

#UrbanEconomicResilience



Workshop on Green Urban Transport

Opportunities & Constraints for Green Urban Transport - Regional Policy Brief on Building Urban Economic Resilience during and after COVID-19 in the UNECE Region

17 September 2021



Our work on...

Smart Sustainable Cities

The concept of **Smart Sustainable Cities** aims to address the current and future challenges of cities and improve the way cities function.

In light of **shrinking public budgets** and the legacy of the global **financial crisis**, local authorities suffer from a **limited capacity** to drive the transition towards smart and sustainable cities and localisation of the 2030 Agenda.

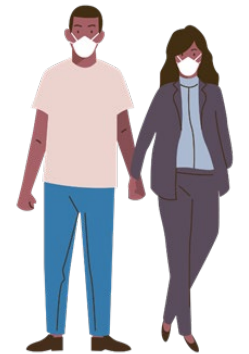


The project *“Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in the UNECE Region”* supports the **transition of cities** towards becoming smart and sustainable.

In 2021, the following **4 cities** undergo the KPI evaluation:

- **Almaty** (Kazakhstan)
- **Bishkek** (Kyrgyzstan)
- **Tbilisi** (Georgia)
- **Podgorica** (Montenegro)

Based on the assessment, city profiles are prepared, including a list of **policy recommendations** to make the city more smart and sustainable and projects to **attract external investments**.



Based on city profiles, we are also developing **Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews** to assess progress at the city level towards achieving SDGs.

Read more at: unece.org/housing/innovativefinancing-sustainablesmartcities

Our work on...

COVID-19 Recovery

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has had serious consequences across all spectrums of development and cities have become the main hotspots for transmission of the virus.

A focus on urban areas is important because of (1) their role as engines of **economic growth** and **structural transformation**; (2) their impact on **income and non-income inequality** and hence **social stability**; and (3) their high **vulnerability to infections** due to poor planning or the existence of **informal settlements**.



A field project *“Post COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the UNECE Region”* provided **concrete recommendations** to enhance the integration of informal settlements into the urban fabric of cities and to help cities to **recover from the crisis** caused by the COVID-19 pandemics.

The project targeted the following **4 cities** to enhance the **socio-economic recovery** following the pandemic and contribute to **urban resilience**:

- Tirana, Albania
- Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- Podgorica, Montenegro
- Skopje, North Macedonia

Read more at: <https://unece.org/housing/post-covid-19-recovery>

Outcomes of the project were also integrated into the UNDA Rapid Response project *“Building Urban Economic Resilience during and after COVID-19”* which aims to strengthen the capacity of city governments in **16 cities** globally to design, implement, and monitor sustainable, resilient, and inclusive **COVID-19 economic and financial responses, recovery, and rebuilding plans**.

In the UNECE region the following countries are beneficiaries:

- Albania
- Kyrgyzstan
- Ukraine.

Read more at: <https://unece.org/housing/urban-resilience-after-covid19>



About the Regional Policy Brief

The UNDA rapid response project focuses specifically on the following areas:



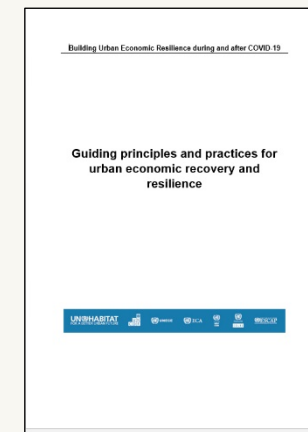
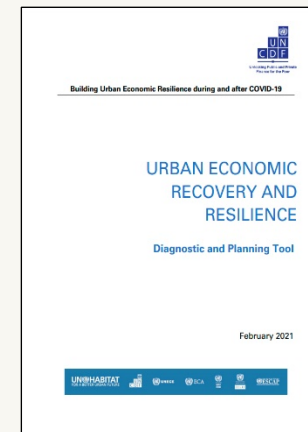
Massive loss of jobs and unemployment



Dwindling local government budgets and revenues



Enormous socio-economic losses in the urban and peri-urban economy



The Regional Policy Brief aims to:

- Provide an overview of the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UNECE region;
- Identify urban economic resilience needs of cities;
- Offer policy recommendations, best practices, tools and mechanisms for sustainable urban economic recovery.

