



**PARTNERSHIP URBAN POVERTY  
ACTION PLAN  
2017**

## **ACTION PLAN**

The Urban Agenda for the EU aims to realise the full potential and contribution of Urban Areas towards achieving the objectives of the Union and related national priorities in full respect of subsidiarity and proportionality principles and competences.

Each Partnership will formulate an Action Plan with concrete proposals for Better Regulation, Better Funding and Better Knowledge, related to the theme of the Partnership, which can be regarded as nonbinding contributions to the design of future and the revision of existing EU legislation, instruments and initiatives.

## **DEFINITIONS**

*Actions:* should address a real need: an important issue, have real and visible impact and concern a larger number of Member States and cities; Actions should be new: no 'recycling' of elements which have already been done or which would be done anyway; Actions should be ready to be implemented: Clear, detailed and feasible; a study or a working group or a network is not considered an action.

*Recommendations:* are meant to suggest good policies, good governance or good practices examples which could be used for inspiration. For instance, these can be projects that have already been implemented and that are considered successful. The aim of such recommendations is to encourage their mainstreaming (implementation at a wider scale) and transfer (implementation in more Member States and cities).

*Responsible:* is meant the institution (EU/national/local) to who the action is addressed. It is not specifically any of the members of the partnerships. To describe why one institution should be responsible means that the partnership went into the analysis of the action and reached the conclusion that an action fits the purpose.

*Deadline:* refers to the timeframe where the action should take place in order to be meaningful. A deadline refers to a specific calendar.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AROPE: At risk of poverty or social exclusion

IC-BCD: Recommendation Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage

EC: European Commission

EPSR: European Pillar of Social Rights

ERDF: European Regional Development Fund

ESF: European Social Fund

ESIF: European Structural and Investment Funds

EU-SILC: European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions

FEANTSA: European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless

FRA: Fundamental Rights Agency

MA: Managing Authority

MS: Member State

NUTS: Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics

SCD: Sub-City District

UDAN: Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods

UPP: Urban Poverty Partnership

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

WB: World Bank

## Table of contents

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1.Governance of the Partnership	9
2.2.Objectives and priority setting	9
2.3.Rationale	11
2.4.Background information used	13
2.5.The working method of the partnership	13
2.6.Communication about the partnership	15
<b>3. ACTIONS</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1.Integrated actions	17
ACTION 1 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: BLOCK GRANT FOR URBAN AUTHORITIES TO FIGHT POVERTY	17
ACTION 2 – SETTING UP AN EUROPEAN NETWORK OF NATIONAL OBSERVATORIES WITH EXPERIENCE IN URBAN POVERTY	21
ACTION 3 – DEVELOPING DATA ON URBAN POVERTY AT EU LEVEL	24
3.2.Child poverty	32
ACTION 4 – ADOPTION OF A EUROPEAN CHILD GUARANTEE	32
ACTION 5 – PROGRESS TOWARDS A DIRECTIVE ON INVESTING IN CHILDREN BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION INVESTING IN CHILDREN: BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DISADVANTAGE	38
3.3.Regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods	40
ACTION 6 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: SETTING UP A NEW URBAN TERRITORIAL OBJECTIVE	40
ACTION 7 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: LOCAL PACT FOR THE REGENERATION OF URBAN DEPRIVED AREAS	42
3.4.Homelessness	46
ACTION 8 – ENDING HOMELESSNESS BY 2030, THROUGH THE REFORM OF SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL	46
ACTION 9 – CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE USE OF THE EU FUNDS TO END HOMELESSNESS	50
3.5.Vulnerability of Roma people	52

ACTION 10 – ADOPTION OF AN INTEGRATED ROMA FRAMEWORK FROM A MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE APPROACH	52
ACTION 11 - STRENGTHENING THE DESEGREGATION PRINCIPLE IN EU URBAN AREAS	56
ACTION 12 – EASE CITIES’ ACCESS TO EU FUNDING IN PARALLEL TO INTRODUCING LOCAL EX-ANTE CONDITIONALITIES REGARDING – AMONG OTHERS – ROMA INCLUSION	59
<b>4. LINKS WITH OTHER COMMITMENTS</b>	<b>61</b>
4.1.Link with the cross-cutting issues	61
4.2.New Urban Agenda & Sustainable Development Goals	64
4.3.Links with other partnerships	66
<b>5. REFERENCES</b>	<b>66</b>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The priority area on Urban Poverty has been defined in the Pact of Amsterdam as “*to reduce poverty and improve the inclusion of people in poverty or at risk of poverty in deprived neighbourhoods*”. This is considered the overarching principle for the development of the Action Plan of the Urban Poverty Partnership (UPP) and on this basis it has put into place a work process based on extensive discussion that has resulted in the identification of four main specific priorities to be addressed: (1) Child poverty; (2) Regeneration of deprived Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods; (3) Homelessness; and (4) Vulnerability of Roma people. It is relevant to mention that the Action Plan includes also initiatives to support specifically all vulnerable social groups (including those in extreme poverty, and those at-risk-of-poverty). The UPP has also defined two transversal priorities: (5) Access to quality services and welfare, and (6) Development of data to identify, measure, monitor, and evaluate urban poverty.

Urban poverty refers to issues related to structural concentration of poverty in urban deprived neighbourhoods. The social and spatial dimensions of the problem addressed have led the UPP to integrate two usually conflicting approaches: i) The area-based approach to urban poverty, understanding urban poverty as a spatial phenomenon manifesting itself in urban deprived areas and neighbourhoods (UDAN) and; ii) The people-based approach to urban poverty, understanding urban poverty as a phenomenon affecting particularly some groups of people. These approaches have fed the development of all the Actions proposed along with a set of principles, such as the implementation of a multi-level governance approach, the engagement of urban authorities in the implementation of all the actions proposed and across all policy stages, the engagement of all the relevant stakeholders with a particular involvement of local communities and the target groups, the development of specific solutions to urban poverty at local level on the basis of an evidence-based approach and the full respect of human rights.

Like the other Urban Agenda partnerships, the UPP takes into account the EU focus expressed by the Pact of Amsterdam on Better Regulation, Better Funding, and Better Knowledge. It also takes into account the cross-cutting issues pointed out by the Pact, especially the territorial dimension, the importance of small and medium-sized cities, the added-value of good urban planning, the links with the international dimension (especially the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals), the general principle of gender mainstreaming, etc.

All this has been taken into account in the methodology of the work of the UPP for the development of this Action Plan. It has been based on a sustained collaboration among the members of the UPP, who have been organised in working groups to address the mentioned priorities effectively. The UPP has also integrated external visions and feedback through the organisation of a Seminar in Athens in September of 2016, in which the members of the UPP and other stakeholders reflected jointly on the scoping documents. The UPP has also taken into account and reflected on the comments provided by different stakeholders in the framework of the public consultation on its draft Action Plan launched during the Summer of 2017. The work developed by the UPP has also explored and constructed on the thematic linkages with other partnerships, particularly with the Housing Partnership.

The Action Plan of the UPP is composed by 12 Actions, structured in five groups: 1) Integrated actions, which are transversal to all the priorities of the UPP mentioned above (Actions 1-3); 2) Actions aimed to fight child poverty (Actions 4 and 5); 3) Actions for the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods (Actions 6 and 7); 4) Actions aimed to end homelessness (Actions 8 and 9); and 5) Actions for the inclusion of Roma people (Actions 10-12):

**Action 1 – Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Block Grant for Urban Authorities To Fight Poverty**

The Block Grant is particularly oriented to provide the EU with an effective and specific funding instrument able to address the specific challenge of urban poverty through comprehensive strategies, by overcoming limitations of the present EU funding framework.

- **Action 2 – Setting up an European network of national observatories with experience in urban poverty**

This Action proposes the creation of one unique European website (one stop shop) to make available to urban authorities and other actors relevant statistics on urban poverty in order to deliver evidence-based policies to fight urban poverty. It will be based on the experience of national observatories.

- **Action 3 – Developing data on urban poverty at EU level**

This Action focuses on the necessity to deliver solid statistical data on urban poverty at local level (NUTS III). It aims at providing harmonised data and indicators able to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive overview of the situation of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion, homelessness, and Roma in the EU.

- **Action 4 – Adoption of a European Child Guarantee**

The Child Guarantee is a tool aimed to realise concrete investments that benefit children and young people in Europe, in particular the most disadvantaged. The Child Guarantee aims to invest in pillars 2 and 3 of the Commission recommendation Investing in Children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage. The Action also includes measures to make better use of current EU instruments.

- **Action 5 – Progress towards a directive on investing in children based on the Recommendation Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage**

This action is complementary to the Child Guarantee, aiming to go one step further to strengthen the legislative body at EU level in order to promote the effective implementation of children's rights in all EU Member states by introducing a directive to break the cycle of disadvantage.

- **Action 6 – Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Setting up a new Urban Territorial Objective**

The current programming period of the Cohesion Policy is based on funding and policy instruments that are not fully adapted to the complex and specific challenge of fighting urban poverty. For this reason, this Action proposes to set up a new Urban Territorial Objective in the Cohesion Policy 2020, specifically designed and oriented to face the problems of urban deprived neighbourhoods and the most vulnerable social groups.

- **Action 7 – Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Local Pact for the Regeneration of Urban Deprived Areas**

This action proposes the Local Pact as multi-fund instrument aimed to assign urban authorities a leading role in the design of their strategies of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods in the Cohesion Policy post 2020. On the basis of a multi-level approach it adopts a mixed place-based and people-based vision, able to adopt the necessary flexibility to address the different dimensions of urban poverty through integrated strategies.
- **Action 8 – Ending homelessness by 2030, through the reform of social inclusion strategies at the national level**

This action has the objective of giving place to a formal framework to advance on the commitment of the EU and the Member States to end homelessness in the EU by 2030. This was agreed under the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG1 commits all Member States and the EU to eradicate poverty, including extreme poverty and homelessness, by 2030.
- **Action 9 – Capacity building for the use of the EU funds to end homelessness**

This action focuses on the potential of the ERDF, the ESF and the FEAD (Fund for European Aid to the most deprived) to fight homelessness more efficiently. For this the UPP proposes building capacity for the use of the funds adopting an approach that shifts from “managing” to “ending” homelessness in the EU.
- **Action 10 – Adoption of an integrated Roma framework from a multi-level governance approach**

This action adopts Roma inclusion to be mainstreamed in inclusive policies and services for all people. It involves that EU, national and local authorities, should work together to make Roma integration a transversal issue across policy sectors and across departments, by means of an integrated framework.
- **Action 11 - Strengthening the desegregation principle in EU urban areas**

This action proposes that the desegregation principle should be strengthened and mainstreamed into the legislation on the use of EU funds at national level. Desegregation should become priority in all housing and education programmes.
- **Action 12 – Ease cities’ access to EU funding in parallel to introducing local ex-ante conditionalities regarding – among others – Roma inclusion**

This action aims to set local ex-ante conditionalities for cities to access EU funding regarding the plan and implementation of Roma inclusion programmes. Cities fulfilling the ex-ante conditionalities should get more direct access to sufficient EU funding to implement their integrated plans for Roma inclusion.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In the run-up to May 2016, discussions related to the adoption of an Urban Agenda for the EU within the UDG and DGUM led a number of urban, regional, national and European stakeholders to form what was to be called “pilot-partnerships”. The Partnership on Urban Poverty (UPP) was one of these four pilot partnerships and has been operational since December 2015.

The Partnership welcomed the Pact of Amsterdam and its recognition of Urban Poverty as one of its thematic priorities.

### 2.1. Governance of the Partnership

#### Coordinators

Belgium (PPS Social Integration) and France (CGET, General Commission for Territorial Equality) are the coordinators of the Partnership on Urban Poverty (UPP).

#### Members

- 5 Member States: – Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, and Spain.
- 7 Cities: Birmingham (UK), Daugavpils (LV), Kortrijk (BE), Keratsini-Drapetsona (EL), Lille (FR), Łódź (PL) and Timisoara (RO).
- 2 Regions: Brussels Capital Region (BE), Ile de France Region (FR).
- 7 Stakeholders: EAPN, Eurochild, FEANTSA, UN Habitat, Eurocities, EUKN and URBACT.
- EC: DG for Regional and Urban Policy and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

### 2.2. Objectives and priority setting

The objective of the priority theme on Urban Poverty, as stated in the Pact of Amsterdam is “to reduce poverty and improve the inclusion of people in poverty or at risk of poverty in deprived neighbourhoods”<sup>1</sup>.

Although cities are hubs of opportunity as they enhance the advancement of science, technology, culture and innovation, they are also places where problems such as unemployment, social exclusion, segregation and poverty are concentrated. This is because more than two thirds of the European population lives in urban areas. In 2014, 120 million people, nearly a quarter of the EU population, were at risk of poverty or

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<sup>1</sup> Pact of Amsterdam, Urban Agenda for the EU, 30 May 2016, p. iii.

social exclusion, 27% of them were children. Also in 2014, 10% of Europeans lived in a household where none of its members were employed.

The majority of EU policies have an impact on urban areas and cities, having a relevant potential to prevent and tackle urban poverty through direct and indirect action (e.g. considering the impact of social, economic, spatial, or energy policies in the Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods – UDAN). In order to make the most of this potential there is a clear need to consider the urban dimension in all the relevant policy fields, at all decision-making levels (EU, MS, regions, and cities), and along the whole policy process (definition of the priorities, design of the instruments, implementation and evaluation). It is also important to put into place specific actions to address urban poverty through policies and instruments in which cities have to be involved and play a key role.

From the beginning, it has been the Partnership's ambition to integrate two usually conflicting approaches to the fight against poverty in urban areas, namely :

- The area-based approach to urban poverty, i.e. urban poverty as a spatial phenomenon manifesting itself in specific urban areas, in particular Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods (UDAN) and;
- The people-based approach to urban poverty, i.e. urban poverty as a phenomenon affecting some groups of people more harshly than others and for which specific measures and policies are developed.

Furthermore, the Pact of Amsterdam identified from the start two focus areas that have deeply shaped the content of the Action Plan:

- The regeneration of Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods
- The fight against child poverty

Like the other Urban Agenda partnerships, the Partnership on Urban Poverty takes into account the EU focus on better regulation, better funding, and better knowledge.

This means the actions and recommendations proposed aim to improve EU legislation by better reflecting urban needs, practices and responsibilities, by ensuring better access and use of the European Funds by urban areas, and by improving the EU urban knowledge base and stimulating the sharing of best practices and cooperation.

In January 2017, following talks on the scoping of the partnership's work, and in addition to the two initial priorities identified at the beginning of the 2016 – fighting child poverty and regeneration of UDAN – the Partnership agreed to widen its focus by taking on additional priorities:

As a result, **four specific priorities were endorsed** and led to the establishment of four working groups. These specific priorities were:

**(1) Child poverty**

**(2) Regeneration of deprived Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods**

**(3) Homelessness**

**(4) Vulnerability of Roma<sup>2</sup> people**

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<sup>2</sup> In the context of this document, the term "Roma" is used in its most commonly used definition at EU level and refers to "a number of different groups (such as Roma, Sinti, Kale, Gypsies, Romanichels, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom) also including Travellers, without denying the specificities and varieties of lifestyles and situations of these groups". France, coordinator of the Partnership, considers the

**The partnership also defined two transversal priorities.** These are defined as priorities that need to be discussed and taken into account in the development of all actions proposed in the Action Plan.

The UPP's transversal priorities are

- (5) Access to quality services and welfare, and
- (6) Data (identifying, measuring, monitoring and evaluating urban poverty).

## **2.3. Rationale**

### **(1) Child poverty**

Considering the At Risk Of Poverty And Social Exclusion rate in the EU Member States, **children are the most vulnerable age group.** Major investments in labour market oriented measures have been made in recent years (including for young people) but this has not had a major effect of the poverty rate among EU citizens and especially children. **Cities face the bulk of the challenges related to this situation.**

In 2013, a recommendation gave member states orientations, principles, and advice on how to break the cycle of disadvantage for children. The three pillars of this recommendation were: adequate resources for households, affordable and quality services for the benefit of children, and children's right to participation.

