National Urban Development Policy

A joint initiative by the federal, state and local governments
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How shall we best describe “city” and its development? For thousands of years, minor and major decisions have been made by every single individual. These decisions are what make up a city, account for the differences between cities and constitute their special features and characteristics. There are the big decisions regarding railway stations and airports, city tunnels and high-rise projects. They have an enduring impact and ought to be given joint consideration. The small decisions – taking a right through the popular student district and going to the organic store there or taking a left in the car to do your main shopping at the discount store just to save a few Euros – are made quickly, yet have a huge impact on the constantly changing urban structure. Keep your children at home or send them to pre-school? Meet in a local café or go to the opera, or a club? You also have an impact on the city. Every single day. Every day you go out and about in public spaces, seeing less of your friends than you do of unknown fellow urbanites. You make yourself visible or want nothing to do with other people. You post your opinion in the social network and trigger a city-wide discussion.

All of these decisions constitute the city. The sum of the individual decisions made by each individual with their individual backgrounds and cultures shapes the atmosphere of a city. Creative skills influence economic power and vice versa. Decisions shape beauty and spaces, public and private, often frequented by some while avoided by others. In addition to the public spaces and spaces close at hand, there are global and local social networks serving to foster social relations. But those will not be sufficient in future, because we are human beings: “Sensibility ensures the real city will survive over the virtual one,” writes Hanns Adrian.

Decisions made by property owners shape the face of a city. The political desire to shape things influences local urban policy. All of this in combination forms an image. Personal or joint decisions and strategies for action determine the course of urban energies, the dynamics within urban society. Urban development is a communal undertaking – conscious or unconscious, planned or spontaneous. Urban development policy has both a private and public impact. Above all, what should it be? Cooperative and full of energy.

An ordinary day in the city. Leave the apartment, greet a neighbour, go down the stairs, out of the house, turn right, run to the baker for bread rolls and coffee, the neighbour’s bicycle trailer nearly catches my leg, jump on the bus to catch the train, then off to the office in the city. Another 87 mails since yesterday. Lunch break, a short walk through the park, then meetings until the end of the day. Collect my son from kindergarten. That’ll take a while too. The bus will probably stop at every building site. OK, I can write a few text messages. There’s traffic everywhere. The bus crawls along. And will shopping have to wait yet again? Is it like this everywhere?
Great challenges.
For strong partners.

Urban development is first and foremost a task for the people in their cities, districts and regions. It is local and is connected to competition. At the same time, the increasing pace of globalisation makes us aware on a daily basis that we also live on one planet. Competition also calls for close collaboration. For some time now, and not just since the financial crisis, global migration and climate change, we have realized how strongly we are networked with one another. We will exploit the opportunities this creates but, simultaneously, we will have to address the problems.

Cities in global competition: high-quality residential areas and public spaces make the difference: HafenCity Hamburg

Cities, local authorities and regions face a major challenge: to hold their own economic position on both the regional and global stages, to master the difficulties of climate change, demographic trends, and to ensure urban development that is socially just, while also reducing regional disparities. Participation in urban development is no longer just a catch-phrase. It must be anchored in local urban policymaking. People likewise have rising expectations for their immediate surroundings. The quality of life in cities and communities is not the least reason for businesses to relocate there.

Challenges of demographic change: between growth and decline

Challenges of energy-efficient and a citizen-friendly mobility

Challenges of resource efficiency

Germany already finds itself in the centre of the age of renewable energies, and is getting away from nuclear power. By embracing this change in energy use, Germany has rigorously spoken out in favour of consistent, long-term reduction of green-house gases, amongst other things by expanding renewable energies, by saving energy and creating smart networks. How can we now make buildings and mobility affordable, yet eco-friendly, for all citizens? How can we shape this move to renewable energies so that everyone benefits? These are questions that local authorities, states and the government are all addressing. At the same time, and to the same degree, it is an immense challenge that requires strong partners and solid cooperation, so that cities and communities will remain viable in the future.
In 2007 the European ministers responsible for urban development passed the "Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities". It contains two key messages:

1. We need to strengthen integrated urban development policy all over Europe.
2. Disadvantaged urban districts fulfill important functions within the overall urban context. They should therefore be accorded greater political attention.

With regard to the Leipzig Charter in July 2007 the then presiding Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development began to set up the "National Urban Development Policy – a joint initiative by government, states and local authority districts". National Development Policy is a joint project of the German Congress of Municipal Authorities, the Association of Towns and Municipalities and the Conference of the Building Ministers of the States, and, as such, an invitation to all interested and active parties to make a contribution to the issues of city and region, living together in the city, urban qualities and good urban policy. A committee of over 40 people represents a diversity of social groups and advises the minister in implementing the National Urban Development Policy. The continuation of the National Urban Development Policy in the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety strengthens sustainable urban development.

