

Assessment Study UAEU

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Coordinators' & Action Leaders' Meeting



Key strengths & achievements (I)

- 1. Multi-level, multi-stakeholder** approach is main added value of the UAEU: Fostered significant collaboration between cities, the Commission, Member States, other EU institutions, and other stakeholders
- 2. Provided unique opportunity** for cities and other stakeholders to enter into dialogue, exchange views and ideas, find common ground, and instigate actions to address identified issues
- 3. Thematic Partnership approach** enabled to identify specific bottlenecks for cities and to develop concrete action plans to address these. Pillars and themes were considered very relevant
- 4. Flexible, 'experimental' nature** of TPs was a key enabler: allowed TPs to take a genuinely 'bottom-up' approach and define their own remit, focus and working methods

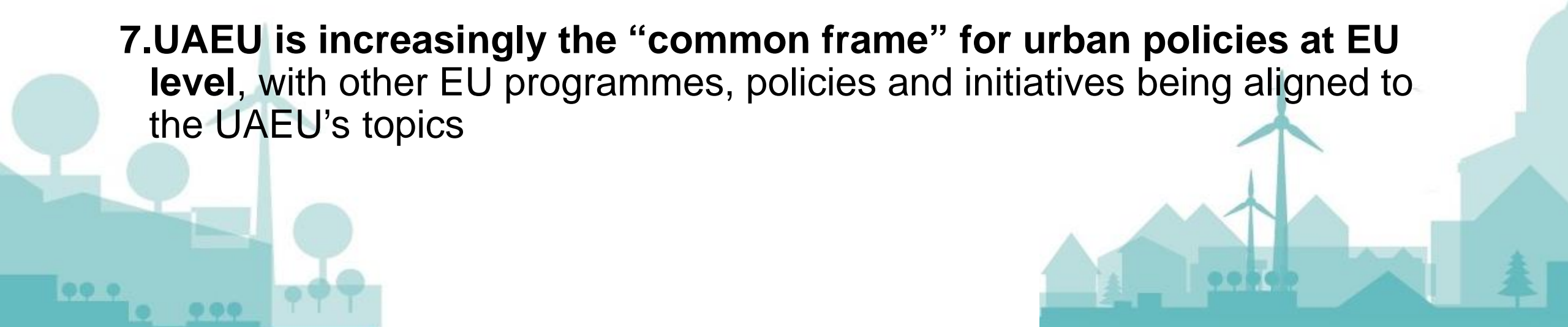
Key strengths & achievements (II)

5. Action Plans are beginning to generate tangible impacts:

- reportedly influenced a few Commission legislative proposals
- Guidelines/recommendations to improve implementation of existing legislation
- large number of best practices, guides, toolkits and roadmaps

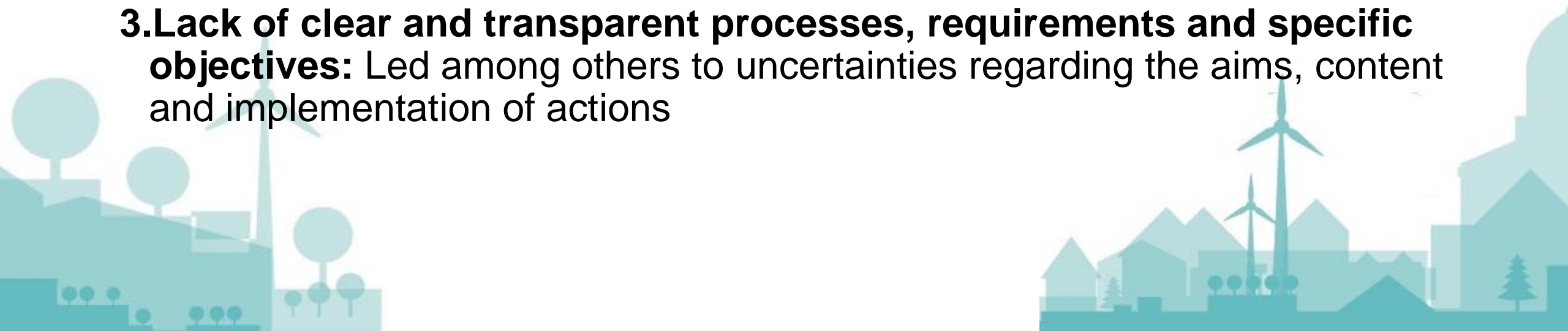
6. Certain, albeit limited influence in strengthening the urban dimension in policy design and implementation at EU and national level; new national structures inspired by the UAEU