**With both actions proposed by the partnership, we want to move forward from the Recommendation** that has triggered a number of good initiatives but not enough to record tangible changes in the poverty rate of children.

The first step is the **Child Guarantee, a set of measures to commit, invest and shape integrated child poverty alleviating policies.** Vertical integration should lead to coherent multi-level policy and governance whereas horizontal integration should lead to cross-sectoral actions across 5 dimensions: education, health, housing, child care, nutrition.

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terminology "Roma" as imprecise because it refers to heterogeneous situations and encompasses populations with very different socio-economic backgrounds, and prefers a non-ethnic terminology such as "highly marginalized European populations in mobility".

This action would contribute significantly to Pillars 2 and 3 of the Recommendation. In a second stage, we are looking to cover all pillars of the recommendation by **progressing towards a longer term objective to introduce a directive based on the Recommendation** and to stimulate social investments by making some budgetary rules more flexible.

### **(2) Regeneration of deprived Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods**

**The regeneration of urban areas affected by urban poverty should be a priority** in the next programming period of the Cohesion Policy (post 2020). It is linked to unemployment, ungraduated inhabitants, a deteriorated living environment, an important weight of single-parent families and a concentration of population with a migrant background. This calls for ambitious reactions by developing integrated and transversal actions. It is essential that those actions involve all the stakeholders, from different levels, but also inhabitants of those areas, as proposed by the partnership. Therefore the partnership proposes the setting of **an urban territorial objective and a Local Pact for the regeneration of urban deprived areas**. Those actions **will structure the policy towards deprived neighborhoods and will support integrated strategies**, avoiding ERDF and ESF segmentation and allowing the combination of financial resources for the regeneration of urban deprived areas and inclusion of their inhabitants. It will also **give the opportunity to urban authorities to have a leading role in the design of their strategy** to address poverty in the context of EU funding, with other stakeholders such as public authorities of different levels, inhabitants and third sector.

### **(3) Homelessness**

These past few years have seen many developments in relation to the fight against homelessness. Evidence, definitions, resources, consensus and a clear conceptual shift from the management of homelessness towards the factual end of homelessness exist but this whole package needs to be stimulated and backed.

**The partnership is calling for action at EU level to stimulate effective multi-level engagement to motivate all relevant stakeholders to end homelessness.** This includes a specific target on homelessness within the European Semester (see action 8).

**EU funds could be better used to tackle and prevent homelessness.** Not only could there be more allocation of funds to this objective, there could also be better allocation of funds linked to current evidence of what works. This entails training and capacity-building at the managing authority level, including putting forward **the potential of housing led solutions and the use of the housing first method to accelerate the process towards effectively ending homelessness.**

### **(4) Vulnerability of Roma people**

**Roma communities face up to 80% poverty rate across the EU. Key to making this situation change also resides in multi-level cooperation and governance.**

The partnership wants to put forward new actions for the post 2020 EU Roma framework with, among others, the development of **multi-level governance strategies**

involving local authorities, offering clarity on EU funding and policy (see **action 11 and 12**).

Spatial and institutional segregation through housing and/or education still exists in EU Member States for Roma communities (but also for other marginalized groups). EU funds can support **interventions to tackle segregation and discrimination**. The partnership is advocating for common provisions regulation to strengthen the desegregation principle and legislation (see action 10). And mainstream inclusion policies should be made to work for Roma too.

For each of the above-mentioned themes, the **Partnership has identified bottlenecks, policy gaps and elaborated recommendations and potential actions**, taking into account the Urban Agenda's focus on *Better Regulation, Better Funding, and Better Knowledge*.

**The actions proposed by this partnership are integrated and multi-dimensional** in order to address the issue of urban poverty through policies and instruments involving stakeholders and in which **cities have to play a key role**. In addition, because of their transversal dimension, the partnership proposes of 3 integrated actions.

**It is also important to underline that** some actions are linked to post 2020 policy and legislation with the objective to improve EU policies and instruments and to make proposals for cohesion policy post-2020 and the European Pillar of Social Rights. **The forthcoming European negotiations offer concrete prospects for putting the fight against urban poverty at the center of decision-makers' concerns.**

## 2.4. Background information used

Two experts<sup>3</sup> with URBACT experience were contracted in 2016 by the Dutch Presidency to prepare scoping documents (a background paper and a scoping note) and to support the development of the Action Plan.

There was a consultation process in which the UPP members and the EC had the opportunity to comment on the scoping note. The comments were collated and included in an annex to the scoping note.

The EC (DG for Regional and Urban Policy and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) also elaborated a mapping of EU policies and initiatives linked to urban poverty issues and people in situation of poverty.

These background and scoping documents are internal working documents and have not been published publicly.

## 2.5. The working method of the partnership

The partners met in a series of meetings to undertake the discussions in relation to the objectives of the partnership. Eight Partnership meetings were held :

- Paris, 20 January 2016: first scoping presentations by the coordinators.

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<sup>3</sup> Ivan Tosics from the Metropolitan Research Institute, Budapest and Laura Colini from Tesserae, Urban Social Research, Berlin.

- Amsterdam, 6 April 2016: identifying scoping and mapping needs as a basis for the partnership working programme. Identifying experts to carry out background research.
- Athens, 28 September 2017: moving from scoping documents to Action Plan; in conjunction with a Seminar “From Scoping Paper to Action Plan” organised in cooperation with EUKN.
- Paris, 19-20 January 2017: final priority setting and identification of working groups to organise the written production of the partners (one working group per specific priority headed by a “working group leader”).
- Kortrijk, 27-28 April 2017: first versions of the actions delivered and discussed.
- Brussels, 23 June 2017: refining of the actions to allow for a publishable version of the Action Plan to be submitted for public feedback.
- Lodz, 21 September 2017: systematic analysis of the comments received through the public consultation, the EC inter-service consultation and Fundamental Rights Agency input. Brainstorming on the implementation phase (first actions identified).
- Rotterdam, 29 November 2017: Following the acknowledgement of the Action Plan in the UDG and DGUM, further discussions and agreements on implementation and advocacy.

Every meeting of the partnership was planned and prepared by way of a coordination meeting between the coordinators, Commission representatives assigned to the UPP (DG REGIO and at some occasions DG EMPL) and members of the Technical Secretariat (as of January 2017). A coordination meeting was also called whenever the need was identified. These meetings served to pilot the partnership, exchange information, determine agenda points and objectives, discuss the evolution of the partnership.

### **Guiding principles for the further development and implementation of all actions**

Across the discussions and during the fine-tuning of the urban poverty actions, the partners identified two guiding principles that are fundamental to the future development and implementation of the actions.

#### **1. Promoting evidence based policy and practice**

Partners are adamant that promoting and encouraging evidence-based approaches to better determine what works, for who, and under what circumstances. The problem is that without good evidence, the uptake and diffusion of innovative initiatives is likely to be minimal, or influenced by a range of social, financial and institutional factors. Initiatives that provide the most value for investment must be identified and supported to enable embedding of good practices in sustainable policies, to ensure efficient and effective use of resources and to enable objective assessments of policies and investments.

The UPP believes that the local level is the level ‘par excellence’ to develop innovative and evidence-based approaches for integrated strategies: it is the level closest to the people, enabling policies tailored to the specific needs of the people.

#### **2. Strengthening the human rights perspective**

Fighting urban poverty stems from every European citizen’s right to a dignified existence. The European Union has developed an impressive human rights framework

which co-exists with the constitutional traditions and institutions of its Member States. This framework is established through a number of different legal instruments, including the Treaty on the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the Racial Equality Directive. These legal instruments place on Member States the responsibility to respect, promote and protect human rights, and this commitment is to be respected by all sub-national authorities.

### **Consultations carried out**

The Partnership sought ways of opening up the discussion between the partners to wider audiences. This was done in several ways.

On 27 September 2016, the coordinators, in collaboration with EUKN, organised a **seminar** on urban poverty in Athens back to back with a partnership meeting. This seminar brought a wider range of urban actors (NGOs, the civil society and citizens, decision-makers, the private sector, and researchers interested in urban poverty) together to exchange about the scoping paper's outline and its translations into concrete actions. This event led to important input for the Partnership's Action Plan.

The full report of the seminar is available online on the [EUKN website](#).

Further down the line, the first package of the UPP actions was delivered in the form of a “[background paper](#)” in June 2017 and published on the website of the Urban Agenda allowing for a wider audience to take stock and react to the proposed actions through a public feedback procedure that ran from 10 July to 25 August. All the comments received were collated and analysed by the Technical Secretariat and communicated to the partners in the form of a report (not available to the public). The total number of responses submitted was 23 (5 submitted by individuals, 18 organisations).

Moreover, the Action Plan was submitted to an inter-service consultation within the European Commission and remarks were also emitted by the Fundamental Rights Agency.

Finally, in the last semester of 2017, the UDG and DGUM meetings also delivered a number of suggestions and remarks concerning the structure and content of the actions proposed.

Most comments received through the different consultation processes have been taken on board by the partnership. An overview of these comments and the decisions taken by the partnership to integrate them or not is annexed to this Action Plan.

## **2.6. Communication about the partnership**

The results on the abovementioned process have been disseminated regularly on the website on the EU Urban Agenda set up by the Dutch presidency on 2016. As of 2017 they have been disseminated through the EC website dedicated to the EU Urban Agenda, Futurium (<https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/urban-poverty>).

Coordinators and/or partners of the UPP participated and provided information about the working process and its results in the following events:

- European Week of Regions and Cities, 10-13 October 2016
- Eurocities Social Affairs Forum, 3 April 2017
- Study visit of a delegation of the Pomorskie Region (Poland) in Brussels, 11 May 2017

- Committee of Regions hearing ‘The state of play of the implementation of the Urban Agenda for the EU’, 29 June 2017
- Conference “The role of urban areas in the Cohesion Policy post 2020”, Lodz, 20 September 2017
- European Commission Cities Forum, 27-28 November 2017

### 3. ACTIONS

#### 3.1. Integrated actions

The Urban Poverty Partnership identified four priorities: child poverty, regeneration of urban deprived neighbourhoods, homelessness and vulnerability of Roma people. Actions addressing each of these priorities are developed below. In section 3.1, we present actions that tackle two or more of these priorities in an integrated way.

#### **ACTION 1 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: BLOCK GRANT FOR URBAN AUTHORITIES TO FIGHT POVERTY**

The Block Grant is particularly oriented to provide the EU with an effective and specific funding instrument able to address the specific challenge of urban poverty through comprehensive strategies. It aims to overcome the fragmentation, lack of flexibility, and insufficient resources with which the ERDF and the ESF are addressing urban poverty in the current programming period of the Cohesion Policy.

**Responsible:** European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy in charge of designing the Cohesion Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs. **Deadline:** 2019.

- **What is the specific problem?**

The effectiveness of European Funds is crucial for the regeneration of deprived urban neighbourhoods. Urban regeneration projects are complex because of the need to adopt an integrated social, environmental, economic, and multi-level approach. These possibilities are very limited under the current funds regulations for the period 2014-2020. For that, the support system should be improved in the next financial perspective, addressing the following pitfalls:

- EU Funds lack concentration to effectively address urban poverty in deprived neighbourhoods, delivering a leverage effect based on the concentration of resources per inhabitant. The current regulation of the ESF is fragmented and optional with regard to the support of social inclusion and economic development (regeneration of deprived urban areas);
- The current ERDF minimum allocation at national level (5%) as well as the potential ESF allocation are not sufficient to result in a transformative impact on urban deprived areas. This is because the regeneration of urban deprived areas is not targeted explicitly by the regulation of the Structural Funds.
- In the current framework the ERDF and the ESF lack the necessary flexibility to address the complex causes of urban poverty and their spatial concentration in deprived neighbourhoods through integrated strategies.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

In the programming period 2014-2020 of the Cohesion Policy two main Funds address urban matters:

- The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is co-financing integrated sustainable urban development strategies (ISUDS) within the operational programmes of the Member States that set out integrated initiatives to tackle the economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges affecting urban areas. Each Member State establishes the principles for the

selection of the eligible areas and an indicative allocation of the resources, taking into account its specific territorial situation and its urban priorities. At least 5% of ERDF resources allocated at national level under the investment for growth and jobs goal shall be ring-fenced to support integrated sustainable urban development strategies (Article 7 ERDF Regulation). The Member States can also allocate ERDF investments to the development of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI).

- The European Social Fund (ESF) may support community-led local development strategies in urban and rural areas, territorial pacts and local initiatives for employment, including youth employment, education and social inclusion, as well as integrated territorial investment (ITI) (Article 12 ESF Regulation)<sup>4</sup>. Also, as a complement to ERDF interventions (Article 7 ERDF Regulation), the ESF may support sustainable urban development through strategies setting out integrated actions to tackle economic, environmental and social challenges affecting their urban areas identified by the Member States on the basis of the principles laid down in their Partnership Agreements (Article 12 ESF Regulation). A minimum of 20% of ESF should be used by Member States to fund actions promoting social inclusion, including poverty reduction initiatives. This is not been implemented equally across the EU Member States.

- **Which action is needed?**

The Urban Poverty Partnership proposes to establish a Block Grant as the funding instrument to use the Structural Funds under a new Urban Territorial Objective (see Action 6: “Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Setting up a new Urban Territorial Objective”). The strategic and governance mechanism proposed to implement this objective and pilot the Block Grant would be the Local Pact (see Action 8: “Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Local Pact for the Regeneration of Urban Deprived Areas”). In addressing sustainable urban development the Block Grant will have a specific focus on fighting urban poverty. The Block Grant fulfils the need for a clear, ambitious and targeted funding to fight urban poverty in the EU.

The proposed Block Grant would have the following characteristics:

- **Multi-fund:** combining or pooling resources from different EU funds (typically the ESF and the ERDF) to achieve a leverage effect in the regeneration of urban deprived areas.
- **Flexible:** through Local Pacts, Block Grants will be flexible enough to adjust to local needs and changing challenges, to combine sectoral policies and to involve all the local stakeholders. For example, enabling re-granting would improve the involvement of the private sector, NGOs, and the development of local initiatives. The Block Grant will be managed by urban authorities (where applicable in the governance structure of the Member States) with flexibility.
- **Integrated:** the Block Grant will focus on integrated urban development approaches and not on thematic concentration. The Block Grant would fund comprehensive strategies developed by urban authorities to tackle urban poverty, and as part of it, regeneration of urban deprived areas. In the

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EU) N° 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) N° 1081/2006.

framework of these integrated strategies the Block Grant allocation will be managed by local authorities and dedicated to these three different objectives :

- Fighting urban poverty based on integrated area-based urban regeneration strategies developed by urban authorities in the context of the Local Pact (see Action 7).
- Undertaking explicit actions at city level in the fight against child poverty, homelessness and exclusion of Roma. This guarantees that there is sufficient investment on these three groups.
- Remaining funds can be used to address other relevant aspects or inclusion of vulnerable groups in order to reduce poverty in urban areas. This flexibility will allow local authorities addressing urban poverty on the basis of their specific reality and necessities.

The allocation of the Block Grant to each of these objectives will be based on a solid diagnosis developed by urban authorities and on comprehensive strategies constructed with the participation of the relevant stakeholders (inhabitants and NGO's). A priority of the Block Grant will be to act facing urban poverty and the decline of urban areas guaranteeing that potential processes of gentrification are avoided.

Allocations of funding to beneficiary urban authorities should not only be based on GDP but also other indicators should be taken into account to better measure economic, social, and environmental disparities and needs.

The implementation of the Local Pact (Action 7) and this Block Grant depends to a great extent on the ability of partner urban authorities, their budgets and qualified technical staff. Supporting these aspects and simplifying them in the context of the creation of the new urban territorial objective of the Cohesion Policy is important to strengthen urban authorities' involvement in these instruments (Action 6). A part of the technical assistance allocation in the future should be devoted to support and/or reinforce the capacity building of urban authorities, especially the small and medium sized ones.