The general public is to be made more aware of the issues affecting cities and towns; new alliances and greater participation are to be encouraged. Citizens are to be more actively involved. To this end, a number of events are being offered, which promote exchange and help find innovative answers. The following will assist in this initiative:

- “Good practice”, urban development promotion programmes
- the “project series for cities and urbanity”
- the general “platform” for urban development

Successful politics relies on protagonists from the worlds of business, science, politics and civil society becoming involved, contributing their expertise and skills. The National Urban Development Policy offers diverse opportunities for collaborative work on the future of our cities and communities.
7th Federal Congress in Mannheim and Ludwigshafen am Rhein
In 2012, the fifth anniversary of the Leipzig Charter and establishment of the National Urban Development Policy provided an ideal occasion to take stock of progress to date and focus on the future of our cities. What are the pressing tasks and suitable strategies for tackling the current challenges cities and local authorities are facing in light of the goals and main thrust of the Leipzig Charter?

In spring and summer 2012, international and national experts drew up a Memorandum on “Urban Energies – Urban Challenges”. It is the result of a comprehensive, multi-level collaborative and participative process that involved local authorities and specifies the current key tasks of sustainable urban development:

- the scrupulous ecological renewal of buildings and neighbourhoods
- the technological regeneration of urban infrastructures
- the development of a new mobility, and
- social integration

The Memorandum calls on those responsible in cities, regions, states and organisations, but also the relevant associations, firms and initiatives to take action and establish their own programmes and projects for sustainable urban development. The idea is for it to be adopted as a self-commitment to take future action.

The Memorandum stresses the necessity of an active urban development policy at the level of national states, with the aim of bundling urban and regional activities and serving as an urban development platform. It calls on all players to expand and make use of the possibilities open to them, to enter into alliances with other partners, and to continue to bring an array of urban energies to bear in urban development – with “joy in shaping the task”.

Memorandum “Urban Energies – Urban Challenges”
International conference Urbane Energien/Urban Energies

In 2012, over 1,300 national and international experts from over 30 nations spent two days in Berlin’s Haus der Kulturen der Welt discussing current opportunities and challenges of urban development.

The then presiding Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, the Conference of the Building Ministers of the States, the German Association of Cities and Towns and the Association of Towns and Municipalities issued a joint invitation to an international conference titled “Städtische Energien/Urban Energies” in Berlin on October 11-12, 2012. The conference centred on the diverse energies that influence cities and regions worldwide: not only in a literal sense, but also the energy of social drivers, which are active in our cities and provide impetus. Concerns included the issues of energy-efficient cities and quarters, integration and social engagement, inner cities, demographic change and aging, urban mobility, industry and rural areas.

One result of the conference was the “Urban Energies – Urban Challenges” memorandum, which was passed following a comprehensive process of cooperation and coordination.

Key element of the conference: “Young Energies” – young people participate with “Pontonia”, a floating youth city they made
“Good practice”: Urban development promotion programmes

“Good practice” is the long-term strategic element of the National Urban Development Policy. Besides advancing legislation (especially urban planning legislation) relevant to specific areas and coordinating research projects on “city and space” (department and university research), continued subsidisation of urban development represents another main focus of “good practice”. It was born of the realization that complex societal, ecological and economic challenges cannot be faced by the cities alone. Owing to their size and complexity, many tasks must be addressed by the entire state. This is why ordinarily the federal government, the states and local authorities each contribute one third of the financing required.

Subsidising urban development is an important element in state structure and urban development promotion programmes. This funding is not intended for isolated projects, but for comprehensive overall urban planning schemes in specific areas. Developing integrated urban planning concepts is a prerequisite for the promotion of urban development concepts. This means that alongside local authorities and politics the following parties are also included in this phase: residents, artisans, property owners, initiatives and associations. Moreover, the urban development subsidisation programmes make an important contribution to boosting local economies. Recent research has come to the conclusion that public funding for urban development at the federal and state levels triggers 7.1 times as much in private and public investment.

Since its introduction in 1971, investment in urban development programmes has continued to grow. This is a reflection of upcoming urban planning activities and presently comprises the following programmes:

- Preservation of Urban Monuments (east, since 1991; west, since 2009)
- The Social City (since 1999)
- Urban Restructuring East (since 2002), Urban Restructuring West (since 2004)
- Active City and District Centres (since 2008)
- Smaller Towns and Communities (since 2010)

The Urban Renewal and Development Measures programme (launched in 1971) was completed in 2012.
The Social City/BIWAQ

In numerous municipalities, both large and small, there are districts where urban planning, economic and societal problems are concentrated. To counter the threat of a downward spiral in these disadvantaged areas, in 1999, the federal and state governments launched an urban development promotion programme, named “Social City”. The primary objective is to promote vibrant neighbourhoods and to strengthen social cohesion. In the various districts, the programme promotes urban development-related investments in buildings and neighbourhoods, as well as in local infrastructures. These are complemented by and dovetailed with measures instigated by other fields of politics, for example, activities to further promote education and employment, integration, health and the local economies.

