Urban Innovative Actions

Knowledge Management Strategy

2020-2023

Foreword

Facilitating an effective process of knowledge transfer and creating the environment and opportunities for capturing and sharing UIA experience are strategic objectives for UIA

The Urban innovative actions (UIA) has been set up in 2015 with two key ambitions in mind. First, to incentivise cities to innovate and to test at real scale new solutions to urban challenges of EU relevance. Second, to enable the subsequent upscale and transfer of the most successful experiences to other urban realities across the EU, especially in those regions and cities that did not benefit directly from the UIA funding.

Five years later, the **UIA Initiative stands at a key crossroads** of its delivery cycle. All five calls for proposals have been processed, first projects have completed their activities and an external study aiming at assessing how the UIA is performing and can be optimized in view of its renewal as a central component of the **European urban initiative (EUI) 2021/27** has been launched. At the same time, Cohesion policy programmes 2021-27 are being prepared, creating a demand for concrete examples of best practices in priority areas.

With **75 projects from 18 Member states** ongoing, a list that will soon be completed by 11 new experimentations to foster culture and cultural heritage, air quality, the circular economy and demographic change as a result of the 5th and last call, the UIA is generating **thematic** (on 12 urban challenges of the Urban agenda for the EU) and **operational knowledge** (on place-based, integrated, cross-sectorial and participatory approaches) that has the vocation to inspire the design and implementation of future programmes and projects.

It is imperative to capture and promote this rich UIA experience in the making, to explain how and by whom it can be mobilised, and to organise systematically UIA's knowledge capitalisation, in view of further dissemination and transfer.

The UIA Knowledge Management Strategy will contribute to the design of the value chain of the future EUI

The Strategy first aims at raising awareness from Cohesion policy stakeholders as most natural addressees of the UIA knowledge, i.e. cities implementing sustainable urban development strategies, Managing authorities and/or intermediate bodies in charge of programmes covering these strategies and the wider community of Cohesion policy beneficiaries at local and regional levels interested in learning from, or in replicating successful UIA experiences. The objective is also to favour the joint programming of activities with key players of EU cities' support function, i.e. stakeholders from URBACT III programme, from the Urban agenda for the EU partnerships, together with the Urban development network, in a more dynamic value chain that the EUI wants to foster in the future. The Strategy offers a valuable testbed for the early identification of common priorities, the use of shared knowledge dissemination channels, and piloting of new transfer mechanisms that could embody EUI's intervention logic and ease the transition from UIA to EUI.

In this particular context, the Entrusted Entity (Region Hauts-de-France) and the European Commission (DG for Regional and Urban Policy) call the UIA cities and experts; Cohesion policy stakeholders at all levels, facilitators in URBACT, Urban Agenda for the EU Partnerships, but also pan-European networks (e.g. Eurocities, CEMR..) to join forces to deliver on the UIA Knowledge management strategy 2020/23, thus contributing to add value for the programming and implementation of the 2021/27 Cohesion policy interventions.

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European Affairs Director, Region Hauts-de-France,
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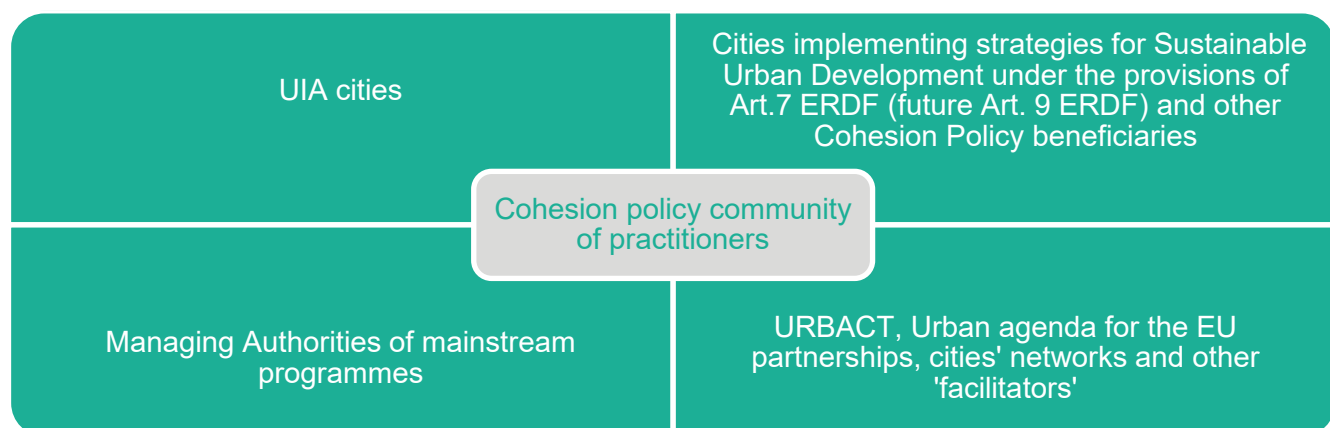# UIA Knowledge Management Strategy – in a nutshell

Objectives

To capture the knowledge generated by each single UIA project during the the implementation phase

To capture, analyze and systematize the dissemination of the knowledge generated across different UIA projects clustered around common policy areas and/or operational challenges

To make the knowledge generated by single projects and at the level of the Initiative more accessible for urban practionners in Europe and to explain how it can be mobilized and by whom

Target Audiences and partners

UIA cities	Cities implementing strategies for Sustainable Urban Development under the provisions of Art.7 ERDF (future Art. 9 ERDF) and other Cohesion Policy beneficiaries

Cohesion policy community of practitioners

Managing Authorities of mainstream programmes	URBACT, Urban agenda for the EU partnerships, cities' networks and other 'facilitators'

Thematic and operational knowledge activities

Thematic capitalisation
- providing evidence based contents, policy findings and recommendations around the main policy areas covered by UIA (i.e. often UAEU themes)
- setting up thematic workstreams, with groups of experts and cities in order to gather evidence, share experiences and good practices on specific topics

Operational knowledge – capacity-building
- providing good and innovative practices, exploring the why and what way with regard to a particular operational challenge
- conducting studies, gathering evidence and sharing good practices on operational challenges most valid under Cohesion policy

Transfer
- identifying the most suitable transfer mechanism to facilitate transfer (and re-use) of UIA practices in other cities in Europe
- initiating pilot action using REGIO TAIEX Peer 2 Peer to apply transfer networks; Connecting with existing mechanisms (e.g. URBACT)

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1. Context

1.1. Urban Innovative Actions framework

Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is the Initiative of the European Union (EU) to test innovative ideas and support urban authorities in their efforts to ensure integrated sustainable urban development.