- **How to implement the action?**

The mentioned changes in the post 2020 period need to be implemented undertaking the following:

- The Block Grant will be formalised taking into consideration cities recommendations for more flexible, efficient, and simple use of the European Funds to address urban poverty, as well as to achieve a high level of complementarity among them.
- The design of such an instrument will also consider the accumulated knowledge by the DG Regio and the DG for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion regarding the use of the Structural Funds to address urban poverty, as well as the relevant knowledge developed by other actors (Member States, MA, regional and local authorities etc.), so that the mentioned current limitations are overcome.
- The result must be a funding instrument framed in the new urban territorial objective of the Cohesion Policy post 2020 proposed by this Action Plan (Action 6), able of integrating resources from the ERDF and the ESF in a simple way to address urban poverty.

This Action should be developed and implemented in full coordination with Actions 6 and 7 of this Action Plan.

- **Which partners?**

- The Urban Poverty Partnership.
- A representation of cities with relevant knowledge on fighting urban poverty using EU instruments.
- European Parliament, especially the Urban intergroup
- Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion.
- Member States
- Committee of the Regions
- Council (Member States).
- European Investment Bank in complement to Cohesion Policy instruments (EFSI: European Fund for Strategic Investment, EIF: European Investment Fund).

- **Which timeline?**

The design of this instrument should start as soon as possible.

The Block Grant should be completely defined by the first semester of 2019.

- 1<sup>st</sup> semester 2018: Influencing the elaboration of the regulatory package on Cohesion Policy post 2020.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2018/2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2018: influencing the elaboration of the negotiation package on Cohesion Policy post 2020.

## **ACTION 2 – SETTING UP AN EUROPEAN NETWORK OF NATIONAL OBSERVATORIES WITH EXPERIENCE IN URBAN POVERTY**

This Action proposes the creation of one unique European website (one stop shop) to make available to urban authorities and other actors relevant statistics on urban poverty. The proposed website will make easily accessible and comparable the statistical data elaborated by the National Observatories of the Member States. The accessibility to that information is considered crucial to allow medium and small cities to address effectively urban poverty in their territory.

**Responsible:** France, Spain and Belgium acting as leaders, National Observatories European Commission, EUROSTAT

**Deadline:** At the beginning of the post-2020 programming; 2021.

- **What is the specific problem?**

Poverty has a spatial dimension, but there is a lack of open access and awareness of the possibilities to compare statistical data on urban poverty, disaggregated at sub-municipal level (district, neighbourhood, census tract, postal code, zip code, etc.). This lack of reliable and comparable data on the spatial and territorial aspects of urban poverty, including data on intra-neighbourhood level, exists also at national level.

Some Member States (France, United Kingdom, Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, etc.) have developed different online visualization or mapping tools (GIS: Geographical Information Systems) that allow local authorities and citizens to have access to poverty indicators at Sub-City District (SCD) level, allowing them to identify their deprived neighbourhoods and to compare their indicators with the national or regional averages.

Most local authorities in Europe need to have access to poverty statistical indicators with the sufficient spatial disaggregation to identify deprivation more precisely. It concerns especially, small and medium size urban areas with less capacity and awareness on how to find and develop relevant knowledge to fight urban poverty. All this useful information should be made available on one unique European website, one-stop shop.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

At the moment the main contribution on this regard consists of intergovernmental cooperation between Member States. The main goal of this initiative is to reinforce the cooperation between Member States having a large experience in terms of national observatories related to poverty and deprivation and providing urban data to local authorities. This group of Member states should constitute a kind of task force making the link with EUROSTAT and facilitating and supporting the involvement of national authorities having competences in statistics in this Action.

Actually, EUROSTAT has developed a range of statistical indicators covering most aspects relating quality of life in European cities (demography, housing, health, labour market, education, environment, etc.). The data collection exercise (Cities, formerly known as Urban Audit) contains 171 variables and 62 indicators at city level, derived from the

variables collected by the European Statistical System. Data are provided by national statistical institutes, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, and Eurostat. Data availability differs from topic to topic, as they are provided by Member States on a voluntary basis. The open access database of indicators at city level is available at the EUROSTAT website.

EUROSTAT has also developed a data visualization tool for European cities, called Regions and Cities Illustrated, which shows some indicators at city level and allows their comparison and analysis using bar charts, scatter plots or distribution plots.

Also EU data collection systems gather useful statistical information through surveys. One of such systems, EU-SILC, provides data on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions. Since 2010, EU-SILC has been used to monitor poverty and social inclusion in the EU, in particular through the Open Method of Coordination (Social OMC) and the Europe 2020 Strategy.

- **Which action is needed?**

The setting-up of a European network of observatories monitoring both people-based and place-based aspects of urban poverty would be useful to inform policies on evidence-based approaches. The action needed is the following:

- Setting up an informal network of existing National Observatories of Urban Poverty/Deprived Neighbourhoods oriented to exchange visions, ideas, innovative approaches, etc. between the national coordinators of the Observatories of Urban Poverty/Deprived Neighbourhoods.
- For Member States interested in creating a National Observatory, the network of National Observatories could be useful to inform about methodologies and possible obstacles and solutions to establish these observatories.
- Creating one unique European website functioning as one stop shop. It would be created by the European Commission in order to make available and easily accessible the statistics elaborated by the National Observatories network (methodologies, tool-kits, indicators, etc. on urban poverty) to local authorities and other relevant actors.

- **How to implement the action?**

The network of National Observatories could be set informally with the leadership of France, Spain and Belgium. The Netherlands could also be associated.

The potential of ESPON should be assessed on whether questions of Urban Poverty/Deprived Neighbourhoods can be integrated in their portfolio.

The network can structure knowledge exchange between members, work on common methodologies, organize seminars, etc.

The mid-term perspective would be to constitute a sort of Member States task-force delivering advice and guidelines on urban poverty data; Eurocities will be also associated.

In parallel the European Commission supported by EUROSTAT should create one stop-shop website; it should be developed with the association of the National observatories task force, Eurocities and ESPON, if appropriate.

One of the functions of the one stop-shop website will be to evaluate and communicate widely the outputs of the National Observatories task force (guidelines, tools, baskets of indicators) and to make them available for cities with free and easy access.

Participants in the network should cover their own travel costs and other expenses.

- **Which partners?**

- Coordinators of the existing National Observatories of Urban Poverty/Deprived Neighbourhoods and other representatives of the Member States interested in learning from existing experiences.
- National statistical institutions.
- Eurocities.
- ESPON.
- The OECD could be associated to the network, as well as the European Commission and Eurostat.

- **Which timeline?**

- First meeting of the national observatories first semester 2018.
- Work on the content of the one-stop shop website to be started second semester 2018.

### **ACTION 3 – DEVELOPING DATA ON URBAN POVERTY AT EU LEVEL**

This Action focuses on the necessity to deliver solid statistical data on urban poverty at local level (NUTS III). It aims at providing harmonised data and indicators able to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive overview of the situation of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion, homelessness, and Roma in the EU. Specific data on these groups is considered necessary to inform the action of urban authorities in order to give place to effective social and urban policies.

**Responsible:** Member States Statistical Institutions and/or EUROSTAT, DG REGIO and “Cities/Urban Audit” managers/ FRA and EUROSTAT in collaboration with EUROCITIES /national observatories in charge of poverty. **Deadline:** To be defined in accordance with “Cities/Urban Audit” and “Regions and Cities Illustrated” budgets and roadmaps for the future, but preferably: 2019 (with preparatory actions and piloting in 2018).

- **What is the specific problem?**

It is only possible to accomplish the recommendations of the Leipzig Charter to “pay special attention to deprived neighbourhoods” and to develop policies focusing on children “tailored to the social area they live in” if local authorities can identify these areas in their territory. This is also a necessity in the case of other vulnerable groups, as poverty has a spatial dimension. Nevertheless in European and national statistics there is a lack of reliable and comparable statistical data about poverty, disaggregated at sub-municipal level (district, neighbourhood, census tract, postal code, zip code, etc.). Indicators are increasingly valued as a means to interpret and present statistical data, monitor policy implementation, and provide the ground for evidence-based policies and increased accountability. Because of this, local authorities need to have access to poverty statistical indicators with the sufficient spatial disaggregation (NUTS III level) to allow them to identify deprivation more precisely and to understand its causes in order to design regeneration plans able to reverse urban poverty trends.

From this understanding this Action addresses three specific problems:

- Recent years have brought new and growing attention to the importance of measuring and monitoring children’s well-being. Despite progress, there is still a lack of indicators covering some specific domains related to the implementation of children’s rights that are necessary to develop and shape policies and services at national and local level.
- Homelessness is on the rise in the EU. Nevertheless, metrics for measuring poverty excludes it. In fact, there is no central EU agency collecting data on homelessness: EU-SILC (European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) and Eurostat do not gather data on this. As a result, policy-making to tackle homelessness faces the lack of harmonized information. Each year FEANTSA and the Foundation Abbé Pierre publish the report “An Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe”. It could be an excellent source to monitor developments in the European housing sector. However, each Member State collects data using different methodologies, which makes it impossible to develop comparative analysis. In addition Member States base data-gathering on different definitions of homelessness.
- Data on numbers of Roma living in the EU and their profiles remain scarce and are at best point in time snapshots. Only few data collections, like the 2011 EC/WB/UNDP data collections ensure comparability. This gap is mainly due to

the restriction, or in some countries prohibition, of collecting data based on people's ethnicity. This leads to a lack of knowledge regarding the Roma community and its situation. By not having access to Roma-related data, evidence-based policy-making that could contribute to Roma inclusion is limited. Furthermore, the absence of cooperation between EU institutions and local authorities in data collection renders the task of finding solutions to local needs for Roma integration and bottom-up strategies much more challenging.

Taking this specific problems into account, this Action proposes that the provision of statistical data to local authorities should particularly focus on child poverty, Roma people, and homelessness.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

These are the existing resources regarding the provision of data on child poverty, homelessness and Roma in the EU (they are explained taking into account the gaps that should be addressed from the perspective of this Action):

-EU-SILC provides data on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions, domains which are inherently related to child poverty, child well-being and homelessness. Since 2010, EU-SILC has been used to monitor poverty and social exclusion in the EU, in particular through the Open Method of Coordination (Social OMC) and the Europe 2020 Strategy.

While EU-SILC has been widely used to monitor progress towards tackling poverty and social inclusion, such an instrument presents substantial gaps that call for the system to be reviewed and updated. EU-SILC, indeed, only covers people living in private households, limiting the outreach of the data and, therefore, its potential to provide an exhaustive and comprehensive overview of the situation of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion and on homelessness. Due to the mentioned gaps it results in a lack of reliable information with regards to social exclusion.

However, from 2018 EU-SILC will introduce an ad-hoc module examining retrospective experiences of housing difficulties. While this will not provide information on current homelessness, it is likely to provide information on people who were previously homeless. This is not a mandatory question to be included by all Member States, and is for each country to decide whether they wish to collect this kind of information.

-Over the years, the European Commission has developed different mechanisms to monitor Member States' progress with regards to policies in the area of social inclusion, including the establishment of targets and indicators.

- The Open Method of coordination for social protection and social inclusion (Social OMC) aims at promoting social cohesion and equality through adequate, accessible and financially sustainable social protection systems and social inclusion policies. The social OMC represents a voluntary process through which Member States agree on common objectives and measure progress towards these goals at national and EU level using common indicators. In order to do so, an Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee was established, and a first set of indicators covering income poverty, health, education, employment and housing was developed in 2001 and integrated in 2009.
- The Europe 2020 Strategy aims at creating a more inclusive economy and society by establishing targets, to be achieved by 2020, on employment, research and

development, climate change, education, poverty and social exclusion. The latter has been defined on the basis of the data collected through EU-SILC. The strategy, moreover, establishes indicators and sub-indicators to monitor Member States' progress towards such targets.

- In 2013 was issued the European Commission's Recommendation '*Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage*'. This Recommendation, although non-binding, laid the ground for a comprehensive approach to ending child poverty and improving child well-being, based on three pillars: access to adequate resources; access to quality services; and children's participation. The Recommendation included as an annex a portfolio of child well-being indicators.
- In April 2017, the European Commission published the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR), a reference framework for upwards social convergence. The Pillar revolves around 20 principles, divided into three main themes: equal opportunities and access to the labour market; fair working conditions; adequate & sustainable social protection. According to the Commission, Member States' progress in implementing the Pillar will be monitored and assessed through the European Semester: to this end, a new Social Scoreboard was established, including social and employment indicators.

-In terms of statistical instruments, Eurostat, the EU's official data-gathering body, has improved the quality and range of the information it collects. Eurostat has developed a range of statistical indicators covering most aspects relating quality of life in European cities (demography, housing, health, labour market, education, environment, etc.). The data collection exercise (Cities, formerly known as Urban Audit) contains 171 variables and 62 indicators at city level, derived from the variables collected by the European Statistical System. Data are provided by national statistical institutes, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, and Eurostat. Data availability differs from topic to topic, as they are provided by Member States on a voluntary basis. The open access database of indicators at city level is available at the Eurostat website.

Eurostat has also developed a data visualization tool for European urban areas, called Regions and Cities Illustrated, which shows some indicators at city level and allows their comparison and analysis using bar charts, scatter plots or distribution plots. Eurostat do not collect data on homelessness.

-ESPON analysis and databases related to urban poverty provide relevant additional qualitative analysis to the statistical information mentioned.

-The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has collected data on Roma through its **Roma survey**, the European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS), in 2009, 2011, and 2016. While the sample of Roma people surveyed was sufficiently large (8,000 interviews of Roma people), data was only collected in 9 EU Member States because of methodological reasons (random sampling for this type of HH [specify] survey required a sufficiently large population size). The FRA is planning to carry out a new Roma survey in 2018.

-The FRA has been recently asked by the European Commission and the Council of the EU to collect data also from the other 16 EU Member States that were not considered in the MIDIS survey. In 2017, the FRA is starting a data collection process to cover the remaining 16 Member States, using different sampling and data collection methodologies so that quantitative data can be collected wherever possible (getting at least qualitative data in the countries where quantitative data is not available). This will be done through the FRANET research network and through external contractors. At the moment there aren't any instruments allowing an EU-local level cooperation for data

collection on Roma, but there is willingness from both the FRA and Eurocities to remedy this need. In 2016, the Court of Auditors published a report on data protection legislation and collection of data on the basis of ethnicity. The findings and recommendations from this report can be used to design appropriate data collection methods and tools for gathering local data on Roma at EU level.

All the mentioned indicators and information sources are useful for the comparison of urban areas as a whole, but do not allow the identification of deprived neighbourhoods within a city, as they are not based on statistical information on poverty disaggregated at sub-city District (SCD) level based on for example on district, neighbourhood, census tract, postal code, zip code, survey etc.. *Cities/Urban Audit* is collecting at the moment data at SCD level, but it will be available only at a later stage. For the time being, statistical data on SCD is not available on the Eurostat website and only some Member States have decided to allow unrestricted access to it through their national statistical institutes.

- **Which action is needed?**

For the identification of deprived neighbourhoods and social exclusion, local authorities need to have access to poverty statistical data on income and living conditions, child poverty, homelessness, and the specific Roma situation at least NUTS III **and where appropriate at SCD level** in order to be able to map and analyse the spatial dimension of poverty.

This Action aims at ensuring that indicators, on the basis of which statistical data is interpreted and analysed through the instruments mentioned in the previous point, are further developed and harmonised in the EU, in order to provide local authorities information that goes beyond highlighting the risk of poverty and social exclusion. The specific main actions required are the following:

- Urban authorities need to have access to poverty statistical information with the highest degree of spatial disaggregation available. Although there are several indicators related to poverty, one of the most relevant is income. Most Member States have detailed information about income with sufficient spatial disaggregation to allow its analysis at NUTS III level<sup>5</sup>, but few of them have made them available open access. For this reason, the development of the *Regions and Cities Illustrated* tool at NUTS III level<sup>6</sup> and the inclusion of poverty indicators (or at least, income) in this tool is considered crucial. The existing *Cities/Urban Audit* working group seems to be the best platform to explore the possibility to make this data available in *Cities/Urban Audit*.
- This statistical information should adopt a multidimensional perspective since poverty and vulnerability have several causes that – alone, or in combination – mean that people may be at risk of exclusion. For this they could address: AROPE indicators; existence of shanty towns or housing with inadequate conditions; degree of incidence of the Ethos typologies; educational level, early school leaving and segregation; etc. Many countries have developed specific studies addressing specific issues that may be relevant at national scale.

