

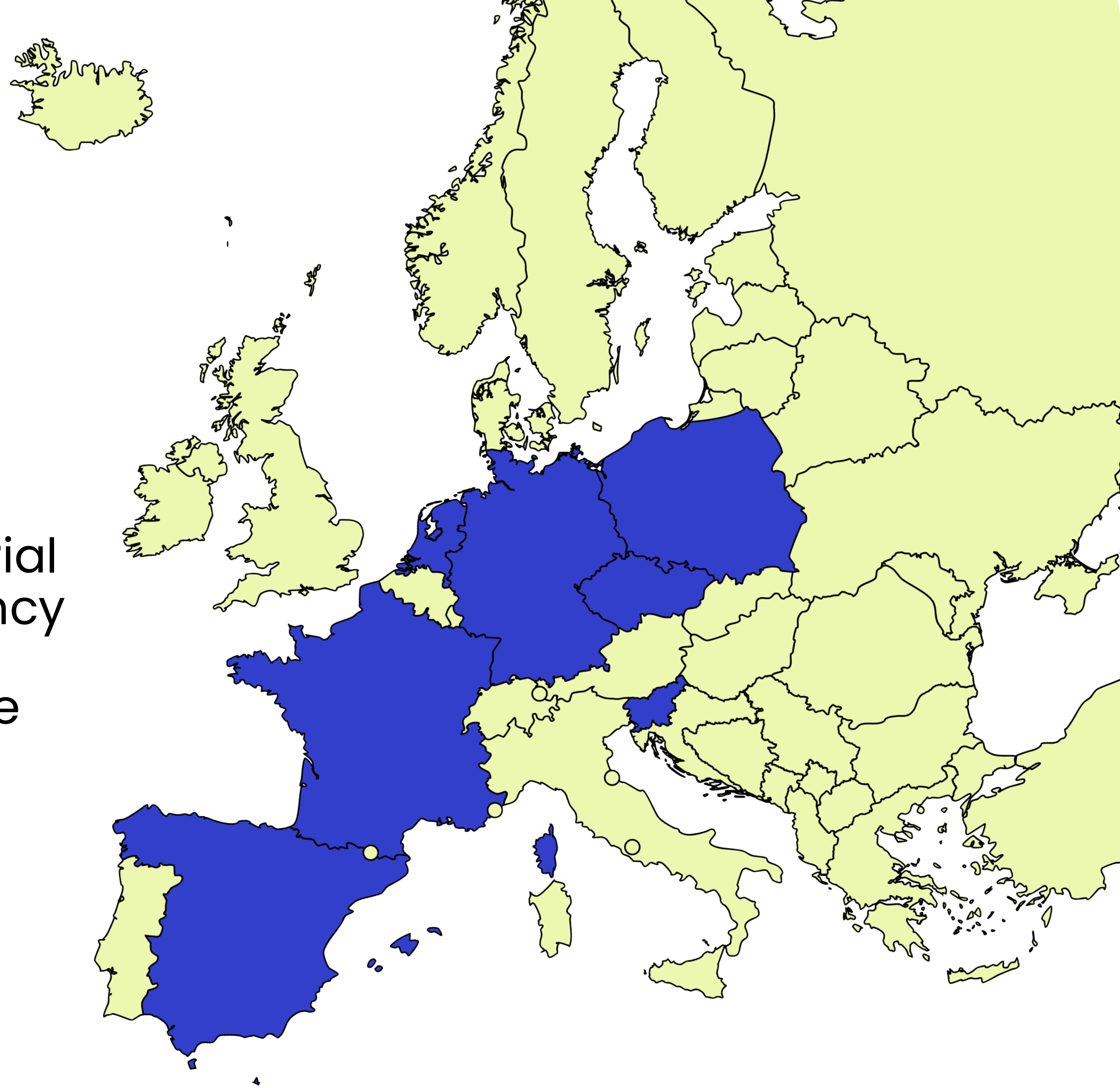


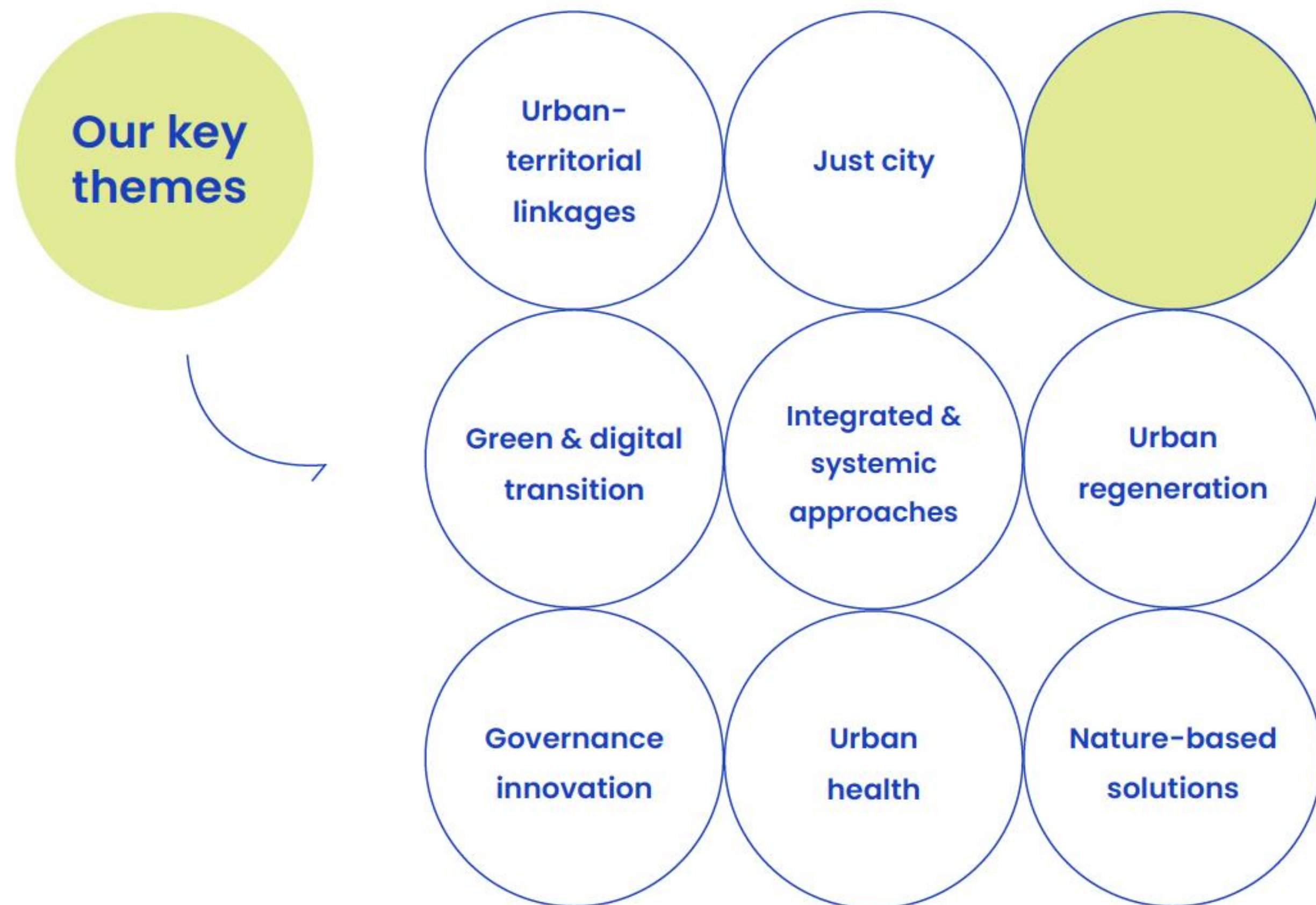
EUKN

European Urban Knowledge Network

The EUKN at a glance

- European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), based in The Hague
- Established in 2004 at the Ministerial meeting under the Dutch Presidency
- Small secretariat, with 5–7 full time employees
- Independent, EU member state-driven network