UIA offers to urban authorities in Europe the possibility to test new and unproven ideas that are too risky and experimental to be supported by mainstream funding. Urban authorities, together with different stakeholders belonging to the local ecosystem of innovation, have the opportunity to test new and bold solutions at a real urban scale. The purpose is to verify how the initial hypothesis react when facing the complexity of the real life, and if the testing phase is successful, to prepare for the upscaling and transfer phase.

The funding dedicated to the UIA comes from the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) and is allocated through competitive calls at the EU level on themes defined by the European Commission, in line with the topics of the Urban Agenda for the EU and the thematic objectives of Cohesion policy[1]. Project applications are evaluated according to a number of criteria[2] that includes their potential to be scaled-up and transferred to other urban realities across Europe. Indeed, the transferability of UIA projects represents a key dimension for the UIA Initiative and it is strictly linked to the knowledge produced by UIA projects.

In addition, when applying, Urban authorities are requested to foresee capitalization and dissemination activities of the knowledge produced[3], including compulsory activities dedicated to knowledge transfer such as the production of a Final Qualitative Report.

To this end, and once selected, projects benefit from the assistance of an external UIA expert (50 days of expertise) to assist with knowledge capture and dissemination throughout implementation. The codification of the practices implemented by the UIA cities is an essential step to facilitate the transfer and the re-use of good practices by other urban authorities. The capitalization activities (capturing/codifying the knowledge generated in the form of reports, case studies, policy recommendations and disseminating it) represent one of the mechanisms available to facilitate the transfer, resulting mainly in intangible outcomes with a potential increase in knowledge and capacities of the audience who have access.

Facilitating an effective process of knowledge transfer and creating the environment and opportunities for capturing and sharing UIA experience are strategic objectives for UIA.

In this perspective, the Delegation Agreement, signed by the European Commission (EC) and the Entrusted Entity (EE) in July 2015, sets the terms and conditions of the UIA Initiative and reflects this strategic objective mentioned above. It also establishes the list of tasks to be undertaken at the

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[1] See Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1301/2013 (OJEU L 347 of 20.12.2013)
[2] Innovativeness (40% of weighting); Partnership (15% of weighting); Measurability (15% of weighting); Transferability and scaling up (10% of weighting)
[3] under the workpackage (group of activities) Management within the compulsory activity "Capitalisation" and under the workpackage (group of activities) "Knowledge Transfer" where the production of a Final Qualitative Report is indicated as a compulsory activity

Initiative level. The two following tasks of the Delegation Agreement explicitly relate to knowledge management:

- Task 8: to recruit UIA Experts to provide advice as well as **capture and share knowledge generated at project level**

- Task 10: to **synthetize the results**, prepare communication material (e.g. case studies) and **disseminate results to policy-makers**, especially urban authorities. To prepare, publish and disseminate brochures and studies on the lessons learned through UIA

1.2. State-of-play and future as part of the EUI 2021/27

With 75 on-going projects (Annexe 1) and a constantly growing wealth of knowledge captured at local level by UIA experts, it is time to show and share the first results being achieved and the first lessons learnt.

Already some capitalisation pilot actions have been undertaken by UIA together with on-going and completed projects, so far limited in scope and detail:

- Jobs and skills lab and report June 2018
- Inclusion of migrants and refugees lab and report June 2019
- Energy transition workshop at Green Week May 2018
- Urban poverty workshop at EURegionsWeek and web article October 2018
- Circular economy workshop at Circular Conference (Maribor) and web article May 2019
- Housing workshop at Housing Europe conference (Lyon) and web article June 2019
- Sustainable food production workshop (Milan) and web article June 2019
- Circular economy workshop at EURegionsWeek and web article 9 October 2019

With a first batch of these projects completed and the last call for proposals closed in December 2019, the **UIA initiative stands now at a key crossroads** and the focus of the Initiative for the next years activities naturally shifts towards urban knowledge generation (through project implementation) and its transfer.

This new period also constitutes a unique window of opportunity to shape **UIA's contribution to the preparation of the future Cohesion policy 2021-2027** and in particular to feed into reflections on the forthcoming EU initiative dedicated to cities, i.e. the **European Urban Initiative** (EUI)[4]. According to the Commission's proposal, the EUI will continue to support innovative actions in a new coherent and synergetic offer of services to all cities as a way to streamline the currently very diverse and fragmented landscape of available instruments e.g. URBACT, the Urban Development Network (UDN), and other knowledge providers (e.g. JointResearch Centre of the European Commission, ESPON, Joint Programming Initiative Europe, etc.) under various governing mechanisms dedicated to urban policy.

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[4]   Article 10 of Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A372%3AFIN

The UIA Knowledge Management Strategy will offer a valuable testbed to explore some of the components of the intervention logic and potential mechanisms to be embedded in the "value chain" of the future EUI as described in Commission's Explanatory Memo - European Urban Initiative post-2020 [5]**. It will provide insights for the design of the value chain of the EUI.**

1.3. Overall objectives

The present Knowledge Management Strategy is designed to enable the transfer of knowledge generated by UIA projects as well as pilot mechanisms and actions that will contribute to the definition of the EUI value chain and inspire more generally the preparation of the urban dimension of Cohesion policy 2021/27

The Strategy outlines the ambition concerning knowledge management and the objectives, the main components, the targets and participating stakeholders in the knowledge process, activities and outputs. It should serve as a reference for the UIA cities to participate in joint knowledge capitalisation and transfer efforts together with the EE (UIA Secretariat and Region) and the EC (REGIO).

