Global State of National Urban Policy 2024

Building Resilience and Promoting Adequate, Inclusive and Sustainable Housing



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NOTE

The names of countries and territories used in this joint publication follow the practice of the United Nations.

Regional groupings in this report follow the new regional groupings based on United Nations Standard Country and Area Codes (M49) Classifications. The following modifications have been made in order to more adequately align with UN-Habitat regional groupings, which are reflected in the UN-Habitat World Cities Report: Western Asia States have been regionally grouped into the Arab States, with the exception of Comoros, Djibouti, Somalia and Mauritania, which are in the Africa region, and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel and Türkiye, which are in the Asia and the Pacific region. The North American countries, Canada and the United States of America, have been added to the European region, forming a category for Europe and North America.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Note by Republic of Türkiye

The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the island. Türkiye recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Türkiye shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union

The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Türkiye. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

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Preface

Urbanisation is one of the megatrends driving global transformation. Around the world, cities are serving as engines of national economic growth and development. However, challenges such as climate change and inequalities in cities are jeopardising sustainable development. Progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the globally endorsed overarching roadmap to achieve sustainable development, has been too slow. Indeed, many cities are below 2015 baselines on some targets related to urban resilience, such as the number of people and services affected by natural disasters, sanitation and hygiene, and the number of refugees. Access to housing also remains a challenge, given that the total number of slum dwellers in 2022 was 130 million higher than in 2015.

While there are a number of factors that can explain poor progress, including post COVID-19 pressures on public finances, a critical factor is often limited co-ordination across different levels of government and policy areas, in particular to manage trade-offs (for example, when allocating resources between shortterm needs and long-term goals), whilst also maximising potential synergies. In addition, with cities influencing economic, social, and environmental outcomes beyond their own boundaries, it is essential to design and implement sustainable urban development policy interventions across wider territorial scales that can also fulfil the social and ecological function of land with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing, as envisaged in the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the Habitat III Conference (2016).

In this respect, National Urban Policy (NUP) can provide a clear strategic framework and effective coordination mechanism to articulate policies across the urban-rural continuum, including at metropolitan and regional scales. By fully tapping into the transformative potential of NUP, governments can harness the positive contribution of cities and local action to global sustainability targets, as emphasised in the New Urban Agenda.

Since 2018, UN-Habitat and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have developed the Global State of National Urban Policy reports as part of a joint National Urban Policy Programme (NUPP) to inform better NUPs by providing a consistent global monitoring through a comparative lens. These reports offer a unique analysis of trends, knowledge, experiences and good practices on NUPs around the world and provide insights on how countries can develop and implement more effective NUPs in a rapidly urbanising world.

Against the backdrop of pressing shocks and inequalities, this third edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy draws on a survey of 78 countries and includes a special focus on how NUPs can build urban resilience and promote adequate, inclusive and sustainable housing. The report also highlights how NUPs have become critical instruments to localise the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11 “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

UN-Habitat and the OECD look forward to continuing to support governments around the world in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda. We hope that this report will encourage, inspire and equip countries to advance their NUPs to deliver greater benefits for a sustainable urban future.



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Tadashi Matsumoto, Head of the National Urban Policy and Climate Resilience Unit, CFE, OECD, and Remy Sietchiping, Chief of the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section within the Urban Practices Branch of UN-Habitat, led the overall work, under the supervision of Aziza Akhmouch, Head of the Cities, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development Division in the CFE, OECD, and Shipra Narang Suri, Chief of the Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ANCT	National Agency for Territorial Cohesion (Agence nationale de la cohésion territoriale) (France)
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act (United States)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBSR	Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (Germany)
BKK	Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (Germany)
BP2BT	Savings-Based Housing Financing Assistance (Indonesia)
BSPS	Self-Help, Housing Stimulus Assistance (Indonesia)
CA	Cities Alliance
CC	Climate change
CEDA	Council of Economic and Development Affairs (Saudi Arabia)
CIDOB	Centre of Global Thinking
CNDU	National Council for Urban Development (Chile)
CONPES	National Council for Economic and Social Policy (Colombia)
COMICIVYT	Commission for the City, Housing and Territory (Chile)
CORICIVYT	Regional City, Housing and Territory Commissions (Chile)
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
C40	Cities Climate Leadership Group
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (United Kingdom)
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
FLPP	Tax Incentives, Housing Financing Liquidity Facility (Indonesia)
FUA	Functional urban area
GCP	Gross city product
GDP	Global domestic product
GIS	Geographic information system
GHG	Greenhouse gases
GSNUP	Global State of National Urban Policy
ICLEI	Local Governments for Sustainability
INE	Institute for Statistics (Spain)
LFR	Local Resilience Forum (United Kingdom)
LRG	Local and regional governments

LUP	Levelling up partnerships (United Kingdom)
MEFL	Ministry for Economy, European Funds and Lands (Malta)
MFiPR	Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy (Poland)
MIDUVI	Ministry of Urban Development (Ecuador)
MoUI	Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (Ethiopia)
MRiT	Ministry of Development and Technology (Poland)
NAP	National Adaptation Plan (New Zealand)
NSRD	National Strategy of Regional Development (Türkiye)
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUDP	National Urban Development Policy (Nigeria)
NUP	National urban policy
NUPP	National Urban Policy Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONAV	National Observatory of Cities (Mali)
ÖREK	Spatial Development Concept Plan (Austria)
PLAN GAM	National Urban Development Plan for the Greater Metropolitan Area (Costa Rica)
PNOT	National Urban Development Plan (Costa Rica)
PNVU	National Housing and Urban Planning Policy (Peru)
PPP	Public-private partnership
PROT	Regional Spatial Planning Programmes (Portugal)
RDP	Regional Development Plans
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SBUM	Down Payment Assistance Subsidy (Indonesia)
SCPP	State Civil Protection Plan (Latvia)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SINAGERD	National Disaster Risk Management System (Peru)
SMO	Strategic Management Office (Saudi Arabia)
SUP	Subnational urban policy
TACAR	Territorial Approach to Climate Action and Resilience
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

Executive summary

Home to around half of the world's population, cities are hubs of economic, social, and cultural activity – acting as engines of growth, innovation, and global interconnection, accounting for over 80% of the world's GDP. They attract talent, investment, and creativity, fostering vibrant, diverse communities, and facilitate the exchange of ideas. However, when urbanisation is poorly managed, these agglomeration benefits can be offset by agglomeration costs, such as traffic congestion, air pollution, urban sprawl, and rising housing costs. Cities are often unequal places, with significant disparities in income, housing, jobs, and access to green amenities and public services. Moreover, several megatrends, ranging from the climate crisis to demographic and digital transformations, are also having an impact on citizens' well-being. Addressing these interconnected challenges in cities is at the heart of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11 'making cities and human settlements, inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'. However, progress is off-track. Of the four SDG 11 targets where adequate data are available, two (upgrading slums, and access to public and green spaces) are far behind schedule, and the other two (access to public transport, and disaster risk management) still require substantial efforts to be achieved.

Despite varying degrees of decentralisation and capacity across and within countries, cities often hold key policy and investment responsibilities to address urban challenges. However, cities cannot do it alone: they need to work hand in hand with national governments. By providing a comprehensive framework to align planning, investment, and policy interventions across levels of government to drive quality urbanisation, National Urban Policy (NUP) can help address urban challenges more effectively and avoid duplicating efforts or resources. For example, it is estimated that while cities have the potential to reduce one third of urban GHG emissions by 2050, the remaining two-thirds depends either on national and state governments or on co-ordination across levels of government. NUP is therefore essential to steer a whole-of government approach towards sustainable urban development.

Drawing on a survey of 78 countries across the globe, this report shows that NUP is increasingly becoming a critical instrument to manage urban challenges and to advance sustainable urbanisation, with more than 80% of countries having a NUP in place. The share of explicit NUPs, which are defined as formally labelled urban frameworks or policies, increased to 63% in 2024 (up from 51% in 2018 and 58% in 2021). Explicit NUPs are particularly prevalent in countries with significant urban population growth. On average, countries with explicit NUPs saw their urban population grow by 43% over the 2000-2020 period, compared to only 19% in countries with non-explicit NUPs.

Given large differences across countries in the scale of urban challenges, the degree of political, administrative, and fiscal autonomy of local governments, as well as the policy and institutional frameworks in place, significant variation exists in how NUPs are defined and developed. Indeed, there can be no one-size-fits-all approach for effective NUPs. However, many commonalities and lessons can be drawn from diverse experiences in designing, formulating, implementing and monitoring NUPs, which are summarised below to provide a source of inspiration for policy makers and other urban actors. In addition, the report takes a forward-looking view by making a series of recommendations to expand the monitoring and evaluation of NUP impacts.

NUP in practice: key findings from the survey

- **While NUPs' thematic scopes and implementation frameworks differ across countries, the survey has identified common characteristics that can help countries compare their NUP approaches with others.** On the one hand, many NUPs are 'multi-sectoral', embracing a wide range of policy areas (e.g., France, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia), typically under the auspices of a dedicated ministry or agency responsible for urban policies, while others are 'mono-sectoral', focusing on one or a few themes (e.g., Canada, Costa Rica, Sweden). On the other hand, NUPs' implementation settings can be either 'guidance-oriented', i.e. prioritising general principles or guidelines (e.g., Bolivia, Czechia, Egypt), or 'action-oriented', i.e. emphasising policy execution (e.g., Mexico, Norway, Nigeria).
- **Three quarters of NUPs include formal mechanisms for policy alignment and co-ordination across and among levels of government.** For example, Mexico uses legal frameworks (requiring states and municipalities to prepare urban development plans that are consistent with national guidelines), while Germany uses a multi-stakeholder platform (Congress of the National Urban Development Policy). Three-quarters of NUPs also promote horizontal co-ordination between local governments in urban areas, which is crucial to support the spatial continuity and functional relations between urban and rural areas for balanced territorial development. For instance, Poland's projects of "Revitalisation Regions" aimed at reinforcing the capacity of municipalities to plan and implement revitalisation measures.
- **Climate resilience is an increasing priority for NUPs.** The majority (93%) of NUPs target urban resilience in their thematic scope, especially resilience to ecological and climate shocks (88% of NUPs). Indeed, the share of NUPs giving extensive attention to climate resilience increased significantly from 13% in 2018 to 49% in 2024. Resilience to economic shocks (75%), including structural transformation and chronic diseases, is also prioritised but social-institutional shocks (such as migration) receive comparatively less attention (41%). This suggests potential for NUPs to advance a systems approach to resilience, encompassing not only climate policies but also economic development and social policies, in particular to protect vulnerable urban populations.
- **Housing emerges as a key NUP priority in a context where 23% of the world's urban population still lives in inadequate housing conditions (SDG 11 Synthesis Report 2018).** Many NUPs explicitly recognise challenges related to affordable and quality housing and foresee related measures. Two-thirds of NUPs mention the lack of social housing (e.g., United Kingdom) and over half of NUPs aim to tackle high property prices, for instance by investing in the growth of liveable communities (e.g., Canada). In addition, 51% of NUPs refer to energy efficiency challenges in housing and aim at retrofitting existing housing stock to improve energy efficiency (e.g., Estonia). However, misalignment challenges between NUPs and national housing policies also persist (21% of respondent countries). For instance, NUP is sometimes restrictive of new infrastructure investment in urban suburbs although a national housing policy has set housing supply targets that would require large-scale suburban development.
- **NUPs fail to fully leverage urban-rural linkages for regional development.** Whereas 58% of NUPs give extensive attention to balanced and polycentric urbanisation, only 45% of NUPs foresee concrete actions to maximise the potential of urban-rural linkages and interdependencies. This

suggests a need for NUPs to recognise and harness cities' strong influence on the economic, social, and environmental performances of their broader regions beyond their own boundaries.

- **Mobilising funding and financing for urban development is a constant challenge that needs to be addressed.** Most urban development projects to implement NUPs are financed by national direct investments, with insufficient own-source revenues at the subnational level and inadequate financial instruments to facilitate private investment. For instance, only 22% of respondent countries use land value capture mechanisms. This highlights the need for national governments to strengthen funding and financing for urban development.
- **Three quarters of countries reported the presence of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate their NUPs.** Among them, more than 70% of NUPs use targets and indicators, a sharp increase from 38% in 2021. Nearly nine out of ten NUPs with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms monitor SDG target 11.a.1. However, only 54% of NUPs are publishing monitoring and evaluation reports, which may hinder the effective tracking and adjustment of policies.

Recommendations

- **Engage sectoral ministries in charge of economic development and social policies more actively in NUPs.** This could help tailor economic development and social policies to specific challenges in cities, thus contributing to enhancing the economic and social dimensions of resilience. Similarly, NUP processes could facilitate better alignment between housing and urban policies.
- **Tap into the full potential of NUPs to support balanced territorial development.** NUPs can help strengthen the spatial continuity and functional relations between urban and rural areas, beyond a narrow territorial coverage of cities, by informing public investments and programme design and by promoting an integrated development approach, for instance by strengthening co operation among local governments or empowering planning bodies within functional urban areas.
- **Enhance city governments' access to finance for urban development.** NUPs could prioritise providing cities with sufficient and reliable sources of funding, including own-source revenue and inter-governmental transfers, to meet the needs for urban development, strengthen cities' financial capacities and improve the efficiency of public investment across levels of government. At the same time, NUPs can leverage private investment (for instance, through biodiversity offsetting, land value capture, land pooling and land banks) by providing legal and institutional grounds for new funding and financing mechanisms (e.g. municipal bonds) as well as promoting public-private partnerships, which are currently poorly used by cities.
- **Improve monitoring and evaluation to report and amplify the impacts of NUPs.** More can be done to monitor, evaluate and report NUP impacts, for instance through digital tools and monitoring frameworks, standards and platforms that can foster comparative assessments and mutual learning between countries, as well as through enhanced horizontal co-operation with other ministries, e.g. environment ministries to develop and collect data on environmental quality.

Résumé

Accueillant environ la moitié de la population mondiale, les villes sont des pôles d'activité économique, sociale et culturelle, jouant le rôle de moteurs de croissance, d'innovation et d'interconnexion mondiale, représentant plus de 80 % du PIB mondial. Elles attirent les talents, les investissements et la créativité, favorisant des communautés dynamiques et diversifiées, et facilitant l'échange d'idées. Cependant, lorsque l'urbanisation est mal gérée, ces avantages peuvent être compensés par des coûts tels que la congestion du trafic, la pollution de l'air, l'étalement urbain et la hausse des coûts de logement. Les villes sont souvent des lieux inégalitaires, avec des disparités significatives en matière de revenus, de logement, d'emplois et d'accès aux espaces verts et aux services publics. En outre, plusieurs mégatendances, allant de la crise climatique aux transformations démographiques et numériques, affectent également le bien-être des citoyens. Aborder ces défis interdépendants dans les villes est au coeur de l'objectif de développement durable n°11 des Nations Unies : 'rendre les villes et les établissements humains inclusifs, sûrs, résilients et durables'. Cependant, les progrès sont en retard. Sur les quatre cibles de l'ODD 11 pour lesquelles des données suffisantes sont disponibles, deux (réhabilitation des bidonvilles et accès aux espaces publics et verts) accusent un retard considérable, tandis que les deux autres (accès aux transports publics et gestion des risques de catastrophes) nécessitent encore des efforts substantiels pour être atteintes.

Malgré des degrés variables de décentralisation et de capacité entre et au sein des pays, les villes détiennent souvent des responsabilités politiques et d'investissement clés pour relever les défis urbains. Cependant, les villes ne peuvent pas le faire seules : elles doivent travailler main dans la main avec les gouvernements nationaux. En fournissant un cadre global permettant d'aligner la planification, les investissements et les interventions politiques à tous les niveaux de gouvernement pour favoriser une urbanisation de qualité, la Politique Nationale Urbaine (PNU) peut aider à relever les défis urbains de manière plus efficace et à éviter la duplication des efforts ou des ressources. Par exemple, il est estimé que si les villes ont le potentiel de réduire un tiers des émissions de GES urbaines d'ici 2050, les deux tiers restants dépendent soit des gouvernements nationaux et étatiques, soit d'une coordination entre les différents niveaux de gouvernement. La PNU est donc essentielle pour orienter une approche gouvernementale globale vers un développement urbain durable.

S'appuyant sur une enquête réalisée dans 78 pays à travers le monde, ce rapport montre que la PNU devient de plus en plus un instrument essentiel pour gérer les défis urbains et faire avancer l'urbanisation durable, plus de 80 % des pays ayant mis en place une PNU. La part des PNU explicites, définies comme des cadres ou politiques urbaines officiellement labellisées, est passée à 63 % en 2024 (contre 51 % en 2018 et 58 % en 2021). Les PNU explicites sont particulièrement courantes dans les pays connaissant une croissance importante de la population urbaine. En moyenne, les pays avec des PNU explicites ont vu leur population urbaine croître de 43 % sur la période 2000-2020, contre seulement 19 % dans les pays avec des PNU non explicites.

Compte tenu des grandes différences entre les pays en matière d'ampleur des défis urbains, de degré d'autonomie politique, administrative et fiscale des gouvernements locaux, ainsi que des cadres politiques et institutionnels en place, il existe des variations significatives dans la manière dont les PNU sont définies et développées. En effet, il ne peut y avoir d'approche unique pour des PNU efficaces. Cependant, de nombreux points communs et enseignements peuvent être tirés des

expériences diverses en matière de conception, de formulation, de mise en oeuvre et de suivi des PNU, résumés ci-dessous pour fournir une source d'inspiration aux décideurs politiques et autres acteurs urbains. En outre, le rapport adopte une perspective tournée vers l'avenir en formulant une série de recommandations visant à élargir le suivi et l'évaluation des impacts des PNU.

PNU en pratique : principales conclusions de l'enquête

- **Alors que les portées thématiques et les cadres de mise en œuvre des PNU diffèrent entre les pays, l'enquête a identifié des caractéristiques communes qui peuvent aider les pays à comparer leurs approches de PNU avec celles d'autres pays.** D'une part, de nombreuses PNU sont «multisectorielles», couvrant un large éventail de domaines politiques (par exemple, France, Lituanie, Arabie saoudite), généralement sous l'égide d'un ministère ou d'une agence responsable des politiques urbaines, tandis que d'autres sont «monosectorielles», se concentrant sur un ou quelques thèmes (par exemple, Canada, Costa Rica, Suède). D'autre part, les cadres de mise en œuvre des PNU peuvent être soit « orientés vers l'orientation », c'est-à-dire en priorisant les principes ou lignes directrices généraux (par exemple, Bolivie, Tchéquie, Égypte), soit « orientés vers l'action », c'est-à-dire en mettant l'accent sur l'exécution des politiques (par exemple, Mexique, Norvège, Nigéria).
- **Les trois quarts des PNU incluent des mécanismes formels pour l'alignement et la coordination des politiques à tous les niveaux de gouvernement.** Par exemple, le Mexique utilise des cadres juridiques (obligeant les États et les municipalités à préparer des plans de développement urbain cohérents avec les lignes directrices nationales), tandis que l'Allemagne utilise une plateforme multipartite (Congrès de la Politique Nationale de Développement Urbain). Les trois quarts des PNU promeuvent également la coordination horizontale entre les gouvernements locaux dans les zones urbaines, ce qui est crucial pour soutenir la continuité spatiale et les relations fonctionnelles entre les zones urbaines et rurales pour un développement territorial équilibré.
- **La résilience climatique est une priorité croissante pour les PNU.** La majorité (93%) des PNU visent la résilience urbaine dans leur champ thématique, en particulier la résilience aux chocs écologiques et climatiques (88% des PNU). En effet, la part des PNU accordant une attention particulière à la résilience climatique a considérablement augmenté, passant de 13 % en 2018 à 49% en 2024. La résilience aux chocs économiques (75%), y compris la transformation structurelle et les maladies chroniques, est également priorisée, mais les chocs socio-institutionnels (tels que les migrations) reçoivent comparativement moins d'attention (41%). Cela suggère que les PNU pourraient adopter une approche plus systémique de la résilience, en englobant non seulement les politiques climatiques, mais aussi les politiques de développement économique et social, notamment pour protéger les populations urbaines vulnérables.
- **Le logement apparaît comme une priorité clé des PNU dans un contexte où 23% de la population urbaine mondiale vit encore dans des conditions de logement inadéquates (Rapport de synthèse sur l'ODD 11 de 2018).** De nombreuses PNU reconnaissent explicitement les défis liés au logement abordable et de qualité, et prévoient des mesures connexes. Les deux tiers des PNU mentionnent le manque de logements sociaux (par exemple, Royaume-Uni) et plus de la moitié visent à s'attaquer aux prix élevés de l'immobilier, par exemple en

investissant dans la croissance de communautés vivables (par exemple, Canada). En outre, 51% des PNU évoquent les défis liés à l'efficacité énergétique dans le secteur du logement et visent à rénover le parc immobilier existant pour améliorer l'efficacité énergétique (par exemple, l'Estonie). Cependant, des défis de désalignement entre les PNU et les politiques nationales du logement persistent également (21% des pays répondants). Par exemple, la PNU est parfois restrictive quant aux nouveaux investissements dans les infrastructures en banlieue urbaine, bien qu'une politique nationale du logement ait fixé des objectifs d'approvisionnement en logements nécessitant un développement à grande échelle des banlieues.

- **Les PNU ne tirent pas pleinement parti des liens urbain-rural pour le développement régional.** Alors que 58% des PNU accordent une attention particulière à une urbanisation équilibrée et polycentrique, seulement 45% des PNU prévoient des actions concrètes pour maximiser le potentiel des liens et interdépendances urbain-rural. Cela suggère qu'il est nécessaire que les PNU reconnaissent et exploitent la forte influence des villes sur les performances économiques, sociales et environnementales de leurs régions au-delà de leurs propres limites territoriales.
- **La mobilisation des financements pour le développement urbain reste un défi constant à relever.** La plupart des projets de développement urbain mis en œuvre dans le cadre des PNU sont financés par des investissements directs nationaux, avec des recettes propres insuffisantes au niveau infranational et des instruments financiers inadéquats pour faciliter les investissements privés. Par exemple, seulement 22% des pays répondants utilisent des mécanismes de capture de la valeur foncière. Cela met en évidence la nécessité pour les gouvernements nationaux de renforcer le financement du développement urbain.
- **Trois quarts des pays ont signalé la présence de mécanismes de suivi et d'évaluation de leurs PNU.** Parmi eux, plus de 70% des PNU utilisent des objectifs et des indicateurs, une nette augmentation par rapport à 38% en 2021. Près de neuf PNU sur dix disposant de mécanismes de suivi et d'évaluation suivent la cible 11.a.1 des ODD. Cependant, seulement 54% des PNU publient des rapports de suivi et d'évaluation, ce qui pourrait entraver la bonne évaluation et l'ajustement des politiques.

Recommandations

- **Impliquer plus activement les ministères sectoriels en charge du développement économique et des politiques sociales dans les PNU.** Cela pourrait aider à adapter les politiques économiques et sociales aux défis spécifiques des villes, contribuant ainsi à renforcer les dimensions économiques et sociales de la résilience. De même, les processus des PNU pourraient faciliter un meilleur alignement entre les politiques de logement et les politiques urbaines.
- **Exploiter tout le potentiel des PNU pour soutenir un développement territorial équilibré.** Les PNU peuvent aider à renforcer la continuité spatiale et les relations fonctionnelles entre les zones urbaines et rurales, au-delà de la couverture territoriale restreinte des villes, en informant les investissements publics et la conception des programmes, et en promouvant une approche intégrée du développement, par exemple en renforçant la coopération entre les gouvernements locaux ou en autonomisant les organismes de planification au sein des zones urbaines fonctionnelles.
- **Améliorer l'accès des gouvernements municipaux au financement du développement urbain.** Les PNU pourraient prioriser la mise à disposition de ressources financières suffisantes et fiables pour les villes, y compris les revenus propres et les transferts intergouvernementaux, afin de répondre aux besoins du développement urbain, de renforcer les capacités financières des villes et d'améliorer l'efficacité des investissements publics à tous les niveaux de gouvernement. En parallèle, les PNU peuvent encourager les investissements privés (par exemple, par le biais de mécanismes tels que la compensation de la biodiversité, la capture de la valeur foncière, le regroupement foncier et les banques foncières) en fournissant un cadre juridique et institutionnel pour de nouveaux mécanismes de financement (comme les obligations municipales) et en promouvant les partenariats public-privé, qui sont actuellement peu utilisés par les villes.
- **Améliorer le suivi et l'évaluation pour rendre compte et amplifier les impacts des PNU.** Davantage d'efforts peuvent être déployés pour surveiller, évaluer et rendre compte des impacts des PNU, par exemple en utilisant des outils numériques et des cadres de suivi, des normes et des plateformes permettant de favoriser les évaluations comparatives et les échanges d'expériences entre les pays, ainsi qu'en renforçant la coopération horizontale avec d'autres ministères, par exemple les ministères de l'environnement pour développer et collecter des données sur la qualité environnementale.

