



## THE STATE OF NATIONAL URBAN POLICY IN THE NETHERLANDS

Name of national urban policy	<i>Dutch Urban Agenda (Agenda Stad)</i>
Date of national urban policy	Currently being formulated – initial proposal submitted to the House of Representatives in June 2015
Explicit or partial	Explicit
Legal status (e.g. act of the legislature, executive order, administrative guidance, etc.)	Not applicable
Previous/secondary policies	<i>National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning (SVIR), 2012</i>
Stage of development	Formulation
How developed (e.g. through a participatory/stakeholder process, or act of parliament, etc.)	Stakeholder participation involving the national government, cities and a range of non-governmental stakeholders
Implementing body	Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations, in partnership with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment and the Ministry of Economic Affairs
Government system	Centralised
Type of national urban agency	General national planning authority
Implementation mechanism (e.g. committee, involvement of multiple agencies, national-local co-ordination)	Proposed implementation mechanism is through city deals

### Current national urban policy

The Netherlands does not have a national urban policy, but the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations, in partnership with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and four other ministries, is co-ordinating the development of the *Dutch Urban Agenda (Agenda Stad)* (OECD, 2015). The agenda includes measures to boost economic growth, quality of life and innovation in Dutch cities, and is based on three principles:

1. eliminating obstacles to allow cities the resources and regulatory ability to grow, differentiate themselves and experiment with solutions;
2. co-operation within and between urban areas to encourage cities to work together across administrative boundaries, with the goal of strengthening their international competitiveness; and
3. creating conditions for innovation that will improve quality of life and attract entrepreneurs, including through fostering networks of data, energy and transport infrastructure (Agenda Stad, 2016).

The *Urban Agenda* is being developed through the co-operation of the national government, municipal governments and other stakeholders (Agenda Stad, 2016). The instrument used for the *Dutch Urban Agenda* is the *City Deal*, which cities and public and/or private stakeholders would design, and which are concluded in partnership with the national government.

The *National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning* (SVIR) was released by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment in 2012 and promotes the efficient use of space. The related *Spatial Planning Decree* (BRO) introduces a sustainable urbanisation ladder, which provides a decision-making hierarchy of three “rungs”, intended to encourage development within existing cities or near multiple modes of transport (OECD, 2015).

### Previous national urban policy and developments

From 1994 to 2009, the national government ran the *Metropolitan (Grotestedenbeleid) Programme*, targeting deprived neighbourhoods in 27 cities. The programme aimed to increase decentralisation while growing the capacity of local government and increasing participation. This programme was then replaced by the *Wijkaanpak*, which was intended to run until 2017 and was to focus on development in 40 deprived neighbourhoods around the country, but was interrupted in 2010 when the national government changed (UN-Habitat, 2015).

### Specific issues covered by current national urban policy

The urban agenda is a programme built on partnerships with cities and research about city development. The outcome of its activities can lead to adaptation of existing policies.

The *Pact of Amsterdam* (establishing the *Urban Agenda* for the European Union [EU]) was agreed upon during the informal Ministerial Meeting of EU Ministers responsible for Urban Matters in Amsterdam on 30 May 2016. The *Urban Agenda* for the EU strives to involve urban authorities in achieving better regulation, better funding and better knowledge (knowledge base and exchange). This requires a joint approach between sectoral policies (integrated) and different levels of government (multi-level). In the *Pact of Amsterdam*, partnerships have been identified as the key delivery mechanism to get recommendations on 12 priority themes within the *Urban Agenda* for the EU, which can contribute to the HABITAT III-goals.

## Bibliography

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Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (2015), “Government to strengthen urban areas through City Deals”, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment webpage, [www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-infrastructure-and-the-environment/news/2015/06/26/government-to-strengthen-urban-areas-through-city-deals](http://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-infrastructure-and-the-environment/news/2015/06/26/government-to-strengthen-urban-areas-through-city-deals) (accessed 13 June 2016).

OECD (2015), “Regional Outlook Survey Results: Netherlands”, unpublished.

UN-Habitat (2017, forthcoming), “NUP Regional Report: Western and Eastern Europe and North America.” Nairobi: UN Habitat.