Based on the three years strategy, the UIA Permanent Secretariat (PS) in liaison with the EE will draw up annual knowledge management work plans to be agreed with the EC. Each annual work plan defines a set of priorities for the coming year which include up to three policy areas and at least one operational challenge to be further analysed, as well as the activities needed to ensure the transfer.

The present document first of all provides information on the overall objectives and the ecosystem; it then describes the two types of knowledge generated by the UIA projects and the mechanisms in place to capture it; and finally the mechanisms envisaged for its transfer to a wider audience of urban practitionners and policy makers.

The objectives of the present strategy are:

- ✓ To capture the knowledge generated by each single UIA project during the the implementation phase
- ✓ To capture, analyze and systematize the dissemination of the knowledge generated across different UIA projects clustered around common policy areas and/or operational challenges;
- ✓ To make the knowledge generated by single projects and at the level of the Initiative more accessible for urban practionners in Europe and to explain how it can be mobilized and by whom

2. Target audience, stakeholders and key partners

2.1. Target audience

The target audience of the present Strategy is represented by the Cohesion policy community of practitionners as natural addressees of the UIA knowledge:

- ✓ UIA cities

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[5] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/brochures/2019/explanatory-memo-european-urban-initiative-post-2020-article-104-5-cpr-proposal-and-article-10-erdf-cf-proposal

- ✓ Cities implementing strategies for Sustainable Urban Development under the provisions of Art.7 ERDF (future Art. 9 ERDF)
- ✓ Managing Authorities of mainstream programmes
- ✓ Cohesion policy beneficiaries.

2.2. Partnerships and cooperations

Knowledge generation and transfer also require partnerships and cooperations. Therefore, strategic partnerships with the Urban Development Network (UDN), Art. 7 national city networks (when existing), the Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU) and the Partnerships and URBACT shall be reinforced to create the necessary synergies and cooperation to deliver the activities described in the present Strategy. Coordination with the actors actively involved in promoting sustainable urban development in the framework of the Cohesion Policy (URBACT, UDN, Partnerships UAEU) will be sought more systematically to identify common priorities, align respective action plans, define resources to be used and test joint activities.

Cooperation with other key players such as pan-European networks (e.g. Eurocities, CEMR, Housing Europe, etc), thematic networks (e.g. Housing Europe) and international organizations (e.g. OECD) will also be developed based on common interests and converging priorities and calendars.

Leassons learnt during the rollout of the Knowledge Management Strategy will be used to feed the EC's reflections for the design of EUI's governance model that should offer a better frame for multi-level dialogue and such multi-player cooperations in the future.

3. Defining UIA knowledge

When considering the specificities of UIA projects, it is possible to highlight two different but highly complementary **dimensions of knowledge** that can be captured and shared with other urban stakeholders in Europe and beyond, i.e. the **thematic knowledge** and the **operational knowledge.**

These two dimensions are the building blocks of the UIA Knowledge Management Strategy to inspire and increase the capacity of urban authorities and urban stakeholders in Europe and beyond. These two intentions (inspiring and increasing the capacity of urban stakeholders) can only be achieved with a mix of different activities of knowledge production, capacity building and transfer.

3.1. Thematic knowledge

UIA projects are generating **thematic knowledge** related to the specific policy areas they are addressing with the Initiative. Naturally clustered around the topics of the UAEU, UIA projects are exploring new ways to address complex issues such us reducing poverty in deprived neighbourhoods, fostering multi-modal mobility or anticipating the effects that major economic and technological transformations will have on local labour markets. By observing the implementation phase and evaluating the first results, UIA projects will be able to suggest to other decision makers what is the best policy mix that better address local societal challenges.

The thematic knowledge activities generate, analyse and aggregate policy findings and recommendations around the main policy areas covered by UIA at the Initiative level. The contents are evidence based (stemming from the observation and evaluation of the main results achieved).

The thematic knowledge in the making also represents a valuable source of information to inspire the programming, design and implementation of project pipelines in the five Policy objectives that will drive Cohesion policy over 2021/27.

UIA projects and therefore the activities of thematic knowledge can be clustered as follows (based on UAEU themes plus one horizontal topic on demographic change):

- Policy objective 1: a smarter Europe – 2021-27
    - ✓ Jobs and skills in the local economy

- Policy objective 2: a greener, carbon free Europe
    - ✓ Adaption to climate change
    - ✓ Air quality
    - ✓ Energy transition
    - ✓ Circular economy
    - ✓ Sustainable use of land and nature based solutions
    - ✓ Housing

- Policy objective 3: a more connected Europe
    - ✓ Urban mobility
    - ✓ Digital transition

- Policy objective 4: a more social Europe
    - ✓ Urban poverty
    - ✓ Integration of migrants and refugees
    - ✓ Housing
    - ✓ Jobs and skills in the local economy

- Policy objective 5: a Europe closer to citizens
    - ✓ Urban security
    - ✓ Culture and cultural heritage
    - ✓ Demographic change

This clustering is an illustration of the potential of the UIA to inspire future Cohesion policy. It is limitative by nature bearing in mind that UIA topics and projects have been designed in a way to foster integrated actions at the cross-roads of most pressing urban challenges. It may thus evolve depending on EU strategic needs (e.g. to show correlation with the upcoming New Leipzig Charter and/or other emerging policy requirements).

3.2. Operational knowledge

The strong focus of UIA projects on the implementation phase and on the confrontation of concepts with the requirements of 'real life', offers the opportunity to generate and disseminate valuable knowledge on how to deliver complex projects, on the skills, mechanisms, methods and capacities needed to implement innovative solutions in an urban environment, as well as to interact with different categories of socio-economic players and populations operating in it.