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<sup>5</sup> *Where appropriate at SCD level*

<sup>6</sup> *Where appropriate at SCD level*

- It is necessary to disseminate the statistical information in the different Member States languages, so that it is fully accessible to local authorities and citizens. Although urban authorities with more resources may have the capacity to develop their own mapping tools, this is not the case of small cities. In this regard, some Member States have developed online visualization or mapping tools (GIS: Geographical Information Systems) that provide local authorities and citizens poverty indicators at SCD level, allowing them to identify their deprived neighbourhoods and to compare their indicators with the national or regional average. For the cases in which this kind of tools is not available in the Member States, it is extremely important that data are accessible in *Cities/Urban Audit* in the national languages to urban authorities.
- A specific action that needs to be undertaken by Eurostat is the development of an indicator (or a set of indicators) on the risk of poverty and social exclusion at NUTS III levels<sup>7</sup>. The new indicator(s) should be developed in collaboration with local authorities and Member States.
- All the above mentioned information should be easily accessible to urban authorities and other actors on the EU one stop-shop urban data portal to access urban relevant information (see Action 2).
- Data regarding child poverty, homelessness and Roma should be desegregated by gender, age, ethnic background, economic and cultural differences, disability and other relevant variables. The availability of such data can draw greater correlation between effective policies and the reduction of poverty.
- Regarding the development of indicators on homelessness: it is necessary to define adequate methodological frameworks for the specific analysis of homelessness. Member States should be encouraged to implement the ad hoc module on retrospective housing difficulties developed by Eurostat and EU-SILC, the regulations has already been prepared<sup>8</sup>. Member States should be also encouraged to use *ETHOS Light* (European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion) as a tool to harmonise data collection. This will ensure that each country is using the same definition of homelessness when monitoring it (taking into account its different typologies).
- Regarding data-gathering on Roma people: it is necessary to give room to action that: i) guarantees a long-term collaboration between local authorities and EU-level agencies such as the FRA and Eurostat, aiming to develop and implement a methodology able to provide local authorities with the correct tools for collecting data about Roma people at local level. Relevant national authorities should also be involved whenever necessary; ii) the mentioned methodology should aim to gather data not only on the number of Roma people living in their respective territories, but also on the challenges they face to access basic and local services; iii) in developing this should be taken into account the national strategies on social inclusion of the Roma; people defined so far, some of which, like the Spanish, include intermediate assessments with specific analysis in key areas for inclusion (such as education or employment), which can serve as a basis for the new European data and indicators framework, particularly in

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<sup>7</sup> *Where appropriate at SCD level*

<sup>8</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32017R0310&from=EN>

relation to methodological aspects or about information collection. This will enable evidence-based policy and concrete measures for improving Roma inclusion.

- **How to implement the action?**

-Development of recommended statistical indicators at EU level to collect, present, and distribute data on urban poverty at NUTS III level<sup>9</sup> for the Cities/Urban Audit, giving place to a common EU methodology to identify deprived urban areas through the use of these data. This information should be available to local authorities in their own language and should be centralized in a one-stop-shop portal (see Action 2). Action on this will be developed by Eurostat with the National Urban Audit Coordinators (NUACs). The development of the “Cities/Urban Audit” at NUTS III level corresponds to Eurostat and the DG for Regional and Urban Policy.

-Regarding the integration of comprehensive and specific indicators related to child poverty in EU-SILC:

- In order to implement this, it would be important for the Social Protection Committee and its Indicators Sub-Group to continue their work on developing child specific indicators to feed into the portfolio included as an Annex to the 2013 Recommendation on ‘*Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage*’. Moreover, a rigorous monitoring framework should be established to ensure follow-up on the basis of such indicators: revising useful elements of the “old” Social OMC should be considered<sup>10</sup>.
- In order to rebalance social and macroeconomic priorities, the new Social Scoreboard developed to monitor the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights should have equal weight as the EU’s macroeconomic scoreboard, to deepen the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union.
- While it is important to further develop indicators at EU level, it is equally fundamental that indicators are developed at national, regional and local level in order to assess the specific needs and circumstances of children living in different geographical areas, also taking into account cultural traditions. To achieve this, collaboration between government agencies and non-governmental organisations working on child welfare, childcare agencies, both private and public, and any other group participating in the formal care system is critical and should be enhanced in the design of a comprehensive information system.
- Child participation is also of crucial importance in this process. Children and young people should be actively involved in the development of indicators. *It is also important to consult their parents, taking into account their different situations on the basis of income, gender (single parent families), etc. For indicators to be as comprehensive as possible, different groups of children should be engaged, as “children’s lives vary significantly*

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<sup>9</sup> *Where appropriate at SCD level*

<sup>10</sup> Key messages and suggestions for taking stock of the implementation of the Investing in Children Recommendation, EU Alliance for Investing in Children, 2017. Link : <https://tinyurl.com/ybxotrxc>

according to age, ethnic origin, socio-economic situation, disability, gender and other factors” (FRA, 2010).

-Regarding the harmonization of national data collection on homelessness in EU-SILC:

- The Urban Agenda for the EU, particularly its Urban Poverty Partnership, should encourage Member States and cities to use ETHOS Light in defining what homelessness is, when monitoring increases and decreases.
- All Member States should be encouraged to monitor homelessness in their respective countries.
- Member states should be encouraged to implement the ad hoc module on retrospective housing difficulties developed by Eurostat and EU-SILC.

-Regarding the harmonization of national data collection on Roma action will be implemented through a two-step process:

1. Direct collaboration between the FRA and local authorities to design the tools and methodological guidelines needed for data collection on Roma at local level, and piloting these in several selected cities;
2. Adaptation of the data collection tools and methodology at national level through direct collaboration of national and local authorities.

A preliminary step would be that the FRA includes this two-step process in its annual work programme to be approved by its management board and in agreement with the European Commission.

Firstly, a working group should be set up with representatives from the FRA, Eurostat and Eurocities to work together to develop the tools and methodology for collecting data on the situation of Roma people at local level. The tools and methodology should then be tested by piloting the survey in several selected cities with large Roma population. The pilots should be accompanied by capacity-building training sessions run by the FRA together with Eurocities to train the municipal staff to implement the survey with full respect of ethical considerations.

Secondly, based on the results and lessons from the pilots, the tools and methodology will be refined. In this second phase, the tools will also be adapted to the national context and needs for data and information on Roma. This should be done by national authorities in direct collaboration with local authorities – in the content of national steering groups for Roma integration – with the focus on adding to the common list of indicators any specific question relevant for each national context. In this way, the survey would have: a) a common part for all EU Member States and cities involved – to ensure comparability of data and make it possible to analyse trends across the EU; and b) a part specific for each national context or information needs related to Roma.

Local and national authorities will follow the methodology and framework agreed with the FRA to collect data on Roma at local level. The data collected will be reported to the FRA that will compile and analyse it in view of providing useful evidence for informing EU and national evidence-based policies for Roma integration and inclusion.

-In addition to all this, it would be relevant to make urban deprived neighbourhood a priority topic for ESPON analysis, so that ESPON can produce qualitative information complementary to that of Eurostat.

- **Which partners?**

Regarding data on child poverty and homelessness:

Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee, Member States, Eurostat, the European Observatory on Homelessness, FEANTSA, Eurofound, Urban Poverty Partnership, National observatories.

Regarding data on Roma:

DG for Regional and Urban Policy and “Cities/Urban Audit” managers, EUROSTAT and the National Urban Audit Coordinators (NUACs), together with experts from the National Observatories of Urban Poverty/Deprived Neighbourhoods, and EUROCITIES as the voice of local authorities across Europe.

Action on data-gathering about Roma people will be developed by: The FRA, Eurostat and EUROCITIES will be lead partners in this action, while also cooperating with the European Commission (the DG for Regional and Urban Policy and the DG for Justice and Consumers), other institutions with experience of data collection from Roma communities (UNDP and World Bank), and the representatives of the Member States with the largest Roma population (RO, HU, BG, SK, CZ) and of the Member States that, although may not have a high percentage of Roma people, have extensive experience on inclusive policies, studies and analysis on this population (ES).

- **Which timeline?**

Regarding data on child poverty and homelessness:

The ad-hoc module on retrospective housing difficulties has been prepared by Eurostat and is ready to be implemented.

Regarding data on Roma:

To be defined in accordance with “Cities/Urban Audit” and “Regions and Cities Illustrated” budgets and roadmaps for the future /Data-gathering on Roma people: The preparatory actions will start as of late 2017 and the first data collection exercise at local level will take place in 2018 to feed into the planned Roma survey of the FRA for 2018.

## 3.2. Child poverty

### ACTION 4 – ADOPTION OF A EUROPEAN CHILD GUARANTEE

The Child Guarantee is the future cornerstone of the fight against poverty in Europe. It is the tool to realise concrete investments that benefit children and young people in Europe, in particular the most disadvantaged. By doing so, we will close the inequality gap, give children equal opportunities and ultimately fight poverty for the benefit of all European society. The Child Guarantee aims to invest in pillars 2 and 3 of the Commission recommendation *Investing in Children : breaking the cycle of disadvantage*. The Action also includes measures to make better use of current EU instruments.

**Responsible:** Commission services (DG EMPL, DG REGIO, DG JUST, DG EAC, DG SANTE), Member States; **Deadline:** The Guarantee should be ready by the beginning of the next MFF period.

- **What is the specific problem?**

There is a lack of political and financial investment in children and young people at EU level, but also at other levels of government. This lack of investment is leading to unchanged poverty levels with children being the age group with the highest poverty level.

As pointed out in the introduction of this section, the AROPE of children is not improving significantly in the EU. The same pattern is true for the AROPE rate in the general population. This rate actually steadily increased after 2008 (the reference year for the EU2020 target on poverty reduction) peaking in 2012 at 24,7%. In 2015, the rate was 23,7%. Between 2009 and 2015, the number of people AROPE has risen by 4 million. The recent “Joint employment report from the Commission and the Council accompanying the Communication from the Commission on the Annual Growth Survey 2017” picked up on this situation and noted that, in relation to the positive evolution of employment rates in the EU, “this upward trend is not reflected in poverty figures”. Part of this situation can be explained by the fact that the EU and Member States made growth and jobs a top priority, massively investing in measures related to the labour market, whereas the poverty target has not benefitted from the same level of attention in the arsenal of instruments provided by the Commission to MS, despite an ambitious target. There is also a widening gap across the EU.

Three years before 2020, it seems that the employment target will probably be achieved, but this won’t translate into a significant positive evolution in the AROPE rate of EU citizens, including children. In other words, employment strategies are not sufficient to tackle poverty EU wide.

In a nutshell, the real problem is an unbalance between the level of commitment to strengthening the labour market versus the level of commitment to structurally tackling poverty through an integrated rights-based approach that ensures access to quality jobs, services and social protection and commitment to redistribute tax/benefit policies. Labour market structural reforms have been backed by strong agreements and funds at EU and Member States level whereas the poverty target has clearly not been deemed the same level of investment. There are however strong arguments to back equal

investment, commitment and policy development, especially if we want to tackle long-term unemployment, promote social investment and social inclusion and if we really want to break the cycle of disadvantage and poverty.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

There are of course many initiatives that contribute to the fight against poverty at EU level and the full array of these initiatives can be found in the Mapping of Policies, one of the scoping documents of the Urban Poverty Partnership.

Focusing on child poverty, the 2013 Commission Recommendation *Investing in Children, Breaking the cycle of disadvantage* (IC-BCD Recommendation) is the most recent instrument adopted in the context of the Social Investment Package (SIP). In this document, the European Commission recommends Member States to “organise and implement policies to address child poverty and social exclusion, promoting children’s well-being, through multidimensional strategies” in accordance with a number of guidelines or framework. This framework includes:

1. A set of horizontal principles that should guide the development of policy/reform.
2. Three pillars: Member States should act on namely access to adequate resources (acting on households’ income), access to affordable quality services (acting on the provision of services to children in the areas of ECEC, health, housing, education, care settings) and children’s right to participate (in recreational-sport-cultural activities and in decision making “that affects their lives”).
3. More/better governance, implementation and monitoring arrangements.
4. Full use of EU instruments including existing funding opportunities

Among the ongoing EU instruments it is important to mention the 20% earmarking of the ESF for social inclusion and poverty which is directly linked to the delivery of the Europe 2020 poverty target (aimed to reduce poverty by at least 20 million by 2020). This represents an increase of 8% with regard to the previous programming period of the Cohesion Policy. **Which action is needed?**

**Investing in children makes sense in a rights-based approach.**

As parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, all EU Member States have obligations to promote, protect, respect and fulfil all children’s rights, this in turn can prevent children from experiencing poverty and social exclusion, or at least mitigate the consequences. Therefore, child poverty needs to be addressed from a child rights perspective and with an integrated approach. If Europe wants to « act big » (in the words of the recent European Parliament Resolution on the European Pillar for Social Rights) on child poverty, it needs to foster shared responsibility between all levels of government and encourage the establishment of a Child Guarantee, taking into account the European Pillar of Social Rights adopted last April (Principle 11: Childcare and support to children, that highlights that children have the right to be protected from poverty).

Put simply:

- The EU and Member States should agree to make the fight against poverty a priority. There is no quick win solution to roll back poverty. Poverty reduction implies long term investment.
- The EU and Member States must recognize that investing in children and in the early years is a key strategy to tackle poverty as a whole and offer equal opportunities to all EU citizens.

- Member states must acknowledge all levels of government have a role to play and should be duly involved in any strategic or reform process in relation to tackling child poverty (vertical integration).
- Member states must pay particular attention to the challenges faced by their urban areas and local authorities: their services and staff are at the frontline of dealing with the majority of households facing poverty.
- Child poverty must be addressed with the involvement of civil society organisations. The involvement of beneficiaries or those directly impacted by poverty is also important.

### **Investing in children is smart.**

If investing in adults and young people to improve their chances on the labour market is smart, then investing in children to close the gap before they are ready to enter the labour market is smarter. In the same way Member States decided to increase under-25's chances to enter the labour market – strengthening the “supply side” of employment policies – investing in children and guaranteeing their rights makes sense if we want to reduce inequalities, fight poverty and break the cycle of disadvantage.

There is strong evidence pointing to the fact that the “return on investment” is higher when you invest in the early years. In other words, investing in children yields better results for society and the economy as a whole.

### **Investing in children is inclusive.**

The aim of the Guarantee is to ensure equal opportunities to all children, reducing the impact of determining factors of child poverty which are the household type, the level of education of parents, monetary poverty, migrant background and living conditions. If we want to roll back poverty, all levels of government have a role to play in accordance with their competences and resources.

The EU and the Member States cannot afford to not do more faced with the persistent level of poverty in the EU. We need to also focus on children's rights in the fight against poverty if we want to have a long term impact on the general poverty rate.

Europe has to offer its future citizens an equally strong position in society and that starts in the early years of life.

#### **• How to implement the action?**

The action requires acting on a number of separate sub-actions.

#### **1. Target(s) : A set of realistic objectives is defined and measurable targets are associated with these objectives.**

A first step would be to define a general target related to children's AROPE rate (define a baseline and quantify the reduction objective). If the Guarantee aims to improve children's living conditions in areas of education, housing, ECEC, health and nutrition, a further step is to define a “flagship target” for all these areas, at national and sub-national level.

The IC-BCD Recommendation proposes an indicator-based monitoring framework. This set of 32 indicators can serve as a base for the selection of a final set of targets in relation to the implementation of the Child Guarantee.