The “Social City” is thus specifically directed at cross-agency collaboration and at the community-oriented concentration of resources. The common objective is to stabilize and holistically improve the districts and thereby the local residents’ quality of life, the standard of social interaction and the level of integration. A further aim is to increase collaboration with other parties in the different districts, for example, by encouraging companies and foundations to become more closely involved, as well as campaigning for volunteer commitment. As an important core element of the programme, this integrated development concept brings together all the players and resources in the various districts. The involvement of local residents makes for new ideas and better results as well as boosting local acceptance of construction measures.

The “Social City” programme runs as the key programme for social integration in the continuation of urban development support. As such, it is also concerned with the know-how assembled for other departmental policies and with a better, more efficient combined use of the funding for various different projects. The programme thus forms the basis of a “Social City cross-agency strategy” at the central government level.

The complementary ESF programme at the national government level “Education, business, work in the districts – BIWAQ” uses funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) to improve opportunities for residents in the areas covered by the “Social City” programme. The programme invests nationwide in projects aimed at workplace integration and at boosting local economies. Accordingly, BIWAQ links district-specific local education, business and labor market-related projects with urban planning measures. This community-oriented focus ensures that the funding is used for those people who need it.

As well as BIWAQ, there is, in the form of the ESF model programme “ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE in the districts”, a cross-agency collaboration between BMUB and the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. This programme assists young people up to the age of 26 in urban and municipal districts with special development requirements, principally at the time of their transition from school to their professional lives. At the same time, these projects also make a contribution to the urban development of municipal districts.
Urban redevelopment east and west

In various regions of eastern and western Germany, the economic and demographic structural transformation is becoming more and more obvious. Answers need to be found to the question of how municipalities deal with large numbers of vacant apartments, something particularly noticeable in some cases, and how it is possible to guarantee the operational capability of some inner-city areas.

This is where urban redevelopment programmes come in. Two such programmes have been launched, the Urban Redevelopment Programme in the east in 2002 and the Urban Redevelopment Programme in the west in 2004. In eastern German municipalities, the quantity of vacant real estate is being reduced in order to stabilize urban structures; the urban infrastructure is being adapted accordingly. At the same time, inner cities, districts worth preserving and valuable old buildings are being upgraded. The programme’s division for redevelopment and preservation of old buildings offers flexible tools in this respect.

In municipalities in western Germany, the focus of activities is on the inner cities, on residential districts with buildings from different eras and on industrial, social and military wastelands. What they all have in common is the fact that successful urban restructuring requires an integrated strategic approach.

In the current phase of urban restructuring, it is essential to provide support to inner-city districts and to preserve their older buildings. Since this urban restructuring is also a driving force for innovation, measures now being adopted include interim utilisation, owner/occupant use and new projects that will attract private owners.
Urban preservation of historical monuments

After decades of neglect, the building fabric in many eastern German town centres meant that these were characterised by vacant real estate and by decay. There was also the danger that architecturally significant ensembles would be permanently lost. In order to save this imperiled cultural heritage, in 1999, the federal government joined forces with the former East German states to set in motion an Urban Monument Preservation programme. Since 2009, funding has also been available for similar measures in former West Germany. Here too, the objective is to protect the kind of key historical areas, architecturally important buildings and ensembles that merit preservation. The focus is also on defining landmarks of urban expansion and on districts whose architecture dates back to the late 19th century, as well as on 19th and 20th-century residential developments.

The objective of the programme is to preserve, modernise and develop historical town centres and urban districts in their architectural totality, with their characteristic buildings, residential streets and squares, and to bolster them as vital centres of daily life. Architecturally valuable town centres and urban districts also hold particular potential as economic and location magnets – they attract residents and tourists by virtue of their historically cohesive downtown districts and their distinctive appearance, as well as representing a popular choice of location for companies. Moreover, modernisation measures provide opportunities for local small and medium-sized businesses, in particular, skilled trades.
Active city and district centres

Attractive CBDs and high standards of living in downtown areas in both urban districts and smaller communities are of outstanding importance to the future of our cities and smaller communities. With its integrated approach, the “Centres Programme” supports the diversity of these centres, buttresses them as places to work and live, as business and cultural centres, sites for shopping and leisure facilities – and, not least, places that people can identify with in their daily lives.

The programme encourages efforts to guarantee and expand the diversity of the facilities in downtown areas and the centres of small communities as well as promoting the meaningful layout of public places, initiatives for dealing with vacant real estate and measures for social stabilisation.

A priority of the programme is the active involvement of civic bodies and the local business community. The objective is to achieve long-term, sustainable results by encouraging collaboration amongst local residents, businesses and public authorities.

Within the Centres Programme, a new tool has been designed to achieve this objective, in the form of a contingency fund. It helps mobilise private financial resources for the strengthening of urban centres. Up to 50 percent of this fund is financed by monies from urban development promotion measures by the central government, the individual states and municipalities, and at least 50 percent through funding from private individuals or additional monies from municipalities. The utilisation of contingency funds in the Centre Programme is becoming increasingly important, and they are available in other urban development funding programmes as well.
Smaller towns and communities

Small and medium-sized towns are important business, social and cultural centres. As places to live and work, they also function as essential supply centres for local residents and the surrounding regions. Because of the current demographic and economic changes however, many municipalities are faced with major challenges.