Ensuring the right and constant level of leadership, re-organising municipal services to gather the required authority and skills, managing the different procedures for public procurement, jointly implementing the activities with the delivery partners while building with them a trust relationship, outreaching and involving the final beneficiaries are, amongst others, all challenges that urban authorities implementing UIA projects are facing on a daily basis.

7 operational challenges have been identified as most recurrent during UIA projects delivery cycle. These challenges are thus the main lens through which the UIA Experts analyse the progress made by projects and generate the main learning points.

The 7 challenges are:

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Smart public procurement for implementation
- ✓ Participative approach for co-implementation
- ✓ Organisational arrangements within urban authorities to deliver integrated innovative projects (cross-department working)
- ✓ Monitoring & evaluation (measurement)
- ✓ Communicating with target beneficiaries
- ✓ Upscaling (incl. resizing/re-planning interventions)

More details are available in Annexe 2.

The list of challenges is not exhaustive as experience shows that whilst implementing their projects, beneficiaries are expending innovation capabilities that are crucial to shape their transformative role as urban policy makers (e.g. processing of big data, engineering of innovative financial schemes).

Above mentioned challenges are also the demonstration that UIA beneficiaries apply at project level methods and principles that are core to the Cohesion policy approach concerning urban and territorial policy investments, notably again through PO5 'EU closer to citizens' in the future, i.e. interventions at the right functional area level (e.g. with inspiring urban-rural cooperations), involving cross-sectorial, integrated and participatory actions, constituting part of their DNA and of the experience that they can offer other local and regional stakeholders across the EU to learn from.

Focusing on these challenges and cross-cutting issues and observing how UIA projects are trying to overcome them offer different perspectives for capturing and disseminating this operational knowledge. This can be done by analysing the experiences of UIA projects horizontally across different topics as well as studying specific challenges within specific policy areas.

4. Capturing UIA Knowledge

UIA knowledge capture is ensured at two levels: identification, capture and uptake of the findings and results is done at project level by UIA experts (vertical approach); whilst at UIA PS level, additional results and knowledge are obtained in a cross-cutting and horizontal approach and through the aggregation of results and comparison of achievements and experiences across projects serving similar objectives.

4.1. Knowledge at project level

To share and disseminate the thematic and operational knowledge generated by UIA projects, it is essential to be able to capture, analyse and narrate the main findings, lessons learnt and experiences coming from the different urban innovative actions that UIA is helping to set up in Europe. It is in this perspective that the UIA Experts working with selected projects play a key role. UIA experts are critical friends able to bring into the project external experiences and knowledge and to capture the knowledge produced in an analytical way. They produce outputs (web articles, Journals, Zoom ins) representing a main source of information and learning for each project as well as the building blocks for any UIA activity.

Over the 3 years of implementation (plus a 4th year following the official end of project activities of selected projects) UIA experts are required to:

- ✓ **provide advice** to UIA projects on aspects related to the policy area addressed as well as on the operational challenges that the projects will face during during the implementation phase;
- ✓ **capture the knowledge** generated locally by UIA projects during implementation. Here the term of knowledge refers to both the thematic knowledge and the operational knowledge (related to the operational challenges) that are strongly interconnected, as clearly shown by ongoing UIA projects. UIA intends the capturing of knowledge as a reflective process including collection of information (from different sources and actors), analysis, identification of learning points and codification in a format accessible to a wider external audience.
- ✓ **Share the knowledge captured**: this implies providing UIA projects with opportunities to further disseminate learning points and findings (building on the experts' professional network) as well as supporting the Main Urban Authorities to define the best contents and formats for further dissemination in relevant contexts.

In addition, several UIA projects have planned to produce through their project budget, reports, policy recommendations, toolkits, etc. to draw lessons on an on-going basis and support activities exclusively devoted to the capture of knowledge for internal use (local policy-makers, colleagues from other departments, etc) as well as for an external audience of urban practitionners .

At project level, the dedicated project webpage on the UIA website is the main repository of knowledge outputs produced by UIA Experts and partners. It represents the main entry point for external audiences to access information on the state of play of the implementation phase as well as as the main lessons captured.

4.2. Knowledge at UIA level

At strategic level, the UIA defines the main priorities for capitalisation, through the Knowledge Management Strategy. This capitalisation work is about aggregating, synthetizing, analysing and disseminating knowledge coming from several projects, in a cross-cutting approach. This knowledge provides additional results through benchmarking and detailed content analysis, and builds on existing projects' experiences.

In order to do so, the UIA PS mobilises the following ressources for capturing and generating knowledge:

- 15 additional days of expertise per UIA expert can be allocated for such activities of knowledge management and dissemination

- external providers and experts can be recruited when needed to generate knowledge, e.g. identifying good practices, exploring why and in what way the projects constitute good (innovative) practices and defining successful approaches and methodologies.

Examples of capitalisation pilot actions presented in point 1.2 are illustrative of the type of outputs that such a resource can generate.

The PS also performs key tasks related to the quality of UIA experts outputs, when training them before starting their work related to UIA projects; and collecting and ensuring quality control of journals, zoom-ins and web articles produced by UIA experts. Dissemination and visibility of experts'

outputs is at the core of UIA PS daily work, using relevant tools such as the UIA knowledge lab searchable platform, gathering and making available all knowledge produced.

5. Transfering UIA knowledge

The UIA Knowledge Management Strategy will activate 3 types of structured mechanisms of capitalisation, capacity-building and transfer of experiences and practices to reach its main objectives and target audiences.

5.1. Thematic capitalisation

The thematic knowledge provides evidence based contents (stemming from the observation and analysis of the main results achieved), policy findings and recommendations around the main policy areas covered by UIA. Their codification and transfer will contribute to the existing policy knowledge, it will inspire other urban authorities in Europe and create the basis for future transfer of practices. It will also aim at contributing to the work carried out by the UAEU Partnerships by building thematic synergies and implementing actions and recommendation in terms of "better knoweldge" among cities.