1. Introduction and methodology

This chapter provides the context, objectives, structure and the methodology of the report. To this aim, the relevance of a national urban policy (NUP) in effectively addressing urban challenges and ensuring quality urbanization are highlighted at the beginning of the chapter; these were key themes explored in the previous two editions of the report. The chapter then continues with an outline of the report's objectives and details of its structure. Finally, there is a description of the methodology employed, including a spotlight on the underlying global survey on NUP conducted in 2023.



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A. Context

With cities housing around half of the world's population and serving as hubs of economic, social and cultural activity, they have become critical policy targets for national governments (OECD, 2014). Cities drive global growth, contributing over 80 per cent of the world's GDP (UN-Habitat, 2023). However, these benefits are often accompanied by challenges such as traffic congestion, air pollution and rising housing costs, particularly when urbanization is poorly managed. Additionally, cities often have significant inequalities in income, housing, jobs and access to public services, while being impacted by megatrends such as climate change and digital transformations. As is emphasized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, addressing these complex challenges is vital for making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Given their significant policy and investment responsibilities, city administrators must collaborate closely with national governments.

This is where NUP becomes crucial, guiding and coordinating efforts across government levels to ensure quality urbanization and achieve sustainable urban development. Policymakers around the world have recognized such policy needs and have taken actions to support countries' efforts to develop and implement NUPs. Recent global challenges such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the green transition and digitalization have also reaffirmed the importance of urban policies for sustainable development and the crucial role that national governments can play in this process.

In addition, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda adopted in 2015 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) adopted in 2016 have provided a strong rationale for countries to develop or review their NUP frameworks (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021). However, despite the critical importance of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 11, progress is currently off-track. Of the four main Goal 11 targets, only two — access to public transport and disaster risk management – have sufficient data, with current progress assessed as having a "moderate distance to target". The other targets, including improving slums and ensuring access to public and green spaces, are significantly far from the being achieved, underscoring the need for intensified efforts at both the national and local levels (United Nations, 2024).

Since 2016, the OECD, UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance have been collaborating to develop a regular and systematic NUP monitoring framework at the global scale as part of the National Urban Policy Programme (NUPP).[1] In February 2018, the first edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy report (GSNUP1) was jointly launched by the OECD and UN-Habitat at the 9th World Urban Forum. The report was the first ever attempt to chart the progress of the development and implementation of NUP in 150 countries (OECD/UN-Habitat, 2018). After three years, in June 2021, the second edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy (GSNUP2) was launched, with an improved methodology. It highlighted how governments across the world are leveraging NUP to address the challenges that COVID-19 has underlined and amplified (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021) (see box 1.1). Both reports served as a critical source of information and analysis for policymakers and urban professionals on how NUPs have been developed and implemented in changing circumstances.

1. The National Urban Policy Programme (NUPP) is a global platform that was established by the OECD, UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance during the Habitat III Conference in 2016 to facilitate the sharing of experiences with NUP. It is also intended to provide targeted support to countries, building on the expertise of the three organizations and supporting partners. The objective is to strengthen knowledge and capacity in countries to develop, implement and monitor NUP in an effective, efficient and inclusive way.

Box 1.1. Second edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy report: key findings

"Global State of National Urban Policy 2021: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Delivering Climate Action" monitored and evaluated the progress of NUP across 162 countries. It showcased how countries used NUP to enhance sustainable urban development, advance global agendas and address challenges magnified by the COVID-19 crisis. Key findings included the following:

- While definitions of NUPs varied between countries, they commonly referred to a coherent set of decisions through a deliberate, governmentled process rallying and coordinating diverse actors towards a common vision and goal to promote transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long-term.
- The global monitoring revealed significant improvements in NUP design and implementation, with all 162 countries studied having national-level urban policies, in different forms, development stages and with varying thematic focuses.
- NUPs had matured since the first edition of the global monitoring report that was published in 2018. They had taken more explicit forms (from 51 to 56 per cent), had advanced to implementation stage (from 61 to 62 per cent), and had embraced wider objectives, including climate resilience (from 36 to 48 per cent). Through NUPs, countries primarily aimed to achieve "balanced territorial and urban development" (55 per cent), "a coherent vision for national urban development" (44 per cent), and "improved policy coordination across sectors" (31 per cent).
- The report indicated that more than two-thirds of surveyed countries recognized the potential of NUPs to advance the Goals. In particular, with regard to Goal 11 – "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", a total of 30 countries (41 per cent) reported that their NUPs fulfilled the criteria for Goal indicator 11.a.1 – responding to population dynamics, ensuring balanced territorial development, and increasing local fiscal space. Equally, more than 50 NUPs were reported to address both climate resilience and the low carbon transition.

Source: OECD/UN-HABITAT/UNOPS (2021). Global State of National Urban Policy 2021: Achieving Sustainable Development Goals and Delivering Climate Action Paris: OECD Publishing. https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/download/global-state-of-national-urban-policy-2021/.

B. Objectives and structure of the report

1. Objectives of the report

The report is intended to offer a unique framework for understanding how and in what forms NUPs have been developed, implemented and monitored globally. Building on the previous two editions, this third edition features key trends, country experiences and other cross-cutting thematic topics related to NUPs.

In common with the previous editions, this report has the following objectives:

- Analyse the status of NUPs, to understand their trends and to allow for comparisons at global and regional scales. To this end, the report has definitions and classifications of different forms of NUP (explicit, implicit), phases of development (diagnosis, formulation, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation) and thematic areas, to provide a comprehensive overview at the regional and country level.
- Assist governments, international and national institutions, and other stakeholders to better understand where future support efforts should be directed.
- Outline the current governance structure of NUPs in countries and identify policy and capacity gaps to effectively advance NUPs and global agendas – the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.
- Highlight key evidence and successful cases of NUPs to support peer learning and targeted application of lessons in different national or regional contexts.
- Provide policy recommendations to inform future actions to advance NUP processes for sustainable urban development.

The report also expands on the previous two editions of the Global State of National Urban Policy reports of 2018 and 2021 with the following objectives:

- It tackles the heterogeneity of NUPs among countries, by providing a more granular and nuanced understanding of NUPs beyond the types of NUP. Namely, it distinguishes between "multi-sectoral" (that is, embracing a wide range of policy areas) and "mono-sectoral" (focusing on one or a few themes), and between "guidance-oriented" (prioritizing general principles or guidelines) and "action-oriented" (emphasizing policy execution).
- It provides a deeper analysis of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure the impacts of NUPs and it reviews the results achieved from NUPs' implementation.
- It analyses two new thematic areas of focus:
    - The role of NUPs to enhance urban resilience.
    - The role of NUPs to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable housing.

2. Structure of the report

Chapter II. Institutional and policy frameworks of national urban policy

This chapter has an analysis of the institutional and policy frameworks of NUPs across countries. The analysis focuses on the following: the main features and trends of NUPs in terms of existence, type (explicit or implicit), and subnational scale urban policy (SUP), the attention given to policy areas covered by NUP; the mechanisms for policy alignment and coordination, financing and implementation, as well as the level of stakeholder engagement. It reports on the outcomes of the novel analysis of the spectrum of thematic coverage, and the role of NUP as either "guidance-oriented" or "action-oriented".

Chapter III. National urban policy to enhance urban resilience

This chapter features an analysis of the way in which resilience has become a key goal for NUPs to anticipate, prepare and respond to diverse shocks and uncertainties, including the asymmetric impacts they produce across people and places. The increasing role of resilience in national frameworks is described and the potential of NUP for building urban resilience is outlined. The analysis focuses on how NUPs include multiple dimensions of resilience (climate and ecological resilience, the economic resilience, and the social-institutional resilience). It reports on the mechanisms and actions foreseen by NUP to promote resilience and to ensure policy coherence between NUPs and other national resilience policies.

Chapter IV. National urban policy to promote adequate, affordable and sustainable housing

This chapter features an analysis of the main urban housing challenges reported by countries that impact housing affordability, adequacy and sustainability. There is a focus on the attention given by NUPs to housing challenges and the subsequent action undertaken through NUPs. It also has a report on the existence of housing policies outside NUPs, and the existence and type of mechanisms to ensure policy coherence and alignment between NUPs and other national and subnational housing policies.

Chapter V. Monitoring and evaluating national urban policy

This chapter has an analysis of the existence, and the types of frameworks used by countries to monitor and evaluate their NUPs. It reviews the main results achieved from implementing NUPs and there are details about the contribution of NUPs to the three qualifiers of Sustainable Development Goal 11.a.1 (NUP is now officially a part of the Goals indicator framework) and how NUPs are contributing to achieving the NUA targets.

Chapter VI. Conclusions

This chapter is a reiteration of the main findings of the report and subsequent recommendations.

C. Methodology

The 2021 edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy introduced a country survey that was carried out in 2020, in addition to expert assessment based on desk research. The survey generated comparable data and enhanced political buy-in and sense of ownership among responding countries/ agencies leading urban policy.

To develop the third edition, UN-Habitat and the OECD decided to use country surveys as the main source of input and jointly developed and disseminated a new country survey in 2023. The survey retained similar questions to the previous edition to enable comparative and trend analysis. The survey also integrated new topics to closely monitor recent developments, highlighting newly produced or modified NUPs. In addition, the survey included specific questions related to the two thematic focus areas of GSNUP3: urban resilience, and affordable, adequate and sustainable housing.

The survey was circulated among all United Nations Member States between July 2023 and April 2024. It consisted of 30 questions structured around 5 main parts, as follows (Annex 1.A features the questions used in the survey):

- **Part 1 – Overview of NUPs**. Part 1 of the survey mapped the varied policy environments surrounding NUPs globally by considering the diversity of institutional settings in which NUPs are embedded, their competencies and responsibilities. It also contained an analysis of the key characteristics of NUPs, including their form, stage of development and thematic scope.
- **Part 2 – Achieving sustainable and integrated urban development**. Part 2 featured an analysis of the attention urban policies give to the creation of more resilient, sustainable and inclusive cities. It featured an assessment of how NUPs contributed to the achievement of Goal target 11.a, implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda and mainstreaming of climate action (both mitigation and adaptation) into urban planning and design, urban infrastructure investments and urban service delivery frameworks.
- **Part 3 – Implementing, monitoring and evaluation of NUPs**. Part 3 had an assessment of the sectoral coordination across ministries, the horizontal coordination among local governments and urban areas, and the vertical coordination between national and subnational scales. In addition, it featured a review of NUP implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and stakeholders engaged in the process.
- **Part 4 – Urban resilience**. Part 4 focused on the role NUPs play in advancing urban resilience. It featured an assessment of the level of attention that urban resilience received in NUPs to foster enhanced policy responses to shocks and stresses. The level of policy coherence between NUPs and other national resilience policies and strategies was also assessed.
- **Part 5 – Affordable, adequate and sustainable housing.** Part 5 had an assessment of the role of NUPs in fostering access to affordable, adequate and sustainable housing. While housing challenges addressed by NUPs were assessed, there was also an evaluation of the alignment of NUPs with national sectoral policies aimed at improving the housing market, access to land, housing construction and maintenance, decarbonization of housing stock and housing finance.

In total, 78 countries responded to the survey, among which 34 were OECD countries and 44 were non-OECD countries. The analysis covered 19 countries from Africa, 5 countries from the Arab States, 13 countries from Asia and the Pacific, 31 countries from Europe and North America, and 10 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex 1.B).

Annex 1A: List of questions in the country survey

Part 1: Overview of national urban policy

Q1. What competences and responsibilities for urban policy does your government have?

Q2. Which ministry/agency has a leading role for urban policy in your national government?

Q3. Does your country have a national urban policy, whether explicit or not?

Q4. If you answered 'yes' in Q3 above, is your national urban policy explicit?

Q5. What are the main characteristics of your explicit national urban policy?

Q6. If you answered 'no' in Q4 above (that is, if your national urban policy is not explicit), could you indicate the most relevant urban policy documents?

Q7. If your national government has developed subnational-scale urban policies (that is, covering specific geographical areas in your country) or cross-border urban policies complementing your NUP, can you provide further details below?

Q8. In which phase of development is your NUP?

Part 2: Achieving sustainable and integrated urban development

Q9. What level of attention does your NUP grant / is going to grant to the following themes?

Q10. Does your NUP and/or do your regional development plans contribute to Goal 11.a.1 target?

Q11. Does your NUP mainstream climate action (both mitigation and adaptation) and/or biodiversity into urban planning and design, urban infrastructure investments and/or urban service delivery frameworks? How?

Q12. Does your NUP support implementing and monitoring the New Urban Agenda?

Part 3: Implementing, monitoring and evaluating NUP

Q13. Does your country have mechanisms to ensure policy alignment and coordination across ministries between your NUP and other sectoral policies at the national level?

Q14. Does your country have mechanisms to ensure vertical policy alignment and coordination between the NUP and subnational urban policies?

Q15. Does your NUP have any mechanisms to facilitate horizontal policy alignment and coordination among local governments in and between urban areas (encompassing multiple local administrative entities)?

Q16. To what extent have subnational governments and other non-governmental stakeholders been engaged with/contributed to the NUP process?

Q17. Does your NUP have implementation mechanisms at the national level?

Q18. What sources are being used to implement your NUP?

Q19. Does your NUP have a monitoring and evaluation framework?

Q20. If you answered 'yes' to Q19, where has your NUP delivered tangible results or improvements?

Part 4: Special Focus Area 1: Urban resilience

Q21. How are the major crises, shocks and uncertainties included and potentially addressed in your NUP?

Q22. Which actions are foreseen within your NUP to promote resilience against different shocks, crises and uncertainties?

Q23. In addition to your NUP, does your country have a dedicated national-level resilience policy/ strategy encompassing urban resilience challenges?

Q24. If you answered 'yes' in Q23 above, does your country have mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between existing national resilience policies/ strategy and your NUP?

Part 5: Special Focus Area 2: Affordable, adequate and sustainable housing

Q25. What are major housing challenges in cities and urban areas in your country, and how are they included and potentially addressed within your NUP?

Q26. What level of attention does your NUP grant to affordable, adequate and sustainable housing? How is your NUP addressing housing challenges in cities and urban areas?

Q27. Which actions are foreseen within your NUP to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable housing?

Q28. Does your country have a national-level dedicated housing policy/ strategy outside the NUP? How does it address specific challenges related to cities and urban areas?

Q29. If 'yes' in Q28 above, are there any misalignments observed between your NUP and existing national housing policies/ strategies?

Q30. If you responded 'yes in' Q29 above, which mechanisms exist to ensure policy coherence between your NUP and the existing national and subnational housing policies / strategies?

Annex 1B: Countries that responded to the country survey

Region	Countries
Africa (19)	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Togo, Zambia
Arab States (5)	Egypt, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Yemen
Asia and the Pacific (13)	Australia, Cambodia, Georgia, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Europe and North America (31)	Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States
Latin America and the Caribbean (10)	Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay

2. Institutional and policy frameworks of national urban policy

This chapter features an analysis of the institutional and policy frameworks of the NUPs across the 78 countries that completed the country survey. The chapter is divided in three sections. The first section comprises an analysis of the main trends and characteristics of NUPs, in terms of existence, type (explicit or implicit) and subnational scale urban policy (SUP). The second section features an analysis of the mechanisms for policy alignment and coordination, implementation and financing, as well as the level of stakeholder engagement. The third section has a new, comprehensive analysis of the spectrum of thematic coverage, distinguishing between multi-sectoral and mono-sectoral NUPs, and examines the role of NUPs as either “guidance-oriented” or “action-oriented”. The analysis is intended to provide a more granular and nuanced understanding of NUPs beyond the types of NUP (explicit vs. implicit).



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Key findings

- **More than 80 per cent of countries have an NUP in place.** There is a rising trend for explicit NUPs (defined as formally labelled urban frameworks or policies). Among countries that have an NUP, 72 per cent have an explicit NUP marking an increase from 51 per cent in 2018 and 58 per cent in 2021.
- **There are marked global variations in the share of explicit versus implicit NUPs.** Explicit NUPs are more common in countries where the share of the population in cities is higher and where the urban population has rapidly expanded over the last 20 years. Countries with explicit NUPs saw their urban population grow by 73 per cent in the 2000 to 2020 period, compared to only 20 per cent in countries with non-explicit NUPs. Explicit NUPs are more commonly observed in regions where acute urbanization challenges are being tackled, such as Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean region.
- **NUPs prioritize polycentric urbanization in their thematic focus by widely addressing "urban systems and networks and inclusive growth"**. However, NUPs fail to fully leverage urban-rural linkages for regional development. Whereas 58 per cent of NUPs feature extensive attention to balanced and polycentric urbanization, only 45 per cent NUPs foresee concrete actions to maximize the potential of urban-rural linkages and interdependencies.
- **Three-quarters of NUPs include formal mechanisms for policy alignment and coordination across and among levels of government.** For example, in Mexico legal frameworks are used (requiring States and municipalities to prepare urban development plans consistent with national guidelines), while a multistakeholder platform is used in Germany (Congress of the National Urban Development Policy). Three-quarters of NUPs also promote horizontal coordination between local governments in urban areas. The project in Poland entitled "Revitalization Regions" is aimed at reinforcing the capacity of communes to programme and implement revitalization measures. By contrast, metropolitan-wide coordination is less pronounced: 71 per cent of NUPs promote horizontal coordination between local governments in urban areas (down from 95 per cent in 2021), and fewer than one in four NUPs provide financial incentives for metropolitan coordination.
- **84 per cent of NUPs have implementation mechanisms, mostly financed by conventional financial instruments** (for example, national direct investments), while innovative financial instruments (for example, land value capture) are used by only 15 per cent of responding countries.

- **NUP's thematic scope and implementation frameworks can be clustered into different categories.** On the one hand, many NUPs are "multi-sectoral", embracing a wide range of policy areas (for example, France, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia), typically under the auspices of a dedicated ministry or agency responsible for urban policies, while others are "mono-sectoral", focusing on one or a few themes (for example, Canada, Costa Rica, Sweden). On the other hand, NUPs' implementation settings can be either "guidance-oriented", that is, prioritizing general principles or guidelines (for example, Bolivia, Czechia, Egypt), or "action-oriented", namely emphasizing policy execution (for example, in Mexico, Norway, Nigeria).
- **In more than half of countries, NUPs are carried out by a ministry or an agency specialized in urban affairs**. A dedicated "urban" leading body (for example, a ministry of urban affairs) is more associated with a multi-sectoral policy coverage and a greater emphasis on policy execution.

A. Trends and characteristics: existence of national urban policy, explicit and implicit policies and subnational urban policies

1. More than 80 per cent of countries have a national urban policy

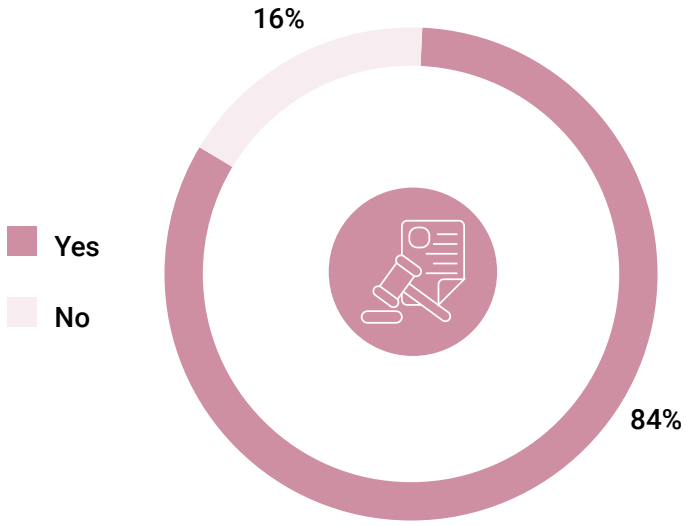
A national urban policy is defined as "a coherent set of decisions through a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors towards a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long term" (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021). This standard definition – which was used in the previous Global State of National Urban Policy reports – has been adapted to country contexts and may include explicit or implicit NUPs. An explicit NUP is formally identified by specific words in its title, such as "national urban policy" or other variants such as "national urbanization policy", "national urban development policy", "national urban strategy", "national urban development strategy", and so forth. An implicit NUP is a strategic document or policy that, albeit not explicitly labelled as such, still maintains an urban focus, or exerts a significant impact on cities. For example, it may include a sectoral policy (for example, housing, transport) primarily directed towards urban areas.

According to this definition, 84 per cent of respondent countries (65 out of 77) reported that they had a NUP (see figure 2.1).[2] The existence of NUPs has a certain degree of variability across global regions. The highest NUP adoption is found in Latin America and the Caribbean where 90 per cent of countries (9 out of 10) have a NUP, followed Europe and North America (87 per cent, 27 out of 31), Asia and the Pacific (83 per cent, 10 out of 12 countries), Arab States (80 per cent, 4 out of 5 countries), and Africa (79 per cent, 15 out of 19 countries) (see figure 2.2).

2. Of the 78 countries that responded to the survey, 77 countries indicated whether or not they had a NUP. The exception was Turkmenistan.

Figure 2.1. Existence of national urban policy

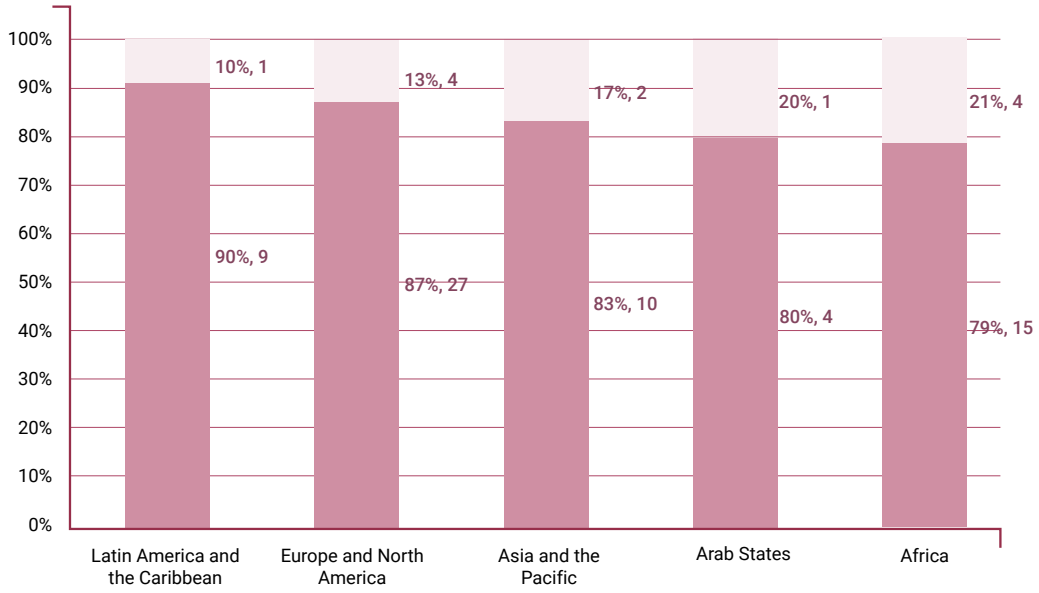
Share of respondent countries (N=77)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Figure 2.2. Countries with a national urban policy, by global region

Share and counts of respondent countries (N=77)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

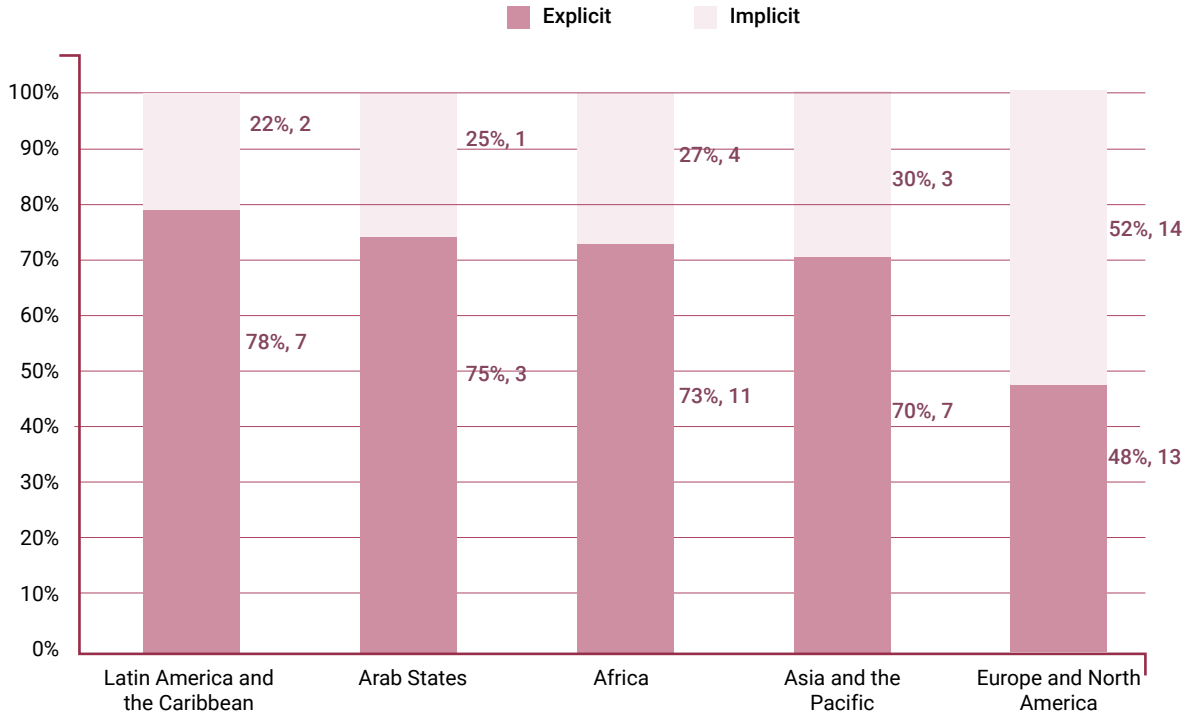
2. Almost two thirds of national urban policies are explicit

While 41 out of 65 countries with a NUP in place (63 per cent) have an explicit NUP, 24 countries (37 per cent) have an implicit NUP. The ratio between explicit and implicit NUPs shows a high degree of heterogeneity among global regions.