In 2010, in order to aid development in these municipalities, the federal and state governments launched the urban development support programme “Smaller Towns and Communities – Cooperation and Networks within the Region”. The objective of this programme is to bolster small and medium-sized towns as anchor points in their regions and to empower them for the future. One specific focus is on inter-community collaboration. Funding is made available to communities that enter into cooperation agreements with neighbouring communities and jointly implement strategies to secure public well-being and quality of life.

On the basis of cross-community agreements and integrated development concepts, funding will be provided for the maintenance and development of public infrastructure. Examples of the types of projects that have been implemented are the revitalisation of vacant real estate the creation of multifunctional facilities and the upgrading of public infrastructure, including improving energy efficiency. Particular importance is attached to the establishment of inter-community partnerships and to the involvement of local residents. Accordingly, the programme contributes to local development and to fortifying local communities as interesting places to stay, live and work.

The research field “The Potential of Small Towns in Peripheral Locations”, launched in 2015 for the purpose of experimental housing and urban construction, will enable an even greater focus on the particular situation in small towns. For a period of three years, eight pilot projects will be supported in identifying development potential and designing future processes for specific locations and their surroundings.
Competition:
“People and Accomplishments”

Rural regions are faced with major challenges. Bolstering them, guaranteeing their financial viability and providing them with future perspective is an ambitious task. The future of rural regions, small towns and communities lies in the hands of many individuals, but it can only be secured if it is approached as a community. It is not only a task for the federal and state governments and the local communities, but also to organisations, companies, associations and the residents themselves. Active community involvement is an essential cornerstone in ensuring the local quality of life.

An annual competition, “People and Accomplishments”, has been held since 2011. It recognises exemplary projects for guaranteeing and improving rural infrastructures and focuses public awareness on innovative approaches to solutions. A crucial element is for the projects to serve the public good. One of the competition’s aims is to express appreciation to individuals for their work in their communities. One not inconsiderable aspect of this kind of project is to set precedents, to encourage other people and to inspire them to similar action.

In 2015, the competition will be organized for the first time under the sponsorship of the German National Urban Development Policy. The current round of the competition addresses the major social challenge of absorbing and integrating refugees in rural communities. Partners of the initiative are the German County Association (DLT), the Federation of German Towns and Communities (DStGB), the German Farmers’ Union (DBV), the Central Association of German Tradesmen (ZDH), the Federal Association of Horticulture, Landscaping and Sports Field Construction (BGL), the Federal Association of German Cooperative Banks and Rural Credit Cooperatives (BVR), the Federation of German Landscape Architects (bdla) and the Federal Association of Non-Profit Rural Development Agencies (BLG).
Nationally important urban development projects

Funding is made available for both conceptual and investment-based projects. In the years 2014 and 2015, financing was focused particularly on ensembles of national importance with monument status (e.g., UNESCO World Heritage sites), as well as on both architectural cultural assets of extraordinary value and on improvement measures in terms of energy and suitability for ageing residents in municipal districts and urban greening measures. The following criteria are applied when selecting projects:

- National and/or international profile and impact
- Above-average quality with regard to public participation, urban development and building culture
- Above-average investment volume
- Feasibility, potential for rapid implementation and
- Innovation potential

With this investment programme the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety has once again made considerable government monies available for rewarding and funding outstanding urban projects in 2015. The purpose of this above-average investment volume is to facilitate more rapid and, if necessary, a greater degree of intervention and problem resolution.

In order to offer particular support to major urban development projects and those of a more experimental nature, as well as acting as a clear stimulus for towns and municipalities, regions and urban development policies in Germany as a whole, a federal programme, the National Urban Development Projects, was instigated in 2014. These projects maintain particularly high quality standards.
“URBAN ENERGIES – Urban Challenges” Memorandum

I. Preamble

(1) The LEIPZIG CHARTER on Sustainable European Cities was adopted five years ago. It builds on the results of the Global Conference on the Urban Future URBAN 21 held in 2000. The challenges identified at the time are still valid today: demographic change, social inequality and integration, shortage of affordable housing as well as environmental and traffic problems. Since then, climate change has become more serious and its impacts more significant, the era of cheap fossil energy is nearing its end, food production has become more vulnerable to crises, and the financial system’s turmoil has not only burdened public finances but is also a threat to social peace. These developments affect cities, but increasingly also rural areas.

(2) Policy makers, civil society and the private sector must provide answers to these challenges – international, national, regional and municipal answers. Cities of all sizes hereby have a particular responsibility and obligation. The major strategic task for the future is the local and regional implementation of the energy transition. Only with greater energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies can the era of cheap fossil energy be left behind. And only by doing so will an effective contribution be made to fighting climate change. Being both the problem and its solution, cities are once again called upon. The Energiewende (energy transition) can only be successful if it is not considered as an isolated task but rather if it is embedded in integrated urban development strategies. This requires extraordinary economic, social, ecological and cultural sensitivity.