Policy recommendations are in the following four areas:

- Urban governance
- Socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Nature-based solutions and climate neutrality
- Urban planning and transportation





Many European countries experienced an 80-90% reduction in the use of public transport services as a result of COVID-19, with societies today still showing a reluctance to use public transport.



This shift to private cars creates a threat of increased road traffic and pollution, as well as a drop in revenue for public transport providers.



Compact and dense urban form provides solutions to these challenges through

- reduction in automobile dependence
- increased safety and social cohesion
- growth in commercial dynamism
- greater pedestrian access to amenities.



Urban design, affordable housing provision, public transit and integrated infrastructural systems are principal instruments for sustainable cities.



Promoting Green Urban Transport in the city of Barcelona

'Barcelona Deal' (Pacte per Barcelona):

- redesigned streets to make more space for pedestrians and cyclists
- improved energy efficiency in buildings
- added more social, cultural and sports outlets in response to climate change and COVID-19.



Promoting Green Urban Transport in the city of Barcelona

Milan Adaptation Plan during the COVID-19 pandemic

Milan Adaptation Plan:

- created pedestrian zones
- promoted additional space for outdoor restaurants and cafes by lowering city speed limits to 30km/h
- “Piazze Aperte” (Open Squares) in every neighbourhood

Urban actions like those in Milan serve to reduce movement and diversify mobility supply.



Regional Policy Brief – Recommendations for Urban Planning & Transportation

Urban development policies, COVID-19 recovery and climate change mitigation plans should address the following issues:



Promote compactness of cities and maximize land-use efficiency.



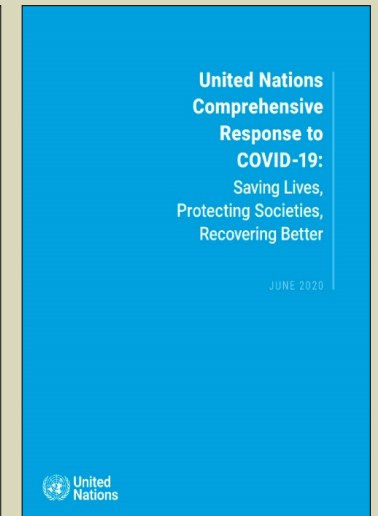
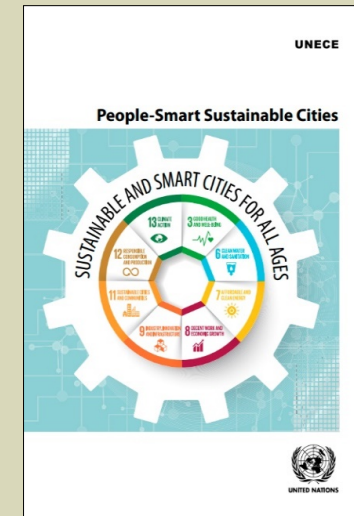
Encourage walkable neighborhoods and street connectivity.



Foster employment and local consumption.



Provide diverse housing in terms of tenure (e.g. combination of ownership and rental) that is adapted to local needs.



Our work on...

Forum of Mayors

Cities are on the front lines of addressing humanity's most pressing challenges, including **pandemics**, **climate change** and **natural hazards**. As our world is growing increasingly urban – with some **75% of the population** already living in cities in the UNECE region – these challenges cannot be solved by national governments alone. Cities are key partners to tackle these challenges and support the efforts to reach the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** before 2030.

The first Forum of Mayors in **October 2020** brought together **40 Mayors and Vice-Mayors**, representing **36 countries** from Europe, North America, Central Asia and the Caucasus, to amplify local solutions to address the key challenges of our time and discuss how they were overcoming the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in their cities. The overall theme focused on *“City action for a resilient future: Strengthening local government preparedness and response to emergencies and the impact of disasters and climate change”*.

The **second Forum of Mayors** will be held back-to-back with the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. The event will provide a platform for Mayors from the UNECE region to **exchange information** on experiences and **best practices** on city level policies and practices.

Read more at: unece.org/housing/events/forum-of-mayors-2022



Calendar of events

SDG11 Day – 6 October 2021

UNECE Ministerial meeting focusing on housing – 6-7 October 2021

Centres of Excellence side event to the Committee session – 8 October 2021

COP26 Mayors Breakfast – November 2021

Second UN Forum of Mayors – 4-5 April 2022

Regional Forum on SD – 6-7 April 2022

World Urban Forum, Katowice, Poland, June 2022

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Read more at: unece.org/housing/events/forum-of-mayors-2022



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