# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
# CALL FOR PILOT NETWORK

**European cities are more and more interested in the 2030 agenda for sustainable urban** development. In response to this increasing interest, URBACT and Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) have joined forces to **propose a pilot network to support cities interested in the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

## The localisation of the 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes the need for an inclusive and localized approach to the SDGs. Localization is described as the process of defining, implementing and monitoring strategies at the local level for achieving global, national and subnational sustainable development goals and targets. More specifically, it takes "*into account subnational contexts for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress*"[1].

"Localization" of SDGs refers both to how local and regional governments and other local governance actors can critically contribute to the overall achievement of the SDGs through action from the bottom up and to how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policies. The key steps to the successful start of the localization of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in municipalities are:

**Step 1 – Raising awareness for SDGs**: Awareness-raising means that all stakeholders must understand the SDGs and engage in a broad-based dialogue that is participatory and inclusive. A successful implementation needs public support and engagement as well as a long-term commitment.

**Step 2 – Establishing a local SDG agenda:** Local authorities along with representatives from the civil and private sector should prioritize the global goals and targets for their local context. The prioritized SDGs should then be integrated into existing local strategies and concrete next steps in the form of an action plan should be defined and communicated broadly.

**Step 3 – Planning the implementation of SDGs:** A goal based planning which takes a long-term perspective is needed. Policies must balance social, economic and environmental considerations and manage potential conflicts.

**Step 4 – Monitoring and evaluation:** Finally, to be able to track progress and ensure accountability, monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be in place. Only by reviewing programs and policies one can determine their impact and efficiency and adapt policies if needed.

In spite of the efforts that cities, regions and their associations have made to raise and foster ownership for the localization of the SDGs, subnational governments are at different stages throughout the localization process.

That is why this project proposal seeks to support interested cities in "localising" the SDGs. This means: tailoring them to place-based contexts, understanding how they translate in their territorial specificities and realities, measuring distance from the national average and peer cities and providing tailored guidance to mainstream the SDG lens into territorial planning, strategy setting and policy making.

The Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments (which brings together the major international networks of local governments including CEMR and PLATFORMA) is partnering with UNDP ART Initiative and UN HABITAT and contributing to the related Toolbox on the localization of the SDGs comprising a knowledge platform, a roadmap, case studies, practical tools and other resources[2]. Moreover, the OECD

has recently developed a Programme on "A Territorial Approach to the SDGs" counting nine pilot cities and regions[3]. Launched at the 2020 World Urban Forum, the report *A Territorial Approach to the SDGs* analyses how cities and regions are increasingly using the SDGs to design, shape and implement their development strategies, policies and plans; innovate and experiment; promote synergies, manage trade-offs; and engage public, private and non-profit stakeholders – in particular the private sector and the civil society – in the policy making process.

The European Commission (EC) has also put the delivery of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs on top of its political agenda for the years to come.

In January 2019, the EC published a Reflection Paper *Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030*[4] for longterm inclusion of SDGs on the European political agenda and priorities post 2019.

AIM:
The aim of this pilot city network is to complement the work that contributes to supporting cities in effectively localizing the SDGs in the European context through the application of the URBACT Method. With a focus on integrated and participatory approach, capacity-building, peer-to-peer exchange, experience sharing, and co-creation at local level this network will also draw on learning from international experience and produce concrete results in the form of an Integrated Action Plan.

With this pilot network, through networking, learning from one another's experiences, identifying good practices, taking a participatory approach to policy-making, planning integrated actions and applying a result framework, URBACT aims to bring cities together, build their capacities and better equip them to work on the localisation of the SDGs and contribute to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda. **A specific focus will be on attracting small and medium sized cities to this network.**

**Use of Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities**
The Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC)[5], promoted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) with the support of the French government, is an open online tool that aims to help European local and regional governments that are involved in or are willing to start a process of integrated and sustainable urban development when designing, implementing and monitoring strategies and projects at city level.

The added value and contribution of the RFSC to deliver the principles of integrated sustainable urban development, which include the localisation of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, has been recognised not only in the Pact of Amsterdam as well as more recently in the Committee of the Regions Opinion on European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund15 and in the European Parliament legislative resolution of 27 March 2019 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund[6].

Thus, this pilot network seeks to support interested cities in "localising" the SDGs, in particular: tailoring them to place-based contexts; understanding how they translate in their territorial specificities and realities; measuring from the national average and peer cities or regions; and providing tailored guidance to mainstream SDG lens into territorial planning, strategy setting and approach to sustainability and well-being at the scale that matters the most.