#### **2. Commitment : the Member States commit to guaranteeing children's rights as a cornerstone to tackle the poverty rate in the EU.**

The starting point of this commitment is the adoption of new binding regulation to implement the Child Guarantee as described here. A further step towards guaranteeing children's rights is to move towards binding regulation covering all aspects of the IC-BCD Recommendation (see Action XX hereafter).

**3. Budget/funds : This commitment is supported by adequate funds.**

The EU needs to back its commitment with appropriate financial support. As a first step, an evaluation is needed of how existing EU funds are being used to tackle child poverty in Europe. As a next step guidelines would be developed for the next round of EU funding programmes which will help the EC and managing authorities create a more enabling framework for better and more targeted funding towards children and families adopting an integrated approach in the next programming period 2020-2027. In order to improve efficiency of EU public spending, Member States will be required to report how much of the different EU and national resources they are investing in children. As part of the Child Guarantee a tool with effective process indicators will be created to identify and monitor how Member States are using EU resources and help assess how successful funding mechanisms are. Another aim is to support prioritisation of children in national budget planning, especially in areas falling under Pillars 1 and 2 of the IC-BCD Recommendation.

Intermediary and/or pilot measures could also be financed by the re-allocation of ESF and/or ERDF unallocated budgets. This would allow short term action and evaluation of the best possible avenues regarding financial support of the Child Guarantee. This short term financial backing should take into account the recommendations of the European Court of Auditors in its report on youth action teams (ECA, 2015).

To further promote investment in children, another lever can be mobilised to encourage Member States to act in line with their engagements in relation to children's rights. In the current regulation of the Stability and Growth Pact, the preventive arm provides several 'flexibility' elements leading to exclusions of certain investments/reforms in the temporary deviations of MS's medium-term objectives. It has been suggested (for example by Caritas Europe) to extend flexibility in the monitoring of national budget expenditure by also excluding certain forms of social investment (if not indefinitely, at least temporarily) and specifically investments that concern children.

**4. Action : National plans to fight child poverty should reflect Member States' commitment.**

As a prerequisite, Member States need to demonstrate that they have in place a child rights-based national plan or strategy for the fight against child poverty. It is crucial that these plans demonstrate ownership from all levels of government and across the sectors mentioned above, including civil society organisations. These plans should result from a strong cooperation between levels of government with Member States fostering and maintaining a participative approach in the preparation, development, and delivery of the national plan. National plans could be complemented by local plans for the cities where child poverty is rising or already very high, providing both are aligned.

The Urban Poverty Partnership – as a multi-level entity composed of representatives of cities, regions, states, Commission and NGO's – stresses here again the importance of **working together** for a common goal.

- **Which partners?**

The development of the Child Guarantee should be a cross-sectoral and multi-level process. It should involve institutional as well as non-institutional stakeholders.

Local (urban and rural areas), regional, national and EU levels have a shared responsibility when it comes to providing services to children and ensuring their fundamental rights are respected. In particular, they all have a responsibility regarding disadvantaged children and the fight against child poverty because they share competencies that contribute to this major challenge.

Taking action in this area of social rights requires a convergence of interests, working together and in complementarity with other levels of government and administration. Member states, as in other EU regulations in relation to the use of structural funds, must commit to the principle of partnership to design anti-poverty policies. The Child Guarantee covers a broad spectrum of actions in the fields of housing, education, childcare, health care. All government entities related to these fields should be involved.

In consequence, we identified Member States and a number Commission DGs as responsible for the Action. Because of the strong linkage with EU funds, social affairs and the urban dimension of poverty, DG EMPL and DG REGIO are the most heavily involved in the development of the Guarantee. DG JUST, DG EAC and DG SANTE have roles to play respectively in relation to:

- Fundamental rights (UNCRC, Charter for Fundamental Rights of the EU), discrimination
- Education (including ECEC) & training, Youth, Sport
- Public health (social determinants of health, health inequalities, promotion of children's health and wellbeing)

Other EU institutions to be involved in the process: European Parliament, Committee of Regions, European Economic and Social Committee, Social Protection Committee, Fundamental Rights Agency.

Involvement of civil society and NGO's, particularly those working with specific groups (such as children, young people, the Roma).

NGO's are in a unique position to provide their expertise, knowledge and critical eye on the design, process, implementation, monitoring, readjusting and evaluation of the Child Guarantee. They have already delivered key analysis and advocacy in this area and in the broader field of poverty reduction and access to public services for disadvantaged groups. Unlike other sectors, NGO's in the social sector are subject to high pressure to deliver their input but they don't always have the internal means to provide their views when timings are short. This needs to be addressed by defining a plan of consultation well ahead. In the context of the development of a Child Guarantee, it is necessary to communicate a clear planning related to the involvement of NGO's. Such a "civil society consultation strategy" should be coherent, timely and should aim at avoiding duplication for these key stakeholders.

Considering the scope of the Child Guarantee, we have identified several types of civil society organisations and NGO's that should be involved in the Child Guarantee development and implementation.

- Organisations defending children's rights and wellbeing and promoting the participation of children and their families.
- Organisations working on poverty reduction and on provision of social services
- Organisations representing the interests of large, medium and small cities as well as metropolitan areas.

- **Which timeline?**

[In addition to the final deadline, there may be intermediary steps]

## **ACTION 5 – PROGRESS TOWARDS A DIRECTIVE ON INVESTING IN CHILDREN BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION INVESTING IN CHILDREN: BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DISADVANTAGE**

Complementary to the Child Guarantee, that is considered a tool to implement the European Commission Recommendation of February 2013 *Investing in Children : breaking the cycle of disadvantage*, the Partnership advocates to go one step further and to strengthen the legislative body at EU level in order to promote the effective implementation of children’s rights in all EU Member states by introducing a directive to break the cycle of disadvantage.

**Responsible:** European Commission, Member States; **Deadline:** New legislative sources should be adopted by 2022 (medium term action).

- **What is the specific problem?**

The Child Guarantee as well as the other actions developed under this Action Plan’s priority on child poverty would all be valuable steps in the right direction but they wouldn’t cover all pillars, aspects and policy mechanisms cited in the Recommendation IC-BCD. As such, the Recommendation is a comprehensive, integrated, child-rights-based set of policy measures but, as stated elsewhere in the Urban Poverty Action Plan, it has not lead to significant reforms at regional or national level with direct impact at the city/local level.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

Focusing on child poverty, the 2013 Commission Recommendation *Investing in Children, Breaking the cycle of disadvantage* (IC-BCD Recommendation) is the most recent instrument adopted in the context of the Social Investment Package (SIP). In this document, the European Commission recommends Member States to “organise and implement policies to address child poverty and social exclusion, promoting children’s well-being, through multidimensional strategies” in accordance with a number of guidelines or framework. This framework includes :

1. A set of horizontal principles that should guide the development of policy/reform.
2. Three pillars. Member States should act on namely access to adequate resources (acting on households’ income), access to affordable quality services (acting on the provision of services to children in the areas of ECEC, health, housing, education, care settings) and children’s right to participate (in recreational-sport-cultural activities and in decision making “that affects their lives”).
3. More/better governance, implementation and monitoring arrangements.
4. Full use of EU instruments including existing funding opportunities.

- **Which action is needed?**

The partnership proposes a two-phase approach. In a first phase, the European Semester should include strict monitoring of reforms based on a new indicator related to investment in children. In a second, medium to long term phase, the Recommendation should be taken a step further and should constitute the basis of a Directive under the European Pillar of Social Rights. This regulation, as a comprehensive body of legislation will enact Member States’ engagements in relation to children’s rights (CFR).

- **How to implement the action?**

A phased approach should be adopted with the Child Guarantee amounting to a first step (focus on pillars 2 and 3 of the Recommendation).

Additionally, there should be a formal recognition of the horizontal principles outlined in the Recommendation and a focus on Pillar 1 that states that there should be:

- Support to parents' participation on the labour market and access to quality jobs.
- Provision of adequate living standards through a combination of benefits (including guidelines for the implementation of minimum income schemes in the Member States, and other income support including child and family benefits).
- **Which partners?**

See Action 4.

### 3.3. Regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods

#### **ACTION 6 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: SETTING UP A NEW URBAN TERRITORIAL OBJECTIVE**

The current programming period of the Cohesion Policy is based on funding and policy instruments that are not fully adapted to the complex and specific challenge of fighting urban poverty. For this reason, this Action proposes to set up a new Urban Territorial Objective in the Cohesion Policy 2020, specifically designed and oriented to face the problems of urban deprived neighbourhoods and the most vulnerable social groups.

**Responsible:** European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy in charge of designing the Cohesion Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion . **Deadline:** 2019.

- **What is the specific problem?**

The Cohesion Policy for the programming period 2014-2020 has been structured (and is being implemented) around 11 thematic objectives supporting growth. Each of the Structural Funds prioritises different objectives (ERDF 1-4, Cohesion Fund 4-7 and 11, ESF 8-11, although ESF can also support objectives 1-4).

The funds oriented to the implementation of regeneration strategies within the framework of the Cohesion Policy, and particularly the ERDF and the ESF, do not share the same logic of intervention, making it difficult for local authorities to combine funding from both sources in the context of integrated initiatives which tackle the complex challenges of deprived neighbourhoods through a holistic approach.

This results in segmented strategies for urban areas, and difficulties to manage integrated strategies, particularly when the ERDF and the ESF need to be combined.

In addition, the lack of a specific urban objective limit the impact of structural funds for cities to address urban poverty in the EU.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

The approaches and instruments with capacity to develop urban regeneration strategies in the programming period 2014-2020 of the Cohesion Policy lack a specific focus on urban poverty. Particularly the most specific, the so-called Integrated Sustainable Urban Development approach funded by at least the 5% of the ERDF (Article 7 ERDF Regulation), has to be implemented addressing some of the 11 thematic objectives of the Cohesion Policy. This results in a limitation to address the significant and complex challenges of urban poverty.

The potential allocation of resources from the ESF (regarding article 12 of ESF Regulation) to support local development strategies co-funded by the ERDF cannot fill this gap, as the main limitation to address the problems of urban deprived neighbourhoods in the current period lies on the approach on which urban strategies have to be envisaged. This different intervention logic led to uncoordinated strategies by urban authorities and limited the impact of funds on policies and for citizen.

In this context the urban issue needs to be made visible in the priorities of the Cohesion Policy, so that urban poverty can be addressed through sound and specific strategies.

- **Which action is needed?**

This action proposes setting up a new urban territorial objective in the Cohesion Policy post 2020. It will address sustainable and integrated urban development through the definition of a simple regulatory framework able to overcome the sectoral approach and substitute it for a territorial and area-based understanding of urban deprivation with a strong focus on fighting urban poverty. As a result it will support urban integrated strategies avoiding ERDF and ESF segmentation and allowing the combination of financial resources for the regeneration of urban deprived areas.

It will take into account that the new instrument proposed launched in the context of this territorial objective as the local Pact (action). It should be simple to be implemented for national authorities, regions, and urban authorities. They also should make possible the active engagement of the citizens and local population to gain credibility, ownership, as well as effective grass-root initiatives.

The new territorial objective will set the regeneration of urban areas affected by urban poverty as a priority in the next programming period of the Cohesion Policy (post 2020). It will also have the objective of making this important issue visible at EU level.

The new urban territorial objective will entail an increase in the minimum national allocation of the ERDF (currently 5%) and will set a minimum national allocation of the ESF for sustainable urban development in close relation with which has been proposed by Action 1 of this Action Plan (Block Grant).

- **How to implement the action?**

The new urban territorial objective should be proposed by the EU in the next “Common Strategic Framework” as specific objective and be included in the upcoming regulatory package of structural funds (at least in the human capital funds, physical investment funds currently ESF and ERDF if necessary ERDF). It should be supported by particularly by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion). Urban authorities must be integrated in a process of shared analysis and diagnosis related to urban poverty with the support of relevant regional and national authorities. The request and necessities of urban authorities need to be taken into account in the final definition of the urban thematic objective.

The new Urban Territorial Objective and the Local Pact (Action 7) will be tested through an URBACT Pilot Action. This Action should be developed and implemented in full coordination with Actions 1 and 7 of this Action Plan.

- **Which partners?**

- Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion.
- European Parliament and Committee of the region
- Member States.
- Regions.
- Cities.
- The Urban Poverty Partnership.

- **Which timeline?**

- The design of this instrument should start as soon as possible.
- Design on regulatory package on 2018

## **ACTION 7 – COHESION POLICY POST 2020: LOCAL PACT FOR THE REGENERATION OF URBAN DEPRIVED AREAS**

This action proposes the Local Pact as multi-fund instrument aimed to assign urban authorities a leading role in the design of their strategies of urban regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods in the Cohesion Policy post 2020. On the basis of a multi-level approach it adopts a mixed place-based and people-based vision, able to adopt the necessary flexibility level to address the different dimensions of urban poverty through integrated strategies.

**Responsible:** European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy in charge of designing the Cohesion Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. **Deadline:** Delivery of the proposals for the Cohesion Policy regulatory package for 2021-2027: end 2017/first quarter 2018; Adoption of Cohesion Policy regulatory package 2021-2027: end 2019.

- **What is the specific problem?**

The convergence and the socio-spatial consequences of impoverishment concentrate poverty in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In order to address this challenge, it is necessary to tackle urban poverty adopting a place-based approach that takes into account all the inhabitants and their necessities (people-based approach). The fight against urban poverty should be formalised on the basis of integrated urban place-based interventions in the context of a EU urban poverty reduction policy that adopts a targeted and integrated approach towards the most deprived neighbourhoods. However, under the current Cohesion Policy (2020), urban authorities face a number of obstacles to develop relevant approaches to tackle urban poverty:

First, urban authorities do not count with the necessary flexibility to address the complex causes of urban poverty through integrated urban regeneration programmes. Integrated sustainable urban development strategies are managed centrally, at the level of national operational programmes co-funded by ERDF. The territorial impact of the actions implemented in deprived areas is not sufficiently taken into account.

Second, urban authorities do not always apply a place-based approach in their urban regeneration strategies. Under the ERDF Regulation, urban authorities can implement Integrated Territorial Interventions (ITI), but this instrument is not been successful in organizing and implementing at the same time multi-fund and area-based approaches.

Third, EU funds are too dispersed, while a higher spatial concentration and intensity would be more effective to address urban poverty in deprived neighbourhoods.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

In the programming period 2014-2020 of the Cohesion Policy the urban dimension of EU policy is being developed through two main instruments: Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategies (funded by at least the 5% of the ERDF allocated at national level) and the Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI). The ITI has been proposed as a new delivery mode to bundle funding from several priority axes of one or more operational programmes for multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral interventions. It offers the possibility to combine funding linked to different thematic objectives, including the combination of funding from priority axes and operational programmes

supported by the ESIF. The Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategies have been proposed to tackle the economic, environmental, climate and social challenges of urban areas. Resources should be concentrated in an integrated manner to target areas with specific urban challenges, and at the same time ERDF-funded projects in urban areas should be integrated in the wider objectives of the operational programmes of the Member States.

The definition and formalization of these instruments does not focus the priority of EU urban action in deprived neighbourhoods and urban poverty, as this challenge is not explicitly mentioned, and the instruments described are challenge-oriented (related to the investment priorities of the Cohesion Policy 2014-2020), not place and people-oriented.

- **Which action is needed?**

The instruments framed in the urban dimension of Cohesion Policy post 2020 should include an explicit reference to tackle poverty in urban deprived neighbourhoods. This policy should be integrated in the new Urban Territorial Objective of the Cohesion Policy for the post 2020 period proposed by the UPP (see Action 6: “Cohesion Policy Post 2020: Setting up a new Urban Territorial Objective”). All this should give more visibility to the problems of urban deprived neighbourhoods and focus the new urban instruments to reduce the economic and social gaps within urban authorities, strengthening social cohesion and social inclusion in the EU.