(3) In many states, drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption is a stated objective. In Europe, the housing stock should be almost climate-neutral by 2050. In Germany, withdrawing from nuclear energy and enacting the energy transition has created a new framework and imposed new constraints. In addition to increasing
energy efficiency, an extensive conversion to renewable energy sources is essential. **The use of regenerative energy resources** will not only change urban utilities infrastructures but also affect buildings as well as citescapes and landscapes. With its enormous scale, the form of this change brings new tasks in the renovation and new construction of buildings and neighbourhoods as well as in urban, transport and landscape development.

(4) European cities provide good conditions to address these challenges. Cityscapes, public spaces, streets, green spaces and buildings offer a sense of local identity and homebuilding in times of accelerated globalization. Their respective singularity must be considered. Thanks to their architectural and social qualities, cities can make a significant contribution to the implementation of the energy transition.

(5) The social energies for a sustainable urban development are concentrated in cities. Urban energies come first and foremost from creative people, their skills and commitment to accompanying sustainable urban renewal, but also from education and science institutions. Cities are “energetic catalysts” of key social, economic, ecological, technological and cultural innovations. They concentrate initiative and willingness to participate as well as committed and competent citizens. Regarding foreigners and minorities, the vast majority of citizens is tolerant and shows solidarity with social issues.

(6) This memorandum outlines requirements for political inspiration, innovation, creativity and civic engagement to ensure an environmentally responsible, socially balanced and economically robust – in short, a sustainable urban development.

*Complete text to be found after resolution by the participants in the “International Conference on Urban Energies” (Oct. 11–12, 2012) at:*  
[www.nationale-stadtentwicklungspolitik.de](http://www.nationale-stadtentwicklungspolitik.de)
The major social policy challenges are concentrated in cities: demographic change, social cohesion and integration, economic development and stability, climate protection and the move towards alternative energy sources.

In order to tackle these complex tasks we not only require tried-and-tested methods, but must also embark along new paths. In the sciences and in medicine, new solutions are often found in the laboratory. What, in those fields, is referred to as an „experiment“ is, in urban development, known as a „pilot project“. It enables new approaches and innovative processes to be tested in practice.

In order to pursue this approach, the National Urban Development Policy 2007 launched the “Project Series for Cities and Urbanity“. They give cities and towns the opportunity to try out new methods and to secure new experts for the urban development tasks facing them. The insights from the pilot projects are also brought to bear in “good practice”, whereby practical approaches are considered when advancing legislation and subsidizing urban development. To date, over 130 pilot projects have been implemented under the sponsorship of the National Urban Development Policy.

Funding is given to approaches for specific districts, schemes and concepts developed for entire cities and regions, as well as specific urban networks. What all projects have in common is that they meet the criteria set out in the National Urban Development Policy:

- projects are innovative, meaning they are instrumental in embracing new ways of solving complex challenges within their field
- projects are exemplary, meaning they address challenges that will also define future urban development in other cities
- projects operate as partnerships involving as many people as possible from a variety of different disciplines
Participation projects

Shaping the St. Pauli district
In order to work together with residents to respond to the challenges posed by trends in the property market that are regarded by many as burdensome, districts are employing new approaches designed to encourage people to become active and involved. Alongside use of the main contact and information office of the “GWA St. Pauli” community work initiative, the project involves students conducting public design consultations for residents, “Stadttteilregale” (district bookshelves) with up-to-date information about development in the district being set up, a website with an interactive district blog being established, and round table meetings being held.

Voluntary mentors for refugee families in Essen
The project helps welcome refugees and their families in Essen by improving mutual understanding through intercultural encounters and thus strengthening social cohesion. To make things easier for refugee families whom the local registration offices have assigned to private families, in the project run by Ehrenamt Agentur Essen e.V., the families are assigned a volunteer mentor. The mentors support the asylum-seekers in feeling at home in their new city, and above all in the district, and in better handling everyday life. Mentors provide time and attention to the refugee families and give them a sense of social orientation. Mentors are citizens who are committed to the goal of improved social and cultural inclusion, and who wish to forge a cultural bridge to their own home district.

Churches and cities join forces. Fields of innovation and experimentation for developing districts that offer a good quality of life
Churches and their associations are firmly integrated in various areas of life, which can strengthen the sense of community in a district. “Diakonie” and “Caritas”, the respective welfare associations of the Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany, are working together to support the partners within the community. The project involves forms of cooperation being developed at the local level and at pioneer locations, for the social development of districts, in order to exploit opportunities for viable urban development that Church organisations are more effectively able provide.