Highest proportions of explicit NUPs are found in Latin America and the Caribbean, where 78 per cent of NUPs (7 out of 9) are explicit, followed by the Arab States (75 per cent of NUPs are explicit, 3 out of 4), Africa (73 per cent of NUPs are explicit, 11 out of 15), Asia and the Pacific (where 70 per cent of NUPs are explicit, 7 out of 10). Meanwhile, Europe and North America show a balance between explicit and implicit NUPs (48 per cent of NUPs are explicit, 13 out of 27) (see figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Explicit and implicit national urban policies, by global region

Shares and count of respondent countries with a NUP (N=60)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey

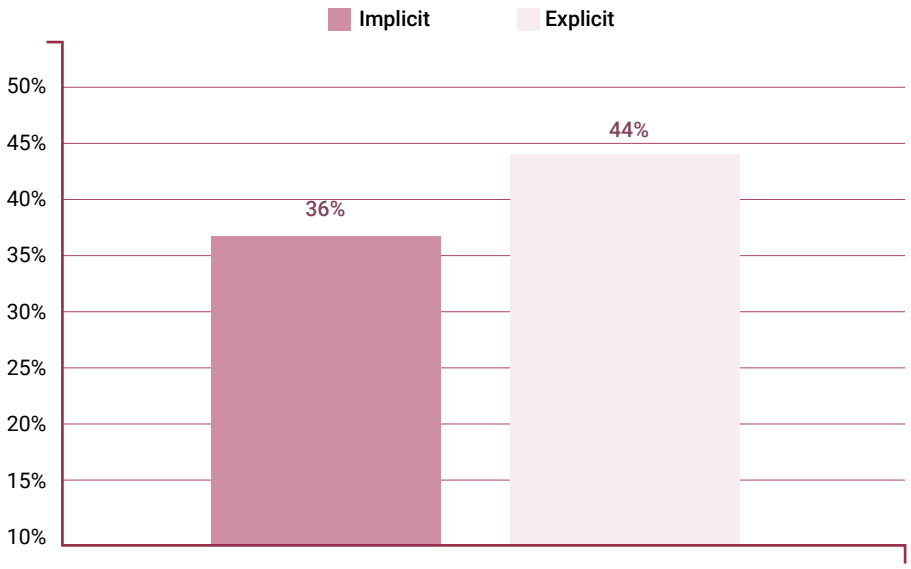
3. Explicit national urban policies are prevalent in countries with significant urban population growth

The form of NUP adopted is associated with urbanization figures. Data retrieved from the degree of urbanization[3] show that on average, countries with explicit NUPs have a higher urbanization level, measured as the share of population living in cities, than countries with implicit NUPs (44 per cent vs. 36 per cent) (see figure 2.4).

3. The degree of urbanization identifies settlements (cities, towns and villages) from clusters of adjacent 1 km^2 grid cells with medium or high population densities (OECD et al., 2021). Accordingly, cities have at least 50,000 inhabitants and a minimum density of 1,500 inhabitants per 1 km^2.

Figure 2.4. National urban policy form and share of national population living in cities

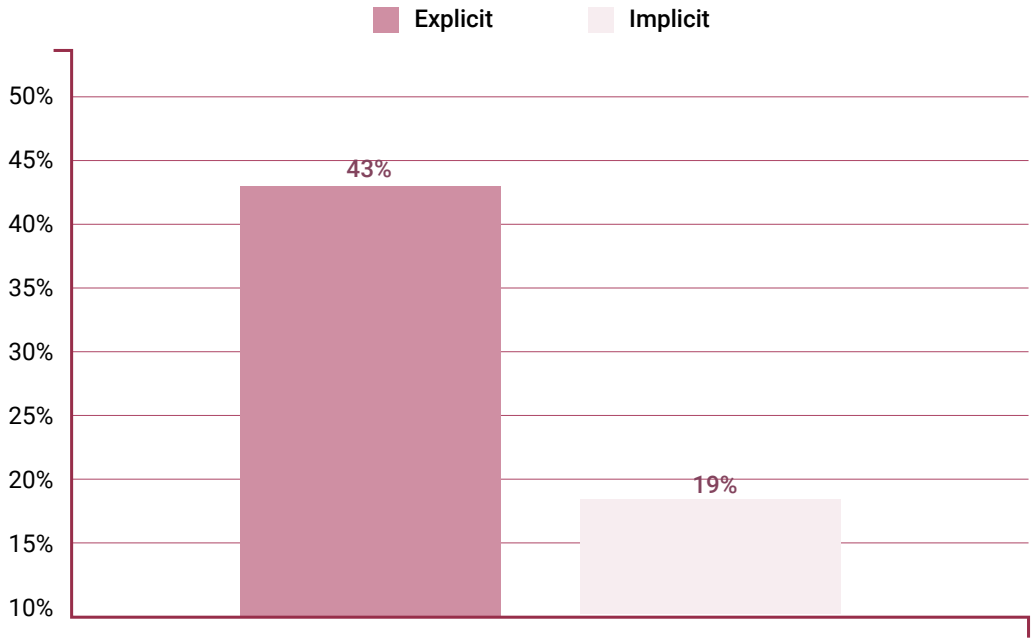
Average share of population living in cities (year 2020)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey and data on the degree of urbanization.

Additionally, countries with explicit NUPs tend to have experienced faster urbanization than countries with implicit NUPs. On average, countries with explicit NUPs have shown a growth of the total population living in cities by 43 per cent (compared to 19 per cent of countries with implicit NUPs) over the 2000–2020 period (see figure 2.5). Among others, countries with an explicit NUPs and the fastest growth of the urban population are: Qatar, where the urban population increased by 47 per cent from 2000 to 2020 (from less than 400,000 to more than 2,000,000 inhabitants), Madagascar (+234 per cent, from 1.5 million to 5.2 million inhabitants), Mali (+213 per cent, from 1.7 million to 5.2 million inhabitants), Rwanda (+204 per cent, from 600,000 to 1,850,000 inhabitants).

Figure 2.5. National urban policy form and growth of the population in cities (2000–2020)

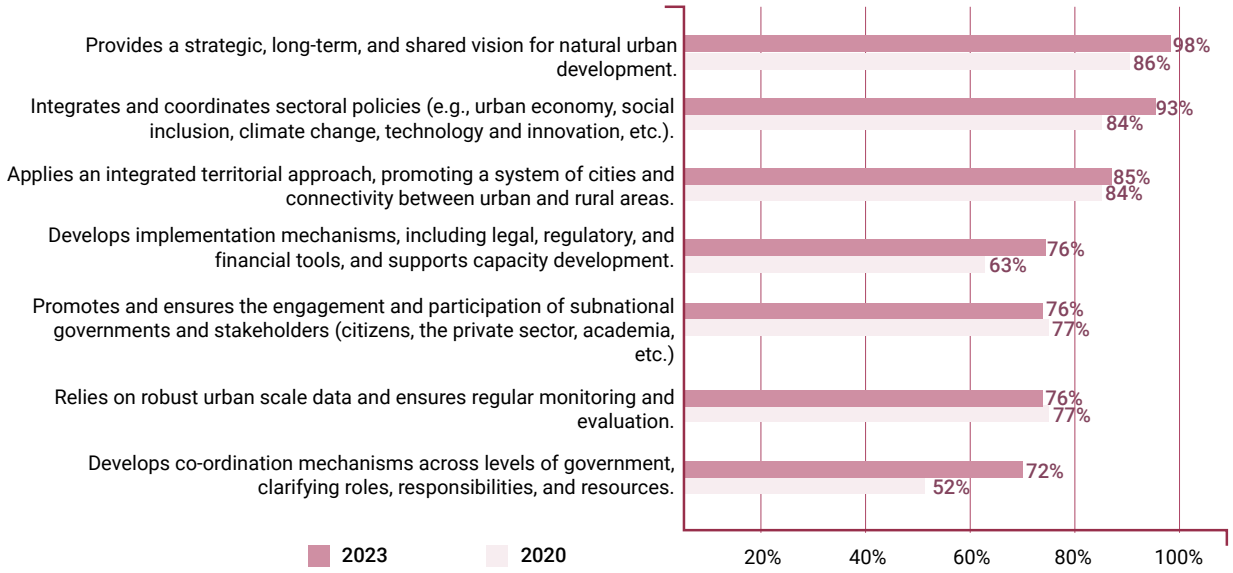


Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey and data on the degree of urbanization.

4. Explicit national urban policies have the main role of providing a strategic, long-term and shared vision for national urban development

The survey revealed that the most common characteristic of explicit NUPs was to provide a strategic, long-term and shared vision for national urban development (found in 98 per cent of countries with an explicit NUP), followed by the integration and coordination of sectoral policies (93 per cent, 39 countries), and the use of an integrated territorial approach promoting a system of cities and connectivity between urban and rural areas (86 per cent, 36 countries). A few other characteristics were found in about 75 per cent of explicit NUPs (31 countries): develops implementation mechanisms, including legal, regulatory and financial tools and supports capacity development; promotes and ensures the engagement and participation of subnational governments and stakeholders (citizens, the private sector, academics, etc., Relies on robust urban scale data and ensures regular monitoring and evaluation. Finally, 71 per cent (30) explicit NUPs feature the development of coordination mechanisms across levels of government (clarifying roles, responsibilities and resources). These findings are in line with what was found in the second edition of GSNUP (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021, pp. 52-53). It is worth noting that the share of countries mentioning the development of coordination mechanisms increased from 51 per cent in 2021 to 71 per cent in 2024.

Figure 2.6. Main characteristics of explicit national urban policies



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

5. In more than half of countries, national urban policies are carried out by a ministry or an agency specialized in urban affairs

The leading institution can be characterized by its level of specialization in urban matters or its institutional type (for example, ministry, prime minister's office or chancellery, or a national agency). In most cases, a ministry or agency specialized in urban issues has a leading role for urban policy (52 per cent, or 40 out of 77 respondent countries), followed by a ministry or agency in charge of general national planning or development (26 per cent, or 20 respondent countries), or by another national institution (13 per cent, or 10 countries) (see figure 2.7). Some countries with a dedicated ministry for national urban policy are:

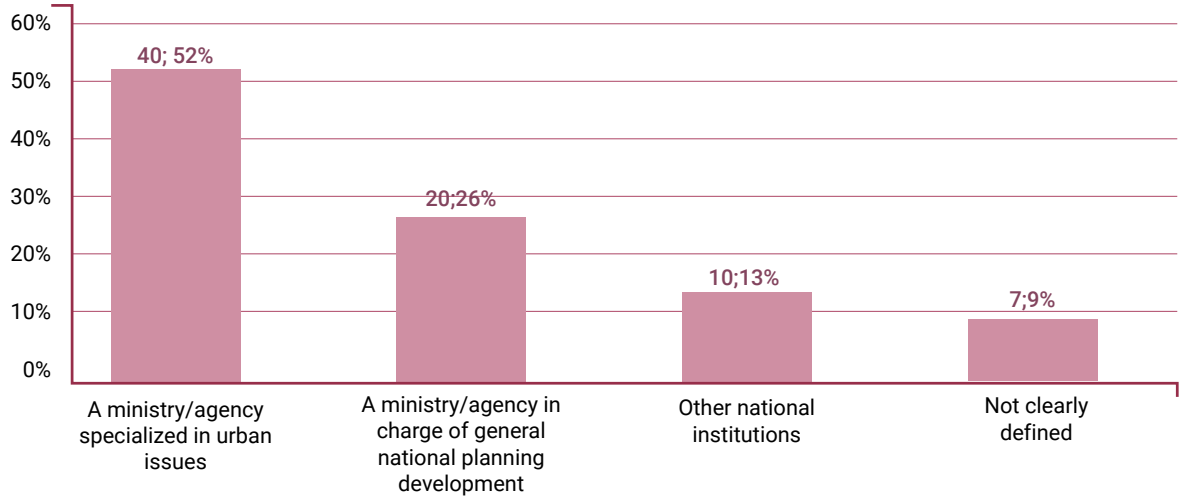
- In **Chile**, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning holds the mandate to build socially integrated and connected cities, transform environments into friendly and inclusive spaces, and promote access to adequate housing.
- In **Egypt**, the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities is responsible for providing urban infrastructure (for example, public housing, water amenities) and for planning new urban areas.
- In **Ethiopia**, the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure is responsible for urban policies, which fall under the jurisdiction of the federal Government.
- In **Germany**, the Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building oversees the portfolios of the construction industry and governmental buildings, urban development programmes, housing as well as spatial planning, regional policy and regional planning.
- In **New Zealand**, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development conducts programmes aimed at developing housing and fostering inclusive urban environments.

Some countries have more than one leading institution in charge of national urban policy. In France, leading institutions include a ministry specialized in urban issues (Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion), the office of the head of state/prime minister, and other ministries (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Economics, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty). In Italy, leading institutions are a ministry/agency in charge of general national planning/development (Agency for Territorial Cohesion) and ministries that handle urban issues within their specialized sectors (for example, Ministry of Infrastructure).

NUP responsibilities are not clearly defined in seven countries (9 per cent). In some cases, sectoral ministries handle urban issues within their sectoral policies.

Figure 2.7. Institution with a leading role in national urban policy

Share and count of respondent countries (N=77)



Note: In case a country has more than one leading institution, it has been allocated to "a ministry/agency specialized in urban issues" if it is among the institutions. In case it lacks a ministry/specialized agency in urban issues, it has been allocated to "a ministry/agency in charge of general national planning/development". In case it lacks a ministry/agency in charge of general national planning/development, it has been allocated to "other national institutions".

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

6. Half of the countries have at least one subnational scale urban policy: targeting specific urban areas, serving as a planning framework or addressing sectoral issues

Subnational-scale urban policies (SUPs) are national policies implemented in specific regions or cities. They can encompass urban policies covering specific geographical areas within a country or cross-border urban policies complementing a national NUP. For instance, this might involve an urban policy for a capital region where the national government has direct oversight or a cross-border urban policy that is jointly developed with the governments of neighbouring countries. Typically, a SUP serves to implement the general framework of urban development in the subnational context or to establish the general framework of urban development within its own territorial context. Half of the studied countries have at least one subnational urban policy. The survey revealed two main types of SUPs: 1) SUPs related to the urban planning of specific metropolitan areas or cities (for example, capital cities or large metropolitan areas); and 2) SUPs with a broader regional scope, serving as a planning framework

or addressing sectoral issues (for example, housing or economic development).

Some examples of such SUPs related to the urban planning of specific metropolitan areas or cities are the following:

- **France** has two dedicated SUPs, one for the Paris metropolitan region (***Grand Paris Express***, since 2017) aimed at promoting its economic development, global attractiveness and balanced urban development; and another for Marseille (Marseille en grand, since 2023), to support housing, security, education, health, employment, transportation and culture in the city.
- In **Denmark**, the Finger Plan (since 2019) provides a framework for the municipal planning within the Copenhagen metropolitan area.
- In **Italy**, the PON Metro Programme aims to improve the quality of services and to promote social inclusion in the 14 largest metropolitan areas of the country (Turin, Genoa, Milan, Bologna, Venice, Florence, Rome, Bari, Naples, Reggio Calabria, Cagliari, Catania, Messina and Palermo).
- In the **Republic of Korea**, the Seoul Metropolitan Area Readjustment Plan (developed by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport) aims to re-balance the excessive concentration of population and economic activities in some parts of the metropolitan area.

Some examples of SUPs with a broader regional scope are the following:

- In **Costa Rica**, the National Urban Development Plan for the Greater Metropolitan Area (PLAN GAM-2013-2030) addresses urban planning in the Greater Metropolitan Area of the Central Valley and the El Guarco Valley of Costa Rica, which are divided into four geographical subregions: San José, Heredia, Cartago and Alajuela.
- In the **Netherlands**, urbanization strategies ("Verstedelijkingsstrategieën") have been collaboratively developed by the national Government and the seven regions with the highest urbanization rates (identified by the national government). These strategies are to plan housing development (with a goal to realizing 900,000 homes by 2040) and manage mobility, natural resources, energy and water.
- In **Nigeria**, the Niger State Urban Policy addresses urbanization issues at the regional level with the aim to enhance the potentials of urban and rural areas through effective settlement planning
- In **Portugal**, the Regional Spatial Planning Programmes are territorial development programmes set at a regional level ("Spatial Planning Regions") that act as the territorial reference framework for sectorial, intermunicipal and municipal spatial planning. They integrate and further develop the options established at national level for territorial and urban development and take into consideration the existing municipal local development strategies.

7. "Urban systems and networks" and "inclusive growth" are the two dominant themes most frequently addressed by national urban policies

In the survey, countries were asked to assess the extent to which their NUP gave attention to 25 themes listed under six broad categories: (a) "urban systems and networks, urban-rural co-operation"; (b) "economic development, skills and innovation"; (c) "inclusive growth and opportunities for all"; (d) "environmental quality and climate action"; (e) "engagement, capacity development, monitoring and

evaluation"; and (f) "financing urban infrastructure". For each theme, it was requested that respondents indicate whether the NUP was given an "extensive", "moderate" or "low" level of attention[4]. Figure 2.8 shows the average share of countries by level of attention to each of thematic category covered by the NUP, while figure 2.9 reports the detailed shares for each specific theme.

As reported in figure 2.8, the highest degree of attention across NUPs is given to the category "urban systems and networks, urban-rural co-operation". On average, 53 per cent of respondent countries devote extensive attention to the category, while 30 per cent provide it with a moderate level of attention. Looking into more detailed themes under this category, as shown in figure 2.9, 58 per cent of countries are giving extensive attention to the theme "maximize the potential of cities of all sizes and promote a balanced national urban system (for example, leveraging the territorial assets of small and intermediary cities, supporting city-to-city cooperation)" (see box 2.1). Further, 56 per cent of countries are giving extensive attention to "targeting an effective territorial scale". The theme of urban-rural interdependencies appears to be less prioritized, with only 45 per cent of countries giving it extensive attention. NUPs, therefore, fail to fully leverage urban-rural linkages for regional development.

- "**Inclusive growth and opportunities for all**" is the second category by level of attention (in 50 per cent of countries it has extensive attention, while in only 18 per cent of countries it has low attention). Within this category, most of the attention is given to the theme "alleviate urban poverty, ensure access to basic urban services and infrastructure (for example, water, sanitation, waste management, public transport, digital infrastructure) for all urban residents and users". This theme receives extensive attention in 59 per cent of NUPs. Following closely, is the theme of "develop(ing) policies and strategies to provide affordable and adequate housing (for example, innovative financing mechanisms for affordable housing, upgrading informal settlements)", which receives extensive attention in 52 per cent of NUPs.
- "**Environment and climate**" is the third most frequently addressed category. On average, in 45 per cent of NUPs it has extensive attention, and in 37 per cent it has moderate attention. This category shows a certain degree of heterogeneity in terms of the themes addressed. The most popular theme, given extensive attention in 51 per cent of NUPs, is "address urban sprawl, exploit the potential advantages of urban density and urban form, and promote compact and connected cities". This is followed by "mainstream climate action (both mitigation and adaptation) into urban planning and design, urban infrastructure investments, and/or urban service delivery frameworks" in which 51 per cent of NUPs it has extensive attention, and in only 14 per cent it has low attention. In addition, "promote green buildings, green and blue infrastructure, ecosystems, biodiversity and nature-based solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster resilient cities" receives extensive attention in 45 per cent of NUPs.
- "**Engagement, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation**" is less of a priority, as 43 per cent of NUPs devote extensive attention to it, and almost one quarter of NUPs give it low attention. Within this category, the level of attention is polarized among themes. While 54 per cent of NUPs give extensive attention to the theme "promote stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of urban policy (for example, citizens, businesses)", the themes

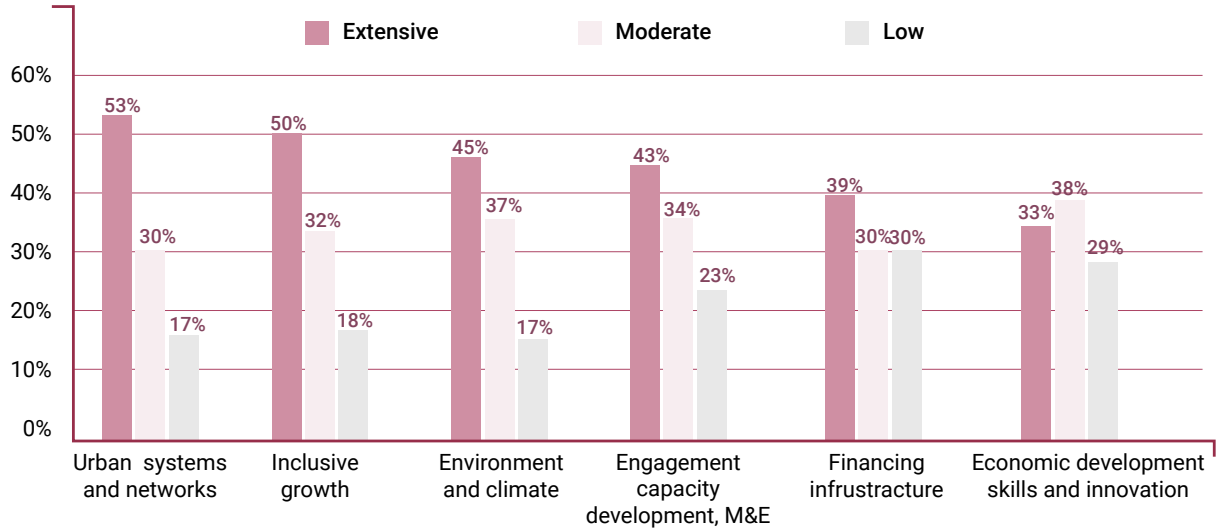
4. Extensive" indicated a strong importance given to the thematic area, which is prominently featured among NUP objectives, with a detailed analysis of the situation, concrete goals and targets, as well as implementation measures to achieve them (for example, indicators, roadmap, timeline, budget, etc.). "Moderate" indicated cases in which the NUP provided a clear reference and description of the thematic issue, as well as the opportunities and challenges to address. "Low" indicated that the theme was either not mentioned as a concern in the NUP, or only briefly mentioned without much information on the situation nor any guidance or directions for future action.

of "strengthen the capacity of citizens and other stakeholders (for example, business, trade unions, etc.) in cities" and "foster monitoring, evaluation and accountability of urban governance and policy outcomes" get relatively low levels of attention, with 39 per cent and 35 per cent respectively getting extensive attention, and 25 per cent and 27 per cent getting low attention.

