

CLIMATE ADAPTATION PARTNERSHIP

Introduction to the Draft Action Plan

In May 2016 the Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters met in Amsterdam; they agreed on and established the Pact of Amsterdam - Urban Agenda for the EU (NP-CEU 2016). In line with the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the Pact of Amsterdam defines Climate Adaptation as one of the Priority themes to be addressed. Climate Adaptation Partnership start working in July 2017 as a multilevel and cross-sectoral cooperation instrument and key delivery mechanism for the theme.

The objectives of the Climate Adaptation Partnership is: “to anticipate the adverse effects of climate change and take appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage it can cause to Urban Areas. The focus is on: vulnerability assessments, climate resilience and risk management, including the social dimensions of climate adaptation strategies”.

The Coordinator of the Climate Adaptation Partnership is the City of Genoa. Among the members are States – France, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria -, local and regional authorities - Barcelona, Glasgow, Trondheim, Loulè, Potenza, Sfantu Gheorghe, European Commission departments – DG REGIO, DG CLIMA, DG ENV, DG RTD, JRC, and other organisations – Eurocities, CEMR, EIB, URBACT, EEA, Covenant of Majors.

It is widely recognized that vulnerability and the potential scale of damage due to climate change is especially high in urban areas, which host high density of populations (including highly vulnerable groups), high concentration of valuable assets and economic investments as well as essential infrastructure networks and nodes. A continent with a high rate of urbanisation faces increasing temperatures and the effects of extreme weather. This could impact not only the quality of urban life but also a range of other themes, from Jobs and Growth to Justice and Migration. However, European cities and towns are not equipped to face this global scale challenge on their own.

The main barriers and bottlenecks are:

- Lack of financial resources for planning and implementation
- Lack of supportive national frameworks and policies
- General lack of human resources and their capacities and know-how
- Lack of experience in creating long-term administrative set-ups for adaptation
- Gaps in understanding climate impacts and costs in specific urban sectors
- Limited capacity to collect, access and interpret climate data



- Lack of experience and know-how on implementing adaptation measures
- Gaps in know-how on developing urban monitoring systems
- Limited awareness of the available information, also due to language barriers.

The Partnership goal is to enable local governments to assess climate change risks and the vulnerability of their own essential urban system, both socially and at the infrastructural level, to strategically plan adaptation policies based on solid evidence and to fund and implement measures on the ground leading to tangible increases of urban resilience in Europe.

The set of actions proposed in the Action Plan comes under three headings:

BETTER REGULATION

- Revision of urban development and planning regulation tools, focusing on national, regional and local climate adaptation actions
- Further involvement of national municipality associations and Covenant of Mayors as key facilitators and supporters of local authorities

BETTER FUNDING

- Guidelines and toolkits for adaptation economic analysis
- Recommendations for the Ops of the ERDF in order to improve access for municipalities
- A new LIFE for urban adaptation projects
- Further support for the drafting of local adaptation plans

BETTER KNOWLEDGE

- Improving data accessibility for EU Municipalities in the framework of COPERNICUS
- Enhancing the urban content of Climate-ADAPT
- Political training academy on climate adaptation
- Enhancing citizen and stakeholder involvement at regional and local levels for climate adaptation agendas
- Promote open access on insurance data for climate risk management.

The Climate Adaptation Partnership process is a response to important urban resilience issues recognised both globally and on the European level – and on to the local level. Acting local is key for successful achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals but local action must be supported by all governance levels in concerted action. The participatory bottom-up approach, which is at the basis of this Action Plan, means to bring together local realities and needs, with international expertise as well as national and international legislative and strategic mandates in defining state-of-the-art solutions. The specific Actions in the Plan aimed to increase the number of urban areas adopting and implementing adaptation plans and strategies resulting in reduced human and economic losses due to climate change impacts.