Thematic workstream

In this view, UIA will set up **thematic workstream,** with groups of experts and cities in order to gather evidence and good practices on specific topics. This structured mechanism includes the identification of cross-cutting dimensions bringing together different projects (these could be sub-topics, specific policy dimensions or beneficiaries) and a thematic analysis with experts' support, exchanges between UIA projects (through e.g. workshops and study visits) and identified partners, and the selection of good practices. UIA cities and experts contribute to the workstream activities with their experience and knowledge, as well as corresponding UAEU Partnerships.

The **thematic workstream** will include transfer of the main learning points and policy recommendations to the Cohesion policy community via dedicated events, web articles and specific outputs. This type of activity is thought to be delivered jointly with relevant 'future EUI' stakeholders, i.e. in particular URBACT but also where possible and adequate pan-European networks (e.g. Eurocities, CEMR) and UAEU Partnerships .

The effective implementation of the workstream mechanism for thematic capitalisation requires a strong and clear coordination with other key partners (see. part 2.2) and more especially:

- a systematic cooperation with URBACT and corresponding UAEU Partnerships leading to events on the targeted urban challenge;

- regular communication with the governance structures of the UAEU

- the annual definition of the thematic priorities on the basis of two criteria: the maturity of projects (see below the temporality of UIA projects); and the policy areas defined in advance with the EC inspired from the clustering defined in point 3.1 to fit with Cohesion policy stakeholders demand and depending on major policy developments, campaigns and/or events.

Depending on needs and demand, the UDN will also be mobilised for the organisation of these events.

Other opportunities may also be explored by the UIA Initiative over the strategy implementation time, building on regular proposals coming from other organisations if compatible with Knowledge Management Strategy's annual workplan.

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Urban poverty, energy transition, integration of migrants and refugees, Jobs & skills							
	Urban mobility, Jobs & Skills, Circular Economy						
		Adaptation to climate change, Air quality, Housing, Jos & Skills					
			Digital transition, Sustainbale use of land, Urban poverty, Urban security				
				Air quality, Circular economy, Culture & cultural heritage, Demographic change			

Expected outputs

It is expected to develop at least 1 thematic workstream per year and to produce the following types of ouputs:

- A thematic analysis (1)
- Short report (format: web article) related to the workstream activities such as study visits and workshops
- Final paper with good practices and recommendations (1)
- Video (option)

5.2. Operational knowledge – capacity-building

By dealing and trying to overcome operational challenges, UIA projects are generating a unique wealth of knowledge on **how to implement innovative urban projects**.This operational knowledge provides good and innovative practices within the framework of UIA projects, explores the why and what way these projects constitute good (innovative) practices with regard to a particular challenge, among those defined in point 3.2 and breaks down and highlights the necessary elements (intervention logic models, techniques for collection of data, approaches and techniques, and governance).

Operational workstream

In this view, UIA will conduct studies with experts and external providers and cities in order to gather evidence and good practices on specific challenges. This structured mechanism includes the design of a methodological approach including research questions, a desk review of UIA projects and the identification of best practices related to the challenge. The natural follow-up to ensure the uptake of the operational knowledge generated is to re-use the main findings (collection of good practices, tool boxes, practical advice) to feed into capacity building transfer activities for urban practitioners and the Cohesion policy community through regular participation of UIA cities in UDN events, dialogue at national level between UIA cities and Managing Auhorities in charge of sustainable urban development and national networks of Art.7 (future Art. 9) cities.

Under this component it is planned to deliver analysis on a limited number of operational challenges. For 2020-2023, the following challenges are prioritised:

- Monitoring and evaluation of results

Monitoring and evaluation of results is still a challenging task (lack of understanding of terminology, a general perception of the exercise being purely administrative and a disconnection between the main urban authorities and the partners leading the Monitoring and Evaluation Work Packages) and the focus remains essentially on the monitoring of results. A number of urban authorities are using the opportunities offered by UIA, in terms of flexibility and availability of financial resources, to go a step beyond. By applying different logic models, combining counter-factual with theory-of-change methodologies, designing Randomised Control Trials but also introducing ethnographic techniques, some UIA projects are trying to assess to what extent the project has contributed to the changes in the local situation (if any) as well as if these changes can be attributable to the innovative approaches tested. How to design and deliver the effective collection of data, analyse and monitor results, what type of approaches can isolate the impact of the different integrated interventions, what type of qualitative metrics should be considered to measure the change in the local situation are, amongst others, all questions to which urban stakeholders involved in UIA projects are trying to find answers, often with very experimental solutions.

The different operational challenges could also be analysed jointly in order to capitalise on UIA's operational knowledge that matches with PO5 methods and principles:

- Integrated and participative approach (cross-department working methods, joint implementation with delivery partners co-design, co-implementation and citizens involvement, communication with targeted beneficiaries and users)

The participative approach – the development of strong partnerships between public bodies, the private sector and civil society (including citizens and inhabitants) – is widely recognised as a cornerstone of efficient urban development policies. UIA helps and encourages urban authorities to set up local partnerships that are rich, diverse and that involve "traditional stakeholders" as well as "unusual suspects".

- Innovative financial schemes (revolving funds, vouchers, prizes, etc).

Financial schemes are schemes supporting the distribution of rewards following a contest (such as prizes, vouchers or grants) to the benefit of third parties (individuals or organisations) that are not part of the project partnership. Examples of financial schemes: R&D vouchers for SMEs; energy efficiency retrofit of houses belonging to citizens; grants to local associations helping migrants and refugees.

When carrying out analyses and developing contents, maximum complementarity with existing tools for administrative capacity building on similar themes from the EC (e.g. REGIO-JRC handbook on sustainable development strategies) or URBACT will be sought as another way to reinforce synergies between supporting instruments.

Activities

Activities can include:

- definition of cross-cutting research questions for the challenges analysed
- identification and desk review of the different practices amongst UIA projects
- hearings and site visits to collect experiences and understand solutions
- production of reports in the form of collection of good practices, practical guidances, toolkits
- dissemination events, including with UDN
- training sessions

Depending on the cross-cutting topic and material available, the intensity of the activities will differ.