Multimedia participation at the 2012 Future Conference in Ludwigsburg
The Ludwigsburg pilot project represents an example of the development of sustainable forms of participation, and tests the use of new media and forms of communication in urban development. The platform “MeinLB.de” was developed with a view to updating the integrated urban development process that commenced in 2004. The aim was to expand the “construction kit” of integrated sustainability management to include innovative forms of participation. The platform forms the basis for on-going urban development debate and is intended to be a source of continual citizen input.
Innovative urban development/building culture projects

The makers of cities – becoming a project developer through crowd funding

Increasingly, city residents wish to play an active role in shaping their surroundings and not wait for others to take the initiative. This inspired the project “Die Stadtmacher” (the city makers), a platform for citizens’ projects. Ideas for projects can be submitted on “stadtmacher.org”; they are subsequently advanced by the “Stadtmacher” team and prepared for implementation – with expert advice and through crowd funding developed especially for urban development projects. “Stadtmacher” will initially kick off in four cities, with strong partners in each: Heidelberg, Mönchengladbach, Kassel and Hamburg.

Bildungs- und Kompetenzzentrum HausHalten Leipzig

As early as the end of 2004, the non-profit association HausHalten e. V. was already collaborating closely with the City of Leipzig to test its “Guardians House” model. The initiative seeks to carefully secure endangered older buildings in significant locations, and to preserve their value by making them appealing to potential tenants who have good ideas and the need for a lot of space. The goal of the subsidized project was to advance the Leipzig Guardians House initiative and to be able to apply the model in other cities.

Trial residences in Görlitz

The “Probewohnen” (trial residences) project aimed to enable residents to experience living in, for them, unfamiliar Wilhelminian-era quarters. Together with residents, the Görlitz City Planning and Zoning Office and Housing Association, Görlitz Kompetenzzentrum Revitalisierung der Städtebau (Görlitz Centre for Expertise in Urban Revitalization) explored concepts for enhancing the status of the Wilhelminian-era districts in eastern German cities and reducing prejudices against them. The period during which the pilot project came under the auspices of the National Urban Development Policy was used to test the idea as a trial experience and to further develop it. The project was then able to successfully fund itself independently.

KulturEnergieBunkerAltona Projekt KEBAP

In a bunker in Hamburg’s Altona district, this project is committed to creating space for cultural events, as well as for decentralized energy supply, and features a community garden on its roof. As regards viable cultural and energy concepts for the future, KEBAP is contributing to the urban space by establishing the underlying provision of people’s basic needs for culture and energy, and connecting local business and ecology. Since 2010, this project has been run by committed citizens, and is responding to the social and cultural needs of local residents. A cultural energy cooperative is being founded, with the concept of investing earnings from energy generation into cultural activities. Rehearsal spaces, communally used workshops, events spaces and places for meetings, interaction and joint projects are being created.
Climate projects

reusecity - urban recycling network in Tempelhof, Berlin
Many industries constantly produce large amounts of materials that are no longer needed. For other residents of the district, however, these can be valuable basic materials. For this reason, the focus of this project is to devise a model for cooperation between the organizers of trade fairs and major events and local players in the alternative and creative sectors. Local recipients in initiatives and the (creative) sector are offered alternative work materials and business activities based on reuse and recycling. Several test runs are intended to provide the basis for setting up a recycling network.

KKAP – Kommunales Klimaschutz-Aktionsprogramm (municipal climate protection action scheme) Neustadt am Rübenberg
Effective climate protection is the result of the interplay between numerous individual measures in different fields of activity, for example, mobility, settlement development, the use of renewable energies, and the energy-related refurbishment of buildings. The municipal climate protection action scheme sounded out what opportunities are available to small towns for making a contribution. The aim was to enable energy to be conserved and more efficiently used, through improvements to community development and design. By way of example, the idea was to bring various aspects of climate protection in urban development together in an integrated action programme and condition them to suit their application.

Energy-efficient urban development of existing and new buildings, Munich
The planning of the new development that is Munich’s Freiham district and the renewal of the existing neighboring area will be combined, in a move to put the urban principle of “energy-efficient urban development” into practice. An energy-efficient strategy plan means that high standards in urban design, energy-efficient construction and renewable energy supply could be linked with a renewal concept, to actively involve the residents of the existing development in socially equitable energy.
Online City Wuppertal

Structural changes to the retail trade have necessitated experimental and innovative projects in an effort to make traditional retail forms and their locations attractive and viable for the future. Accordingly, the internet platform “online-city-wuppertal.de” was set up for retailers in the city to present themselves together online and jointly meet the challenges in Wuppertal. When an order is placed, same-day delivery is guaranteed by their own courier network. In addition, via the platform, online traders who previously had no retail premises of their own in the city will be offered those that have become vacant in Wuppertal.

“stadtnachacht” – managing urban night-time economy

Preferences with regard to location and the heterogeneous interests of users, operators and residents mean that the diverse nightlife and night-time economies in major cities frequently cause problems. The “stadtnachacht” project addresses these conflicts of interest against the backdrop of the potential that urban nighttime economies in major German cities offer to the economy and urban space, a topic that is being increasingly debated. Using case studies and an international excursion as a basis, recommendations and impetus for Germany with regard to urban planning, governance and marketing will be outlined for the first time, taking the various interests into consideration.

