

	<b>URBACT III Programme Manual</b>	<b>Fact Sheet 4B National URBACT Points</b>
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Section 1. National URBACT Points in the URBACT III Operational programme: context and objective

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### **1. National URBACT Points in the URBACT III Operational programme: context and objective**

The URBACT III Operational Programme foresees that National URBACT Points shall contribute to the delivery of Specific Objective 4, related to capitalization and dissemination. As stated under Specific Objective 4, URBACT shall *“ensure that practitioners and decision-makers at all levels (EU, national, regional and local) have increased access to URBACT thematic knowledge and share know-how on all aspects of sustainable urban development in order to improve urban policies”* (OP section 2.A.1.)

Actions shall be developed to consolidate and share knowledge on sustainable urban development (good practices, policy recommendations, etc.) so that it is widely used by relevant players in the field. More especially, the capitalisation and dissemination actions will also aim to reach players beyond the URBACT beneficiaries: cities not involved in URBACT networks, as well as the different levels of government involved in urban development (regional, national, European). These actions shall foster the up-take of knowledge on sustainable urban development in urban policies, and increase the opportunities of exchange on urban issues, building on URBACT results, at local, regional, national and EU level.

The Operational Programme outlines National URBACT Points are a key component of the activities to be implemented under Specific Objective 4, in charge of *“communicating on URBACT activities and disseminating URBACT results at national level in local language and operating as national platforms for dialogue, exchange and learning on sustainable urban development, involving the different levels of governance concerned (national, regional, local)”* (OP section 2.A.3.1.D). They shall do so by *“providing a wider range of services at national level, including translation and dissemination of results, organization of national seminars, support for capacity-building activities, etc.”* (OP section 2.A.3.1.D).

## **2. Role of National URBACT Points and target audiences**

The National URBACT Points shall play an active role, at national level, in:

- 1) Communicating on the URBACT programme (objectives, activities, etc.) and informing potential beneficiaries (more especially in relation to the open calls for network proposals)
- 2) Disseminating programme results (network results, capitalisation outputs, etc.) to urban practitioners and policy-makers at local, regional, national and EU level, with a specific emphasis on reaching out to urban players outside the URBACT community
- 3) Enhancing the dialogue between local, regional and national authorities to support the design and delivery of sustainable integrated urban policies
- 4) Supporting the URBACT Secretariat in enhancing capacities of urban practitioners and policy-makers in designing and delivering integrated and participatory urban policies

The National URBACT Points shall target their activities to the following audiences:

- urban practitioners and policy-makers at local, regional, regional and EU level (including Managing Authorities of ERDF and ESF Operational Programmes)
- potential beneficiaries, with a focus on local authorities
- the national “URBACT community” (network partners, experts, etc. involved in URBACT networks)

## **3. Services to be delivered by National URBACT Points**

### **3.1. Communication and information on the URBACT programme**

The National URBACT Points shall contribute to the implementation of the URBACT Communications strategy, more especially by ensuring communications on the URBACT programme (objectives, activities, etc.) and informing potential beneficiaries (more especially in relation to the open calls for network proposals). This shall be done, on the basis of content provided by the URBACT Joint Secretariat, by means of different communications activities in national language including:

- a) Appointing a contact person who will be in a position to provide information, in national language, on URBACT objectives, activities, calls for network proposals, etc. and dispatch specific requests to the URBACT Secretariat as needed;
- b) Delivering national communications using digital tools and print material when relevant;
- c) Providing contributions related to the activities of URBACT partners in the country or content related to sustainable integrated urban development in the country, to feed into the URBACT communications tools such as the website (national pages, blog), the Newsletter, etc.
- d) Organising dedicated infodays to present the programme, the open calls for network proposals and how to join, etc.;
- e) Organising dedicated events to support potential beneficiaries in joining the programme and beneficiaries in delivering their activities (eg training on network management);

- f) Supporting the URBACT Joint Secretariat with the identification of opportunities to foster communication on the URBACT programme, calls for network proposals, etc. (eg events organized by other players on urban matters), and using these opportunities to foster URBACT's visibility and outreach (eg organizing and holding an URBACT stand, ensuring presence of URBACT material, organizing and delivering URBACT contributions/ speakers in events, etc.).