- The thematic category "**financing urban infrastructure**" appears to be less popular in terms of policy attention in NUPs, as on average, it gets extensive attention in only 39 per cent of NUPs. Within this thematic category, the theme with the most widespread interest is "set priorities for government funding" to which 51 per cent of NUPs give extensive attention. In contrast, the themes related to "the diversification of sources of finance" and to "the use of public procurement" have untapped potential, with 39 per cent and 32 per cent of NUPs giving low attention to the themes, respectively.
- "**Economic development, skills and innovation**" is the least popular thematic category in terms of average level of attention given in NUPs. On average, only 33 per cent of NUPs give extensive attention to the themes associated with this category. While a reasonably high level of NUPs give extensive attention to the theme "Identify and foster the territorial assets for economic development, increase productivity and competitiveness in cities and communities" (54 per cent), a low level of attention is given to "leverage the potential of the social and solidarity economy" (42 per cent) and "promote sustainable tourism" (35 per cent).

Figure 2.8. Level of attention given in national urban policy, by thematic category

Average share of respondent countries (n=77)

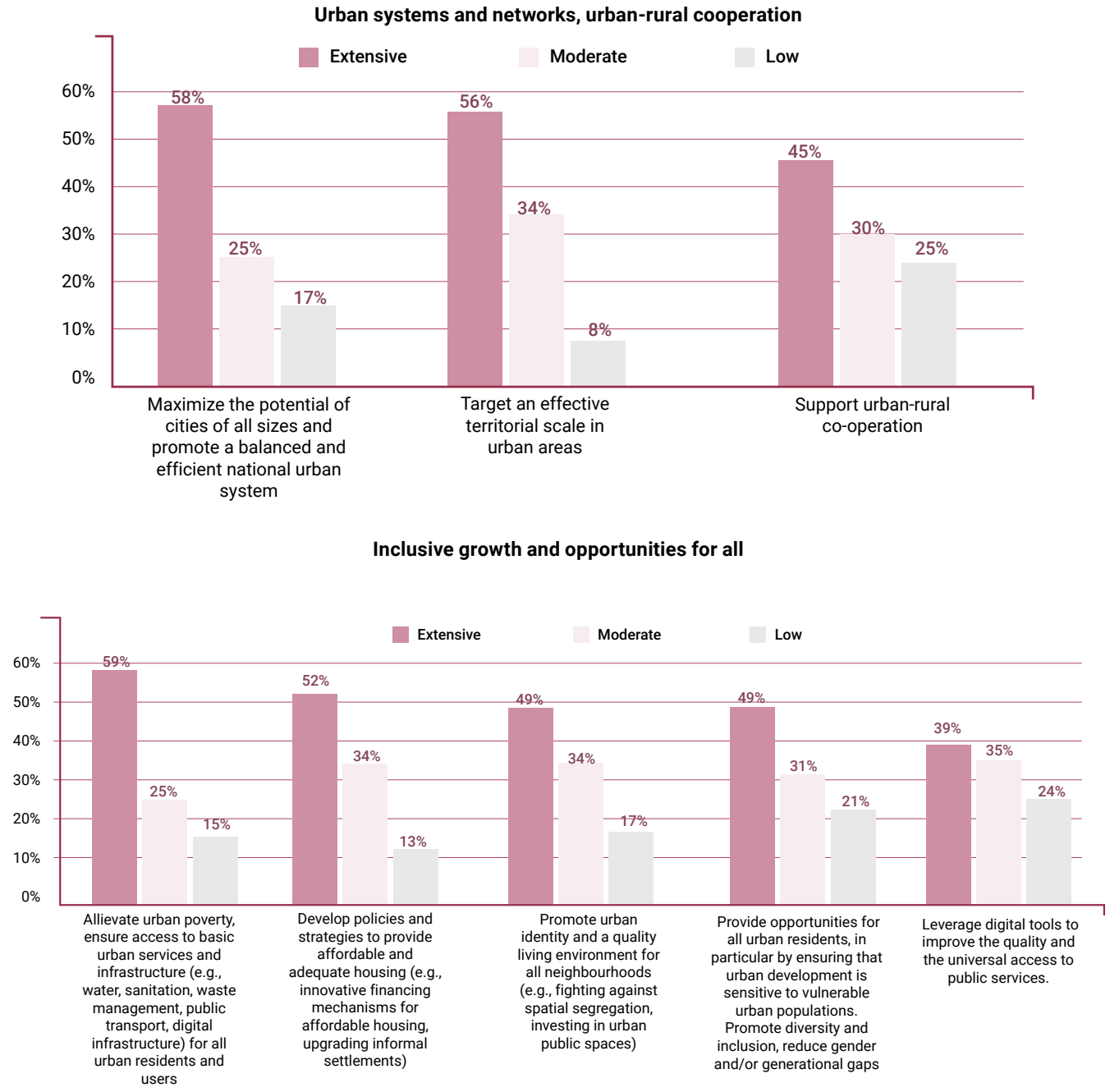


Note: Each column provides the average value of the share of countries with a certain level of attention (extensive, moderate or low) within each category. Environmental quality and climate action is composed of five themes; urban systems and networks, urban-rural cooperation is composed of three themes; inclusive growth and opportunities for all is composed of five themes; economic development, skills and innovation is composed of five themes; engagement, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation is composed of three themes; and financing is composed of three themes. Respondents could choose more than one option.

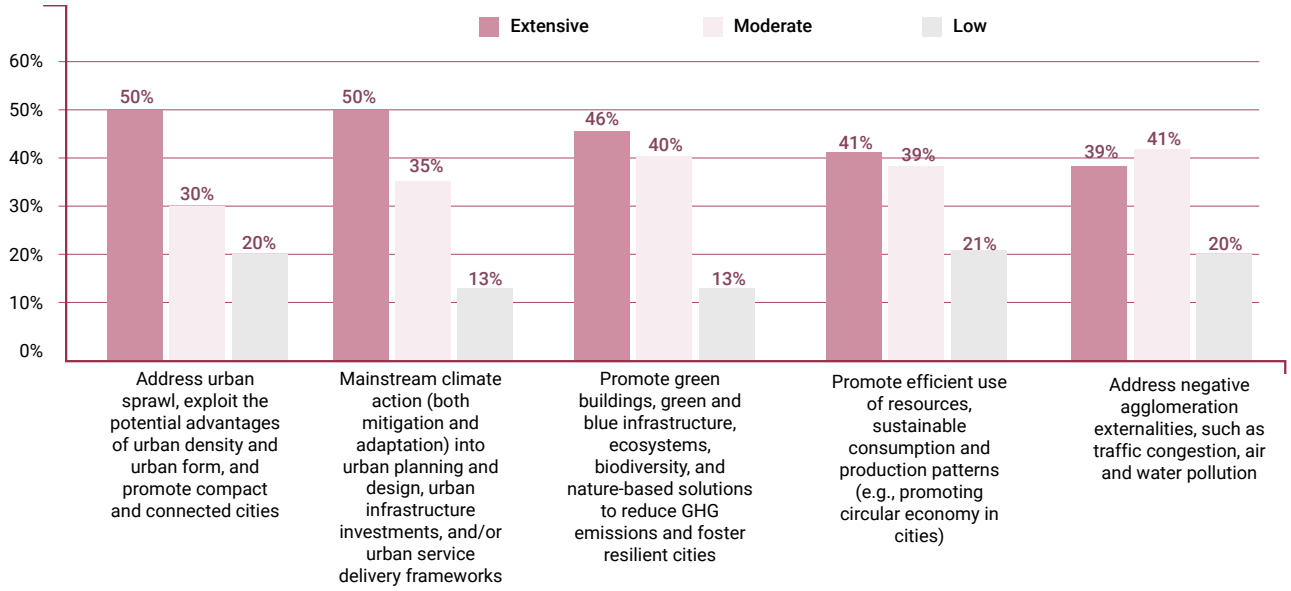
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Figure 2.9. Themes receiving extensive, moderate and low attention, by thematic category

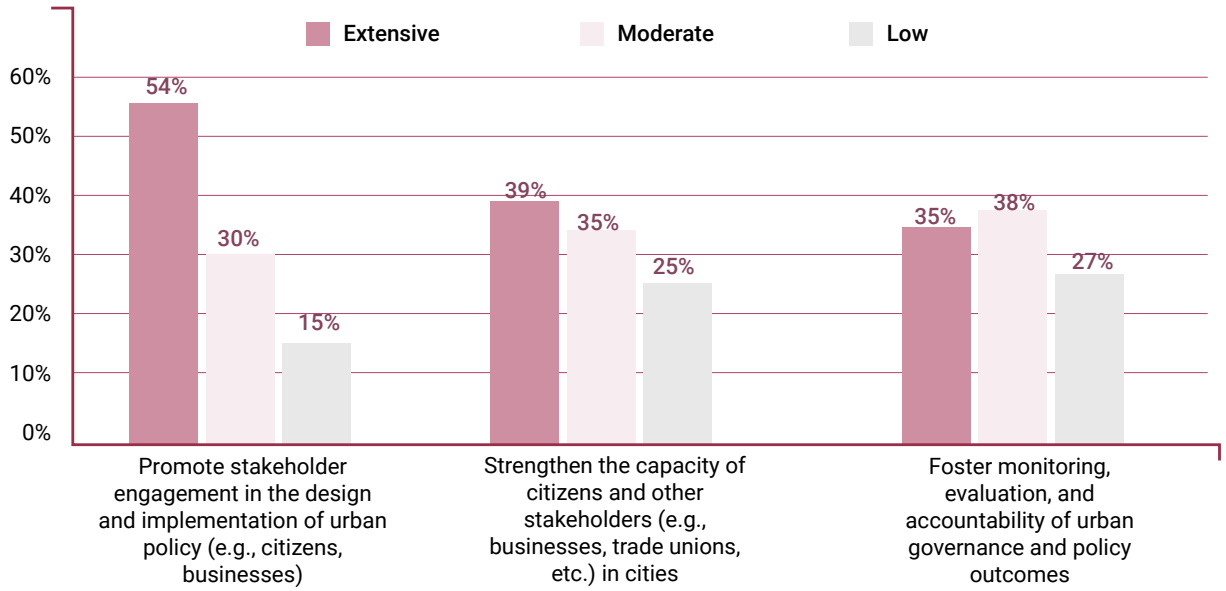
Share of respondent countries (n=77)



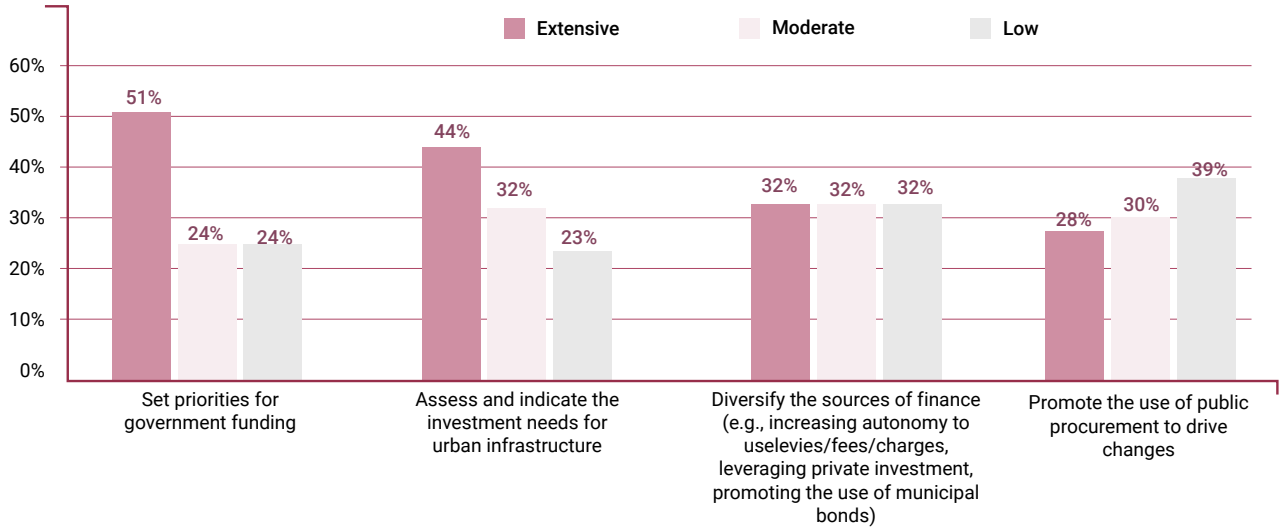
Environment and climate



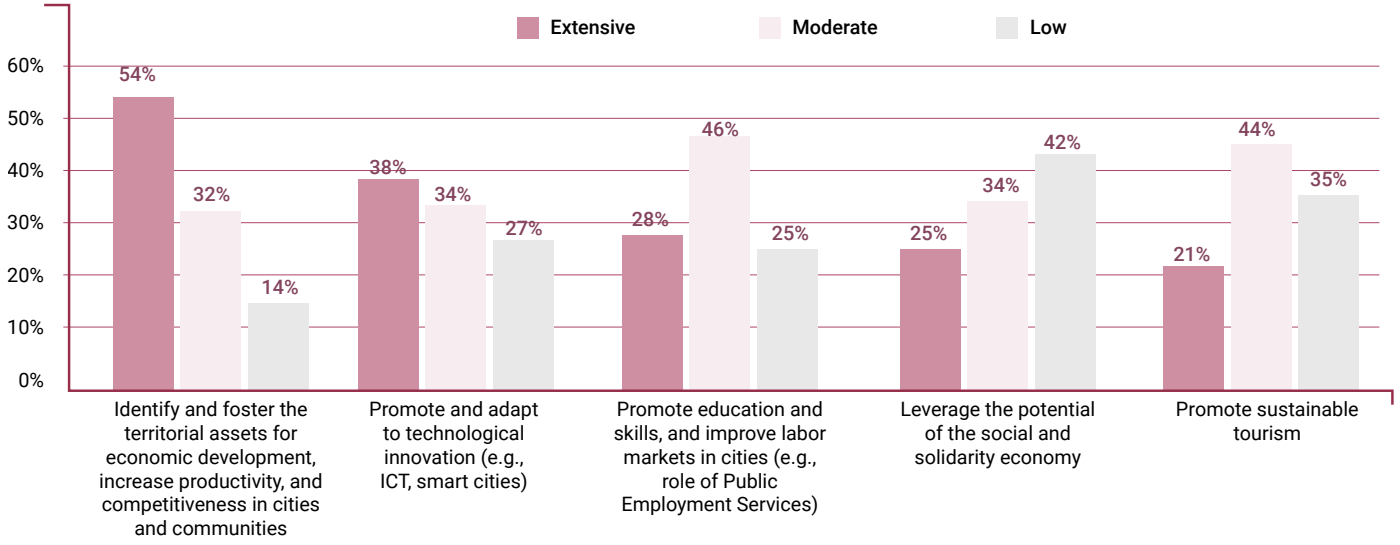
Engagement, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation



Financing urban infrastructure



Economic development, skills and innovation



Note: Respondents could choose more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Box 2.1. Balanced and polycentric urbanization is a consolidated key priority

Many countries use their NUPs to promote a more balanced and polycentric urbanization strategy in order to harness the benefits of urban agglomeration across entire systems of cities. Some NUPs that target polycentric and balanced urban development include the following:[5]

- In **Ethiopia**, the Urban Development Policy (2013-) promotes the establishment of a balanced urban system. This policy is structured around several pillars, including the following: urban job creation and enterprise development, urban land management and infrastructure provision, housing development, social services, governance, and capacity-building.
- In the **Republic of Korea**, the 5th Comprehensive National Territorial Plan (2020-2040) promotes the notion of win-win balanced development, which is to be attained via regions' cooperation with the central Government and voluntary solidarity between regions. The plan envisions that large cities should contribute to their broader regions across economic, social and cultural dimensions. Depopulation in small- and medium-sized cities is identified as a key challenge.
- In **Peru**, a priority objective of the National Urban Policy ("Política Nacional en Vivienda y Urbanismo") is to guarantee the growth and sustainable development of all of the country's cities and "population centres" (that is, relevant settlements of a smaller size) through urban and territorial planning. This involves leveraging the unique characteristics and potential of each city and population centre.
- In **Portugal**, the National Spatial Planning Policy Programme is promoting polycentric urban systems and balanced territorial organization among its priorities. The revitalization of small- and medium-sized cities implies cooperation and connectivity to strengthen territorial cohesion. The social dimension of the programme targets medium-sized cities specifically, as they are mentioned as "clusters of social vulnerability".
- In **Türkiye,** the Integrated Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan highlights multi-centred and balanced spatial development as one of its values, although the plan does not outline more detailed policies.

Other NUPs devote specific attention to small- and medium-sized settlements:

- While **France** does not have a single NUP document, three main programmes guide urban policy, all of which are led by the National Agency of Territorial Cohesion. The Small Cities of Tomorrow ("Petites villes de demain") programme mobilizes funding and technical support for local investments. The City Policy ("Politique de la ville") is intended to combat inequalities inside cities and promote the development of social capital and civic initiatives. Lastly, the Heart of the City Initiative ("Action Coeur de Ville") focuses on fostering the economic and social dynamism of medium-sized cities.

5. The country examples mentioned are extracted from the NUPs of the countries that have declared they give extensive attention to one of the themes under the category "urban systems and networks".

- In **Luxembourg**, the Territorial Planning Master Programme ("Programme directeur d'aménagement du territoire") identifies territorial inequalities as a strategic challenge, by prioritizing small cities and towns. Historical and natural capital, along with emerging trends in mobility and remote work, are pinpointed as factors that can be leveraged to revitalize smaller settlements.
- In **Poland**, the National Urban Policy 2030 highlights the need to foster close cooperation inside functional urban areas and points to medium-sized cities as the major driver within that area. The Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy plans to develop a support centre for medium-sized cities. This objective meets the ambition of the country's National Regional Development Strategy 2030, which highlights declining medium-sized cities as key targets of balanced regional development policy, for example through the Medium City Package.

Some countries also dedicate efforts to supporting specific cities facing social and economic decline:

- In **Germany**, the National Urban Development Policy recognizes the risk of a downfall spiral when it comes to social challenges in small municipalities. The Social City programme also focuses on small cities in an integrated approach and can be deployed jointly with the Active City and District Centres programmes, both aiming to promote public spaces. Finally, the Rural Infrastructure Initiative deploys its Smaller Towns Programme to help smaller municipalities in revitalizing their potential.
- In the **United Kingdom**, the Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs) target 20 local authorities and the Long-Term Plan for Towns focuses on 55 towns deemed "left behind" across the UK. The aim is to provide funding for regeneration (LUPs) and address local priorities such as revitalizing high streets, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving transport and boosting the local economy (Long-Term Plan for Towns).

8. National urban policies demonstrate potential in addressing spatial inequalities

The twin shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis have had uneven impacts across different regions, reinforcing the need to tackle spatial inequalities between regions, which have been persistent over the last two decades (OECD, 2023). Additionally, while the largest metropolitan regions (for example, capital-city regions) have been characterized by stronger growth (for example, in terms of population change), they are also facing major challenges such as congestion, high costs of living and housing, and inequalities. In particular, capital-city regions are the most unequal territories in terms of per capita income among OECD countries (OECD, 2023).

As is highlighted earlier, "Inclusive growth and opportunities for all" is the second-most frequently addressed category by level of attention. The report includes an experimental analysis by using OECD data to see if the presence of NUPs is making differences in terms of regional spatial inequalities in a country.[6] As data reveal, the presence of an explicit NUP does not yield to higher regional inequalities, on average. Despite of the limited country scope, the result demonstrates the potential of NUPs in addressing spatial inequalities (see box 2.2).

6. The impacts of NUPs may be limited due to their limited spatial coverage within regions and countries.

Box 2.2. The presence of explicit national urban policies and regional inequalities

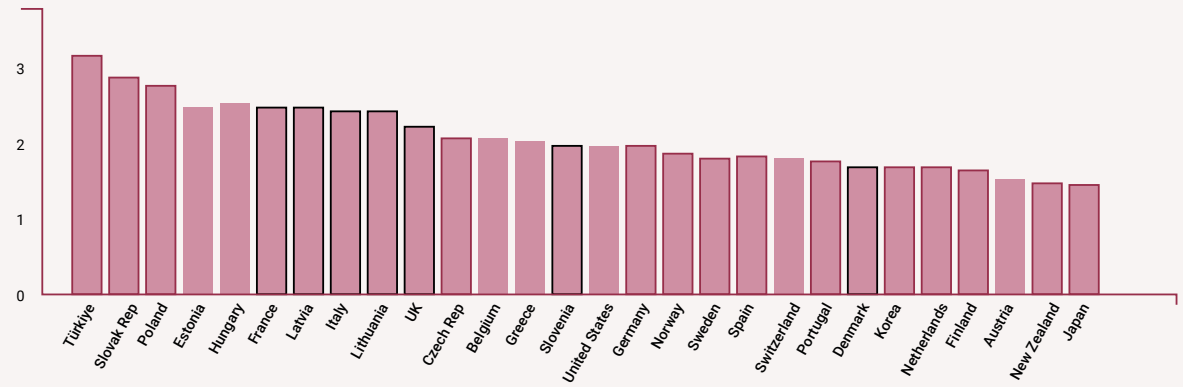
NUPs can serve as an effective tool to address spatial inequalities. For OECD countries with available data, figure 2.10 shows regional inequalities measured by the top 20 per cent of GDP per capita relative to bottom 20 per cent in regions, and the form of NUP. On the one hand, the figure shows that most of the explicit NUPs are in countries with lower regional inequality (for example Finland, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea). However, the three countries with largest regional inequalities (Poland, Slovakia and Türkiye) also have explicit NUPs – which are targeting a more balanced development.

Table 2.1, which displays data from 25 OECD countries that responded to the country survey and provided available data on trends in regional inequalities from 2000 to 2020 (OECD, 2023), shows that almost all countries with decreasing regional inequalities have a NUP (10 out of 11 countries), while 3 out of 14 countries with increasing regional inequalities do not have a NUP. Additionally, the table shows that explicit NUPs are more common in countries experiencing decreasing regional inequalities (9 out of 10 NUPs are explicit), compared to countries with rising inequalities (where 5 out of 11 NUPs are explicit).

Table 2.1 also shows categories of countries based on their trends in mean GDP per capita for the period 2000 to 2020, distinguishing between "higher income" countries (those with GDP per capita above the OECD mean), "converging" countries (approaching the OECD mean GDP per capita), and "diverging" countries (deviating from the OECD mean GDP per capita), as detailed in the OECD Regional Outlook 2023 (OECD, 2023). While higher-income countries are slightly less likely to have a NUP than converging or diverging countries (3 out of 12 higher-income countries do not have a NUP), there are no substantial differences between the groups in terms of the explicit vs. implicit form.

Figure 2.10. National urban policy form and income gap across regions

Top 20 per cent of GDP per capita relative to bottom 20 per cent in OECD administrative regions, 2022 or latest year available



Note: Countries with explicit NUP framed in red, countries with implicit NUP are framed in black. Data consider the Territorial Level 3 classification of administrative regions (OECD, 2023).

Source: OECD Regional Outlook (2023).

Table 2.1. National urban policy form and trends in GDP and regional inequalities in OECD countries

	Decreasing inequality	Increasing inequality
Higher income (above OECD mean GDP per capita)	Austria (Implicit NUP) Finland (Explicit NUP) Germany (Explicit NUP) Netherlands (Explicit NUP)) Norway (Explicit NUP)	Belgium (No NUP) Denmark (Implicit NUP) France (Implicit NUP) Japan (Explicit NUP) Sweden (Explicit NUP) United Kingdom (Implicit NUP) United States (No NUP)
Converging (to OECD mean GDP per capita)	Korea (Explicit NUP) Latvia (Implicit NUP) New Zealand (Explicit NUP) Türkiye (Explicit NUP)	Czechia (Explicit NUP) Estonia (Implicit NUP) Lithuania (Implicit NUP)) Poland (Explicit NUP) Slovakia (Explicit NUP) Slovenia (Implicit NUP)
Diverging (from OECD mean GDP per capita)	Portugal (Explicit NUP) Spain (Explicit NUP)	Italy (Implicit NUP)

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey and data on regional inequalities retrieved from the OECD Regional Outlook (2023).