Business incentives for timber-frame towns

Precisely in the context of demographic change and the challenges in rural areas, innovative conversion strategies and projects are required with regard to the development of historical timber-frame towns. Organized by Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Fachwerkstädte e. V., the “Timber-frame Towns – Impetus from Business” project focuses on local companies. In developing further sources of support for segmented urban structures, the project aims to develop revolving funds, with a view to modernising and networking the tourist infrastructure. As such, models for placing citizens’ initiatives on a professional footing, for example, in the form of cooperatives, are being devised. In a competition, 15 entries were selected and, in 2015, presented nationwide and on “fachwerktriennale.de”.

MetroLab in the metropolitan region of Nuremberg

“FabLabs” (fabrication laboratories) are globally networked and locally integrated public technology workshops fostering the free exchange of knowledge and ideas. A network of “FabLabs” that covers the metropolitan region of Nuremberg and is open to all sections of the population is being established. For the first time in Germany, the focus will be on small and medium-size cities and the prospects that “FabLabs” offer for urban and regional development there. With this objective in mind, existing locations in the Nuremberg region will be strengthened and new local “FabLabs” established.
Cooperation projects

Downtown dialogue in Rhineland-Palatinate – incentives for integrated urban development
In Rhineland-Palatinate the “Kooperationsnetzwerk Innenstadt” (downtown cooperation network) is taking a new interdisciplinary approach to the challenges facing city centres. The most important downtown players, for example, retailers, property owners, and official local representatives, will enter into dialogue when solution strategies are being drawn up. In business simulation games, they will discuss interaction and devise innovative possible uses for inner cities. The guiding principle, namely exchanging and merging “diverse” points of view for a joint goal, runs consistently through the project. Overall, the results of the business games will be combined in an overarching model for integrated location management.

“Stadt als Campus” – network for pro-active urban development
The focal point of “Stadt als Campus” (the city as a campus) is how the young generation of creative professionals in planning and design disciplines, as well as in social and cultural sciences in small and medium-sized towns and structurally weak regions can become the drivers of pro-active urban development. In the course of the project, a network of universities, interested towns and municipalities, Federal State Ministries and the Association of Towns and Municipalities was established in Saxony-Anhalt and Lower Saxony. Impetus projects were launched in five towns. Active partners from completely different cities throughout Germany have since joined the “stadt-als-campus.de” network.

“Koopstadt” – an urban development cooperation project in Bremen, Leipzig and Nuremberg
To learn with and from one another is what the three cities of Bremen, Leipzig and Nuremberg sought to accomplish, and accordingly, they implemented the “koopstadt” pilot project. Since 2008, the cities have been engaging in in-depth exchange on urban development, with a view to mirroring and reflecting on issues of future interest, testing innovative solutions for the main challenges that urban development faces, and qualifying the players involved, inside and outside local administrative authorities, through intensive exchange between the cities. Whereas from 2009 to 2012, “koopstadt” concentrated on setting up networks and initiating exchange in thematically-linked aspects of urban development (known as project families), from 2013 to 2015, the focus was on the quality of urban life, ecological change and social cohesion.

Vor-Ort store, Dessau
Campus-Club, Bernburg (Saale)
Exchanging ideas in Unkel
The “platform”: exchange and transfer of information

There are a number of possible formats on offer to ensure as broad an inclusion as possible:

- Around 1,000 representatives of politics, administration, business, science, civil society, and social and planning professions take part in the annual federal congresses. In addition to current urban development issues, exemplary projects and approaches from Germany and abroad are presented.

- Over 40 key figures from politics, science, business and civil society belong to the Board of Trustees. Its members introduce current social impulses into the National Urban Development Policy and contribute to widening the initiative in their respective specialist fields.

- Educators, researchers, young scientists and students regularly meet at the National Urban Development Policy university open days and other special events. They help to provide a broad foundation for urban research and make the best possible use of the existing potential in the German research landscape.

- At a regional level, the states and leading municipal organizations regularly organize specialized events. In addition, the project conferences help foster exchange between local authorities and those involved in projects at a local level.

Architects, urban planners and transport experts, authorities and laymen, politics and business, the academic world, churches, associations and initiative – these are just a few of the interest groups who, alongside local residents, mould the image of our cities. In order to fuse their relevant knowledge and skills, a continuous process involving the exchange and transfer of knowledge must be guaranteed. Only in this way can solutions be developed that make it possible to implement the kind of integrated urban development that is called for in the Leipzig Charter.

Since its launch in 2007, the National Urban Development Policy has taken up this concept and developed it into a central forum for cities and communities in Germany. Since then, experts from the worlds of business, science and civil society have been working together with the federal government, the state governments and local authorities to find solutions for the future of our cities and communities.
Integrated urban development concepts are not only gaining importance in Germany, but also in other countries. The Leipzig Charter represents an international agreement crafted by the European member states. Following the anchoring of the initiative at the national level in past years, not only was cooperation intensified with partners at a European level, but also international exchange.