Member activities

Capacity building

- Conferences and lectures
- Monthly thematic newsletters
- Urban Voices articles & podcasts

Targeted Member Support

- Knowledge exchange between Member States
- Approximately one Policy Lab or other major TMS deliverable produced per month
- Follow-up reports and/or policy recommendations



Policy research

- Strengthen the interface between research & policy
- EU-funded research projects (incl. Horizon Europe)
- Research on critical urban policy topics commissioned by members

Additional activities

- Long track record in supporting EU Council Presidencies (over 25 instances from 2006 to 2025)
- Work drafting crucial documentation and common agreements



The New Leipzig Charter

Key elements of this leading EU urban policy framework:

- 5 principles of good urban governance
- 3 dimensions of the city & 1 cross-cutting dimension
- 3 spatial levels
- Legal, financial and political empowerment of cities



Policies for the common good

- Inclusivity and Equity
- Public Participation and Transparency
- Sustainable Development
- Economic fairness
- Health and well-being

Policies for the common good refer to public policies that aim to benefit all members of society, ensuring that the well-being of the community as a whole is prioritized over individual or narrow group interests.

These policies are designed to promote social equity, economic fairness, environmental sustainability, and overall quality of life.

The new Leipzig Charter at a glance



The Urban Agenda for the EU

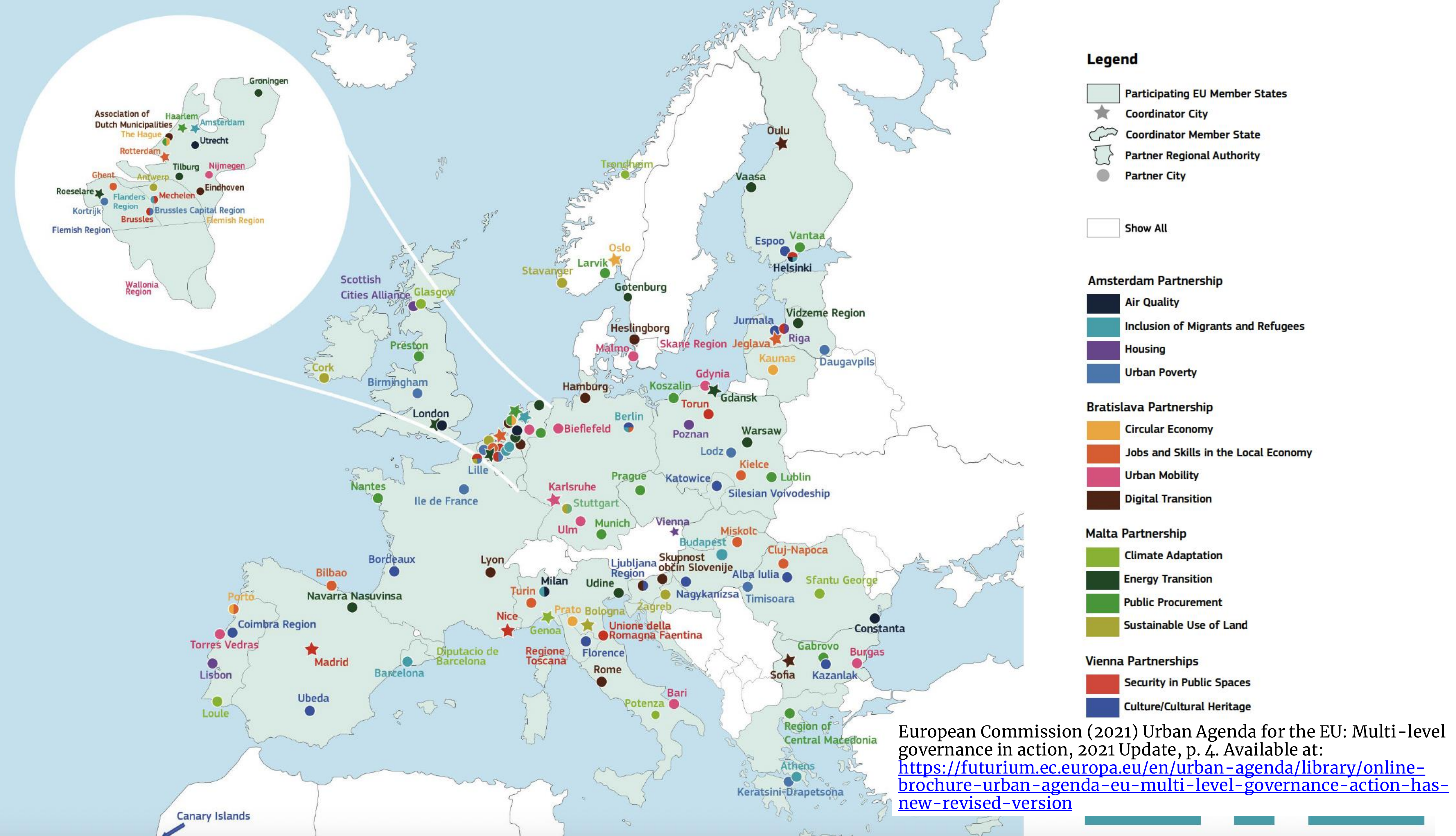
Action-oriented agenda based on 3 “betters”:

