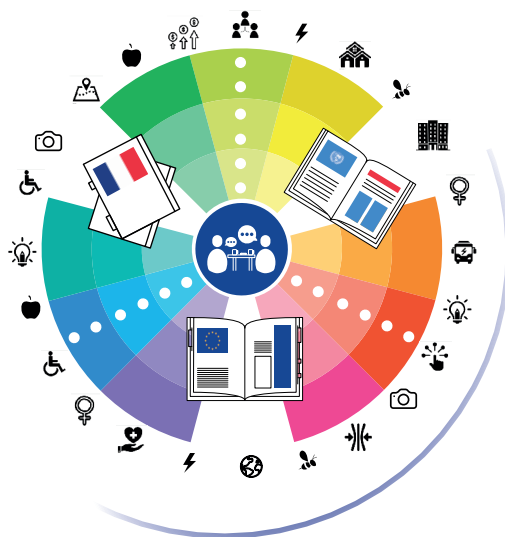
Urban Agendas are thus essential to empower local and urban authorities, which are sometimes best placed to respond to local needs and challenges. To this end, a change in their governance is necessary to empower cities and make them spaces for experimentation and innovation. While solely top-down policies may sometimes be out of touch with the reality of urban issues, another approach is possible to design and implement more relevant policies. This is why we wish to support the idea of an inclusive governance of the Urban Agendas involving the different levels of government (supranational, national, regional, local) and different

actors (public, associations, citizens, technical experts...). It is this linking of actors, resources and expertise which will enable the joint construction of an urban space which meets the concrete and current needs of the population and the different groups which make it up. **Thus, partnership governance as experimented on a small scale at the AUEU level is a promising avenue for the implementation of the Agendas**, as it allows for the sustainable involvement of a variety of urban actors in the design and implementation of its objectives. In addition, partnership would allow a better interaction of Urban Agendas and their actors at different scales. It would therefore be interesting to disseminate this partnership approach as an implementation tool to other Urban Agendas such as the NUA to allow for an inclusive governance, continuous implementation and better interconnection among different Urban Agendas.

In the context of the current climate crisis, and despite the variety of solutions exemplified in this document, we fail to see the necessary ground actions that can ensure the required radical transformation of our urban environment into a more sustainable and fair one. As students of European Urban Policy and Ecological Transition we call for a wider engagement of all the urban actors for a faster implementation of these goals.

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