The then presiding Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development concluded cooperation agreements on urban development and housing policy both with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs of the Republic of South Africa. China, India and Brazil are other countries with whom close collaboration has been agreed. The exchange revolves around the questions: what challenges will cities and regions face in the various countries, what approaches of integrated and sustainable urban development can be implemented locally, and how is it possible to enable successful cooperation?

At the 2012 international conference on „Städtische Energien/Urbane Energien“, representatives from various countries began concrete work. The project “Dialogues for Change” aims to contrast different local authorities’ experiences in resident-oriented development programmes in the USA and Germany, and to initiate targeted learning and exchange opportunities. The project “Urban Regeneration. Rejuvenated Cities” examines success factors in urban regeneration. To this end, case studies are being carried out in selected European cities.
International cooperation: “Dialogues for Change – D4C”

Sustainable urban development processes rely on cooperation, neighbourliness, and civic engagement. The differing experiences of U.S. and German communities in the area of participation in the planning process were discussed in an innovative project, and targeted learning and exchange opportunities were initiated.

As part of a cooperation agreement between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the then presiding Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, the learning programme was conducted in 2012-13 between the German cities of Bottrop, Leipzig and Ludwigsburg and the U.S. cities of Austin, Flint and Memphis, with support from the German Marshall Fund of the United States. This enabled a professional and personal exchange of practical experience between the cities, as well as the joint development of political solutions and specific action programmes, and allowed set-up of the „Dialogue for Change“ network.

In the second stage of the D4C network in 2013-14, the developed strategies were implemented as specific local urban development projects. In a workshop in Baltimore – this U.S. east coast port city took the place of Austin in 2014 – the unexpected obstacles that arise in urban development processes were carefully analysed and evaluated. Finally, in 2014, it was Ludwigsburg’s turn to provide recommendations and prepare a new direction for the third phase.

The results of this dialogue will be integrated into development planning at regional and national levels. Accordingly, this transatlantic cooperation generates important ideas for continually modifying legislation and development policy to meet the new challenges that local authorities in particular must address.

There are three components to the city network’s learning method:

- **Learning laboratory**: use current planning processes in the participating cities to test concepts and ideas and share the results
- **Exchanging experiences**: promote dialogue to analyse strategies in depth, jointly evaluate experiences and strategies, and apply them – possibly after modification;
- **Goal-orientation and goal revision**: set learning goals related to general or specific urban situations, support and revise procedures and achieve the learning goals with network participants acting as coaches.
The National Urban Development Policy Civic Foundation Prize

In recent years, Germany has emerged as a “nation of donors”. In many places, citizens are doing voluntary work for the good of their towns, cities and communities. They develop new ideas on the future of their cities and realize these as non-profit projects. Civic foundations are increasingly important in this regard. As foundations "by citizens for citizens", they serve as crystallization points for civic involvement.

Civic foundations are not meant to handle tasks that are responsibility of the public sector, or provide basic public services. They do, however, of their own volition support communal structures. To strengthen the culture of appreciating such efforts in cities and communities and highlight the possible range of civic commitment, in 2011 the then presiding German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, together with the federal states, the local authority umbrella organisations and the Federation of German Foundations (Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen) for the first time bestowed the National Urban Development Policy Civic Foundation Prize. The idea: to enhance the perception of civic foundations as a partner in urban development.

In 2011, there were about 300 civic foundations in Germany with total assets of EUR 180 million. Each year, members of the civic foundations provide some 450,000 hours of voluntary work.

At the end of 2011, 15 foundations were awarded the National Urban Development Policy Civic Foundation Prize, and in summer 2013, ten foundations were awarded the National Urban Development Policy Civic Foundation Prize, with one foundation receiving a special award.

The foundations are actively committed in three selected areas of national urban development policy, namely:

- Proactive civic commitment – galvanizing citizens on behalf of their town or city
- Social cohesion – creating opportunities and preserving integrity
- Architectural culture – improving urban design
University open days and research dialogue

Germany has 415 universities (2010-11 winter semester) and thus a dense network of education and research establishments. Countless institutes focus on current issues relating to cities. The National Urban Development Policy has undertaken to tap this existing potential and elaborate on urban issues together with representatives of the world of science and research.

The university open days organized by the National Urban Development Policy create the relevant framework for this. At the annual events, representatives of the federal and state governments, local authorities, and the fields of science and research interact on current urban development research topics. In the accompanying dialogue with the universities, the discussion focuses on current methods, on aligning research projects, and on fostering interaction between the different disciplines and colleges. One key element of the university dialogue is to bring cutting-edge research into contact with young or trainee urban planners. “Young Specialists Design the Future” is one such project, offering students the opportunity to work on cross-university planning topics of the future in consecutive summer sessions. Moreover, under the heading of “Participate – New Ways to Involve the Public” young planners in four cities are given the chance to develop new ideas and concepts to involve the public in processes relating to public space. The National Urban Development Policy runs a database on Ph.D. and research projects by young scholars and thus provides another element to strengthen close networking between policymakers and university researchers. The database gives an overview of current urban research in Germany and strongly helps academic professionals to align their research work.