### 3.2. Dissemination of URBACT results

The National URBACT Point shall support the dissemination of programme results (network results, capitalisation outputs, etc.) to urban practitioners and policy-makers at local, regional, national and EU level, with a specific emphasis on reaching out to urban players outside the URBACT community. This shall be based on content and documents provided by the URBACT Joint Secretariat. NUPs may also propose to produce specific content to support dissemination of programme results at national level (eg focusing on results achieved by URBACT partners in the country, on a capitalization topic of specific importance at national level, etc.). This shall be done by means of different activities, in national language, including:

- a) Delivering national communications using digital tools and print material when relevant;
- b) Providing contributions related to the results achieved by URBACT partners in the country or content related to sustainable integrated urban development in the country, to feed into the URBACT communications tools such as the website (national pages, blog), the Newsletter, etc.
- c) Organising dedicated events to share the results coming from networks involving national partners, URBACT capitalization results, etc.;
- d) Identifying opportunities to disseminate programme results (eg events organized by other players on urban matters), and using these opportunities to foster URBACT's visibility and outreach (eg organizing and holding an URBACT stand, ensuring presence of URBACT material, organizing and delivering URBACT contributions/ speakers, etc. in events).

### 3.3. Supporting dialogue between local, regional and national authorities on sustainable integrated urban development in relation with URBACT objectives, activities and results

The National URBACT Point shall support and enhance the dialogue between local, regional and national authorities on the design and delivery of sustainable integrated urban policies, in relation with URBACT objectives, activities and results. This shall be done by means of different activities, in national language, including:

- a) Ensuring ongoing dialogue among URBACT partners through communications on networks and partners' activities and results (eg by means of social media campaigns, dedicated meetings, networking URBACT partners in the country, etc.);
- b) Organising and contributing to events gathering players from all levels so as to allow them to exchange on all issues related to sustainable integrated urban development, building on URBACT activities and results, in accordance with national urban agendas and priorities;
- c) Targeting all key urban players ( at local, regional, national levels, Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes, etc.) in activities related to communication on the programme and dissemination of programme results;
- d) Identifying opportunities for URBACT to support national activities/ initiatives/ schemes dedicated to promote sustainable integrated urban development and

support cities and Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes with the design and delivery of integrated projects/ strategies, etc; and supporting the URBACT Secretariat in contributing to these national activities/ initiatives/ schemes.

### 3.4. Supporting the delivery of URBACT capacity-building actions

National URBACT Points shall support the URBACT Joint Secretariat with the delivery of URBACT capacity-building actions dedicated to urban practitioners and policy-makers for the design and implementation of integrated and participatory urban policies. This shall be done by means of different activities including:

- a) Supporting the URBACT Secretariat with the organization and delivery of capacity-building events for programme beneficiaries (eg national capacity-building seminars for URBACT partners, URBACT Summer University taking place in their countries, etc.) with logistics (eg providing venue for events, supporting registration process), identification of service providers (eg interpretation, trainers, speakers), relaying information/ invitation emails, etc.;
- b) Supporting the URBACT Secretariat with the identification of capacity-building needs related to integrated and participatory approaches to urban development (eg relaying surveys among URBACT partners, reporting back to the Secretariat relevant information the NUP may have gathered on capacity-building needs related to sustainable urban development);
- c) Identifying opportunities for URBACT to support national activities/ initiatives/ schemes dedicated to build capacities of cities and Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes with the design and delivery of integrated projects/ strategies, etc; and supporting the URBACT Secretariat in contributing to these national activities/ initiatives/ schemes (with logistics, identification of trainers, etc.).

## **4. Mandatory and optional activities under the different services**

National URBACT Points shall operate to provide all services listed above under section 3:

1. Communication and information on the URBACT programme
2. Dissemination of URBACT results
3. Supporting dialogue between local, regional and national authorities on sustainable integrated urban development in relation with URBACT objectives, activities and results
4. Supporting the delivery of URBACT capacity-building actions

Under each category of services, some activities shall be mandatory and other optional so as to take into account national contexts, resources and needs. The following table outlines mandatory versus optional activities:

MAIN SERVICES	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	MANDATORY/ OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES
<b>1.Communication &amp; Information on the URBACT programme</b>	Info-point/ contact person in a position to provide relevant and updated information (especially on open calls, how to join, etc.)	Mandatory: 1 person to be appointed as “URBACT contact person”, who will be in a position to provide information, in national language, on URBACT objectives, activities, calls for network proposals, etc. and dispatch specific requests to the URBACT Secretariat as needed
	Organization of infodays/ ad hoc meetings	Mandatory: 1 event minimum to be organised per year*
	National communications relaying URBACT news related to calls, important events, etc. using digital tools and print material when relevant	- Mandatory: Dissemination of URBACT news related to calls, important events, by means of emails, newsletter, social media, etc. - Mandatory: Regular updates the “national page” on the URBACT website (minimum once every 2 months)
	Providing contributions related to the activities of URBACT partners in the country or content related to sustainable integrated urban development in the country, to feed into the URBACT communications tools such as the website (national pages, blog), the Newsletter, etc.	Optional
	Others (to be defined with NUP, national authority and agreed by URBACT MA)	Optional
<b>2.Dissemination of URBACT results (network results, capitalization results, etc.)</b>	Organization of events dedicated to the dissemination of URBACT results in the country, or contribution to relevant national events organized by other institutions and targeting relevant audiences in the country	Mandatory: 1 event minimum to be organised per year*
	Support to the URBACT Secretariat with the organization of dissemination events	Optional
	National communications relaying URBACT content related to the dissemination of programme results (from networks, from capitalization), etc. using digital tools and print material when relevant	- Mandatory: Dissemination of URBACT content, by means of digital tools such as emails, newsletters, social media, etc. - Mandatory: Regular updates the “national page” on the URBACT website (minimum once every 2 months)
	Others (to be defined with NUP, national authority and agreed by URBACT MA)	Optional
<b>3. Supporting the dialogue between local, regional &amp; national authorities on sustainable integrated urban development</b>	Organization of events or contribution to relevant national events organized by other institutions	Mandatory: 1 event minimum to be organised per year*
	National communications campaign relaying URBACT content and national priorities/ agenda related to sustainable integrated urban development, using digital tools	Optional
	Others (to be defined with NUP, national authority and agreed by URBACT MA)	Optional
<b>4.Supporting the delivery of URBACT capacity-building actions</b>	Supporting the URBACT Secretariat with the organization and delivery of URBACT capacity-building events for programme beneficiaries (eg logistics, identification of trainers, etc.)	Mandatory: Support to URBACT Joint Secretariat with the organisation of capacity-building actions foreseen in the country (1 event every 2years on average)
	Contributing to the identification of capacity-building needs (eg by means of surveys)	Optional

	Monitoring of capacity-building schemes developed at national level and identifying opportunities for URBACT input/ contribution	Optional
	Others (to be defined with NUP, national authority and agreed by URBACT MA)	Optional
<b>5. NUP Coordination</b>	Reporting on NUP activities (incl. monitoring results indicators, providing information for performance review, etc.)	Mandatory: 1 activity report every 6 months, 1 annual report for performance review
	Participating in coordination meetings, trainings, etc. organised by the URBACT Secretariat for all NUPs	Mandatory: participation in 2 physical meetings per year minimum
	Coordinating with national authorities responsible for URBACT in the country to raise awareness on NUP activities, ensure alignment between NUP activities and national priorities/ needs related to sustainable integrated urban development, etc.	Mandatory: 1 physical meeting per year minimum
	Others (eg translation of documents from EN to national language in the framework of the delivery of the above services - to be defined with NUP, national authority and agreed by URBACT MA)	Optional

*\* These events may be organised so as to deliver on one or several categories of services simultaneously, including sessions for communication/ information purposes, for dissemination of results, for capacity-building purposes, to support dialogue between local, regional and national authorities on sustainable integrated urban development. NUPs may also embed dedicated URBACT sessions in major events organized by other institutions, as long as the target audience is relevant for NUP activities (see section 2).*

All activities (mandatory and optional) shall be included in a work plan to be discussed with the URBACT Secretariat and possibly with the national authority responsible for URBACT in the country, and validated by the URBACT Secretariat.

The URBACT Secretariat shall provide all the necessary guidance, information, material, training for National URBACT Points to deliver the above services.

## 5. Framework for implementation

### 5.1 Provisions in the URBACT III Operational Programme

As stated in the URBACT III Operational Programme, *“each Member/ Partner State shall appoint, in agreement with the Managing Authority, a public or equivalent or not for profit body in their country that shall operate as National URBACT Point (...) Should a Member/ Partner State not be able to appoint such a body or should no such suitable public body exist, an open call for tender will be launched by the Managing Authority”* (OP section 2.A.3.1.D).

### 5.2 Procedure for the appointment by national authorities

Member/ Partner states willing to appoint their National URBACT Points shall submit a “form for the appointment of National URBACT Point”. In this form, they shall present the proposed organization, outline the experience and capacities of the organization against the services to be delivered, and explain why the organization is in a strong position to perform the role of National URBACT Points in their country. It will be possible that 2 or several countries appoint a joint NUP (eg in countries with a shared language).

Following the validation of the proposed National URBACT Point by the URBACT Managing Authority (against the NUP selection criteria, see section 4.4.), an agreement shall be signed between the URBACT Managing Authority and the appointed organization (OP section 2.A.3.1.D). The agreement will define the activities to be performed by the National URBACT Point under each category of services (see section 3), the expected deliverables and results, as well as the conditions for delivery (administrative and financial conditions, calendar for delivery of the activities, etc.). It will include a framework for an annual performance review (see 4.5.).