In order to address urban poverty in urban deprived areas under the new Urban Territorial Objective of the Cohesion Policy, **the UPP proposes the creation of Local Pacts for the regeneration of urban deprived areas in a *multi-level, strategic, and multi-annual* perspective for the period 2021-2027.**

The Local Pact gives urban authorities a leading role in the design of their strategy to address poverty in the context of EU funding, along with other stakeholders (public authorities of different levels, inhabitants and third sector). Through the Local Pact, urban authorities can lead the discussion on which urban deprived areas European Funds should be concentrated. The identification of these areas should be done at least by national authorities (Member State) in collaboration with the local authorities based on their diagnosis, strategies and main necessities and priorities.

The Local Pact would have the following characteristics:

- Mixed place-based and people-based approach: Upgrading the urban deprived areas should be done understanding the needs and difficulties felt by people in poverty situation and living in deprived areas, as well as on analysis of the causes. The Local Pact would enable the design of adequate strategies (including appropriate quality services) based on the integration of a place-based and people-based approach.
- Multi-fund: The Local Pact would combine or pool resources from different EU funds, typically the ESF and the ERDF, achieving leverage effects in the urban regeneration of deprived areas.
- Flexible: The Local Pact would enable adjustments to local needs and to the evolution of changing challenges. It would also help to combine sectoral policies.
- Multi-level: Local Pacts address both city-wide challenges as well as specific challenges of urban deprived areas. They involve several levels of government

(local, regional, national) and different types of stakeholders, including non-for-profit and grass root organizations, and involving the people directly affected by urban poverty. Local Pacts should also be participative, through the setting-up of Local Committees of Users and Inhabitants (LCUI).

The Local Pact aims to give place to integrated urban regeneration interventions including the following four dimensions to tackle urban poverty:

1. Urban regeneration/living environment. These strategies will be aimed to integrate the deprived neighbourhoods in the dynamics of their urban agglomeration by reinforcing their residential attractiveness, the quality of the services, and the quality of the standard of life and social mix. Important aspects of this dimension include living environment, public space, housing, transport, equipment, facilities, services and economic development.
2. Social cohesion. This dimension focuses on vulnerable social groups (jobseekers - particularly young people-, single parent families -particularly those headed by women-, migrants, older people, etc.), the fight against child poverty, and the integration of homeless and marginalized communities. It includes education, employment, health, integration, and access to jobs and skills.
3. Inclusive economic development. This dimension refers to action fostering the economic potential of UDAN. It will aim to foster the establishment of economic activity and business creation in urban deprived areas, to improve integration with local and internal dynamics and support transition to formal economic activities.
4. Environment/energy. This dimension will tackle challenges such as energy efficiency in housing and urban regeneration programmes, fight against climate change, adaptation to climate change and urban resilience, among others.

The identification of the urban deprived areas should be done at least by national authorities (Member States) in collaboration with the local authorities based on their diagnosis and strategies.

The Local Pact and the new Urban Territorial Objective (Action 6) will be tested through an URBACT Pilot Action. The URBACT method could be useful for modelling, testing such a partnership framework and designing guidance for the upcoming programming period.

- **How to implement the action?**

The Local Pact will be designed as a EU funded multilevel governance framework for the regeneration of the UDAN, including national, regional, local authorities, local stakeholders, private sector, NGOs, citizens (particularly people experiencing poverty and social exclusion) civil society, etc. committed to a multi annual term pact. In its functioning, such an instrument should enable the implementation of an urban regeneration multi-fund approach, making possible the concentration of the resources and the intensity of the action undertaken. It will be oriented to guarantee action the four mentioned dimensions (see above), fostering targeted investments at European scale for an improved living environment and daily life of all citizens in UDAN, including the marginalised communities (Roma people, homelessness) with a special focus on child poverty.

The Local Pact will be the appropriate instrument to deliver the Territorial urban objective on the ground. The Local Pact will be managed by local authorities, financed where appropriate by the Block-Grant (see Action 1), based on simple rules and result-

oriented, in order to implement targeted intervention in the UDAN to reduce the socio-economic gaps at city level.

A Local Pact (pilot action) will be tested through URBACT. The URBACT method could be useful for modelling and test such a partnership framework. The voluntary members of the UPP could set up a Local Action Group (LAG) and design a Local Action Plan (LAP) with the support of URBACT. At the moment URBACT is financing one network on the topic of deprived urban areas: *URBinclusion*. It includes partners from France, Spain, Greece, UK (among others) examining the challenges around implementing existing integrated action plans. It may be possible to test how to scale up the capacity building training provided to city partners in this network via the participant countries implicated in the Urban Poverty Partnership. The French experience *Contrat de Ville* as well as the German experience with the “Soziale Stadt” (Social City) and the interdepartmental strategy could be also a guiding experience for testing the pilot.

This Action should be developed and implemented in full coordination with Actions 1 and 7 of this Action Plan.

- **Which partners?**

To influence their action:

- European Commission: i) Units of the DG for Regional and Urban Policy in charge of designing the Cohesion Policy, drafting the regulatory package of the ERDF, and coordinating the ESF; ii) Units of the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion in charge of drafting the ESF regulations.
- European Parliament: i) Urban intergroup; ii) Commission REGI; iii) Commission EMPL.
- European Council (Member States), Council of Ministers and their formations (e.g. EMCO, SPC, etc.).
- European Investment Bank in complement to Cohesion Policy instruments (EFSI: European Fund for Strategic Investment, EIF: European Investment Fund).
- Eurocities to ensure the participation of cities in the Local Pact through training sessions, capacity building and sharing good practices.
- CEMR

To implement (actions and pilot actions):

- URBACT and URBACT cities (Secretariat and Monitoring Committee).

- **Which timeline?**

first quarter 2018: influencing the elaboration of the regulatory package on Cohesion Policy post 2020. Launching URBACT Pilot Action.

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2018/2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2018: influencing the elaboration of the negotiation package on Cohesion Policy post 2020.

### 3.4. Homelessness

#### **ACTION 8 – ENDING HOMELESSNESS BY 2030, THROUGH THE REFORM OF SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

The EU and the Member states have agreed a target to end homelessness in the EU by 2030. This was agreed under the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG1 commits all Member States and the EU to eradicate poverty, including extreme poverty and homelessness, by 2030.

**Responsible:** European Commission: To re-affirm Commitment to end Homelessness / Member States: To develop social inclusion strategies that include targeted actions for people who are homeless; **Deadline:** European Commission – Re-affirm target as part of the 2030 Agenda / Member States.

- **What is the specific problem?**

Homelessness is on the rise across the EU. There is no EU target to end homelessness. Policy makers at national level are not encouraged to fight this problem. In 2010, under the Presidency of Belgium, a European Consensus Conference on homelessness led to the identification of a comprehensive set of principles and recommendations to effectively put an end to homelessness. Following the conference many EU bodies (European Parliament, Committee of Regions, Economic and Social Committee, EPSCO council) supported its results. To date, this conference is still a reference in the way forward to end homelessness, notably acknowledging the efficiency of housing-led policies. These policy approaches identify the provision and/or sustaining of stable housing with security of tenure as the initial step in resolving or preventing situations of homelessness. Moreover, as mentioned under Action 3, metrics for measuring poverty in the EU excludes homelessness, which result in a lack of knowledge able to support targeted and efficient policies.

Experience shows that active engagement of European, national and local policy makers in the fight to end homelessness in the EU needs to be i) underpinned by a specific target detailing both a deadline and the reduction to be achieved and, ii) incentivised through the distribution of European funds. Social inclusion strategies to access EU funds are required to include people who are homeless. They need to be combined with solid housing strategies specifically designed to address homelessness.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

While the EU has an anti-poverty target for 2020 it excludes homelessness. Currently the European Commission is not set to meet their target of lifting 20 million people out of poverty. The European Pillar for Social Rights, proclaimed on 17 November 2017, recognises the right to “Housing and Assistance for the Homeless” under Article 19.

Beyond the European level, each Member State and the EU as a whole, has committed under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 to end poverty in all forms by 2030, this implicitly includes a commitment to end homelessness, an extreme form of poverty in the EU.

While setting an EU target to end homelessness is not new, its re-affirmation is an important tool for policy makers, at all levels, to ensure that homelessness remains a top priority.

- **Which action is needed?**

**At EU level**, a target is needed to motivate all relevant stakeholders to end homelessness. The lack of specific targets under the Europe 2020 Strategy, a timeframe where homelessness has grown significantly throughout the EU, shows that in the absence of targets specifically on homelessness, policies and strategies will fail to reduce homelessness. Re-affirming the target to end homelessness in the EU further encourages policy makers at European, national and local level to pursue other actions proposed by the Homeless Working Group.

“Homelessness” can be a disputed term. What constitutes homelessness is clearly defined and agreed upon in the ETHOS Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion. This typology should be a reference for all actions pursuing the end of homelessness, understood as falling under four categories : rooflessness, houselessness, insecure housing and inadequate housing. When re-affirming a target, it should be made clear what constitutes “ending homeless”. It is proposed that it should include the following: i) no one sleeping rough, ii) no one living in emergency accommodation for longer than an “emergency” situation, iii) no one living in transitional accommodation longer than is required for a successful move-on, iv) no one leaving an institution without housing options, and v) no young people becoming homeless because of the transition to independent living. Ending homelessness requires investing in preventive strategies to stop the recent increases in homelessness, in addition to investing in housing led solutions that allow cities to move from managing long-term and chronic homelessness to ending homelessness. This can help to break episodic experiences of homelessness, where once homeless as a child or young adult, you are more likely to have repeated experiences of homelessness in the lifetime.

**At national level**, Member States that request the use of European Structural Funds must be asked to develop National Social Inclusion Strategies complemented with housing solutions that specifically aim to support the inclusion of homeless persons. This action will incentivise the Member States to consider the vulnerable situation of these people. The inclusion of homeless persons in such strategies empowers policy makers at the local, regional, and national level, to request increased resources to invest in evidenced based solutions (see Actions 1 and 7) and push for the use of harmonized data collection (see Action 3). These are suggested examples of actions that can be included in national strategies, to be implemented at regional and local level:

- Housing First and Housing-led actions.
- More effective use of land to enable the production of reasonably-priced rental housing in developing areas. This housing should be integrated in diverse and vibrant residential areas, in order to avoid the development of ghettos.
- Putting into place adequate alternatives for people facing homelessness developing both emergency accommodation and long term housing options. Regarding the first, everyone presenting at an emergency accommodation centre should be offered a long-term, adapted solution to their housing needs.
- Limiting the length of stay in emergency accommodation. The “Ending Homelessness: A Handbook for Policy Makers” publication recommends to limit it to no longer than is required for successful move-on or to the duration of a specific “emergency” situation.
- Reducing evictions (and eliminate the eviction of children).

- Facilitating the entry into the mainstream housing market for people in housing ladders, training flats or other forms of temporary accommodation provided by social services.
- Access to specialised, long-term supported or supervised accommodation with trained staff for homeless people with a high level of need and complex problems. This should be aimed to help them overcome difficulties to move from transitional contexts.

Member States should be encouraged to develop and implement an integrated strategy for ending homelessness. This can be facilitated through the document “Ending Homelessness: A Handbook for Policy Makers” which outlines approaches for ending this problem. This is a toolkit developed by FEANTSA<sup>11</sup>. The toolkit is already translated into 6 European languages, with a leaflet version of the guide available in 9 countries. National Strategies empower cities and regional actors in the pursuit of ending homelessness. The causes of homeless can often be triggered by national level policies, but the solutions often come from the local level.

- **How to implement the action?**

**Working group on homelessness:** The working group on homelessness proposes a target to end homelessness in the EU by 2030. This target will be in line with existing international obligations. The target to end homelessness will be supported by actions including the use of social inclusion strategies in accessing EU funds, and the use of integrated strategies for ending homelessness. This will provide policy makers with a pathway towards the implementation.

**Urban Poverty Partnership:** The partnership endorses the target and deadline proposed by the Working Group. As a result, they will be integrated in the PPU-Action Plan for the Urban Agenda to the European Council, along with the pathway documents to support policy makers.

**FEANTSA:** FEANTSA will use its network within the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament to push for a formal recognition of the UN target to end homelessness. This will also be used to connect the Urban Agenda with EU legislative developments around the European Pillar for Social Rights. On the basis of the resources available, FEANTSA will work with the UPP in the development of supporting documents for policy makers.

**Potential risks:** While the European Council may resist the formal recognition of a target to end homelessness, this risk should be mitigated by highlighting that national governments have already agreed to this commitment through the UN SDGs.

- **Which partners?**

UPP members and the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and DG for Regional and Urban Policy).

- **Which timeline?**

The overall Action Plan on homelessness has been drafted around empowering cities and national governments to deliver real impact in their contexts and to end

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<sup>11</sup> FEANTSA is the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless. The toolkit can be accessed in: <http://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2010/10/12/toolkit-ending-homelessness-a-handbook-for-policy-makers>

homelessness. Setting a target and defining a target to end homelessness should be considered a priority and the catalyst for other actions proposed within the action plan.

## **ACTION 9 – CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE USE OF THE EU FUNDS TO END HOMELESSNESS**

Capacity Building for Effective EU Cohesion Funds in the fight to end homelessness: the ERDF, the ESF and the FEAD can provide a lever for better progress in reducing and ending homelessness.. To date funds have not been used to the maximum of their efficiency for this purpose. The so-called “creaming” effect means that Cohesion Funds rarely reaches people in the most vulnerable situations.. Capacity Building for the use of the funds, in the context of homelessness, can act as a simple but important step in assisting actors at the Member State and local levels to use the funds more efficiently.

**Responsible:** The European Commission, supported by FEANTSA, and UPP partners;

**Deadline:** To commence as soon as possible.

- **What is the specific problem?**

Cohesion Funds have the capacity to be used in the context of preventing and fighting homelessness. However, only a small portion the funds focus on this issue. Moreover, investments made are not always in line with the established evidence base on how to effectively end homelessness. There is a lack of knowledge and shared practices about how the European Funds can be used in the context of homelessness.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

The ESF, the FEAD and the ERDF can be used to invest in solving homelessness. The ESF has a threshold of 20% to be used for social inclusion, the FEAD is specifically dedicated for the most-deprived areas; and the EDRF has the potential to be used for social infrastructure, including housing.

**Which action is needed?**

Managing authorities and those responsible for the implementation and management of the funds will benefit from training on the use of the funds focusing on tackling homelessness. They will also be trained on how to work with social organizations and the target groups to tackle homelessness in an effective way, so that the strategies developed adopt a holistic approach that considers all the relevant dimensions that have to be taking into account regarding funding (including preventive and long-term assistance). Topics covered will include:

- How to end homelessness
- Multi-fund programming
- Blended financial instruments
- Unit Costs
- Transnationality

- **How to implement the action?**

This action will be facilitated through the offer of a relevant number of training outlets on addressing homelessness with the Cohesion Funds. Multi -fund programming, blended financial instruments, unit costs and transnationality are all key topics. The seminars will be organised by the European Commission, supported by FEANTSA and

other potential experts including managing authorities, beneficiaries, members of the Urban Poverty Partnership of the Urban Agenda for the EU, the EIB etc.

- **Which partners?**

DG for Regional and Urban Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Urban Poverty Partnership, FEANTSA, managing authorities of the Funds that can exert an impact on homelessness, and the UPP partners

- **Which timeline?**

To commence as soon as possible.

### 3.5. Vulnerability of Roma people

#### **ACTION 10 – ADOPTION OF AN INTEGRATED ROMA FRAMEWORK FROM A MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE APPROACH**

This action proposes mainstreaming a Roma inclusion perspective in all relevant policies and services, arguing that such mainstreaming would be more effective than adopting sectorial Roma integration policies. It recommends that EU, national and local authorities should work together to make Roma integration a transversal issue across policy sectors and across departments. This requires an integrated EU Roma framework post-2020 and close cooperation between national and urban authorities in coordinating actions. Participatory and multi-level approaches should be at the core of the new framework.