- Better Regulation
- Better Funding
- Better Knowledge

The Agenda is carried out through **thematic partnerships**, allowing cities to collaborate directly with one another on key issues.

See: <https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/partnerships>





The Urban Agenda for the EU

The Agenda features over 20 thematic areas. Among the most relevant to an agenda for urban innovation are:



Jobs and skills in the local economy



Urban mobility



Digital transition



Compact cities

URBAN
AGENDA
FOR THE EU

The Draghi Report: Implications for cities and urban innovation

- *“A strong social model and a thriving technological environment are [...] self-reinforcing when combined with programmes targeted at creating high-quality jobs for well-skilled workers living in affordable cities.” (Draghi, 2024. p. 255)*
- *“The EU has numerous innovation clusters, but they are less developed and generate less value than those in the US and China.” (Draghi, 2024. p. 241)*
- *“The realisation of a high-speed rail network connecting all EU capitals and major cities would enhance rail attractiveness and further increase investment needs.” (Draghi, 2024. p. 210)*

What does this mean?

- Europe's cities and urban areas will be the engines for the innovation and growth that drive competitiveness.
- But it is not enough for Europe's regulatory structure to facilitate innovation and competitiveness: Europe's urban structures need to facilitate this, too.
- Draghi's report covered this in terms of transport. But cities need to be able to house and employ workers and innovators

But there is another reason this all matters...

The future of European competitiveness

Part B | In-depth analysis and recommendations

SEPTEMBER 2024

Innovation and competition as geopolitics

Competitiveness is inherently comparative. There have to be other competitors.

In the EU's case, this is the US and China.

- China is facing several structural long-term economic issues.
- But the United States is another story:

FIGURE 1
EU versus US labour productivity 1890-2022
Index (US=100)