B. Mechanisms for implementing national urban policies

This section features an analysis of the mechanisms to realize urban policies by means of NUPs, which include the following aspects: a) policy alignment and coordination, b) tools for implementation, c) financing, and d) monitoring and evaluation frameworks. It also reports on the level of attention given to engaging stakeholders. The monitoring and evaluation frameworks will also be discussed in depth in chapter V.

1. Most national urban policies include mechanisms to ensure policy alignment and coordination

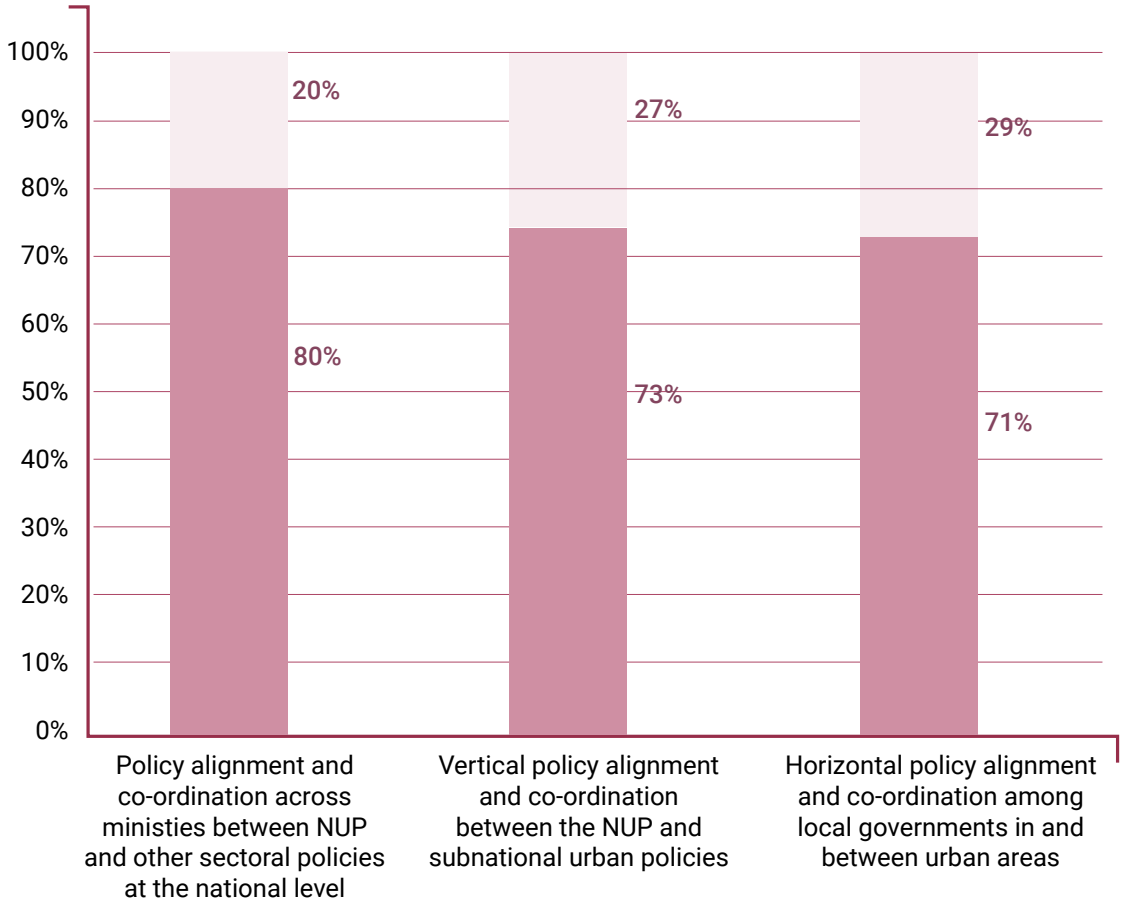
The country survey revealed that most NUPs are equipped with mechanisms to ensure policy alignment and coordination (see figure 2.11):

- 80 per cent of NUPs have mechanisms to ensure horizontal policy alignment and coordination at the national level, that is, inter-ministerial policy alignment and coordination between the NUP and other sectoral policies at the national level.
- 73 per cent of NUPs have mechanisms to ensure vertical policy alignment and coordination between NUPs and other subnational urban policies.
- 71 per cent have mechanisms to facilitate policy alignment and coordination among local governments within and between urban areas (encompassing multiple local administrative entities).

Each mechanism will be discussed below in detail.

Figure 2.11. Mechanisms to ensure policy alignment and coordination

Share of respondent countries (n=74)



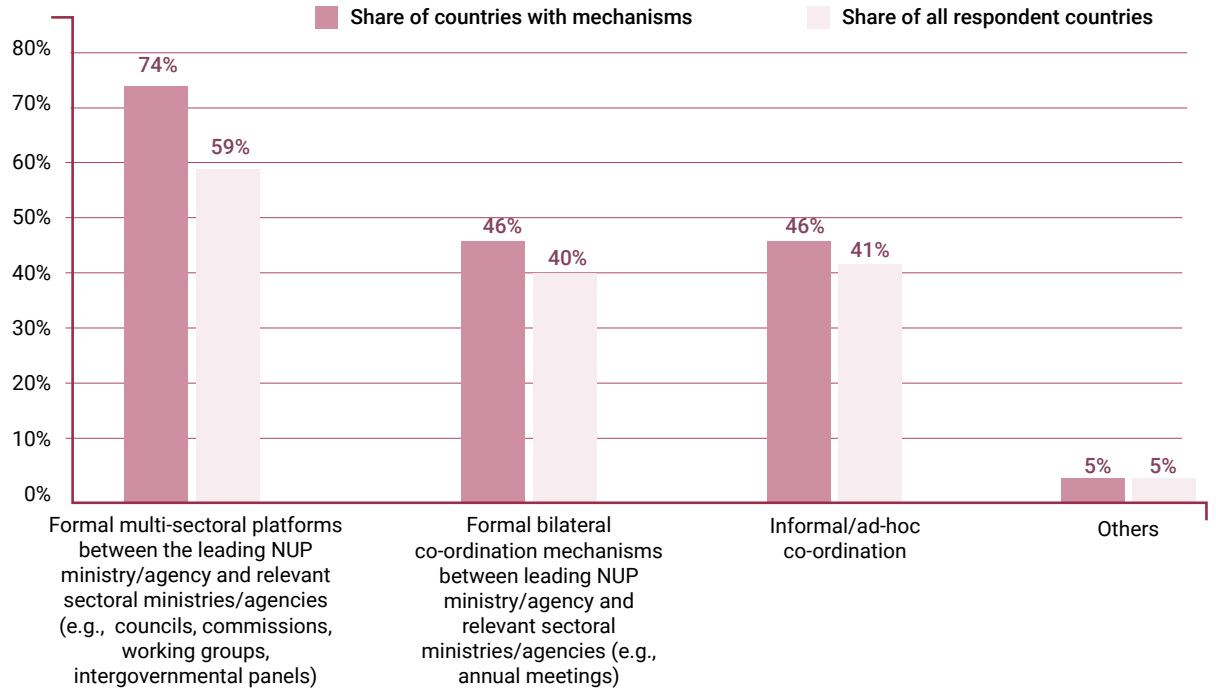
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Formal mechanisms are commonly used to ensure horizontal policy alignment and coordination

The majority of mechanisms used for policy alignment and coordination among NUPs and sectoral policies are formal, consisting of formal multi-sectoral platforms (for example, councils, commissions, working groups, etc.) involving the leading NUP national ministry or agency and the relevant sectoral ministries or agencies (see figure 2.12). These mechanisms are used by 75 per cent of NUPs that have at least one mechanism for horizontal policy alignment and coordination. For instance, **Mexico** has a legal framework requiring States and municipalities to prepare urban development plans consistent with national guidelines. Additionally, bilateral coordination mechanisms between the leading NUP body and relevant sectoral bodies are used, with 53 per cent of NUPs having at least one mechanism for horizontal policy alignment and coordination. Among the NUPs with mechanisms for horizontal policy alignment, 51 per cent also report informal/ad hoc coordination. Overall, when a NUP has policy alignment and coordination mechanisms, formal mechanisms are employed in 86.5 per cent of cases, while only 13.5 per cent rely exclusively on informal mechanisms. Considering all NUPs, the share of countries with formal mechanisms is 67 per cent, a value slightly lower than the 74 per cent found in the previous edition of the report, which considered a different sample (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021).

Figure 2.12. Mechanisms to align national urban policies with sectoral policies at the national level

Percentage shares of all respondent countries (n=74) and of respondent countries with at least one mechanism for horizontal policy alignment and coordination (n=59)



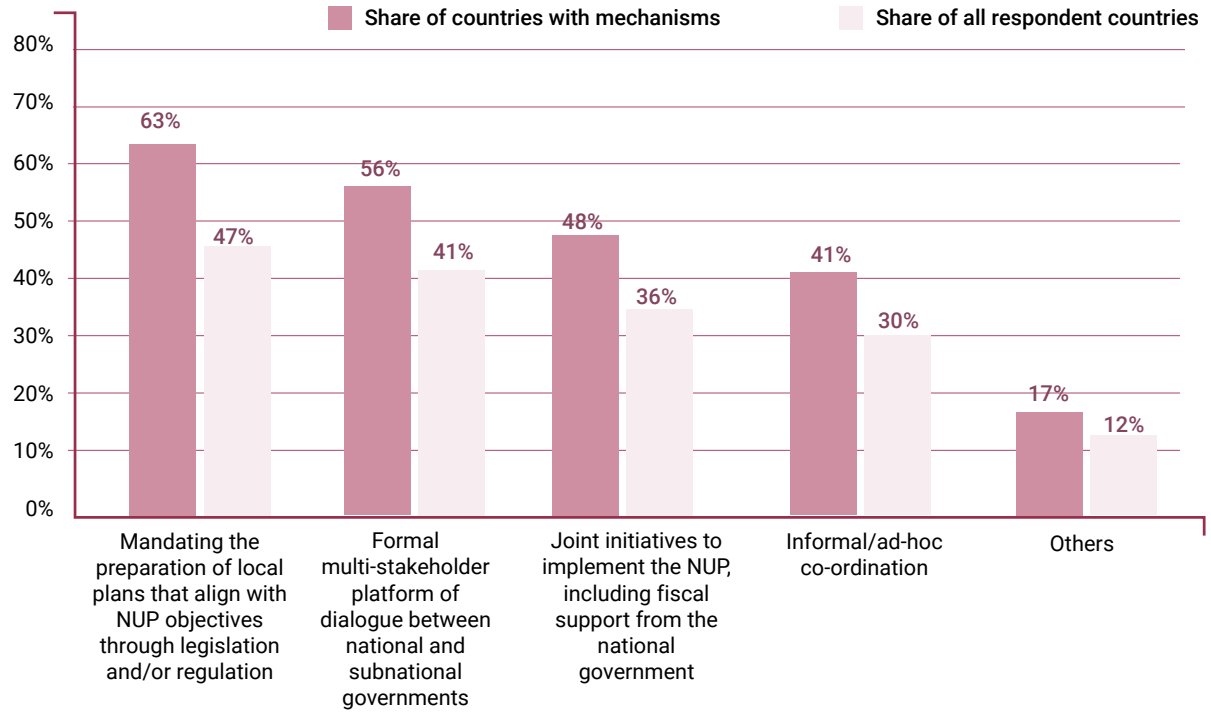
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Vertical coordination between national and subnational governments is often formally arranged as well

As highlighted above, almost three-quarters of the NUPs (73 per cent) have mechanisms for vertical policy alignment and coordination between NUPs and subnational policies. Similar to horizontal policy alignment, vertical policy alignment tends to be formally arranged, since 63 per cent of the NUPs containing vertical policy alignment and coordination mechanisms mandate the preparation of local plans and objectives through legislation and/or regulation. Further, 56 per cent have a formal multistakeholder platform for dialogue between the national and subnational governments. This is the case, for instance, in Germany, which set the multistakeholder platform "Congress of the National Urban Development Policy". Forty-eight per cent have joint initiatives to implement the NUP (including fiscal support from the national government). Finally, informal mechanisms are used in 41 per cent of the countries (see figure 2.13).

Figure 2.13. Mechanisms for vertical policy alignment and coordination between national and subnational governments

Percentage shares of all respondent countries (n=74) and of respondent countries with at least one mechanism for vertical policy alignment and coordination (n=59)



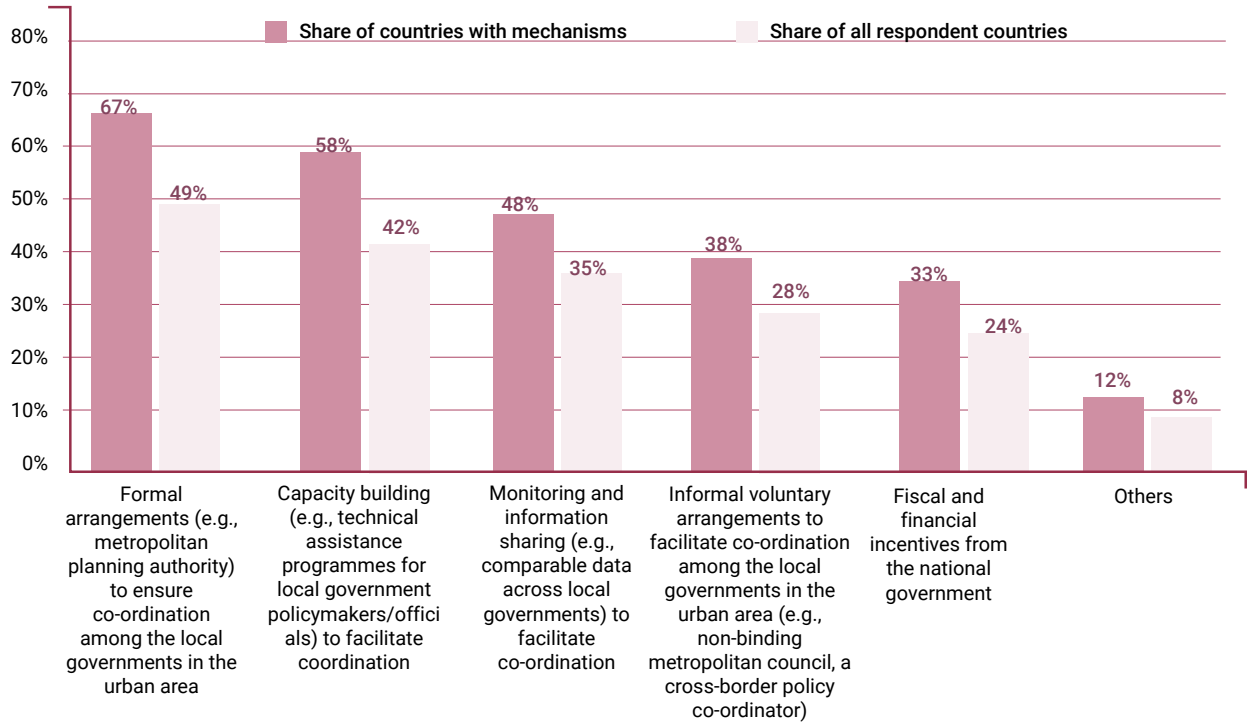
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Horizontal coordination within and between urban areas is arranged by national urban policies both with formal arrangements and capacity-building for local governments

As figure 2.14 illustrates, countries deploy a variety of mechanisms for horizontal policy alignment and coordination among local governments within and between urban areas. Of the NUPs that have at least one mechanism, two-thirds adopt formal arrangements to ensure effective coordination among the local governments in urban areas (for example, a metropolitan planning authority). Capacity-building and technical assistance for local governments is also prevalent in NUPs (58 per cent of the cases). The latter, for instance, is the case in Poland and the projects of "Revitalization Regions", which is intended to reinforce the capacity of municipalities to programme and implement urban revitalization measures.

Figure 2.14. Mechanisms for horizontal policy alignment and coordination among local governments within and between urban areas

Percentage share of all respondent countries (n=74) and of respondent countries with at least one mechanism for horizontal policy alignment and coordination (n=59)



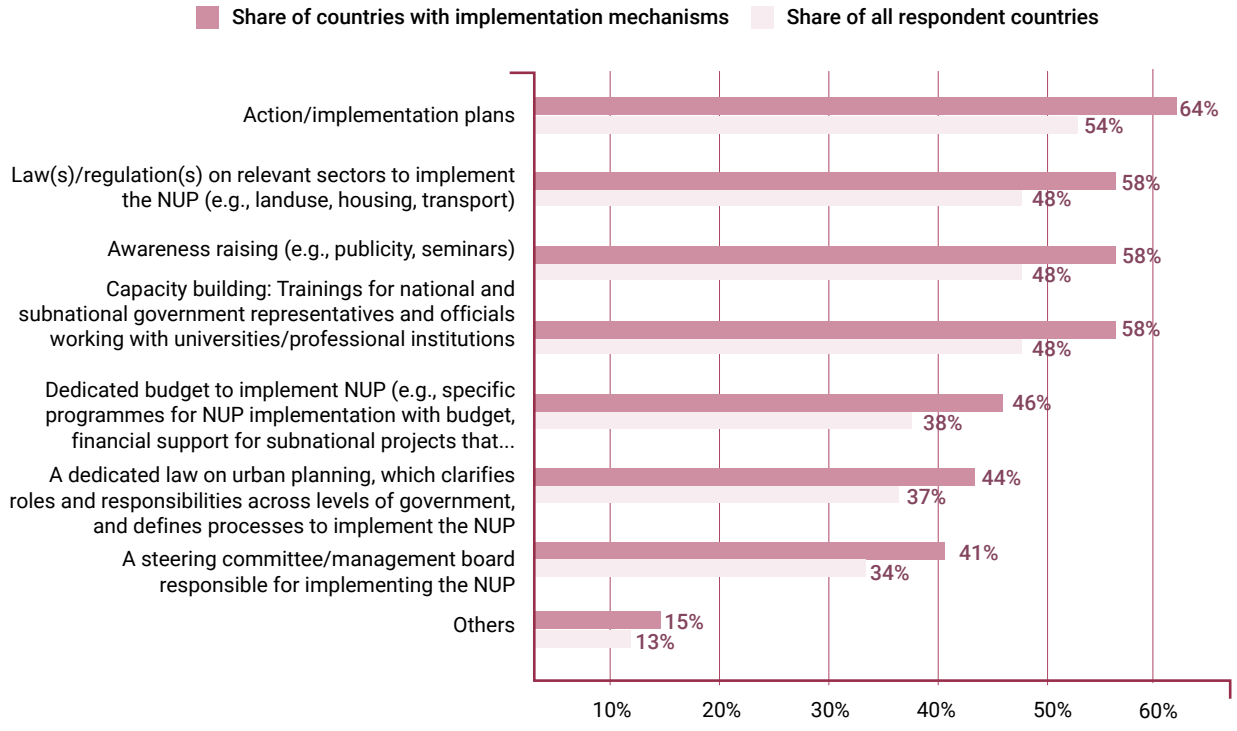
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

2. National urban policies have been equipped with a variety of instruments for implementation

The survey revealed that 84 per cent of NUPs (59 out of 70 respondent countries) have at least one instrument for implementation (for example, legislation, vertical and horizontal coordination, budget, guidelines and toolkits, training and capacity-building, action plans/workplans, experimental/pilot projects). As figure 2.15 illustrates, action or implementation plans are the most common instruments (used by 64 per cent of countries that have at least one instrument for implementation), followed by sectoral laws or regulations (58 per cent). Awareness-raising and capacity-building are also common (both used by 58 per cent of countries that have at least one instrument for implementation). Some binding and relevant measures to implement NUPs are less common, such as a dedicated budget (46 per cent), a dedicated law on urban planning (44 per cent), or a steering committee (41 per cent).

Figure 2.15. Instruments for national urban policy implementation

Percentage shares of all respondent countries (n=70) and of respondent countries with at least one mechanism for implementation (n=59)



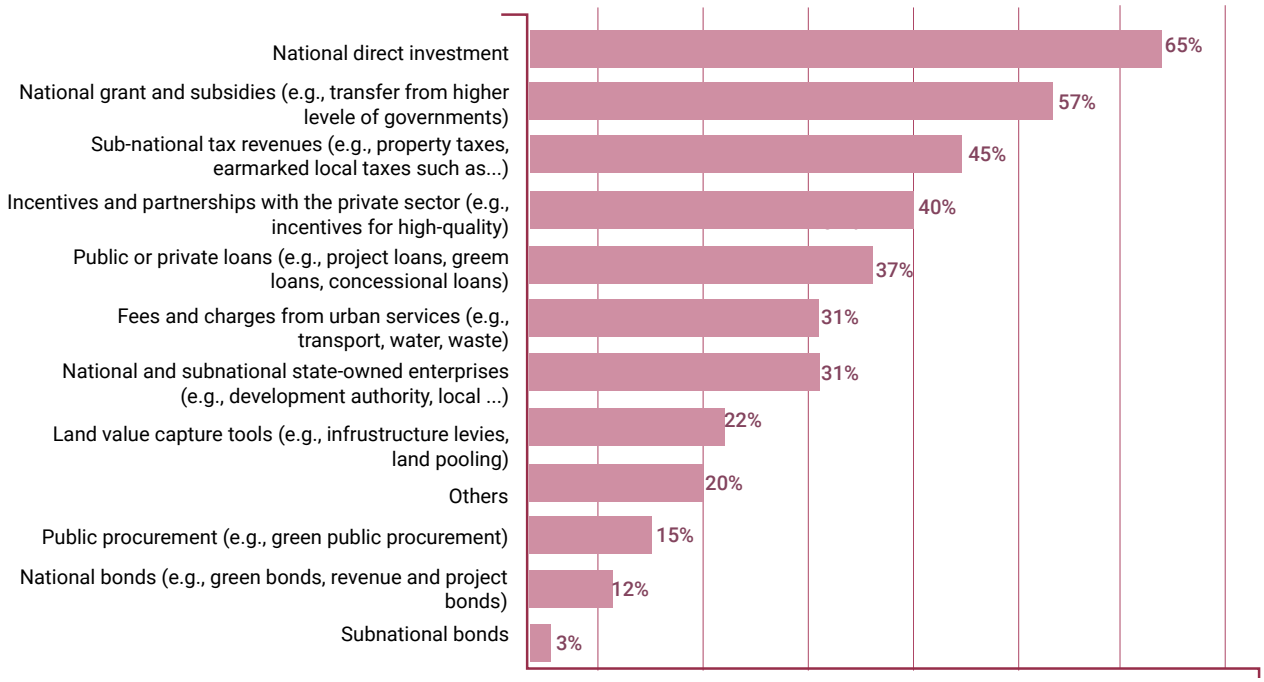
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

3. National urban policies are mostly financed by "traditional" sources

Figure 2.16 shows the sources used to finance the implementations recommended and assigned for urban development by NUPs. The most common financing sources include national direct investments and national grants, which are used in 65 per cent and 57 per cent of NUPs, respectively. Subnational tax revenues are less common, used in 45 per cent of NUPs. Overall, the survey revealed that "traditional" sources are more common than innovative ones to finance urban policies. These include bonds (national bonds and subnational bonds are used by 12 per cent and 3 per cent of countries, respectively), public procurement (used by 15 per cent of countries), and land value capture (used by 22 per cent of countries). This lack of varied instruments poses a challenge in mobilizing funding and financing ambitious, sustainable and resilient urban development.