**Responsible:** EU, national and local authorities; **Deadline:** 2020 (launch of the new EU Roma Framework).

- **What is the specific problem?**

Under the EU Roma Framework that runs until 2020, Member States have committed to develop and implement National Roma Integration Strategies. The main problem is the lack of integrated and coordinated approach to Roma integration, as current national strategies are a collection of thematic actions and projects relevant for Roma (on housing, on employment, on education, on healthcare), but often lack a coordinated, integrated approach. As such, the national strategies promote a fragmented approach to Roma inclusion. This is an issue because some policies can have competing or conflicting objectives and thus generate adverse effects to Roma integration. For example, while a policy aims at improving the housing situation of Roma through offering them social housing, depending on the concentration social housing in a specific area, this can lead to spatial segregation and school segregation. Sectorial policies can only address part of the problem and can sometimes produce detrimental effects. Unless policies are brought together into an integrated approach to Roma integration, the problem will persist. It is not sufficient to divide actions or funding in themes of housing, education, employment and health, but these areas need to be connected into an integrated framework that takes into account the diversity at local level, and at the same time addresses core horizontal issues such as discrimination against Roma and their lack of participation.

To avoid this, Roma inclusion should be mainstreamed in inclusive policies and services for all people. Mainstreaming a Roma inclusion perspective in all relevant policies and public services is more effective than adopting sectorial Roma integration policies. This means that EU, national and local authorities, should work together to make Roma integration a transversal issue across policy sectors and across departments, by means of an integrated framework. Services need to be joined up and actions coordinated (e.g. education, employment, housing) at all levels of government to achieve real improvement in the lives of Roma people. This involves a mainstreaming approach and the development of specific focused action addressing the most important challenges for the full integration of the Roma community.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

The EU Roma Framework was adopted in 2011 with the aim to make a tangible difference to Roma people's lives. The framework mentioned specifically that *“action is needed to break the vicious cycle of poverty [of Roma people] moving from one generation to the next”*. Despite the efforts at national and EU level to implement a targeted approach to Roma integration, the situation of Roma remains critical. This was acknowledged by the Council conclusions of December 2016 that called for stronger efforts to improve the social and economic integration of Roma, *“especially at local level”*. The conclusions recognised that despite the measures taken by the Member States, only limited progress has been made in advancing to Roma integration. Reasons for this include insufficient cooperation between stakeholders, a lack of commitment by local authorities, and the ineffective use of available funds and continued discrimination.

The Council recommendation of December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures acknowledges that Roma inclusion policy initiatives need to be designed and implemented by Member States in close cooperation with cities. Furthermore, the recommendation called for *“striving at the local level for an integrated approach concerning families with a Roma background facing multiple problems such as non-completion of school, debt, poverty and poor health”*.

During 2017, the European Commission (DG Justice and Home Affairs) is carrying out a mid-term review of the EU Roma Framework until 2020 with the aim of developing a (new) EU approach to Roma integration after 2020. For this purpose, the Commission will prepare a report to be released before the end of 2017.

- **Which action is needed?**

There is a need for a long-term vision on the integration of marginalised Roma people in our societies and to make them an objective for our communities. This vision can be realized through: i) the integration of policy, legal and funding instruments in a renewed EU Roma framework post-2020 that should promote a coherent approach to Roma integration; ii) the mainstreaming of the Roma perspective in all policies. The focus should be on integrated programmes and policies to replace thematic one-off projects. While the focus would be on mainstream policies from an inclusive approach, a particular emphasis on the specific problems, needs and degree of deprivation of Roma (e.g. Roma children) should remain; this would mean bringing a ‘Roma lens’ into all mainstream policies to ensure they are inclusive for Roma people. Practices that use the principle of so-called proportional universalism are aware of the possible indirect discrimination of Roma that can bring about a mainstream policy. Such practices can work threshold-reducing, build bridges and stimulate mutual trust. The integration of Roma into mainstream society should be the ultimate goal.

The EU framework post-2020 should adopt an integrated approach to Roma integration with a multi-level governance coordination, by joining efforts of national governments to those of regional and local authorities. The integrated approach should consist of a coordinated strategy and action plan across ministries. This means that Roma concerns should be mainstreamed into education, employment, health, housing and other relevant policies. Mainstreaming should be ensured and monitored both at EU level as well as at national and local level.

This new EU approach to Roma integration should be applicable to all EU Member States. Member States should continue to update and improve their national Roma integration strategies by adopting a coherent, integrated approach, they should also find effective ways to mainstream the Roma perspective into all relevant policies.

- **How to implement the action?**

1. Each EU Member State should set up, at national level, a steering group to develop or update and implement an integrated national strategy for Roma inclusion. All 28 steering groups should have in their composition:
  - Representatives of all relevant Ministries (health, education, employment, housing, migration, fundamental rights, youth, family policy, etc.).
  - Representatives of the National Roma Contact Point.
  - Representatives of local and regional authorities (or their associations).
  - Representatives of Roma and pro-Roma civil society.

The steering groups at national level should have the mandate to better integrate the different policies and actions addressing Roma integration into a coherent approach involving coordinated efforts across ministries and departments, and with the involvement of local authorities and of Roma civil society and other relevant non-governmental stakeholders. The steering group should further develop the work of the existing National Contact Points. This means that the existing processes and structures will not be replaced, but that the steering group will serve as an advisory committee to support and build on the work of the National Contact Points by reaching out to all relevant Ministries. It will also use the existing Roma platforms to consult with broader audience and external stakeholders and to inform its work.

2. At EU level, a multi-level governance structure should be set up in the form of an urban partnership for Roma integration. This partnership should have in its composition:
  - Representatives from the European Commission (DG REGIO, DG JUST, DG EMPL, DG EAC etc.).
  - Representatives from the five EU member states with largest Roma populations (RO, BG, HU, SK, CZ) as well as other EU member states interested to develop further the EU framework on Roma.
  - Representatives of cities with largest Roma populations (both from “origin” and “destination” cities).
  - Representatives of Roma civil society at EU level.
3. This partnership should serve as an advisory group (or task force) to the Council of the EU to advise on developing a renewed EU Roma Framework after 2020 and to monitor its implementation. It would strengthen the much-needed collaboration between EU, national and local authorities and work towards making Roma integration a reality on the ground. This partnership would also advise on how to monitor the implementation of the new National Roma Integration Strategy based on participatory monitoring tools, identify challenges and propose support to national and local authorities where needed. While a robust monitoring system already exists as was developed by DG JUST, the partnership would support making this monitoring more participatory. This multi-level governance structure would ensure the much-needed participation of local authorities and Roma communities in all stages of the process, from drafting to monitoring and evaluating the integration strategies. Nevertheless, the subsidiarity principle will be respected as data collection for the monitoring process will be organised at the discretion of the Member States and conform to individual Member States' national legal frameworks. An integrated and

coherent approach to Roma integration should also be stimulated with an appropriate funding framework. This means that a combination of ESF and ERDF funding should be made possible for implementing integrated actions for Roma inclusion at local level. This could be made possible through direct access of cities to EU funding, e.g. through ITI, provided they fulfil some local ex-ante conditionalities (action outlined under better funding section).

- **Which partners?**

In pursuing this action, EU institutions should work together with national and local authorities as well as Roma civil society and other relevant non-governmental organisations. Lead partners of this action would be DG REGIO, DG JUST, national ministries in charge of fundamental rights and those working on anti-poverty policies and social inclusion, and EUROCIITIES. Participating partners could be DG EMPL, DG EAC, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), EP Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup and Roma networks, such as the ERGO network (grassroots network of Roma organisations) and EURoma network.

- **Which timeline?**

In 2017, consultation meetings will be held with DG JUST in view of feeding these proposals into the mid-term review of the EU Roma Framework and into the reflections on the (new) EU approach after 2020.

In 2018-2019, the structures would be formed and piloted. By 2020, the action should be implemented and aligned with the new EU Roma Framework (to start as of 2021).

## **ACTION 11 - STRENGTHENING THE DESEGREGATION PRINCIPLE IN EU URBAN AREAS**

This action proposes that the desegregation principle should be strengthened and mainstreamed into the regulation on the use of EU funds post-2020. National and local governments should be supported to assess the level of residential and educational segregation in their cities and introduce adjustments to their planning and investment strategies to combat it.

**Responsible:** European Commission and national governments; **Deadline:** 2020.

- **What is the specific problem?**

In European cities, marginalised communities face multiple forms of exclusion, and their living arrangements are often concentrated in space. Therefore, many groups, among them Roma and other ethnic minority groups, live spatially segregated and generally in much worse housing conditions as the majority of society. Segregation is a multifaceted issue that can occur intently or de facto. For example, Roma and other marginalised groups often suffer also from educational segregation, which not only impedes social interaction with the majority of society but also means education of significantly worse quality and high early school dropout rate. Discrimination exacerbates the problems of segregation – e.g. discrimination in access to housing, when looking for a new flat or when applying for social housing; discrimination in access to education, by teachers or at school towards Roma children or parents; negative attitudes of non-Roma neighbours, causing them sometimes to pull their children out of classes or schools where there are many Roma students. All this contributes further to segregation. Educational and/or residential segregation results in worse outcomes in educational levels, labour market participation, health, and in growing poverty. Beyond physical separation, social separation is exacerbated by unequal access to mainstream, inclusive and high-quality services. In the case of marginalised Roma groups across European cities, these problems have led to wasted resources and unbalanced social, political and economic developments.

- **How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

The Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) sets out the obligation of all Member States to combat discrimination and prevent in particular discrimination based on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin notably in social protection, education and access to and supply of goods and services, including housing. Segregation is discriminatory since it implies either a less favourable treatment or an unjustified particular disadvantage which are prohibited by the directive. In this respect Cohesion Funds cannot be used to perpetuate segregation, which falls within the scope of discriminatory treatment. Moreover, Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 - Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) obliges the Member States to prevent any discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, during the preparation and implementation of programmes.

In practice, the most explicit tool to support actions against segregation is a (non-binding) set of recommendations in the Commission's *'Guidance for Member States on the use of European Structural and Investment Funds in tackling educational and spatial*

*segregation*<sup>12</sup> for better planning, more effective local level implementation and monitoring.

- **Which action is needed?**

For the forthcoming implementation period of Cohesion Funds (2021-2027), the desegregation principle should be strengthened by mainstreaming it into the legislation, building on local level planning and implementation lessons learnt from local best practices. The Roma community should be involved in all stages of the policy process, from the very beginning, to ensure their views are fed into the legislation while they are also empowered to monitor its application afterwards.

According to this legislation, national and local governments should assess the level of residential and educational segregation in their cities and introduce adjustments to their planning and investment strategies to combat it. They should align policies by fully committing to the core recommendations of the Guidance Note, most importantly, by considering the desegregation principle as the first option in all housing and educational programmes. Consequently, cities in their comprehensive strategy should include concrete measures for desegregation, with a specific focus in the fields of housing and education. For example, in the field of housing, supply of social housing in integrated neighbourhoods should be increased, mobility of Roma families from segregated neighbourhoods to integrated neighbourhoods should be promoted whilst settlements in worst conditions should be eradicated. School district design and enrolment incentives should serve more balanced opportunities for children to enrol in quality education options. In countries, where the relevant policy fields do not fall to the local governments' competences, mechanism should be set up enabling cities to efficiently influence/push the higher level policy makers to intervene nationally, regionally, and also locally in favour of desegregation.

- **How to implement the action?**

The Roma working group of the Urban Poverty Partnership will create two tools:

-First it will prepare a roadmap and methodology for mapping how city authorities should assess critical levels of residential and educational segregation in their administrative areas.

-Second, based on a review of experiences so far, it will elaborate a toolkit for better national, regional, and local level regulation and actions for halting and reducing residential and educational segregation. The toolkit will provide knowledge on the best practices developed at local or national level to address the problems and recommendations for the use of the European Funds<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic\\_guidance\\_fiche\\_segregation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/thematic_guidance_fiche_segregation_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Relevant sources for this: The Euroma Network has been relaunched again in 2017, and there are several publications on how to apply the European Investment Funds to Roma policies, for example:

<http://www.gitanos.org/actualidad/archivo/108052.html>

[http://www.gitanos.org/centro\\_documentacion/publicaciones/fichas/117000.html](http://www.gitanos.org/centro_documentacion/publicaciones/fichas/117000.html)

<http://www.gitanos.org/actualidad/archivo/108052.html>

[http://www.gitanos.org/centro\\_documentacion/publicaciones/fichas/117000.html](http://www.gitanos.org/centro_documentacion/publicaciones/fichas/117000.html)

Guía EURoma para apoyar la inclusión efectiva de la población gitana a nivel local a través del uso de los Fondos ESI - Fundación Secretariado Gitano

[https://www.gitanos.org/upload/66/60/texto\\_completo\\_EU\\_Roma\\_para\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.gitanos.org/upload/66/60/texto_completo_EU_Roma_para_WEB.pdf)

[www.gitanos.org](http://www.gitanos.org)

The Urban Poverty Partnership will adopt the recommended roadmap and toolkit. The European Commission should include these two tools into the guidance for Member States on the use of Cohesion Funds for Roma inclusion for the next implementation period. Implementation risks should be mitigated by pointing out that all Member States have agreed to the obligation to fight discrimination, hence segregation, and any use of EU Funds perpetuating segregation contradicts European regulation.

- **Which partners?**

Beyond the UPP members, DG JUST, DG REGIO, DG EAC and DG EMPL are key partners. Former URBAN I and II, as well as EURO CITIES and URBACT cities' expertise should be also taken on board. EAPN and other relevant EU networks can be also involved. NGOs and civil society organizations working with Roma population.

- **Which timeline?**

The current implementation period (2014-2020) already delivers some insights into the challenges of mainstreaming desegregation and non-segregation actions in education and housing, thus, the action should be launched as soon as possible before 2020.

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In addition, there are studies that can help to identify and measure the incidence of the problems about housing conditions. For example, the methodology of the "Map and Report on Housing Conditions of Roma Population in Spain" carried out by the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality could be extrapolated to other countries:

<http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/mapavivienda/>

<https://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/familiasInfancia/PoblacionGitana/docs/ResumenEjecutivoEstudioViviendaPG2015.pdf>

## **ACTION 12 – EASE CITIES’ ACCESS TO EU FUNDING IN PARALLEL TO INTRODUCING LOCAL EX-ANTE CONDITIONALITIES REGARDING – AMONG OTHERS – ROMA INCLUSION**

This action proposes the introduction of local ex-ante conditionalities within the Cohesion Funds legislation post-2020. The ex-ante conditionality would require that cities put in place an integrated Roma inclusion plan at local level. Cities which fulfil the ex-ante conditionalities should get more direct access to sufficient EU funding to implement their integrated plans for Roma inclusion. This action would improve the link between policies and funding for Roma inclusion at local level.

**Responsible:** DG REGIO in consultation with EURO CITIES, could prepare a recommendation; **Deadline:** end of 2017.

### **What is the specific problem?**

Cities, being closer to the problems and knowing better the potential solutions than central governments, could use EU funds more effectively. However, for various reasons, national and regional authorities are often reluctant to give access to appropriate EU funding and sufficient flexibility to cities to determine how Cohesion Funds should be spent. Moreover local authorities find it difficult to implement regulation in relation to EU instruments due to the complexity and red-tape of the formal procedures to access funding, develop the programmes and report about expenditure.

In order to demonstrate that cities are able to plan and implement Roma inclusion programmes and thus use EU funds effectively, local ex-ante conditionalities should be introduced in the Cohesion Funds legislation after 2020.

#### **• How do existing EU policies/legislations/instruments contribute?**

The EU requires Roma inclusion strategies at national level. It would not be justified to require such strategies at local level generally, but it is justified to require strategies from cities that are faced with high levels or high risk of poverty and exclusion of Roma.

#### **• Which action is needed?**

Local ex-ante conditionalities can be introduced with the Cohesion Funds legislation after 2020. The advantage of the action is that it improves linkages between policies and funding. Cities which fulfil the ex-ante conditionalities should get more direct access to sufficient EU funding to implement their integrated plans for Roma inclusion.