The effective implementation of operational knowledge and capacity-building activities requires a strong and clear coordination with other key partners (see. part 2.2) and more especially:

- a systematic coordination with the UDN leading to events aiming at transferring the operational knowledge and training cities implementing strategies for sustainable urban development under the provisions of Art.7 ERDF (future Art. 9 ERDF);

- partnership with URBACT ensuring dissemination of tools and training to other relevant urban stakeholders;

- the annual definition of the cross-cutting topics, including other potential cross-cutting issues that can be explored over the strategy implementation time, e.g. contribution of UIA to functional urban area dynamics.

Other opportunities may also be explored by the UIA Initiative over the Strategy implementation time, building on regular proposals coming from other organisations if compatible with Knowledge Management Strategy's annual workplan.

Expected outputs

It is expected to carry out at least 1 analysis per year, producing the following types of ouputs:

- analysis report
- Collection of good practices
- final publications/products with learning points and recommendations
- Training sessions when applicable
- Transfer and dissemination events, including a minimum of 1 UDN event dedicated to UIA capacity building strand and systematic participation of UIA cities to other UDN events on demand

5.3. Transfer of experiences and practices

The transferability of solutions tested, when succesful, is one of the UIA selection criteria and part of the work package of each individual project. Previous experience by other organisations (URBACT, Eurocities, etc) clearly stress the need to differentiate the knowledge generation and transfer activities (dissemination) from the mechanisms for transfer of practices. While the process of transfer builds upon and benefits from the analysis and codification of practices, it also needs a proactive methodology supported by sufficient expertise and financial resources. URBACT in particular has defined a 3 step transfer process based on the sequence Understand→Adapt→Reuse widely applied by its Transfer Networks.

The transfer mechanism will be designed and tested to support UIA cities in their transfer plans and efforts. This pilot transfer will concern UIA projects reaching the end of the delivery cycle.

Activities

UIA will identify the most suitable transfer mechanism to facilitate transfer (and re-use) of UIA practices in other cities in Europe targeting in particular Article 7 (future Article 9) cities and/or other potentially interested beneficiaries from Cohesion policy.

- Initiating pilot action using REGIO TAIEX Peer 2 Peer to apply transfer networks;
- Connecting with existing mechanisms, such as URBACT transfer networks;

An effective transfer of experiences and practices requires a strong and clear coordination with other key partners (see. part 2.2) and more especially:

- a systematic coordination with the UDN and with other tools and mechanisms of the EC, such as REGIO TAEIX Peer 2 peer

- a connection with existing transfer mechanisms of URBACT and support for the rolling out of an URBACT transfer network call targeting UIA project transfer if such a possibility materialises.

For 2020-2023, the two above mentioned options will be explored as a matter of priority. Other opportunities may also be explored by the UIA Initiative over the strategy implementation time, building on regular proposals coming from other organisations if compatible with Knowledge Management Strategy's annual workplan.

Expected outputs

It is expected to carry out the following types of ouputs:

- Defining a business case for UIA's pilot transfer mechanism
- Testing of the mechanism by UIA cities

6. Communication for an effective knowledge management and transfer

Communication is an important tool for effective knowledge management and transfer. Linking knowledge management and communication is a key process to ensure the proper and targeted dissemination of the knowledge. Knowledge transfer needs a specific dissemination strategy to make the results accessible for the identified target audiences. Knowledge results must also be promoted through specific innovative communication approaches and be turned into communication stories.

To achieve this, UIA annual communication workplan (under its 3rd pillar) will include a dissemination package for each knowledge activity. The packages will present an integrated set of tools and channels to enhance the visibility and impact of the knowledge management activities. They come in complementarity with the UIA Communication Strategy that focuses on communicating funding opportunities (UIA Calls for Proposals) and disseminating projects progress, outputs and results. On that particular aspect, the collection and communication of project results is also a key communication activity for the three years to come.

ANNEX 1 – UIA projects per call and topics

The invidividual webpages of each project are available on UIA website: https://www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities

	Topic	Project	MUA	Country
Call 1	Energy transition	FED	Gothenburg City	SWEDEN
		VILAWATT	VILADECANS MUNICIPALITY	SPAIN
		CoRDEES	CITY OF PARIS	FRANCE
	Integration of migrants and refugees	S.A.L.U.S. 'W' SPACE	Bologna Municipality	ITALY
		U-RLP	City of Utrecht	NETHERLANDS
		CURANT	City of Antwerp	BELGIUM
		CoRE	City of Vienna	AUSTRIA
	Jobs and skills in the local economy	AS-FABRIK	Bilbao	SPAIN
		BRIDGE	City of Rotterdam	NETHERLANDS
		OpenAgri	Municipality of Milan	ITALY
		MARES de Madrid	MADRID CITY COUNCIL	SPAIN
	Urban poverty	USE-IT!	Birmingham City Council	UNITED KINGDOM
		B-MINCOME	Barcelona City Council	SPAIN
		5Bridges	City of Nantes	FRANCE
		CO-CITY	Municipality of Turin	ITALY
		TAST'in FIVES	The city of Lille	FRANCE
		MAC	City of Pozzuoli	ITALY

	Topic	Project	MUA	Country
Call 2	Circular economy	Antwerp Circular South	City of Antwerp	BELGIUM
		URBAN SOIL 4 FOOD	MUNICIPALITY OF MARIBOR	SLOVENIA
		EARTH CYCLE	City of SEVRAN	FRANCE
		A2UFood	Municipality of Heraklion (MoH)	GREECE
		Urban infra revolution	City of Lappeenranta	FINLAND
		APPLAUSE	City of Ljubljana (COL)	SLOVENIA
		Super Circular Estate	Municipality of Kerkrade (Kerkrade)	NETHERLANDS
		BRICK-BEACH	VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA TOWN COUNCIL	SPAIN
	Integration of migrants and refugees	Curing the Limbo	Municipality of Athens (MoA)	GREECE
		MILMA Project	Fuenlabrada City Hall	SPAIN
		MiFRIENDLY CITIES	Coventry City Council (CCC)	UNITED KINGDOM
	Urban Mobility	TMaaS	City of Ghent	BELGIUM
		CitiCAP	City of Lahti	FINLAND
		LINC-TUPPAC	Albertslund Municipality	DENMARK
		SASMob	Municipality of the City of Szeged (SZEGED)	HUNGARY
		COMMUTE	Metropolitan Toulouse	FRANCE