SDG monitoring and reporting remains a challenge. The pilot network will address another explicit objective of the pilot – to strengthen synergies between URBACT, CEMR and the Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC) as well as the EU and international institutions.

integrating the 2030 Agenda in their territory and translating the SDGs locally into policy planning supporting the design, implementation, monitoring and review of locally-appropriate SDG actions.
The main objective of the network will be for the pilot cities to exchange, learn from European and International peers, build capacities towards the localisation process of the SDGs in their territories and

with their peers and develop tools and policy recommendations for localising the SDGs.

**Who can apply:**
As in regular call for networks in the URBACT Programme:
• Cities, municipalities, towns;
• Infra-municipal tiers of government such as city districts and boroughs in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having competences for policymaking and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned in which they are willing to get involved;
• Metropolitan authorities and organised agglomerations in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having delegated competences for policymaking and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network.
• Local agencies defined as public or semi-public organisations set up by a city, partially or fully owned by the city authority, and responsible for the design and implementation of specific policies (economic development, energy supply, health services, transport, etc.).

Provincial, regional and national authorities as well as universities and research centers are not considered as eligible partners. These organisations can be involved in the SDG Pilot Network as members of the URBACT Local Group (ULG) that each partner of the network will have to build.

**Start of the Network**
The network kick-off meeting, foreseen in March 2021, will be the opportunity for the partners to share and refine the rationale and working methods of this pilot network. This first meeting will also be the time to fix milestones for the network and define a common workplan. A final event will be scheduled for September 2022, which will be used to draw out the main findings and results of the pilot.

**The 18 month schedule will be split into two main stages:**
**Stage 1** – Diagnosis and Visioning (approx. 8 months)
This stage will start with some work to set out a baseline for each city partner. It will then focus on mapping and aligning the SDGs to the local context with the support of the network Lead Expert.
This stage should also help the city partners to start looking ahead to fixing priorities and targets for the future.
Several different tools and methods will be used including workshops and visits to lighthouse cities, peer review, self assessment using the RFSC tool, local awareness raising actions can also be designed to engage with local stakeholders and set up a strong URBACT local group.
**Stage 2** – Planning Actions and Fixing Indicators (approx. 10 months)
This stage will focus on supporting partner cities to co-design an Integrated Action Plan. It will use the knowledge and experience of some lighthouse cities to help identify suitable actions. The Lead expert will support the cities to ensure that the actions are well defined using the URBACT tools. This stage will also provide cities with the skills necessary to fix suitable indicators and establish monitoring systems for

these.
Both stages of activity will be accompanied by the URBACT programme and CEMR through dedicated capacity building actions including training on RFSC, tools for peer review, training on setting up multi-stakeholder groups etc.

## The SDG Pilot Network Budget

The global budget for the entire SDG Pilot Network will be €900,000. A maximum average ERDF cofinancing rate of 70% will apply. The Lead Partner will require a higher budget allocation to cover additional coordination costs.

CEMR and URBACT Monitoring Committee members shall identify potential city partners and inform the URBACT Joint Secretariat by 15 December 2020

# ANNEX 1 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

## BASIC INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| CITY | COUNTRY |
| FIRST NAME | LAST NAME |
| TITLE | |
| POSTAL ADDRESS | |
| POSTAL CODE | TELEPHONE |
| EMAIL | FAX |

## ABOUT THE CITY

**Brief description of the city**
**Basic city data**
a. Population size
b. Surface area (km2)
c. Population density (people/km2)
d. Population growth rate (%)
e. Main source of prosperity (e.g. industry, trade, tourism, creative industry, etc.)
f. City URL/webpage

## BACKGROUND SDGs LEGISLATIVE OR POLICY INFORMATION

Describe the SDGs legislative or policy framework (policy document, statement, agreement, etc.)

## STATEMENT OF INTEREST AND EXPERIENCE

a.Why is the city interested in the project? Why does this project matter?
Explain the motivation and expectations for the city to participate in this project
b. How is the city service(s) or practice(s) relevant to the project?
c. What is the city's experience working on a similar project (highlights of city's experience in EU and SDG projects)?
d. What other cities can learn from your experience and what your city is prepared to do to further that learning?
e. Is the city interested to become and act as a Lead Partner in this network?
Yes No

## NETWORK MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

a.Local management team (decision makers, project coordinator, local team, communication and financial officers)
b. Experience of proposed local project

---

[1] - Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP, UN-Habitat (2016), Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Subnational Level

[2] - The Local2030: Localizing the SDGs online platform provides tools, experiences, new solutions and guides to support SDG localization.

[3] - OECD Programme on a Territorial Approach to the SDGs: https://www.oecd.org/cfe/territorial-approach-sdgs.htm

[4] - European Commission Reflection Paper 'Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030'

[5] - CEMR, Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities (RFSC): www.rfsc.eu or http://app.rfsc.eu/

[6] - European Parliament proposal for a regulation on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2019-0303_EN.html?redirect