The setting-up of financial instruments for financing the integrated strategies should also be explored in a complementary way and in articulation with the allocation of EU funds.

#### **• How to implement the action?**

The specific formulation of local ex-ante conditionalities depends on the architecture of the Cohesion Funds legislation after 2020. We recommend that cities should get improved access to Cohesion Funds, e.g. through the Block Grant (see Action 1) provided that they demonstrate that they use Cohesion Funds for implementing a comprehensive strategy, not only stand-alone actions for Roma integration. As marginalised communities have limited capacities to represent their interests, the local ex-ante

conditionalities could add a safeguard for the inclusive dimension of the local strategies.

- **Which partners?**

DG REGIO, DG JUST, DG EMPL, EUROCITIES, URBACT, EIB.

- **Which timeline?**

The recommendation can be prepared in the following steps:

- Gathering cases in national legislations that are similar to local ex-ante conditionalities (ensuring that cities or municipalities can have a financial advantage provided that they prove to comply with some ambitious policy-related conditions), by February 2018.
- Drafting a first proposal, by June 2018.
- Discussing and piloting the first proposal with selected cities, by December 2018.
- Finalising the recommendation, by March 2019.

## 4. LINKS WITH OTHER COMMITMENTS

### 4.1. Link with the cross-cutting issues

This section highlights the cross-cutting issues pointed out by the Pact of Amsterdam that are crucial in the approach adopted by this Action Plan. They have been integrated as transversal topics in the Actions proposed. As pointed out by the Pact, their inclusion is oriented to make interventions in urban areas more effective. In the case of the specific challenge of urban poverty, they contribute importantly to make the action proposed more solid and consistent.

**Effective urban governance, including citizens participation and new models of governance (12.1) and Governance across administrative boundaries and inter-municipal cooperation: urban-rural, urban-urban and cross-border cooperation; link with territorial development and the Territorial Agenda 2020 (well-balanced territorial development) (12.2)**

- Effective urban governance is considered crucial for the success of urban regeneration initiatives in urban deprived neighborhoods. The actions included in this Action Plan adopt this idea by highlighting: i) the necessity to advance towards collaborative interdepartmental governance (horizontal governance) at the local and inter-municipal level. The adoption of this principle is crucial to overcoming the sectorial approach in urban regeneration; ii) the importance of integrating the participation of the local community in the instruments aimed to address urban poverty in a specific area; iii) the relevance of achieving policy scenarios characterized by collaborate multi-level governance.

**Sound and strategic urban planning (link with regional planning, including ‘research and innovation smart specialisation strategies’ (RIS3), and balanced territorial development), with a place-based and people-based approach (12.3)**

- Urban planning plays a central role in limiting the negative socio-economic trends that can affect the most vulnerable neighborhoods. Strategic urban planning can set social and economic cohesion as a city priority by adopting a place-base and people-based approach oriented to achieve mix-use, complex and polycentric urban areas, based on a city-of-short-distances approach, in which all the neighborhoods count on the necessary public facilities and services, and are connected by efficient and affordable public transport and with a network of lively and safe public spaces that enhance social interaction. Urban planning can also adopt social diversity as a driver of cultural innovation and economic activity in urban neighborhoods.
- The link of urban planning with regional planning defines, among other issues, the relation among cities within their functional area and the role played by each of them. In this regard a balanced territorial development is also crucial to prevent the emergence of deprived neighborhoods.

**Integrated and participatory approach (12.4)**

- The actions proposed by this Action Plan adopt an integrated approach based on an integrated diagnosis of urban deprived neighborhoods. This is because a sound diagnosis allows understanding the complex interrelations between the different dimensions of urban poverty. This is a necessary step to avoid acting through sectoral measures that are not able to break the circle of poverty. From this kind of diagnosis, it is possible to give place to integrated strategies of urban regeneration that include environmental, social, economic, and governance measures able to create synergies between them, fostering their respective results.

- The participatory approach is understood by this Action Plan as crucial in the development of place-based strategies to face urban poverty. This is because, the inclusion of participatory processes have a number of important benefits. Some of the most important are the following: i) the development of local capacity and the enhancement of social resilience; ii) the design of strategies that take into account the real necessities of all the inhabitants of deprived areas, particularly the most vulnerable (children, older people, homeless people, immigrants, etc.); iii) the achievement of consensus on how urban poverty has to be addressed in a specific area. This can result in effective community involvement and the development of a sense of identification of the inhabitants with the strategy agreed. This Partnership aims to foster this vision through the creation of Local Committees of Users and Inhabitants -LCUI- (see Action 7) in the context of place-based regeneration initiatives.
- It is important that participation is not limited or understood only as provision of information and/or local community consultation in the context of urban regeneration programmes. At the same time it is necessary that the programmes of urban regeneration that integrate participation as a relevant element of their methodology allocate funds and provide technical resources and expertise for the development of effective participative processes.

#### **Innovative approaches, including Smart Cities (12.5)**

- Innovative approaches in urban regeneration are crucial to address the complex and interrelated problems that explain urban poverty and social exclusion. These negative dynamics are often a result of social, economic and cultural changes that affect particularly urban areas. Local authorities have to respond as rapidly as they can to the challenges of a changing world, introducing innovation in their strategies, so that new challenges are addressed through innovative and demonstrative solutions.
- New technologies, the Smart City concept (understood from a people-based perspective) and other instruments, such as open data and the use of GIS, can enhance the transformative potential of urban regeneration strategies. The use of technology to address present and future necessities is a relevant driver of innovation. It has to be applied taking into account that, due to the complex situation that characterizes people in situation of poverty, it is important to pay attention to the way in which public services are delivered (e.g. in many cases they should be delivered combining e-services with social mediation/intervention).
- Innovative regeneration approaches can be achieved also integrating measures to tackle the climate challenge and the demographic change. The first requires the inclusion of mitigation and adaptation in integrated urban regeneration strategies, while the second requires paying more attention to a number of issues (e.g. support in a more effective way the daily life of young couples -particularly women- and single-parent families, devote attention to the necessities and requests of older people, advance towards child-friendly cities, etc.).

#### **Impact on societal change, including behavioural change, promoting, among other things, equal access to information, gender equality and women empowerment (12.6)**

- According to Eurostat women and young people are more likely to live in poverty and social exclusion than men. This has to do with the fact that people's roles and responsibilities within families and at the workplace change throughout the life cycle and generally are influenced by gender. Aware of this Eurostat points out that age and gender are an interesting breakdown to consider when analyzing poverty and social

exclusion. This approach is assumed by all the actions that involve the development of knowledge in this Action Plan (Actions 2, 3 and 4).

- A study developed by Eurostat in 2015<sup>14</sup> shows that “women were more likely to experience poverty or social exclusion than men by 1.4 percentage points (the rate for women was 24.4 %, while for men it was 23.0 %)”. This fact has a relevant impact on child poverty. This is because the main drivers behind the gender gap are higher poverty rates among single female households, mainly those with dependent children. In a workshop on the main causes of female poverty, the Directorate General for Internal Policies pointed out that one reason for this persisting gender gap is that single parents are more likely to have very low work intensities compared with other households with children. These single-parent households are far more often headed by women (almost 10 % of all European households in 2011) than by men (1.8 %). A comparison of Member States’ performance in the European Semester Thematic Fiche shows two policy measures that could ease this problem: child and family-support benefits and access to affordable, high-quality childcare.
- According to all this, the gender dimension understood from an intersectoral perspective that considers also other factors such as race, age, income, etc., is considered in all the Actions proposed by this Work Plan.

**Urban regeneration, including social, economic, environmental, spatial and cultural aspects, also linked to the brownfield redevelopment with the objective of limiting greenfield consumption (12.8)**

- Urban regeneration, developed from a holistic perspective that integrates measures in the social, economic, environmental, spatial, cultural, climate, and demographic dimensions, is a crucial field of public policy to address urban poverty in urban deprived neighborhoods.
- Urban regeneration based on a people-based perspective can provide innovative solutions. This is because the strategies are based on diagnosis able to understand what are the real necessities of all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable (child, homeless, ethnic minorities, older people, single-parent families headed by women, etc.), and why they are experiencing poverty and social exclusion. This kind of approach allows carrying out strategies of urban regeneration tailored to specific situations.
- Urban regeneration is a powerful instrument to rebalance the level of social and economic cohesion of cities. From this perspective, it is important that the areas in which urban regeneration instruments are implemented include the necessary mechanism to avoid gentrification and the replacement of the residential use when it is not considered necessary by the regeneration strategy.
- Urban regeneration can also be an effective tool fighting urban sprawl and achieving a social mix in the new and old neighborhoods, the city as a whole and the entire functional area.

**Provision of adequate public services of general interest (within the meaning of Article 14 TFEU in conjunction with Protocol Number 26) (12.10).**

- Public services play a crucial role to tackle poverty and social exclusion. This is a view embodied in the place-based and people-based approach adopted by this Action Plan, as public services such as schools, nurseries, health services, day care centers, public

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<sup>14</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe\\_2020\\_indicators\\_-\\_poverty\\_and\\_social\\_exclusion](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe_2020_indicators_-_poverty_and_social_exclusion)

transport, etc. play a central role in the daily life of all citizens, but this role is particularly important in the daily life of the most vulnerable social groups. In fact, public services of quality and adapted to their social reality, well-located in the city (on the basis of a city of short distance approach), and where all citizens are entitled to access, are crucial to alleviate the situation of the inhabitants of deprived neighborhoods, particularly children and other vulnerable groups. They contribute importantly to rebalance socio-economic differences within the city.

- In the case of public transport, it is important to plan transport networks in which urban deprived neighborhoods are provided a good level of accessibility and connection within the functional areas in which they are integrated so that they do not remain isolated. Regarding public transport in deprived areas, it is also important to pay attention to the price (affordability), frequency and level of security that it provides to travelers (particularly important for workers, men and women, that need to travel during the night).

## 4.2. New Urban Agenda & Sustainable Development Goals

The EU and the Member States agreed on the New Urban Agenda and committed to implement it through the Urban Agenda for the EU. In this section the UPP indicate how its actions address the statements/targets relevant with regard to urban poverty.

In order to make this in a clear way the different statements of the Urban Agenda for the EU are quoted, and afterwards is provided the explanation on how the issue is addressed by this Action Plan:

**3. “Since the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976 and in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996, and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, we have seen improvements in the quality of life of millions of urban inhabitants, including slum and informal-settlement dwellers. However, *the persistence of multiple forms of poverty, growing inequalities and environmental degradation* remain among the major obstacles to sustainable development worldwide, with *social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation often an irrefutable reality in cities and human settlements*”.**

**5. “By readdressing the way cities and human settlements are planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed, the New Urban Agenda will help to *end poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions; reduce inequalities; promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in order to fully harness their vital contribution to sustainable development; improve human health and well-being; foster resilience; and protect the environment*”.**

**14. To achieve our vision, we resolve to adopt a New Urban Agenda guided by the following interlinked principles:**

**(a) *Leave no one behind, by ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including the eradication of extreme poverty, by ensuring equal rights and opportunities, socioeconomic and cultural diversity, and integration in the urban space, by enhancing liveability, education, food security and nutrition, health and well-being, including by ending the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, by promoting safety and eliminating discrimination and all forms of violence, by ensuring public participation — providing safe and equal access for all, and by***

***providing equal access for all to physical and social infrastructure and basic services, as well as adequate and affordable housing.***

***25. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We also recognize that growing inequality and the persistence of multiple dimensions of poverty, including the rising number of slum and informal-settlement dwellers, are affecting both developed and developing countries, and that the spatial organization, accessibility and design of urban space, as well as the infrastructure and basic services provision, together with development policies, can promote or hinder social cohesion, equality and inclusion.***

***63. We recognize that cities and human settlements face unprecedented threats from unsustainable consumption and production patterns, loss of biodiversity, pressure on ecosystems, pollution, natural and human-made disasters, and climate change and its related risks, undermining the efforts to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to achieve sustainable development. Given cities' demographic trends and their central role in the global economy, in the mitigation and adaptation efforts related to climate change, and in the use of resources and ecosystems, the way they are planned, financed, developed, built, governed and managed has a direct impact on sustainability and resilience well beyond urban boundaries.***

The persistence of urban poverty, social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation lead the UPP to give place to this Action Plan. The UPP agrees with the ideas embodied in these paragraphs of the New Urban Agenda and proposes a set of actions specifically designed to tackle the complex and specific challenge of urban poverty.

All the Actions developed (see part 3 of this document) are aimed to end poverty, reduce inequalities, and promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth. For this reason this Action Plan addresses the four priorities mentioned in part 2.2: (1) Child poverty; (2) Regeneration of deprived Urban Deprived Areas and Neighbourhoods; (3) Homelessness; (4) Vulnerability of Roma people, and proposes to give local authorities the possibility to support specifically other vulnerable social groups (Actions 1).

The Actions proposed are also committed with gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Gender equality is adopted as a cross-cutting issue by this Action Plan (see part 4.1), meaning that the gender dimension has been taken into account in the design of the Actions and also in the objectives to be achieved. This Action Plan takes into account that frequently policy decisions do not benefit and support equally the daily life of all citizens. To avoid this, the UPP Action Plan proposes Actions that adopt a people-based approach, aimed to understand the specific problems of all the social groups living in deprived neighbourhoods, so that their specific necessities and requests can be taken into account in the urban regeneration strategies and the policy action to address urban poverty trends. The adoption of a people based-approach is also specifically aimed to improve human health and well-being.

This Action Plan also takes into account the relevance of the spatial organization, accessibility and design of the urban space in addressing urban poverty. This is an idea present in the approach of most of the Actions proposed, and that is particularly important in the case of Actions 1, 6, and 7, in which the spatial dimension of urban poverty is a crucial factor. Moreover, the issue of accessibility is specifically addressed by a cross-cutting issue (see part 5.1), in which efficient and safe public transport services, and walkable networks of public spaces are considered necessary to avoid the spatial segregation of the most vulnerable urban areas and to revitalize urban deprived neighborhoods.

The role of cities to face the environmental and climate change challenges through re-naturalization, mitigation and adaptation efforts has also been embedded in this Action Plan. Particularly Action 7 proposes the development of Local Pacts for the regeneration of urban deprived areas. It includes action in the specific “Environment/Energy” dimension of urban decline, entailing the inclusion of mitigation and adaptation measures in the holistic regeneration strategies in the context of the Local Pacts. Beyond this, the environmental and climate change challenges has to be considered and addressed in the development of the integrated urban regeneration strategies that urban authorities will have the possibility to develop in the local pact (action 6 ).

### **4.3. Links with other partnerships**

Links with other partnerships and especially the pilot partnerships on Affordable Housing and the Integration of Migrants and Refugees have been explored, notably during bilateral meetings organised in the context of the coordinators’ meeting of 21-22 June 2017 (coordinators of all active partnerships met in Brussels to discuss advancement, challenges and cross-cutting issues).

The fight against homelessness has been understood in the context of the UPP as fighting a form of extreme poverty, particularly visible in urban areas. Through the debates undertaken by the partners, clear links have been made with the need for innovative, housing-led (housing-first) solutions to tackle this growing problem in Europe but it has also been linked to the affordability of housing and the efficiency of housing policies with regard the accessibility of vulnerable groups. As this last point is the subject matter of the Affordable Housing partnership, it was deliberately decided to avoid overlap and/or repetition with the actions. The partnership focussing on housing has clearly defined its scope to the spectrum of affordable housing, leaving the extreme segments of the housing market (high end luxury housing on the one hand, and housing destined for crisis or emergency situations including shelters or innovative housing solutions) out of their discussions.

Links have also been identified with the actions developed by the Migrants and Refugees partnership such as the focus on the target group of migrant children and the reinforcement of desegregation policies in European cities.

Further coordinators’ meetings are scheduled in 2018 and will serve to further discuss cross-cutting issues and how links and overlaps can be managed jointly by the partnerships’ respective coordinators.

## **5. REFERENCES**

To be added in final stages.