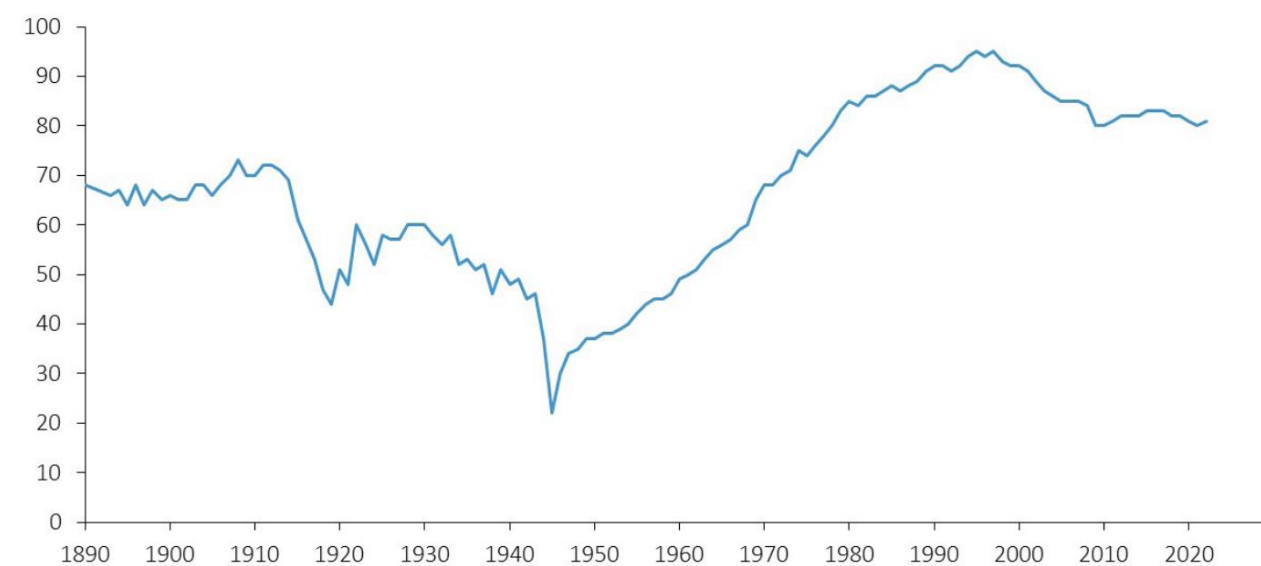
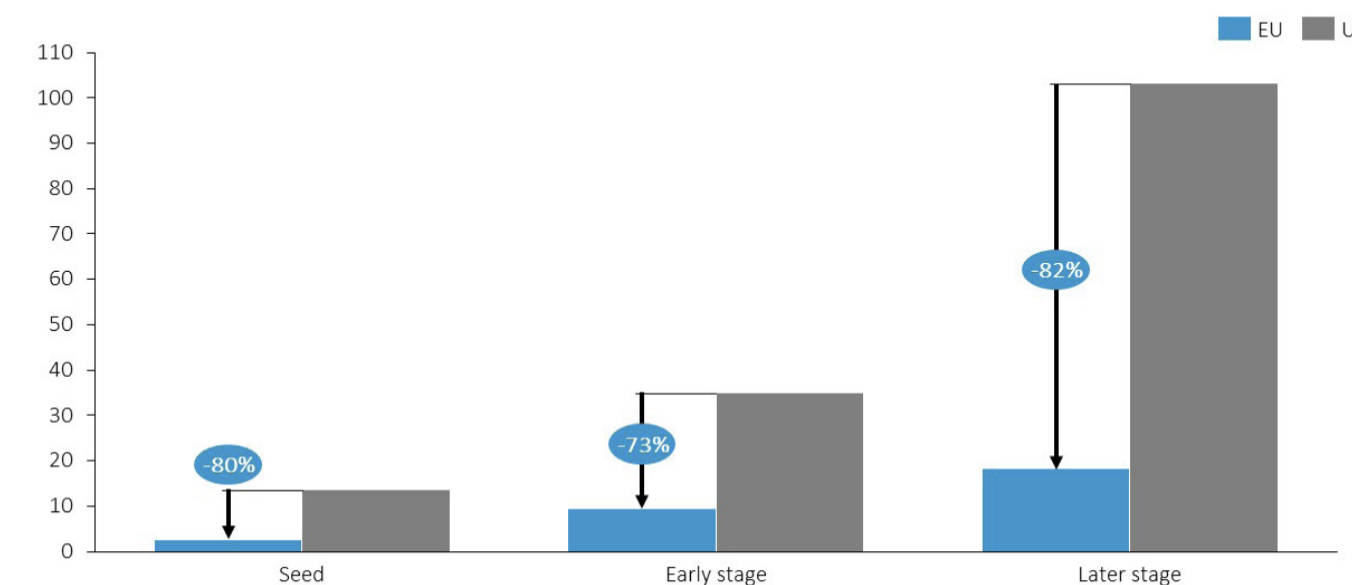
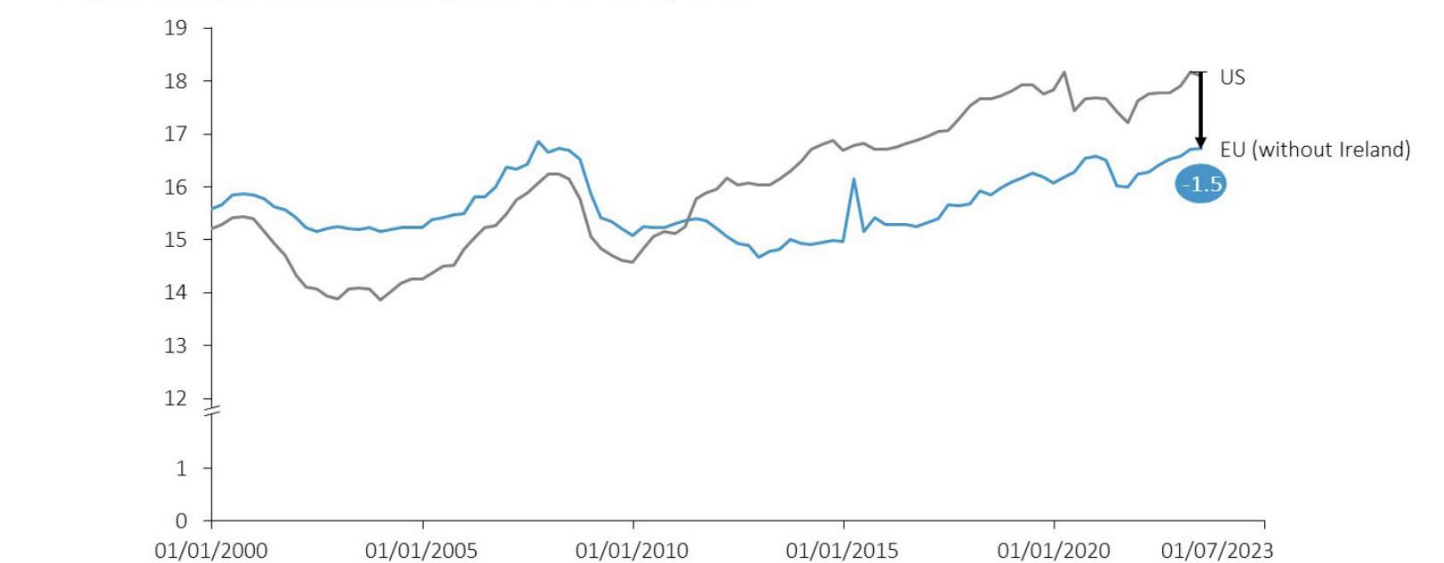


FIGURE 3
Venture capital investment by development stage
USD billion, 2023



Source: Pitchbook data. Accessed 20 November, 2023.

FIGURE 5
Productive investment
Real gross fixed capital formation excluding residential investment, % of GDP



Source: EIB, 2024.

And this matters, because...

- The United States is going to be a lot less predictable over the next four years, and maybe longer: Trump is not an aberration.
- It cannot be guaranteed that the United States is going to be on friendly economic terms with the European Union.
- Especially with headlines like this: **Trump: The EU is an ‘atrocitiy’ on trade**

So for Europe, and Europe’s cities, competitiveness is key.

President of the United States



Presidential seal



Presidential flag



Incumbent

Donald Trump

since January 20, 2025

An ambitious agenda for cities?

- The UAEU is nearly a decade old. What does the future of urban policy in Europe look like?
- **Commission** President von Der Leyen has tasked Executive Vice-President Raffaele Fitto with putting forward “an ambitious policy agenda for cities” in the 2024–2029 term, meaning that a full EU policy response is possible in the coming years.
- It remains to be seen on the European level how competitiveness, innovation, and effective urban policy coordination will be shaped.



EUKN



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Newsletter

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