

EN
ANNEX

PREPARATORY ACTION: WORLD CITIES: EU-THIRD COUNTRIES COOPERATION ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT (BUDGET LINE 13 03 77 15)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Budget line: 13 03 77 15
- 1.2. Basic Act: Not applicable
- 1.3. Policy context

The international dimension of EU regional and urban policy gains on importance over the last years. There are now regional policy dialogues formalized through written agreements with 13 countries, including with EU strategic partners (China, Russia, Brazil, Mexico and Japan), Eastern Partnership countries (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia) and Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and SICA -the Central America Integration System-). Outside the group of 13, exchanges have taken place with other EU strategic partners such as Canada, India and South Africa and regional groupings such as ASEAN or African Union.

The dialogue in the field of regional and urban policy, being one of the components of the Union's diplomatic relations with third countries, requires further support. Moreover, the cooperation with third countries should focus on certain issues in relation to the reform of EU cohesion policy, 2014-2020, namely its enhanced urban dimension.

- 1.4. General objectives of the preparatory action:

The objectives of the work under the Preparatory Action, which will be implemented by the European Commission, will be to:

- **support EU global relations and cooperation on urbanisation matters** with strategic partners outside the EU;
- **share the benefit of the EU's experience** of how regional and urban development policies underpin the process of economic and political integration with main partners outside the EU, regional organisations and world regions;
- **pool international responses and experience for the benefit of EU regions and cities** on the challenges faced by countries and regions worldwide, challenges that have a strong "territorial" dimension and that require action at local and regional level and **provide networking opportunities to EU regional and local authorities**. It is envisaged to include where appropriate private sector actors, such as providers of urban goods and services, in the networks as the opportunity arises.

Under the preparatory action implemented since 2014, four platforms for city-to-city cooperation have been created (EU-China, EU-India, EU-Japan and EU-Canada) and the third edition of URBELAC network was supported. These successful cooperation activities will be taken forward by a new International Urban Cooperation Programme financed by the Partnership Instrument.

Accordingly, the main focus of the extension of the preparatory action will be to support new policy dialogues and EU global relations and cooperation on urbanisation matters with third countries which have expressed keen interest in the recent past to engage with EU in this kind

of cooperation, namely EU strategic partners such as South Korea and South Africa as well as Australia, Southeast Asian countries or countries from the southern Mediterranean shore.

The Preparatory Action will help the European Union to deepen and widen its activities and to bring real help to third countries in their efforts to improve public policy in regional and urban development, and regional and local governance issues.

The Preparatory Action will help as well to test innovative approaches on cooperation on urbanisation with EU strategic partners, which could be taken forward from 2017 through other instruments as the Partnership Instrument, which has identified urbanisation as a priority area for intervention, or other EU external policy instruments.

2. Actions/ Type of financial intervention

In 2016 the preparatory action will be implemented through the use of specific contracts under existing framework contracts or through calls for tenders. The actions supported will include the organisation of events, information activities, study visits, networking, technical assistance and studies.

2.1. ACTION 1: Studies and technical assistance

Direct management

A number of technical assistance actions and studies are foreseen, for example, possibly covering the following geographical areas and themes:

- Southeast Asian countries: Technical assistance to promote the development of the necessary capacities in selected cities on sustainable urban development in order to enable cities to work together to develop pragmatic solutions to major urban challenges (such as planning and implementation of investment programmes which embody a low-carbon approach, mobility, energy efficiency, etc.)
- South Africa: Technical assistance to help the development of the necessary capacity in selected cities and develop pragmatic solutions to major urban challenges.
- Countries from the southern Mediterranean shore: Technical assistance to selected cities to promote the development of the necessary capacities to participate in global urban initiatives sponsored by the EU.
- China: comparative study on international good practices on regional and urban development that could feed into the preparation of China's regional and urban development policies.

Indicative budget: EUR 700 000

2.2. ACTION 2: Programmes exchanges (study visits and seminars)

Study visits and seminars are an important means of exchanging information and promoting mutual understanding with third countries. There is an increasing demand from third countries for direct experience of the implementation of EU regional and urban policy on the ground in different contexts. The preparatory action makes this possible, by assuming travel and accommodation costs incurred by nominated European and third country experts as well as those incurred by other key third country regional and urban policy actors.

A number of **seminars** could be supported, to be held in main partner countries or in EU, on themes such as: strategic and governance issues, integrated urban approach, urban-rural partnership, sustainable urban development, etc. For example:

- China: Contribution to EU-China Urbanisation Forum (in the framework of the EU-China Urbanisation Partnership)

- Seminar/side event in the framework of the Habitat III Conference (United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development).
- Seminars and communication events on regional and urban policy co-operation in the framework of the annual European Week of Regions and Cities, with countries having a dialogue on regional and urban policy or cooperation on regional and/or urban development policy;

A number of **programme exchanges** could take place, namely for representatives from countries having expressed keen interest in the near past to engage with EU in this kind of cooperation. Other countries could also participate in these exchange visits depending on them expressing an interest. Following the exchanges and visits, participants will be asked to report and provide concrete feedback on lessons learnt, good practices, possibly tips and relevance of the exchange for their respective areas of competence. Some of the following actions could be supported:

- South Korea: EU-South Korea Urbanisation Platform (knowledge transfer for sustainable and integrated urban development), including networks of cities on selected topics, a database on good practices and an on-line platform to facilitate the exchange of information.
- Australia: EU-Australia Urbanisation Platform (knowledge transfer for sustainable and integrated urban development), including networks of cities on selected topics, a database on good practices and an on-line platform to facilitate the exchange of information.

Other programme exchanges, including expert visits from third countries to Europe (namely from Southern neighbourhood countries) or to other third countries or from European regional and urban policy experts to third countries, could take place depending on specific interests.

Indicative budget: EUR 800 000

3. Total budget: EUR 1 500 000

4. Indicative calendar for procurement procedures

The Community contribution to the procurement procedures described in the work programme will be covered by commitment appropriations for 2016 for which an amount of EUR 1 500 000 is available. Most of the actions (either use of a FWC or of direct contracts) will start on the 2nd quarter of 2016. All specific and direct contracts are expected to have been signed by end 2016.