	Topic	Project	MUA	Country
Call 3	Adaption to climate change	RESILIO	City of Amsterdam	NETHERLANDS
		IGNITION	Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)	UNITED KINGDOM
		GBG_AS2C	Barcelona City Council	SPAIN
		CartujaQanat	Seville City Council (SCC)	SPAIN
		GUARDIAN.	Riba-roja de Túria	SPAIN
		OASIS	City of Paris	FRANCE
	Air quality	DIAMS	Aix Marseille Provence Metropole (AMP Metropole)	FRANCE
		AirQon	Municipality of Breda	NETHERLANDS
		CLAIRO	City of Ostrava	CZECH REPUBLIC
		HOPE	City of Helsinki	FINLAND
		AIR-HERITAGE	Portici Municipal Authority [CdP]	ITALY
	Housing	Home Silk Road	Metropole of Lyon	FRANCE
		CALICO	Brussels Capital Region	BELGIUM
		ICCARus (Gent knapt op)	City of Ghent	BELGIUM
		Yes We Rent!	Mataró City Council	SPAIN
		E-Co-Housing	City of Budapest, District 14 Zugló Municipality	HUNGARY
	Jobs and skills in the local economy	AVEIRO STEAM City	Municipality of Aveiro	PORTUGAL
		UFIL	Municipality of Cuenca	SPAIN
		Cluj Future of Work	Cluj-Napoca Municipality	ROMANIA
		NextGen Microcities	Ventspils City Council (VCC)	LATVIA
		P4W	City of Eindhoven	NETHERLANDS
		Urban Growth - GSIP Vantaa	City of Vantaa	FINLAND

	Topic	Project	MUA	Country
Call 4	Digital Transition	WESH	Municipality of Heerlen	NETHERLANDS
		Vox Pop	Municipality of Lisbon	PORTUGAL
		RUDI	Rennes Métropole	FRANCE
		BRISE-Vienna	City of Vienna	AUSTRIA
		DIACCESS	Municipality of Växjö (MuV)	SWEDEN
		Gavius	Gavà City Council	SPAIN
		DARE	Municipality of Ravenna	ITALY
	Sustainable use of land, nature based solutions	Green Minds	Plymouth City Council	UNITED KINGDOM
		SPIRE	Baia Mare Municipality	ROMANIA
		GreenQuays	Municipality of Breda	NETHERLANDS
		PUJ	Prato Municipality	ITALY
		UPPER	Municipality of Latina	ITALY
	Urban poverty	home and care	Stadt Landshut	GERMANY
		EPIU	Getafe City Council	SPAIN
		A Place to Be-Come	City of Seraing	BELGIUM
		CAPACITyES	Municipality of Bergamo	ITALY
		SURE	City of Tampere	FINLAND
		To-nite	Municipality of Turin (COTO)	ITALY
		BeSecure-FeelSecure	MUNICIPALITY OF PIRAEUS (PIRAEUS)	GREECE

ANNEX 2 – Seven operational challenges

1. Leadership

Implementing and testing unproven solutions through a genuine participative approach implies a high degree of risk for urban authorities. However, administrations in general and civil servants in particular operate in an environment where the level of risk aversion is traditionally high. A positive and committed leadership is therefore a key pre-requisite for municipal led innovation. Political and administrative (senior management) leadership can lower the aversion to risk by providing a strong vision and legitimisation but also by creating a professional environment where civil servants can be more inclined, motivated and rewarded to be innovative, to use their discretion, to work differently with local actors, etc. Positive leadership is also a guarantee for local stakeholders that by working with urban authorities on innovative projects, part of the risk is shared. Relevant questions:

- o How to secure this type of leadership?
- o What does leadership mean in an innovative project?
- o How does it work down all the chains of levels?
- o What are the characteristics of positive leadership for innovation?
- o Is the top-level political leadership (mayor) enough? Or should urban authorities look for a more "diffused" form of leadership?
- o How to keep leaders enthusiastic about the project?
- o How to manage changes in the political and senior management leadership over the implementation process?

2. Organisational arrangements within the urban authority (cross-department working)

UIA projects are complex because they test unproven solutions at a real urban scale but also because they try to do so by intervening on the different interconnected dimensions of the challenge(s) being addressed. Combining and coordinating different actions in the framework of an effective integrated approach, which looks at the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions, can be particularly difficult for urban authorities. The main difficulty is represented by the tension between the functional specialisation of departments and offices within municipalities versus the cross-department cooperation and coordination needed. Shaped by the traditional "silo" organisational culture, urban authorities are often ill equipped to fight against the modern complex challenges, which extend beyond departments' boundaries and narrow competencies. UIA projects are all committed to testing new forms of management and coordination, which involve all the relevant skills, experiences and competences within the municipality. The main questions here are:

- o What are the most effective coordination mechanisms?
- o How to make sure that these are accepted and understood by different levels of management?
- o What is the role of senior management in creating and managing such "integrated task forces"?
- o How can new technologies help this horizontal coordination and cooperation?
- o How can risks and rewards be shared across departments involved?
- o What type of group within the urban authority is most effective to deliver the integrated aspects of the projects?
- o How to link the UIA project with other existing (and complementary) actions delivered by other departments?