The agreement shall cover a two-year period. It can be automatically renewed twice (2 other two-year periods). The annual performance review may lead to the appointment of a new National URBACT Point. The framework for the annual performance review and the conditions for renewal of the appointed NUP shall be defined in the agreement.

#### a. Procedure for the selection by means of open calls for tender

As stated in the URBACT III Operational Programme foresees, should a Member/ Partner State not be able to appoint such a body or should no such suitable public body exist, the URBACT Managing Authority shall launch an open call for tender to select the National URBACT Point. This shall be done building on the criteria for the selection of National URBACT Points outlined in the Programme Manual (see section 4.4.).

The terms of reference of the tender will define the services to be performed by the National URBACT Point, the expected deliverables and results, as well as the conditions for delivery (administrative and financial). The national authorities responsible for URBACT in the concerned country will normally take part in the selection of the service provider.

Following selection of the service provider, a contract shall be established for two years, renewable twice, and include an annual performance review (see 4.5.). The annual performance review may lead to a new tendering procedure for the selection of a new National URBACT Point in case the service provider is not performing according to the result indicators and expected deliverables set in the contract.

#### b. Criteria for the selection of National URBACT Points

National URBACT Points shall be selected against the following criteria:

- Experience with sustainable integrated urban development and knowledge of EU and national policy framework and instruments in this area;
- Capacity to dedicate, in a sustainable way, a reference person with the necessary skills to act as a contact person for URBACT in the country (more especially good understanding of sustainable urban development and EU policy framework, good communications skills – both oral and written, fluent in English);
- Capacity to reach out, in national language, to a large audience of urban practitioners and policy-makers at local, regional and national level (existing database of relevant contacts, partnerships with relevant organizations, etc.);
- Capacity to communicate, in national language, relevant content targeting various audiences through digital communications tools (webpage, newsletters, social media, etc.) and other communications tools (print, participation in events, stand management, partnerships, etc.); capacity to mobilize appropriate staff needed for the delivery of communications activities;
- Capacity to organize and deliver events as well as support the organization and delivery of events at national level (eg URBACT info days, National Capacity-building seminars, etc.) including designing programmes, inviting speakers, managing registration, etc.
- Capacity to access and dialogue with national authorities responsible for urban policies (relevant ministries, Managing Authorities of Operational Programmes, etc.);

As stated under section 4.2., in case of appointment by the National Authorities, the National URBACT Point shall be a public or equivalent or not for profit body.

#### c. Management and coordination of National URBACT Points

The National URBACT Points shall establish an annual work plan in cooperation with the URBACT Secretariat. The national authority responsible for URBACT can take part in this process. The annual work plan shall be validated by the URBACT Secretariat.

A person within the URBACT Secretariat will be dedicated to the coordination of National URBACT Points and monitoring of their activities.

Coordination of National URBACT Points shall be based on:

- regular coordination meetings between the URBACT Secretariat and all NUPs (at least twice a year),
- ongoing flow of information on programme and networks activities,
- ad hoc trainings to support service delivery,
- participation of National URBACT Points in key URBACT activities when relevant (eg. Programme level events such as conferences, summer universities, etc),
- ongoing networking among National URBACT Points, etc..

The National URBACT Points shall be accountable to the URBACT Managing Authority. The URBACT Secretariat will report on NUPs activities and performance to the Monitoring Committee. The URBACT Secretariat shall define and implement a reporting and performance management



framework, which will be included in the agreement/ contract signed with the National URBACT Point. This framework shall include:

- regular reporting on delivery of services,
- a set of indicators to monitor delivery of the different services;
- an annual performance review;
- meetings with the URBACT Secretariat (at least once a year)
- minimum one annual meeting (physical or online) gathering National URBACT Point, a representative of the national authority responsible for URBACT and the URBACT Secretariat (to agree work plan, monitor progress in service delivery, review performance, adjust work plan, etc.);

## **6. Budgetary elements**

The budget for National URBACT Points' services shall not exceed 50.000 euros per year per country (all taxes included).

The budget for mandatory activities (see section 3.5.) shall normally not exceed 30.000 euros per year per country. The agreement/ contract will include the allocated budget building on the activities (mandatory and optional) listed in the work plan. The budget shall cover all costs related to the delivery of the expected activities, except travel and accommodation costs incurred for participation in events/ meetings organized by the URBACT Secretariat that will be directly covered by the Programme budget (eg URBACT programme level conferences, coordination meetings, trainings, etc.).