Figure 2.16. National urban policy financing sources

Percentage shares of respondent countries (n=65)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

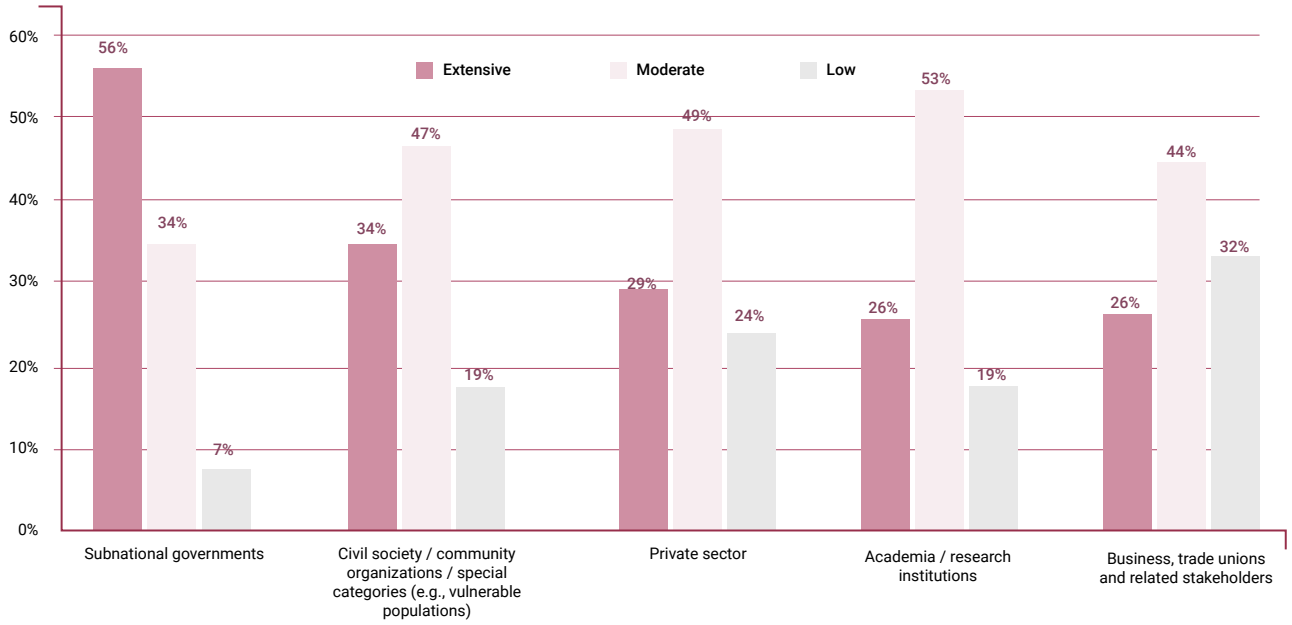
4. National urban policies widely engage subnational governments, while other stakeholders are less engaged

Figure 2.17 shows the level of engagement of key stakeholders (subnational governments, civil society, private sector, academia and research institutions, business, trade unions and related stakeholders).[7] Regarding the engagement of subnational governments in NUPs, 56 per cent demonstrate an extensive level of engagement, and 34 per cent exhibit a moderate level of engagement. All other stakeholders receive notably less attention in terms of engagement. The civil society is engaged extensively in 34 per cent of NUPs, while the private sector, academia and research institutions, and the business sector are each engaged extensively by 29 per cent, 26 per cent and 26 per cent respectively.

7. A low level of engagement/contribution corresponds to limited participation opportunities in the NUP process. For example, for the implementation phase, it corresponds to a circumstance where subnational governments are given limited roles and responsibilities to implement a NUP, with limited regulatory, financial and institutional arrangements. A moderate level of engagement/contribution entails clear roles and responsibilities given to subnational governments, allowing them to have the opportunity and capacity to substantially contribute to each NUP development phase. For instance, subnational governments are fully consulted for the identification of problems and policy priorities, and can provide local knowledge and data to support national government decisions. An extensive level of engagement/contribution indicates a strong vertical collaboration between levels of government, in which subnational governments are co-creators / joint implementers of NUPs, and actively help to adapt it to local needs and contexts.

Figure 2.17. Level of stakeholders' engagement

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=64)



Note: Values are ranked in decreasing order, according to the "extensive" level of engagement.

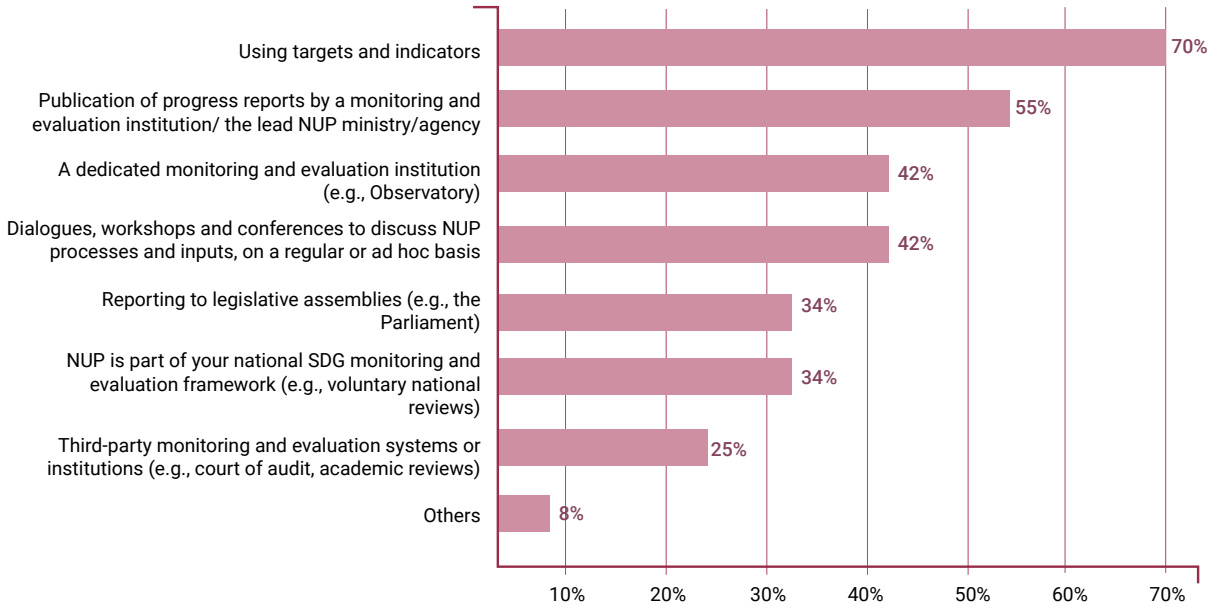
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

5. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Seventy-two per cent of countries reported the use of frameworks to monitor and evaluate their NUP. The use of targets and indicators is the most popular tool (used by 70 per cent of NUPs with monitoring and evaluation), followed by the publication of progress reports (55 per cent). Dedicated monitoring and evaluation bodies (for example, observatories) are less popular (42 per cent), as well as other instruments such as dialogues, workshops and conferences to discuss NUP advancements (42 per cent), reporting to legislative assemblies (34 per cent), using NUP as part of the Sustainable Development Goals monitoring and evaluation framework (34 per cent), or third-party monitoring and evaluation systems or institutions (25 per cent.) See figure 2.18.

Figure 2.18. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks used in national urban policies

Share of NUPs with monitoring and evaluation frameworks (n=54)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

C. National urban policy types, institutional and policy frameworks

In previous analyses, including earlier reports (OECD/UN-Habitat, 2018; OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021), the focus was primarily on distinguishing between explicit and non-explicit forms of NUP. While this approach offered a foundational understanding, this typology does not capture the complexities and nuances of NUPs globally, particularly the different dimensions and roles that NUPs can embody.

Against this background, a new methodology was developed to propose a typology of NUPs according to two key dimensions: a) the thematic coverage, in terms of policy areas, and b) the role of NUPs in terms of guiding or executing urban policy. The new typology can provide a more granular understanding of the characteristics of NUPs and thus a better explanation of the performance of NUPs.

This section is structured as follows. First, there is a discussion of the typology. Second, there is a report on two composite indicators used to measure NUPs according to the two dimensions. Third, the two indicators are combined and the four types of NUPs are identified, and some key characteristics (for example, form, responsible institution).

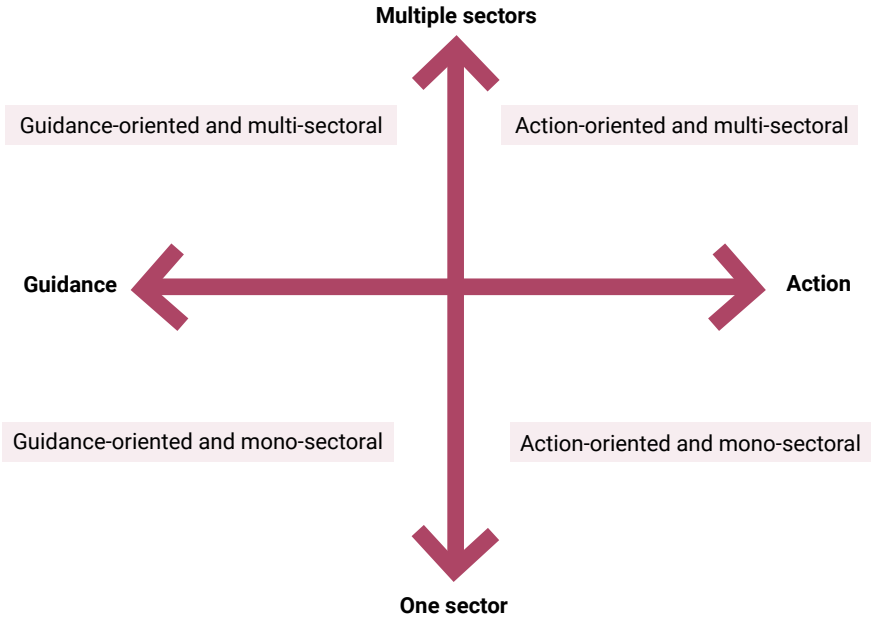
1. Mapping national urban policies along the spectrum of thematic policy areas and the spectrum of "guidance-action"

With reference to the thematic coverage, a NUP can either cover a broad range of themes ("multi-sectoral NUP"), or have a narrow thematic coverage, if one (or a few) specific theme(s) ('mono-sectoral NUP') are prioritized. A multi-sectoral NUP might be a proxy for the connection and integration of several policy areas to build more resilient, greener and inclusive cities, as advocated in the previous edition of the report (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021).

With reference to the role in terms of "guidance" or "action", a NUP can be categorized as either guidance-oriented or action-oriented, depending on the existence and strength of the instruments used to execute urban policy. A guidance-oriented NUP primarily provides overarching principles and guidance for urban policy, leaving its actual execution mechanisms outside the NUP itself. In contrast, an action-oriented NUP includes specific mechanisms and tools that directly execute these principles and guidelines.

In figure 2.19, the y-axis represents the spectrum of thematic areas, while the x-axis represents the spectrum of guidance-action. Therefore, the combined NUP types are as follows: a) guidance-oriented and multi-sectoral; b) action-oriented and multi-sectoral; c) action-oriented and mono-sectoral; and d) guidance-oriented and mono-sectoral.

Figure 2.19. Four types of national urban policies



Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages:

- **Guidance-oriented and multi-sectoral NUPs** provide comprehensive and overarching principles for a wide range of policy areas, promoting holistic and integrated urban development. They might be used in countries with a high level of decentralization, such as federal countries where urban issues are tackled by states, while the federal government can provide key guidelines for integrated urban development. However, their multi-sectoral scope and lack of specific implementation tools within the NUP can lead to execution challenges, dependency on other instruments and agencies for implementation, potential ambiguity and lack of focus on specific areas that need prioritization.
- **Action-oriented and multi-sectoral NUPs** allow for the implementation of policies across multiple areas, ensuring coherence and integration. They provide actionable steps for urban policies, potentially leading to more tangible results. However, their complexity requires strong institutional coordination and significant resources, which can lead to management and execution difficulties. Additionally, their detailed nature may be overly prescriptive, limiting flexibility and adaptation to subnational specific contexts.
- **Action-oriented and mono-sectoral NUPs** have a strong focus on implementation, aiming for fast and tangible results. They can target nationally recognized urban policy priorities, simplifying responsibility and accountability. However, their focused approach can create policy silos and lack of coordination with other policies, potentially overlooking interconnections with other urban sectors and leading to fragmented development that does not address broader urban challenges systemically.
- **Guidance-oriented and mono-sectoral NUPs** provide clear principles and guidelines for specific sectors, guiding targeted interventions. They can be used in decentralized countries, where the national government targets specific policy priorities to be tackled by subnational governments. They can serve as a foundation for subnational governments to develop more concrete action. Being less detailed, such NUPs are easier to adapt and update as new trends or issues emerge. However, the lack of effective implementation tools may hinder their ability to take necessary action for execution.

Mapping national urban policies along the spectrum of thematic coverage

With reference to the y-axis of figure 2.19, a composite indicator of a variety of thematic areas covered (T_i) has been computed to map NUPs along the spectrum of thematic coverage. For each country ***i*** that provided the information on the level of attention given to the 25 thematic areas, as discussed in chapter II, section A, paragraph 7, the indicator has been computed in three steps as follows:

a. The level of attention assigned by countries to each theme has been recorded on a scale of 100 for "extensive attention", 50 for "moderate attention", and 0 for "low attention". It should be noted that a moderate level of attention is weighted half as much as an extensive level of attention for each theme.

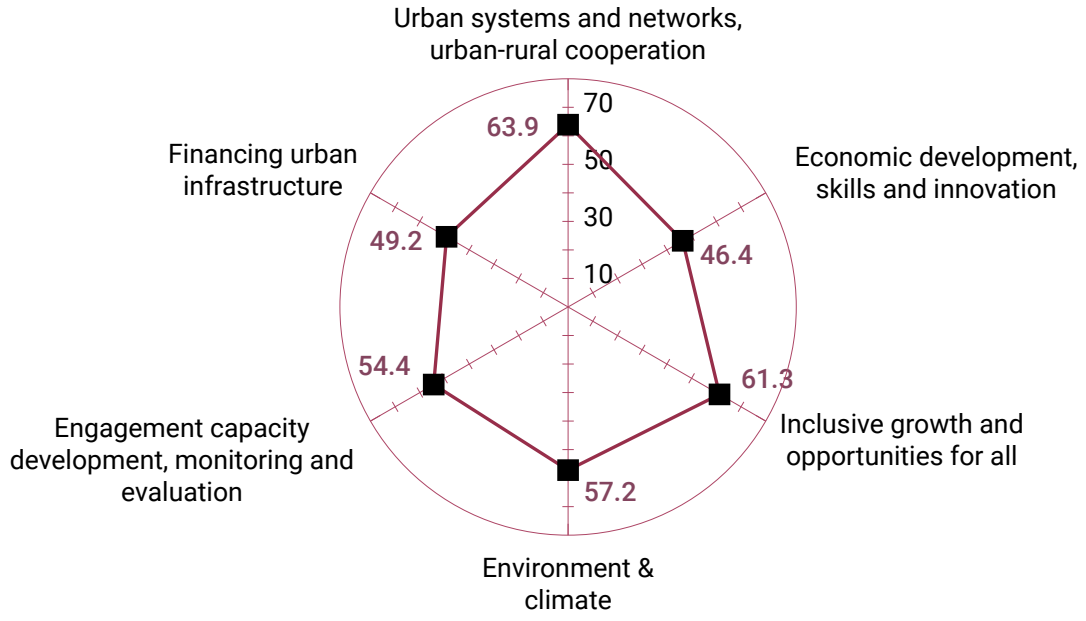
b. For each of the six broad thematic categories, a composite indicator (C_i) has been computed as the average of the recoded levels of attention of the themes within the category. C_i ranges from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates an overall extensive attention given to all the themes associated

to the category. Figure 2.20 shows the values of C_i across the respondent countries.

c. The composite indicator *Ti* is computed as the average of the composite indicators C_i. *Ti* ranges from 0 to 100. The higher the value, the more "multi-sectoral" the NUP is. For instance, a value equal to 100 means that a NUP gives extensive attention to all thematic areas, and therefore it is fully "multi-sectoral", while a value equal to 0 would mean low attention to any of the thematic areas investigated by the survey.[8]

Figure 2.20. Level of attention given to thematic categories

Composite indicators Ci of average level of attention for each thematic category, average of respondent countries (n=77)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Importantly, while the results are derived from a self-assessment exercise conducted by countries to select the thematic areas tackled by their NUP, it provides a proxy tool for the NUP's ability to integrate several policy areas or goals, or to prioritize a fewer areas or goals more selectively. For instance, a group of countries (Cambodia, Cameroon, Ecuador, France, Kenya, Lithuania, Nigeria, Philippines, Saudi Arabia and Spain)[9] report that a broad range of policy areas and goals are tackled by their NUPs. On the opposite end of the spectrum, some countries (for example, Costa Rica, Czechia, Estonia, Eswatini, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Slovakia and Sweden)[10] tend to be focus on fewer policy areas. For instance, Sweden prioritizes environment and climate goals, while Costa Rica puts more emphasis on both inclusive growth and opportunities for all, as well as the environment and climate. These themes have a moderate level of attention on average, while other thematic categories receive a low level of attention.

8. Low values indicate either a NUP focused on one sector (for example, extensive attention to environment and climate themes, and low attention to other themes), or an overall low level of attention to all thematic categories. In the latter case, the assumption is that a NUP still focuses on the thematic category with the highest (self-assigned) value.
9. Countries with $Ti \geq 100$.
10. Countries with $Ti \leq 20$.

Mapping national urban policies along the spectrum of "guidance"-"action"

With reference to the x-axis in figure 2.19, to map NUPs along the guidance-action spectrum, a composite indicator (A_i) was computed. This indicator is derived from the answers provided by countries in the survey, for each country (***i***) that participated in the survey (see chapter I), with regard to the following four dimensions:

- Instruments for policy alignment and coordination;
- Instruments for implementation;
- Financial means;
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

For each dimension, the analysis determined if a NUP incorporates robust mechanisms (for example, formal platforms and coordination mechanisms, alignment of local plans through laws, joint implementation initiatives, formal horizontal arrangements, fiscal and financial incentives, implementation plans, laws on urban planning defining NUP processes, sectoral laws to implement NUP, formal bodies or steering committees, a dedicated budget, a dedicated monitoring and evaluation institution). The computation of the indicator involved the following steps:

a. Several survey questions and possible answers (relating to coordination/alignment, implementation, finance and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms) were recoded into multicategory variables so that they could be expressed as a numerical score. Mechanisms were weighted, with weaker mechanisms assigned half the weight compared to robust mechanisms.[11]

b. Four scores relative to each dimension ("dimensional scores", D_i) were computed based on the ratio between the actual presence of mechanisms and all potential mechanisms. The scores range from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates that a NUP has all the potential mechanisms for a dedicated dimension (for example, for a given NUP a dimensional score equal to 100 for the coordination mechanisms would mean that the NUP has all the potential mechanisms).

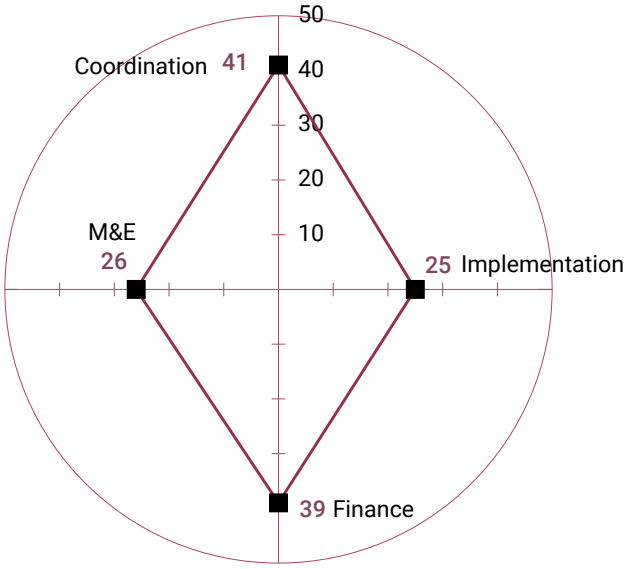
c. Finally, the overall indicator (A_i) has been computed as the average of the dimensional scores (D_i), with every dimension being weighted equally. A_i ranges from 0 to 100, where a value of 100 would signify that a NUP would have all mechanisms for coordination, implementation, finance, monitoring and evaluation, indicating that it is entirely "action-oriented". Conversely, when a score is equal to 0, the NUP is focused on providing principles and guidance (see figure 2.21). It should be noted that the methodology is based on the hypothesis that a NUP, regardless of its level of A_i, provides guidance by definition. Therefore, an "action-oriented" NUP does not imply that it has a low level of guidance.

Figure 2.21 shows the average of the dimensional scores (***Di)***. NUPs demonstrate a good presence of strong coordination mechanisms (with a score of 41, indicating that NUPs deploy, on average, 41 per cent of the hypothetical instruments for coordination) and financial mechanisms (with a score of 39).

11. In particular, the analysis identified the presence of "strong" and binding mechanisms for each dimension (for example, formal platforms and coordination mechanisms, alignment of local plans through laws, joint implementation initiatives, formal horizontal arrangements, fiscal and financial incentives, implementation plans, laws on urban planning defining NUP processes, sectoral laws to implement NUP, formal bodies or steering committees, a dedicated budget, a dedicated monitoring and evaluation institution). All other mechanisms were identified as "weak".

However, they lag in terms of strong implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, which are likely to be provided by other sources outside the NUP.

Figure 2.21. Dimensional scores of national urban policies



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

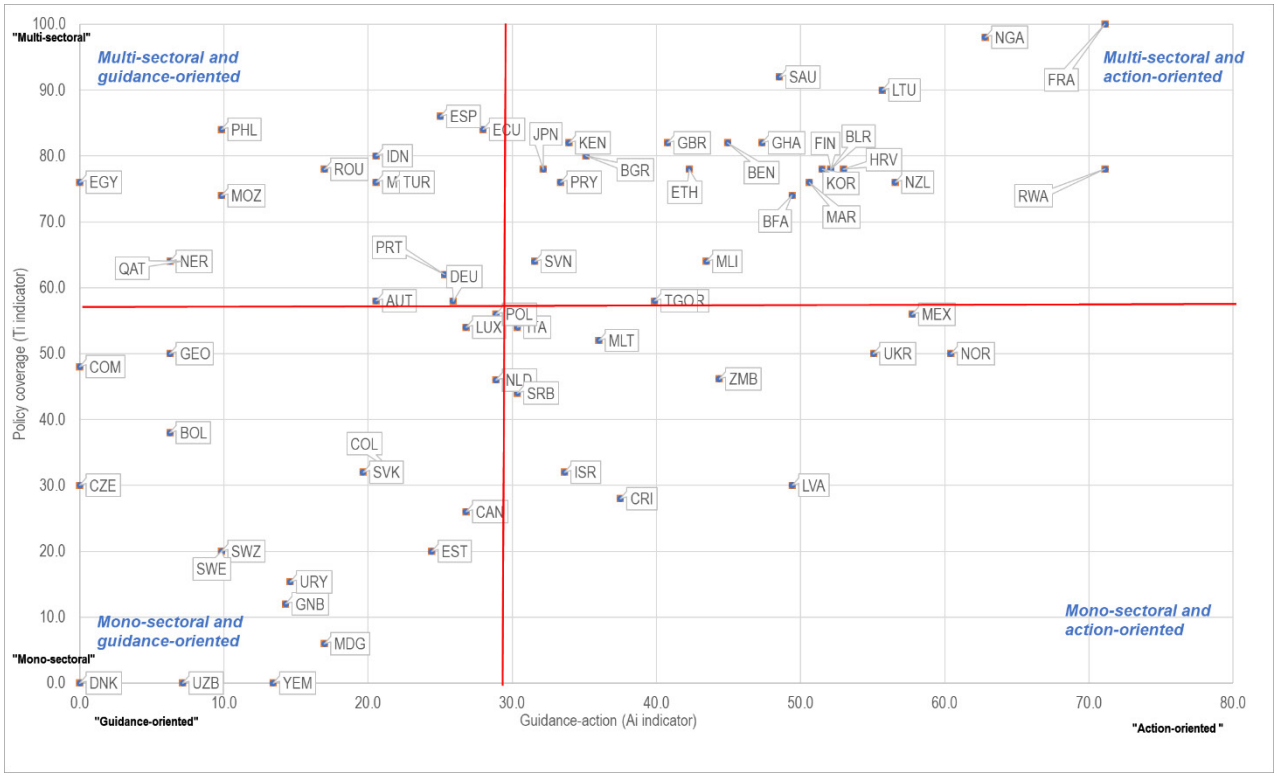
2. Most common national urban policy type is "multi-sectoral and action-oriented"

Figure 2.22 plots countries along the two spectra, namely, thematic coverage and guidance-action, represented by the two axes of figure 2.19. It uses the mean values for each spectrum as thresholds to classify NUPs according to the four types (see figure 2.19). These types are represented by the red vertical line (indicating the mean value of the ***Ai*** score, that is 28.5) and horizontal line (indicating the mean value of the ***Ci*** score, that is 57.5).