3. Participative approach for co-implementation

The participative approach – the development of strong partnerships between public bodies, the private sector and civil society (including citizens and inhabitants) – is widely recognised as a cornerstone of efficient urban development policies. Organisations as well as individuals and end-users external to the urban authorities are increasingly willing to contribute in finding and implementing new solutions to the most pressing societal challenges. NGOs and cooperatives are conceiving new ways of delivering welfare schemes for vulnerable groups while new technologies to reduce pollution or to improve mobility are being prototyped by research centres and private actors (multinationals as well as start-ups). Urban authorities need to tap into the collective intelligence of different stakeholders and benefit from the diffused knowledge and expertise to find new ways and approaches to develop efficient solutions to these societal challenges. UIA helps and encourages urban authorities to set up local partnerships that are rich, diverse and that involve "traditional stakeholders" as well as "unusual suspects". Delivery Partners have a key role in the project's co-implementation and they share with the urban authorities risks and responsibilities. Over the implementation process, UIA projects will generate valuable knowledge around questions such as:

- o What are the most effective coordination mechanisms for co-implementation?
- o How to maintain the motivation and commitment of all partners and wider stakeholders over the implementation phase (trust, co-responsibility, mechanisms and procedures)?
- o How to solve potential conflicts?
- o What are the limits of sharing responsibilities?

4. Communication with target beneficiaries and users

The final aim of any sustainable urban development project, and therefore of any UIA project, is to increase the quality of life of citizens. Beneficiaries, target groups, end users and more generally citizens are therefore key actors. Urban authorities have clear responsibilities and interest in involving them in the design and implementation process. Therefore, UIA projects need to establish a two-way inclusive and honest communication process that goes beyond the simple information about the project (the project's plaque and poster). They need to define a process able to engage target groups to increase the quality as well as the shared acceptance and ownership of the project by collecting and taking into consideration feedback, suggestions and proposals. The first UIA projects have all conceived their communication activities as an integral and important part of the implementation process and they demonstrate how it is possible to be innovative by testing new methods and techniques to outreach, engage and involve end users and beneficiaries. Last but not least, a positive communication approach can also reinforce the message that the EU and its funds have a concrete impact on the ground on the quality of life of its citizens. Relevant question here is:

- o How will the project team communicate with all relevant stakeholders at local level about progresses, benefits and (eventually) problems?

5. Monitoring and evaluation

Focusing on the actual changes achieved locally (i.e. the results) rather than on the delivered outputs and being able to monitor and evaluate to what extent projects are contributing to their achievement are essential aspects of sustainable urban development, and they are even more important for UIA projects. They are important because, first of all, UIA projects need clear parameters that will tell

urban authorities and local partners whether or not the experimental solution tested was successful. They are also important because monitoring and evaluation tools can be designed as an ongoing process, generating a learning loop for all actors involved in order to adjust and improve the actions along the way. Last but not least, they are important because only with evidence of the results urban authorities will be able to secure additional funds for upscaling the innovative solution tested. Given the innovative and experimental nature of UIA projects, they have been given the freedom to design and develop their own monitoring and evaluation framework. An initial observation of projects from the first two calls shows that this is a field where UIA projects are ready to experiment new approaches (e.g. theory of change, Randomized Control Trials, etc.) and techniques (e.g. data mining, citizen evaluators, qualitative surveys, etc.). By working on these essential aspects, UIA projects are expected to provide examples and learning points on questions such as:

- o How to co-design innovative projects starting from the expected results?
- o What are the indicators that will best generate the achievement of results but also the added value of the innovative approach?
- o To what extent can monitoring and evaluation frameworks generate the ongoing learning loop?
- o How to ensure a learning loop able to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the implementation process?
- o What are the most effective approaches and techniques?
- o How to isolate and discount achieved results from external factors?
- o How can we measure the real added value of the project compared to what would have happened without us? (What techniques, such as social return on investment?)

6. Upscaling

UIA projects are conceived as experimental tests of innovative solutions never tested before in the EU at a real urban scale. As such, they are limited in their scale (focusing on one specific neighbourhood or target group) and duration (3 years). The aim is to use this testing phase to verify how the innovative solution reacts to the complexity of real life and, if successful (according to the parameters defined in the monitoring and evaluation framework), the experimental stage should lead to an upscaling of the solutions. However, planning the next stage is not something that urban authorities should start doing only at the end of the project. Already when designing their proposals, UIA projects were reflecting on questions such as:

- o What should be the next step (a gradual or a generalised upscaling)?
- o What types of conditions and resources are needed?
- o What should be the role of the partners be in the upscaling process?
- o What are the additional or new challenges of deploying the project at a larger scale?
- o How can urban authorities ensure that the approach tested in the project becomes more generalised (mainstream) and has greater impact on the long term?
- o What type of conditions and resources are needed?
- o When should the upscaling process start?

7. Public procurement

Urban authorities are responsible for providing public services to ensure better quality of life for citizens. One way of doing this (and the most common one) is to tender out contracts to external service providers and/or purchase products through public procurement procedures. The total value

of public procurement in the EU is estimated at €2 trillion per year – or about 19% of European GDP. The way in which this money is spent has clear implications for the economy, as well as for the organisations spending it and the citizens who ultimately benefit of their services. Public procurement procedures must comply with EU law, which is transposed into national legislation by MS. Public procurement is therefore perceived as an administrative procedure but also increasingly considered as a powerful leverage to promote innovation, achieve socio-economic and environmental policy objectives and address societal challenges. UIA projects will all tender contracts and procure services during the implementation phase. The type of services and products to be procured, the financial amounts mobilised, the nature and the competencies of service providers will be very different across projects. However, overarching questions can be identified:

- o How to effectively engage service providers in the definition of the best service/product (pre-procurement/pre-commercial procurement)?
- o How to avoid hyper-specification of the services/products needed and focus on results to leave freedom and create the conditions for innovation in the mode of delivery (public procurement of innovation)?
- o How to use data to show that procurement processes have contributed to deliver the expected results?
- o How can urban authorities ensure other local benefits (e.g. social inclusion, local employment, environment, etc.) in the commissioning and procurement process?