7. UAEU is increasingly the “common frame” for urban policies at EU level, with other EU programmes, policies and initiatives being aligned to the UAEU’s topics



Weaknesses & issues to address (I)

- 1.Implementation of actions is often uncertain:** There are serious doubts about the extent to which TP members (or other stakeholders) are able to fully implement their action plans
- 2.Relatively few actions focus on Better Regulation or Better Funding:** Prevalence of Better Knowledge actions raises questions about TPs' level of ambition and ultimate impacts
- 3.Lack of clear and transparent processes, requirements and specific objectives:** Led among others to uncertainties regarding the aims, content and implementation of actions



Weaknesses & issues to address (II)

- 4. Level of engagement of stakeholders in and with UAEU was uneven:** Progress relied heavily on 'hard core' of engaged TP members, especially coordinators. MS and some DGs less involved
- 5. Limited outreach to stakeholders who are not directly involved in UAEU:** Some TPs reached out to a "second circle" of cities, but overall the profile and visibility of the UAEU remains quite low
- 6. Resource constraints were a challenge for TPs:** Caused by the relatively small amounts available, and, in some cases, a lack of awareness on available funding

Weaknesses & issues to address (III)

- 7. Governance mechanism for UAEU is not effective:** The UDG and DGUM were only able to provide a limited extent of guidance and steer
- 8. Internal communication within and between different elements of the UAEU has been lacking:** The flow of information between key actors (the Commission, TP coordinators, Technical Secretariat and governance bodies) was suboptimal
- 9. The internal and external coherence of the UAEU is low:** Applies to both the alignment with other elements of the UAEU (such as the “one-stop-shop”) and the alignment with other relevant EU initiatives

Considerations for the future

Key issues to be addressed

1. Implementation uncertain
2. Relatively few actions on Better Regulation or Funding
3. Lack of clarity & transparency

Enhancing the implementation and impact of actions

4. Uneven engagement of stakeholders
5. Limited outreach to external stakeholders
6. Resource constraints a challenge for TPs

Improving the engagement of stakeholders in and with the UAEU

7. Governance mechanism not effective
8. Internal communication was lacking
9. Low internal and external coherence

Refining UAEU governance mechanisms, internal comms, place in the wider policy framework

Options to address key issues (I)

Option A: Continuation and deepening thematic approach

Option B: Shift towards holistic / integrated approach

1. Enhancing the implementation and impact of actions

- Prolong current TPs with focus on implementing APs
- Stimulate amendments to current actions
- Formulate clear and transparent processes, requirements and specific objectives for TPs
- Promote cross-Partnership collaboration
- Improve information on the status of actions

- End TPs in their current format
- Set up an alternative transversal / integrated working method, to allow former 'core' TP members to work together
- Systematic identification of lessons learned, challenges and solutions identified across TPs
- Identification and prioritisation of actions with potentially high impact and reasonable chance of implementation
- Joint proposal for implementation, combining and building on original actions

Options to address key issues (II)

2. Improving the engagement of stakeholders in and with the UAEU

Option A: Continuation and deepening thematic approach

- Allow for a greater role of cities in the composition of TPs
- Ensure all TP members have sufficient relevant thematic expertise
- Ensure adequate resources for TPs
- Strengthen the relations of the TPs with relevant institutions
- Reach out to external actors not directly involved in TPs

Option B: Shift towards holistic / integrated approach

- Expand on the format of Coordinators meetings, e.g. via regular meetings of the core former TP members with high-level Commission and MS representatives
- Active engagement in thematic working groups
- Ensure adequate resources for engagement in holistic / integrated approach

Options to address key issues (III)

Potential high-level changes and enhancements

3. Refining the UAEU's governance mechanisms, internal communications, and place in the wider policy / institutional framework

- Improved guidance from the DGUM/UDG and Commission for TPs, e.g. by more clearly defining roles of the DGUM, UDG and UATPG, and/or by 'recalibrating' the way the Commission coordinates and facilitates the UAEU
- Enhance the links between the UAEU and the decision making processes and policy cycles
- Enhancing the representation of cities in relevant decision-making / governance bodies at EU and national level
- Improve the alignment with Cohesion Policy programmes and other EU initiatives

Study available here:

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2020/01/15-01-2020-assessment-study-of-the-urban-agenda-for-the-european-union



Thank you!