The result shows that the most common NUP type is the "multi-sectoral and action-oriented" (36 per cent, located in the top-right quadrant of the figure), followed by the opposite group of "mono-sectoral and guidance-oriented" (30 per cent, located in the bottom-left quadrant), then the "multi-sectoral and guidance-oriented" group (21 per cent, located in the top-left quadrant), and the "mono-sectoral and action-oriented" group (13 per cent, located in the bottom-right quadrant). As is visible in figure 2.22, there is a strong positive correlation between the two spectra: NUPs covering multiple thematic areas also tend to be more action-oriented.[12]

12. The mean value of the thematic coverage spectrum is 43.4. The mean value of the guidance-action spectrum is 50.8. To present a clearer visualization, the indicator for the spectrum of guidance-action has been standardized from 0 to 100, where 100 is the value of the countries with the highest A_i score.

Figure 2.22. Types of national urban policy



Note: The red lines represent the mean values for the two composite indicators of thematic coverage and guidance-action.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

3. Explicit national urban policies tend to be more "multi-sectoral" than implicit policies

Figure 2.23 details the mapping by distinguishing between implicit and explicit NUPs, while figure 2.24 summarizes the distribution (percentage shares) of NUP forms (implicit, explicit) by type. On average, explicit NUPs are more "multi-sectoral" than implicit NUPs (the average score is equal to 56.7 vs. 41.7), and only 29 per cent of explicit NUPs are "mono-sectoral", while 67 per cent of implicit NUPs are mono-sectoral.

Explicit NUPs tend to be slightly more "action-oriented" than implicit NUPs (the average score is equal to 45.9 vs. 39.7). However, an explicit NUP does not necessarily mean that it is action-oriented, given that 49 per cent of explicit NUPs are "guidance-oriented" (compared to 44 per cent of implicit NUPs).

In contrast, implicit NUPs exhibit greater heterogeneity compared to explicit NUPs. As the linear interpolations show, implicit NUPs demonstrate a stronger positive correlation between the two dimensions than explicit NUPs: the more multi-sectoral, the more likely to be action-oriented (see figure 2.23). Implicit NUPs also tend to be clustered in the two opposite groups of "mono-sectoral-focused and guidance oriented" (52 per cent of implicit NUP belong to this type) or "multi-sectoral and action-oriented" (30 per cent of implicit NUPs belong to this type).

Figure 2.23. Types of national urban policies, explicit and implicit policies

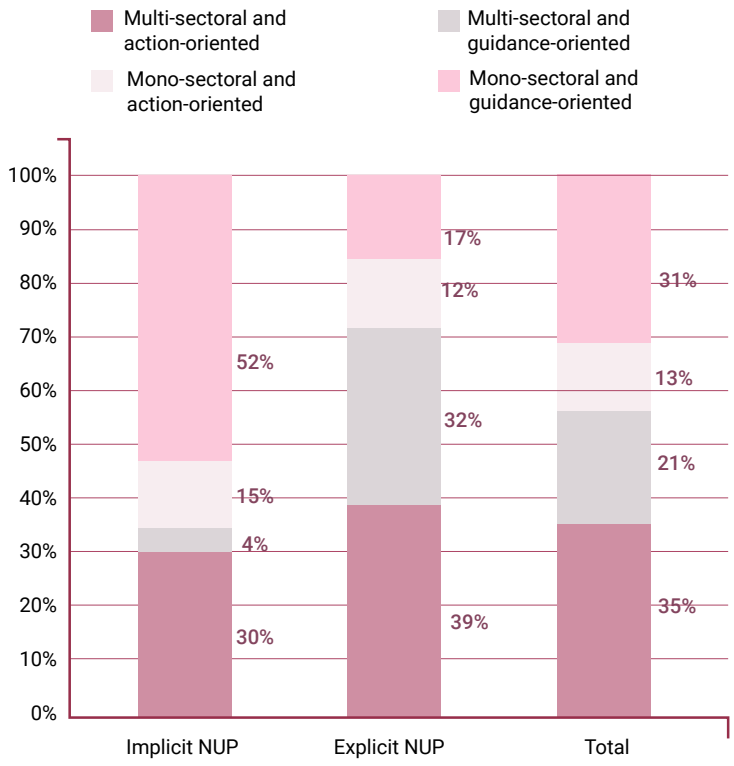


Note: The red lines represent the mean values for the two variables.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Figure 2.24. Share of national urban policies by type, explicit and implicit policies

Percentage shares of respondent countries

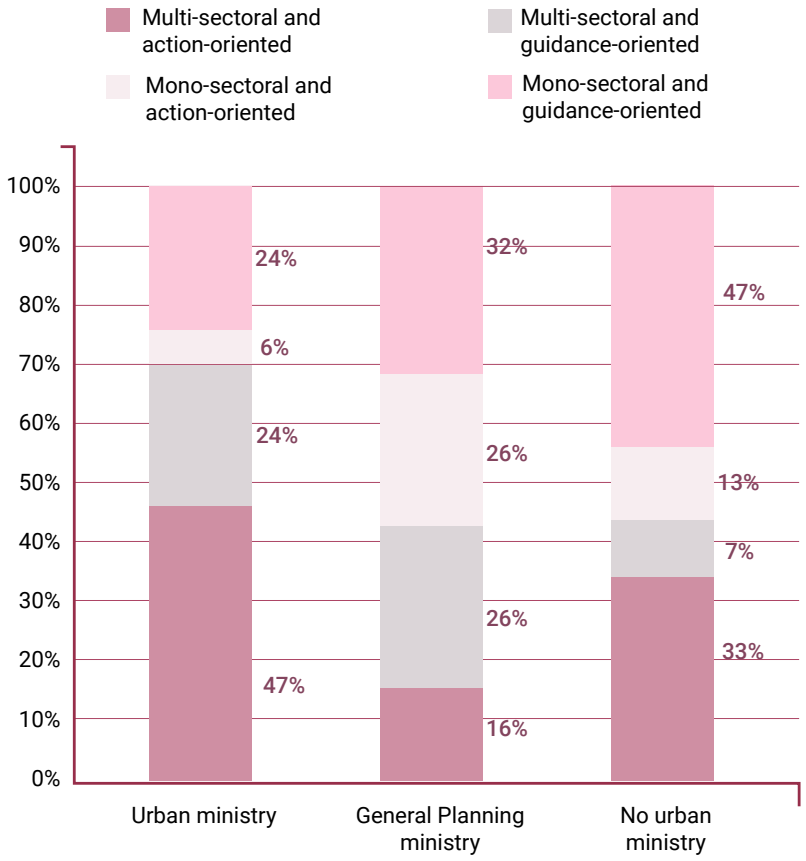


Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

4. Dedicated national "urban" leading institutions are associated with multi-sectoral and action-oriented national urban policies

The type of leading institutions responsible for NUPs may correspond to NUP types. Almost half of the countries with a dedicated ministry or agency for urban affairs (see subsection A 5 in this chapter) tend to have a higher proportion of "multi-sectoral and action-oriented" NUPs. Conversely, countries without a dedicated ministry are more likely to have "mono-sectoral and guidance-oriented" NUPs (see figure 2.25). Countries where NUPs fall under a general planning ministry appear to exhibit a more mixed pattern, with the majority of NUPs belonging to the "mono-sectoral and guidance oriented" type.

Figure 2.25. Share of national urban policies by type and leading institution



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

5. National urban policies' alignment with international guiding frameworks on urban policy

As is illustrated above, the new methodology can offer more comprehensive understanding of NUP, in terms of both policy areas and implementation mechanisms. It also allows for countries to check if their NUPs are adequately designed and implemented in line with major international guiding frameworks on urban policy. For example, UN-Habitat and OECD have developed the following guiding frameworks on NUP or urban policy in general:

- The UN-Habitat report "How to Formulate a National Urban Policy. A practical guide" (UN-Habitat, 2019), which illustrates the process of NUP formulation, identifies five key principles for a NUP: participation, inclusion, affordability, sustainability and implementability. It is stressed

in the document that a NUP should be implementable, meaning that should be formulated by actively engaging stakeholders, by drawing on a thorough analysis of the urban sector and being supported by all levels of government with the legal tools and resources needed for its implementation.

- The OECD Principles on Urban Policy (OECD, 2019) offer a framework to guide national and subnational governments in designing and implementing smart, sustainable and inclusive urban policies. These policies are developed by national and subnational governments, and reflect shared responsibility across public, private and non-profit sectors. The principles are organized around three pillars: "scale" of policy action, "strategy" to build smart, sustainable and inclusive cities, and the engagement of "stakeholders" in co-designing, co-implementing, and co-monitoring urban policy. The principles were endorsed by mayors and ministers during the 7th OECD Roundtable of Mayors and Ministers on 19 March 2019 in Athens, Greece. Mayors, ministers and key partner institutions committed to supporting the use of the principles in decisions and policies.

An experimental analysis of OECD countries that responded to the country survey reveals that their NUPs incorporate most of the OECD Principles on Urban Policy, and identified several areas where not fully addressed by NUPs (see box 2.3). Such an analysis, with international guiding frameworks, can provide additional information for policymakers to leverage NUPs' potential to systemically address complex urban challenges in an integrated way.

Box 2.3. National urban policies and the OECD Principles on Urban Policy across OECD countries

To check how the OECD Principles on Urban Policy are incorporated into NUPs, relevant questions from the country survey were selected and aligned with the "implementation toolkit of the OECD principles on urban policy" (OECD, 2022). On average, NUPs across OECD countries incorporate 6 out of 11 principles (the average share of principles' incorporation by respondent countries is 56 per cent), with 58 per cent of NUPs incorporating at least 6 principles. Almost one quarter of countries (24 per cent) incorporate at least 9 principles in their NUPs. However, a third of countries incorporate fewer than 5 principles. To enhance incorporation, Bulgaria (in a process of OECD accession) for instance, has established instructions on how cities and towns can integrate the OECD Principles on Urban Policy in their strategies.

Table 2.2. Indicators used to measure the incorporation of the OECD Principles on Urban Policy into NUPs across OECD countries

	Principle	Indicator
Scale	Maximize the potential of cities of all size	Extensive attention given to the theme "maximize the potential of cities of all sizes and promote a balanced national urban system (for example, leveraging the territorial assets of small and intermediary cities, supporting city-to-city cooperation)"
	Adapt to the place where people live and work	Extensive attention given to the theme "target an effective territorial scale in urban areas (for example, delivering quality local public services and amenities at a relevant scale, supporting a functional urban area approach"

	Support urban-rural interdependencies	Extensive attention given to the theme "support urban-rural cooperation (for example, fostering connectivity, promoting balanced territorial development across the urban-rural continuum, promote local sustainable food systems)"
Strategy	Set a clear vision for NUP	Existence of strong mechanisms to ensure vertical policy alignment and coordination between the NUP and subnational urban policies
	Advance environmental quality	Extensive attention (average) to the thematic area on "environmental quality and climate action"
	Provide opportunities for all	Extensive attention (average) to the thematic area on "inclusive growth and opportunities for all"
	Align sectoral policies	Existence of strong mechanisms to ensure policy alignment and coordination across ministries between NUP and other sectoral policies at the national level
	Harness adequate funding	Existence of strong financing mechanisms
Stakeholders	Promote stakeholder engagement	Extensive attention given to the theme "Promote stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of urban policy (e.g., citizens, businesses)"
	Strengthen the capacity to innovate	Extensive attention given to the theme "Strengthen the capacity of citizens and other stakeholders (e.g., business, trade unions, etc.) in cities"
	Foster monitoring, evaluation and accountability	Existence of strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

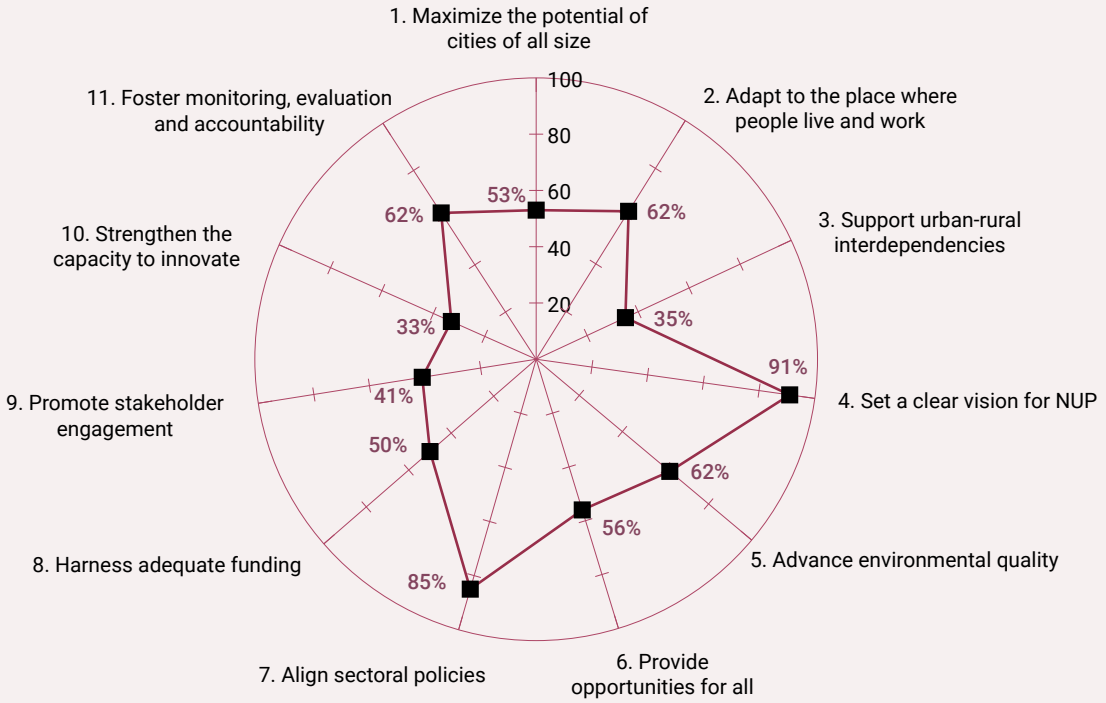
Note: Principle 10 goes beyond the capacity of citizens and other stakeholders and also contemplates the innovation in the public administration (for example, in terms of skills). However, data available from the country survey did not allow for fully capturing this aspect.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey and the Implementation toolkit of the OECD Principles on Urban Policy" (OECD, 2022).

As figure 2.26 shows (which refers to OECD countries), the principles vary significantly in their level of incorporation into NUPs. Principle 4 ("set a clear vision for NUP) is the most incorporated (by 91 per cent of respondent countries), followed by principle 7 ("align sectoral policies"), incorporated by 85 per cent of NUPs. On the other hand, principle 10 ("strengthen the capacity to innovate") is the least incorporated principle (33 per cent of NUPs), followed by principle 3 ("support urban-rural interdependencies"), incorporated by 35 per cent of NUPs, and principle 9 ("promote stakeholder engagement"), incorporated by 41 per cent of NUPs. In terms of the pillars of the OECD principles, it appears that the "strategy" pillar is the most incorporated (on average, the score of the principles belonging to the pillar is 69 per cent), followed by the "scale" pillar (50 per cent on average), while the "stakeholders" pillar is the least incorporated (46 per cent on average).

Figure 2.26. OECD Principles on Urban Policy incorporated into national urban policies across OECD countries

OECD countries (n=32)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

ANNEX 2A: List of national urban policies (65 countries, by global region)

Country	NUP of country (type, name, target year, website)	Year formulated	Stage of development
Africa (15)			
Benin	Implicit Programme d'Action du Gouvernement 2021–2026 (Pilier 3) https://beninrevele.bj/pag-2021-2026/	2021–2026	Implementation
Burkina Faso	Explicit Stratégie Nationale de l'Habitat et du Développement Urbain (SNHDU) 2021-2025 Website: N/A	2021	Implementation
Cameroon	Explicit Politique Urbaine Nationale (PUN) Website: N/A	2022	Formulation + implementation
Eswatini	Implicit A guide to the development of a National Physical Development Plan Website: N/A	2017	Feasibility
Ethiopia	Explicit Comprehensive National Outline Plan for Construction, Development and Conservation (also referred to as NOP 35) Website: N/A	2022	N/A
Ghana	Explicit National Urban Policy and Action Plan www.nalag-ghana.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/national_urban_policy_framework_ghana_2012.pdf	2012 and 2023	Formulation
Kenya	Explicit National Urban Development Policy Website: https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/National%20Urban%20Development%20Policy.pdf	2016	Implementation
Madagascar	Explicit Politique Nationale de Développement Urbain (2018) Website: N/A	2019	Implementation
Malawi	Explicit National Urban Policy www.urbanagendaplatform.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/National Urban Policy_April-2019_0.pdf	2019	Implementation
Mali	Explicit La Politique Nationale de la Ville (PONAV) Website: N/A	2014	Implementation
Niger	Explicit Politique Nationale de Développement Urbain (PNDU) Website: N/A	2018	Formulation

Nigeria	Explicit National Urban Development Policy (NUDP) www.worksandhousing.gov.ng National Housing Policy (2012) Website: N/A National Policy on Climate Change (2021) Website: N/A	2023	Implementation
Rwanda	Explicit National Urbanization Policy and Implementation Strategy Website: N/A, to be shared once available	2024	Monitoring and evaluation
Somalia	Implicit National Urban Policy Roadmap (2022) www.mpwr.gov.so/ Urban Regulatory Frameworks, Building Codes and Land Management (2017) www.mpwr.gov.so	2021	Feasibility + diagnosis + formulation
Togo	Explicit Politique Nationale de l'Habitat et du Développement Urbain (PNHDU) Website: N/A	2014	Implementation
Arab States (4)			
Egypt	Explicit Egypt National Urban Policy Website: N/A	2023 (to be approved)	Formulation
Morocco	Implicit Name: Politique de la Ville Website: N/A	N/A	N/A
Qatar	Explicit Name: N/A Website: N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Explicit National Spatial Strategy Website: N/A	2019	Implementation
Asia and the Pacific (10)			
Australia	Explicit National Urban Policy (still in development) Website: N/A	N/A (under formulation)	Formulation
Cambodia	N/A (under formulation) National Urban Policy or National Urban Development Strategy Website: N/A	N/A (under formulation)	Formulation
Indonesia	Explicit National Urban Policy 2045 Website: N/A	2024	Implementation
Israel	Implicit NOP35 https://mavat.iplan.gov.il/SV4/1/99005181336/310	2022	Formulation + monitoring and evaluation
Japan	Explicit National Spatial Strategy (National Plan) (2023) www.mlit.go.jp/kokudoseisaku/content/001621775.pdf	2023	Implementation

New Zealand	Explicit Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development(GPS-HUD) (2021) www.hud.govt.nz/urban-development/government-policy-statement-gps/ "National Policy Statement on Urban Development" (NPS-UD) (2020) https://environment.govt.nz/publications/national-policy-statement-on-urban-development-2020-updated-may-2022/	2021/ 2020	Implementation + monitoring and evaluation
Philippines	Explicit National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan 2040 www.urbanagendaplatform.org/resources/national-housing-and-urban-development-sector-plan-2040-technical-report	N/A	N/A
Republic of Korea	Explicit The 5th Comprehensive National Territorial plan (2020-2040) https://library.krihs.re.kr/dl_image2/IMG/07/000000031068/SERVICE/000000031068_01.PDF	2019	Implementation
Thailand	Implicit NUP1: The Thirteenth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023-2027) www.nesdc.go.th/article_attach/article_file_20230615134223.pdf NUP2: Thailand National Spatial Development Plan (N/A) Website: N/A NUP3: National Strategy 2018 – 2037 (2018) http://nscr.nesdc.go.th/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/National-Strategy-Eng-Final-Update.docx	2023–2027	Implementation + monitoring and evaluation
Türkiye	Explicit Integrated Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan (KENTGES) 2010-2023; National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD) (2014-2023) https://kentges.csb.gov.tr/kentges-english-i-98653 ; National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD) (2024-2028) (DRAFT) www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2014-2023_B%C3%B6lgesel_Geli%C5%9Fme_Ulusal_Stratejisi.pdf	2010; 2014	N/A
Europe and North America (27)			
Austria	Implicit Austrian Spatial Development Concept 2030 (2021) www.oerok.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/OEREK_2030-in_brief.pdf	2021	Implementation

Bulgaria	Implicit NUP1: Regional Development Act (RDA) 2023 www.mrrb.bg/bg/zakon-za-regionalnoto-razvitie-pravilnik-za-prilagane-na-zakona-za-regionalnoto-razvitie/ NUP2: National Spatial Development Concept of the Republic of Bulgaria (2013; update 2020) www.mrrb.bg/bg/nacionalna-koncepciya-za-prostranstveno-razvitie-za-perioda-2013-2025-godina/ and https://www.mrrb.bg/bg/aktualizaciya-na-nacionalnata-koncepciya-za-prostranstveno-razvitie-za-perioda-2013-2025-g/ (updated 2020) NUP3: Programme "Development of the Regions" 2021-2027 (entered in 2022) https://bgregio.eu/wps/portal/operativna-programa/regional-development-program-2021-2027/planning-programming-prd-2021-2027	NUP1: 2023 NUP2: 2020 NUP3: 2020	Implementation
Croatia	Implicit Spatial Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia (OG No. 106/17) Website: N/A	2020	Implementation
Czechia	Explicit Principles of Urban Policy of the Czech Republic (2017); Principles of Urban Policy of the Czech Republic (2023) Website: N/A	2017; 2023	Formulation + implementation
Denmark	Implicit Danish Planning Act (year: N/A) www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2020/1157	N/A	Implementation + monitoring and evaluation
Estonia	Implicit NUP1: Estonia 2035 strategy https://valitsus.ee/strateegia-eesti-2035-arengukavad-ja-planeering/strateegia/materjalid?view_instance=0&current_page=1 NUP2: Regional Development Action Plan www.fin.ee/riik-ja-omavalitsused-planeeringud/regionaalareng-ja-poliitika/regionaalpoliitika-kujundamine#Alusdokumendid NUP3: Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy Funds 2021-2027 www.rtk.ee/toetusfondid-ja-programmid/euroopa-liidu-valisvahendid/2021-2027-toetusperiood#item-1	NUP1: 2021 NUP2: 2022 NUP3: 2022	Implementation
Finland	Explicit The National Urban Strategy 2020-2030 https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162442	2020	Monitoring and evaluation
France	Implicit NUP1: Politique de la ville (N/A) https://agence-cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/politique-de-la-ville-97 NUP2: Action cœur de ville (2023) https://agence-cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/guide-action-coeur-de-ville-2-1094 NUP3: Le Programme Petites Villes de Demain (N/A) www.ecologie.gouv.fr/petites-villes-demain-dominique-faure-fait-point-sur-deploiement-du-programme-et-annonce-888meu-deja	NUP1: N/A; NUP2: 2023; NUP3: N/A	Monitoring and evaluation

Germany	Explicit Nationale Stadtentwicklungspolitik"/ National Urban Development Policy www.nationale-stadtentwicklungspolitik.de/NSPWeb/DE/Home/home_node.html	2020	Implementation + Monitoring and evaluation
Ireland	Implicit NUP1: National Planning Framework (2018) www.npf.ie/project-ireland-2040-national-planning-framework/#publications NUP2: Town Centre First (2022) www.gov.ie/en/publication/473d3-town-centre-first-policy/ NUP3: Sustainable and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) www.gov.ie/en/publication/aaea6-sustainable-residential-development-and-compact-settlements-guidelines-for-planning-authorities/	NUP1: 2018; NUP2: 2022; NUP3: 2024	Implementation
Italy	Implicit NUP1: The PON Metro Plus (N/A) www.ponmetro.it/home-2/pon-metro-plus-21-27/pn-metro-21-27-2/ NUP2: National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2017) www.mase.gov.it/pagina/strategia-nazionale-lo-sviluppo-sostenibile; https://hlpf.un.org/countries/italy/voluntary-national-review-2022 NUP3: National Strategy for Internal Areas (2022) www.politichecoesione.governo.it/it/strategie-tematiche-e-territoriali/strategie-territoriali/strategia-nazionale-aree-interne-snai/ ; www.agenziacoesione.gov.it/strategia-nazionale-aree-interne/	(N/A)/ 2017/ 2022	Implementation + Monitoring and evaluation
Latvia	Implicit National Regional Policy http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/documents/6588	2021	Implementation
Lithuania	Implicit NUP1: The Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania (CP) (2021) Lietuva 2030 - Bendrasis planas | Puslapis nerastas; www.bendrasisplanas.lt/ NUP2: N/A (2019) www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/a8c317c0be8011e9840ec0427c781bac NUP3: Law on Architecture (2023) www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/ea80d52054f211e7846ef01bfffb9b64/asr	2021	Implementation + Monitoring and Evaluation
Luxembourg	Implicit Politique de l'aménagement du territoire (2023) https://amenagement-territoire.public.lu/content/dam/amenagement_territoire/pdat-programme-directeur-damnagement-du-territoire-4072023.pdf	2023	Implementation
Malta	Explicit The Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED) (2015) www.pa.org.mt/en/strategic-plan-details/strategic%20plan%20for%20the%20environment%20and%20	2015/ Being reviewed since 2020	Feasibility+ Monitoring and Evaluation

Netherlands	Explicit NOVI: National Strategy on Spatial Planning and the Environment www.denationaleomgevingsvisie.nl/publicaties/novi-stukken+publicaties/default.aspx	2020	Implementation
Norway	Explicit Nasjonale forventningar til regional og kommunal planlegging 2023–2027/ Statlige planretningslinjer for samordnet bolig-, areal- og transportplanlegging/ Statlige planretningslinjer for klima- og energiplanlegging og klimatilpasning/ Statlige planretningslinjer for differensiert forvaltning av strandsonen langs sjøen/ Strategi for småbyer og større tettsteder som regionale kraftsentre/ Byvekstavtaler og belønningsavtaler/ Områdesatsinger/ Ny distriktsmelding/ Startar arbeidet med stortingsmelding om levekår i byar og byområde www.regjeringen.no	2023 / 2014 / 2018 / 2021 / 2021 / 2023 / 2023	Diagnosis + Formulation + Monitoring and evaluation
Poland	Explicit National Urban Policy 2030 www.gov.pl/web/fundusze-regiony/polityka-miejska	2022	Implementation
Portugal	Explicit National Spatial Planning Policy Program (PNPOT) https://pnpot.dgterritorio.gov.pt/sites/default/files/V01_Ingl_DRE_EstratPNPOT_2020.pdf	2019	Implementation
Romania	Explicit National Integrated Urban Development Strategy for Resilient, Green, Inclusive and Competitive Cities 2022-2035 – The Urban Policy of Romania https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/263345	2022	Implementation
Serbia	Explicit Urban Development Policy www.mgsi.gov.rs/cir/dokumenti/urbani-razvoj	2019	Implementation + Monitoring and evaluation
Slovakia	Explicit Koncepcia mestského rozvoja SR do roku 2030 / Conception of the Urban Development Policy of the Slovak Republic by 2030 (2018) 177add300b0faa6f4201a4d8a240021e77552653.pdf (mindop.sk)	2018	Implementation
Slovenia	Implicit Spatial Planning Strategy of Slovenia 2050 https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MNVP/Dokumenti/Prostorski-razvoj/SPRS/Strategija_prostorskega_razvoja_2050.pdf	2023	Implementation
Spain	Explicit Agenda Urbana Española www.aue.gob.es	2019	Implementation
Sweden	Explicit Strategi för levande städer – politik för en hållbar stadsutveckling (Skr. 2017/18:230) https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/481EAF83-12CF-490E-9D7A-16E094F29CC7	2018	Implementation

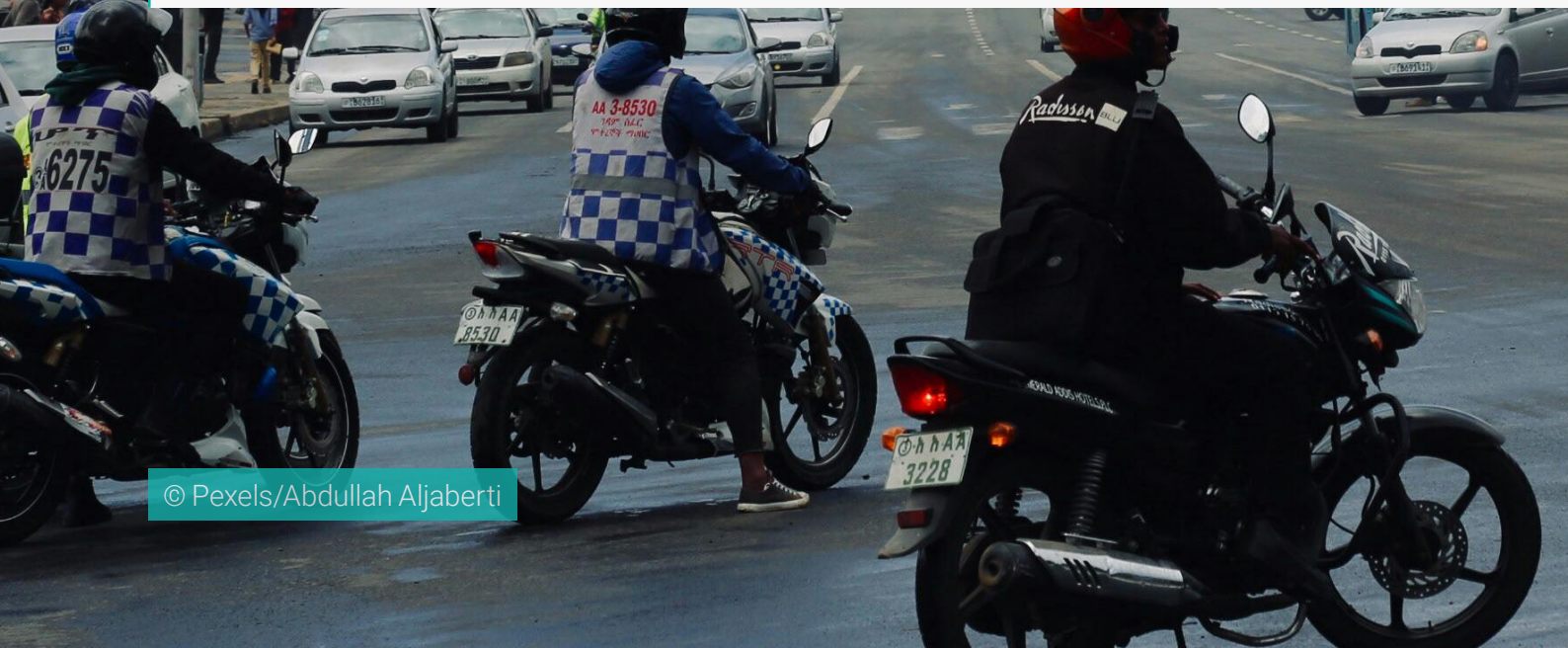
Ukraine	Implicit NUP1: Local Government. Law of Ukraine "On Local Self-Government in Ukraine" https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1359-14#Text NUP2: Urban planning and construction. The Law of Ukraine "On Regulation of Urban Development" (2023) Містобудування та будівництво. (Закон України «Про регулювання містобудівної діяльності») https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3038-17#Text NUP3: Law of Ukraine "On the Basics of State Regional Policy" (2023) https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/156-19#Text	2023	Implementation
United Kingdom	Implicit NUP1: Levelling Up White Paper and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom NUP2: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 NUP3: National Model Design Code (2021) www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code	2023	Implementation + Monitoring and evaluation
Latin America and the Caribbean (9)			
Chile	Explicit Política Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano (2014) www.bcn.cl/leychile/navegar?idNorma=1059974; https://cndu.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/L4-Politica-Nacional-Urbana.pdf	2014	Implementation
Colombia	Explicit Política Nacional para la Consolidación del Sistema de Ciudades CONPES 3819 (2014) https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/cdt/conpes/econ%C3%B3micos/3819.pdf	2014	Monitoring and evaluation
Costa Rica	Explicit National Habitat Policy Sistema Costarricense de Información Jurídica (pgrweb.go.cr) NOTE: the analysis in this report is based also on the following documents National Land Management Policy; Urban Development Policy https://www.mivah.go.cr/Documentos/politicas_directrices_planes/pnot/PNOT_2012-2040_English_Language.pdf https://www.mivah.go.cr/Documentos/politicas_directrices_planes/PNDU-2018_Politica_Plan_Completo.zip	2023 2012; 2018	Implementation -
Ecuador	Explicit Politica Urbana Nacional (year: N/A) https://pun.miduvi.gob.ec/	N/A	Implementation

Guatemala	Implicit NUP1: Política Nacional de Ordenamiento Territorial -PNOT Website: N/A NUP2: Agenda Urbana GT Website: https://issuu.com/agendaurbanagt/docs/agendaurbanagt?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=www.pronacom.or NUP3: Política de Mejoramiento Integral de Barrios Website: http://fopavi.gob.gt/Documentos_en_Index/Politica%20MIB%20CONAVI%20v08062017.pdf	NUP1: 2022; NUP2: 2016; NUP3: 2017	N/A
Mexico	Explicit Programa Sectorial de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial y Urbano (PSEDATU) 2020-2024 www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5595683&fecha=26/06/2020&print=true Estrategia Nacional de Ordenamiento Territorial de la Sedatu 2020-2040 (ENOT) www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/632547/ENOT._versio_n_extensa._26.2.21-Abr-.pdf / Programa Nacional de Ordenamiento Territorial y Desarrollo Urbano (PNOTDU) 2021-2024 www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/643102/PNOTDU_VERSION_FINAL_28.05.2021-comprimido.pdf Programa Nacional de Vivienda (PNV) 2019 -2024 www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/513675/Programa_Nacional_de_Vivienda_2019-2024.pdf Política Nacional de Suelo (PNS) http://insus.gob.mx/archivos/PSN/Pol%C3%ADtica%20Nacional%20de%20Suelo.pdf	2020 / 2020 / 2021 / 2019 / 2020	Implementation
Paraguay	Explicit Política Nacional de Urbanismo, Vivienda y Hábitat (pendiente de la formalización del Decreto del Poder Ejecutivo) https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hB_DDRKrkDhWgqtaQVd1u9mTvhJ7aV3b/view?usp=sharing	2023	Implementation
Peru	Explicit Política Nacional en Vivienda y Urbanismo https://pnvu.vivienda.gob.pe/inicio; https://cdn.www.gob.pe/uploads/document/file/2017412/DECRETO%20SUPREMO%20N%C2%B0%20012-2021-VIVIENDA.pdf.pdf?v=1626384939	2021	Implementation
Uruguay	Implicit NUP1: Ley 18.308 De 18 De Junio De 2008, De Ordenamiento Territorial Y Desarrollo Sostenible (2021) www.impo.com.uy/bases/leyes/18308-2008 NUP 2: Ley 19.525 De 18 De Agosto De 2017 Directrices Nacionales De Ordenamiento Territorial Y Desarrollo Sostenible (2017) www.impo.com.uy/bases/leyes/19525-2017	NUP1: 2021; NUP2: 2017	Implementation

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

3. National urban policy to enhance urban resilience

This chapter features an analysis of how resilience has become a key goal for national urban policy to anticipate, prepare and respond to diverse shocks and uncertainties, including the asymmetric impacts they produce for people and places. First, the chapter sets the scene with a focus on the need for leveraging the urban dimension of national resilience policies, in the current context of poly-crises, and an outline of the potential of NUPs for building resilience in cities. The second element is an analysis of the dimensions of resilience addressed by NUPs: the climate, ecological, economic and social-institutional resilience. Third is an analysis of the mechanisms and actions foreseen by NUP to promote resilience. Fourth is a report on the mechanisms used to ensure coordination between NUPs and other national resilience policies.



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Key findings

- NUPs are responding to the imperative for cities to become more resilient. Many countries have put in place national resilience and recovery measures in the aftermath of COVID-19. Almost all NUPs (93 per cent of the responding countries) prioritize urban resilience, recognizing the need to address major crises, shocks and uncertainties. About half of the respondent countries have national-level resilience policies focusing on or covering urban resilience, independent of the NUP.
- Ecological and climate resilience is the dimension most included in NUPs (88 per cent of the responding countries), followed by economic resilience (75 per cent) and social-institutional resilience (41 per cent).
    - Among climate and ecological shocks and crises, non-climate related disasters (for example, earthquakes) (51 per cent) and natural resource scarcity (51 per cent) are less commonly included in NUPs, compared with climate-related disasters (85 per cent).
    - Among economic shocks and crises, high attention is given to structural transformations (for example, jobs, unemployment, skill gaps, the cost-of-living crisis) (66 per cent), followed by chronic diseases and other health crises (41 per cent).
    - Among social-institutional shocks and crises, migration is the most widely addressed aspect (27 per cent)
- Urban land use, such as integrating disaster risk into planning regulations (73 per cent), is the most referenced action within NUPs to achieve urban resilience, followed by provision of climate-resilient urban infrastructure (63 per cent) (for example, early warning systems, critical infrastructure on energy and transport). Only 32 per cent of the responding countries report that there is a dedicated budget to face shocks and uncertainties.
- 80 per cent of NUPs report the existence of mechanisms to ensure policy coherence and alignment between the NUP and the national resilience policy. The most-used mechanisms are institutional arrangements at the national level (74 per cent), capacity-building and cross-sectoral exchanges (66 per cent). In contrast, finance-related mechanisms, such as financial incentives (for example, grants and subsidies) for urban resilience initiatives are less common (46 per cent).

A. Urban resilience: an emerging policy challenge in the poly-crises context

In the current global context of unpredictable, complex and multiple shocks, including pandemics, economic crises, social tensions, natural and climate-related disasters, demographic changes and digital challenges, the urban dimension of resilience is crucial more than ever.[13] Cities, as hubs of people and economic activities, are at risk of being affected the most severely and the fastest by the disruptions triggered by shocks and crises, as was the case during the COVID-19 pandemic (OECD, 2020). Cities are also more affected by the impacts of climate shocks (OECD, 2023). At the same time, as cities are the primary engines for economic development and innovation, they also have the potential to lead wider regional and national recovery efforts and disseminate successful practices for larger geographic areas, for instance in terms of job creation, sustainable urban practices and infrastructure development. Cities shape the services and infrastructure that will shape responses to climate change, the digital transition and inclusive growth (CIDOB, 2022; OECD, 2023).

Shocks and crises such as natural disasters, economic downturns or pandemics can affect cities differently, depending on factors such as geographic location, economic structure and connections, demographic structure and social cohesion, and the state of existing infrastructure. For instance, cities' inequalities are higher than the national averages, amplifying their vulnerability to shock and crises (OECD, Forthcoming) and disproportionately affect vulnerable groups such as the poor, older people and minorities. During the COVID-19 crisis, neighbourhoods characterized by high poverty levels, overcrowded housing and limited access to healthcare suffered more severely than denser parts of the same city that were less disadvantaged (OECD, 2020). Low-income neighbourhoods also tend to have less resilient infrastructure (OECD, Forthcoming).

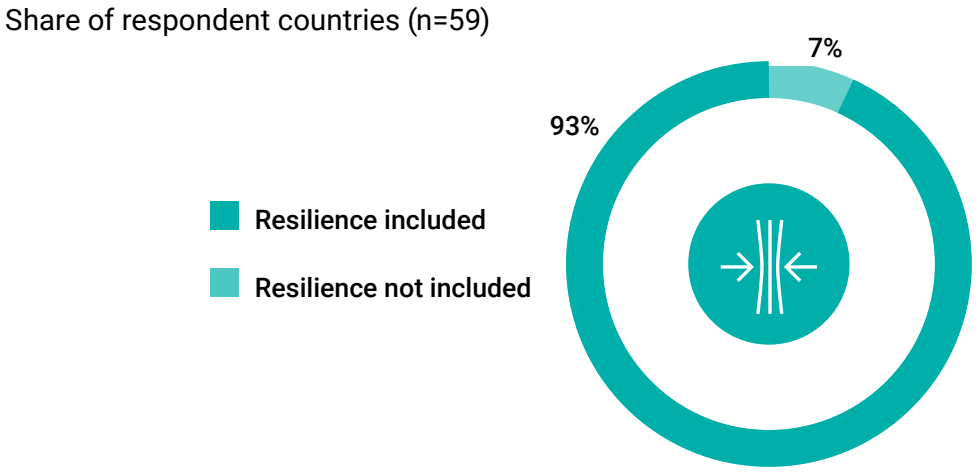
In addition, the effects of major shocks and crises are complex, causing impacts to multiple systems and policy areas and producing compounding and cascading effects. This is the case, for instance, with climate shocks such as the heatwaves that affected European cities in 2022, which had multiple effects ranging from increased mortality rates to the breakdown of infrastructure and public services (OECD, 2023). Similarly, geopolitical instability and disruptions in global supply-chains caused a steep rise in the price of energy and food, impacting the most on the living conditions of vulnerable groups (OECD, 2023). Even in the absence of emergencies, building resilience often implies tackling trade-offs of various dimensions. For instance, urban expansion and investment can lead to economic benefits (for example, business and job creation, improved infrastructure), however this can happen to the detriment of land, green space and biodiversity conservation in cities, which are important factors for climate resilience. Such impacts can be amplified as a result of the worsening vulnerability of cities to extreme weather events and natural disasters, including heatwaves, droughts, storm surges and floods. It is therefore more critical than ever for national policies to strengthen "systemic" and "place-based" decision-making approaches instead of "sectoral" and "one size fits all" approaches, by tailoring policies to local specificities, engaging with local governments and stakeholders (OECD, 2023; Faggian and Urso, 2023).

13. Urban resilience is defined as the capacity of cities to absorb, recover and prepare for future shocks (OECD, 2016; Figueiredo, Honiden and Schumann, 2018). UN-Habitat defines resilience as the "capacity and related capabilities of cities or urban communities to plan for and anticipate negative shocks, including long-term stresses, to their economies, allocate, reallocate and mobilize resources to withstand those shocks, recover from the shocks and rebuild at least to pre-crisis levels, while placing their economies on the path to sustainable economic growth and simultaneously strengthening their capacity to deal with any future shocks" (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2022[91]).

However – in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic – while national governments have recognized the need to strengthen resilience by implementing recovery and resilience plans and strategies[14] that typically follow a macro-level approach (for example, public health measures, economic stimuli, social safety nets) rather than a territorial or place-based approach, this implies that the urban dimension of resilience is not always focused.[15] Many national recovery plans and strategies have not sufficiently prioritized engaged local stakeholders (Faggian & Urso, 2023). By overlooking place-specific vulnerabilities, national plans are largely unable to implement resilience policies that respond to local shocks and stresses.

In such global contexts, urban resilience has emerged as a critical objective for national urban policies in preparing cities to anticipate, respond to and recover from various shocks and uncertainties. The country survey revealed that 93 per cent of countries (that is, 55 out of 59 respondent countries having a NUP) address resilience in their NUPs, recognizing the need for cities to tackle major crises, shocks and uncertainties (see figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Share of national urban policies including resilience



Note: Data based on question 21 of the country survey: "How are the major crises, shocks and uncertainties included and potentially addressed in your NUP? For each challenge, please specify if this is addressed or not in the NUP".

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

NUPs can be an effective instrument to align policies across territorial scales, sectors and places, directing financing and contributing to the overall resilience and sustainability goals of cities. Forward-looking NUPs can play a pivotal role in setting a clear vision and enhancing policy coherence across levels of government, not only by governments responding to a crisis but also by preventing or preparing for future crises, shocks and pressures on cities.

14. In Europe, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, a financial instrument valued at EUR 723 billion, was set up by the European Union to foster pandemic recovery in Member States (European Commission, n.d.). Similarly, the United States implemented the American Rescue Plan Act, a comprehensive relief package aimed at addressing the public health crisis, supporting individuals and families, revitalizing the economy and aiding state and local governments. (The White House, 2021).
15. For instance, although many national plans coordinate risk reduction across national and state/provincial/regional levels, the local level is frequently overlooked (UNDRR, 2023).

Below are three key roles NUPs are expected to play:

- **Facilitating an integrated approach to address urban resilience among policy areas**, therefore promoting synergies and managing trade-offs. By facilitating coordination across different policy domains and actions (for example, housing, infrastructure, environment) NUPs can enable cities to build robust systems that withstand and adapt to various challenges. For instance, NUPs can support building climate and ecological resilience by promoting sustainable urban practices, economic resilience through policies that foster economic growth and stability, and social-institutional resilience by strengthening governance and community engagement. An integrated approach not only enhances the overall efficiency and impact of urban policies but also plays a crucial role in identifying and managing potential trade-offs, for instance, between environmental goals and social inclusion. However, as this process of coordinating and implementing NUPs is complex, many countries lack the resources to implement all components of the NUP simultaneously (UN-Habitat, 2019). Often, this situation allows interest groups to take the lead in advocating for the implementation of specific NUP components that impact them directly.
- **Promoting win-win outcomes between short-term responses and long-term resilience**. Cities often face the challenge of balancing immediate needs and responses against the planning and investment required for future resilience. For instance, when a crisis occurs, resources might be diverted to emergency response and recovery efforts at the expense of long-term resilience building and preventive measures. This can create a cycle of vulnerability where cities that are focused on responding to current crises are perpetually unprepared for future shocks. Besides, investing in climate-resilient infrastructure often requires significant financial resources and planning. In the short term, this can lead to budget constraints or the reallocation of funds from other pressing needs. A broad approach to climate-related decision-making is therefore essential, which includes stress-testing climate policies against potential future disruptions, understanding their interactions, and identifying win-win responses to enhance policy resilience (OECD, 2023). NUPs are instrumental in identifying and managing trade-offs between immediate needs and short-term responses to shocks and crises, and investments to achieve long-term resilience. For instance, NUPs can promote coordinating short-term crisis management strategies with long-term urban planning. Besides, NUPs can provide a structured platform for stakeholders from different sectors to facilitate informed decision-making that considers both immediate and long-term impacts.
- **Tackling the asymmetric impacts of crises and shocks across places and people**. By targeting urban areas and cities, a NUP can be an effective instrument to align policies across territorial scales, sectors and places, directing financing and contributing to the overall resilience and sustainability goals of cities (Hohmann, 2017) (OECD, 2023). As strategic documents of urban policy, NUPs can facilitate the recognition of the differentiated challenges across urban systems, based on their environmental, economic and social conditions. This allows for the creation of tailored actions that are specific to the needs of each city (for example, prioritizing flood management strategies in coastal cities, heatwave management in dense urban centres). Acknowledging and bolstering the informal sector is crucial for urban economic resilience and developing productive urban futures, especially in developing countries. Considering the contribution of the informal sector, cities should adopt a transformative urban economic agenda

that is both inclusive and equitable. Urban planning, governance and international development approaches should be reformed to respond to the needs of informal sector workers. This should be supported by necessary mechanisms such as access to finance (and relief during crises), markets and infrastructure to enhance the resilience of informal economy actors to shocks and to strengthen their contribution to productive urban futures (UN-Habitat, 2022). Extending social protection to informal sector workers is critical for inclusive development and resilient urban futures, as it supports vulnerable populations that are often most affected by urban challenges (UN-Habitat, 2022). The Territorial Approach to Climate Action and Resilience framework, developed by the OECD is an example of how climate action can tailored to address local specificities (OECD, 2023) (see box 3.1).

Box 3.1. Territorial Approach to Climate Action and Resilience framework

A Territorial Approach to Climate Action and Resilience "integrates a place-based perspective into national and subnational climate policies and mainstreams climate objectives into urban, rural and regional development policies, to effectively drive climate action at all territorial scales" (OECD, 2023). It is a recognition that climate impacts are experienced differently across places, producing diverse risks and necessitating targeted solutions. As such, the framework has 45 indicators that allow for highly granular, context-specific data to be collected and offers 9 policy recommendations under 3 pillars of actions for place-based policies to be adopted. In addition, with this framework it is recognized that while cities have great potential to increase mitigation and adaptation efforts, effective climate action cannot be maximized without support from the national level. As an example, while local governments have direct power over one third of urban greenhouse gas emissions reduction potential by 2050, the remaining two-thirds of urban emission reduction requires coordination and support across levels of government (Coalition for Urban Transitions, 2019).

Source: (OECD, 2023); (Coalition for Urban Transitions, 2019).

B. National urban policy's role in enhancing urban resilience

1. The dimensions of resilience addressed in national urban policy frameworks

Serving as a comprehensive tool for integrating various policy areas to address the complex challenges faced by cities, NUPs are expected to provide policy coordination and coherence for cities to achieve resilience under multiple dimensions (see table 3.1).

- **Climate and ecological resilience**, which refers to the capacity to adapt to and recover from climate change impacts, environmental disturbances, or other ecological disruptions. This resilience involves enhancing the ability of cities to deal with changes and shocks while maintaining their essential functions and structures.
- **Economic resilience**, which refers to the capacity to absorb and recover from short-term crises and shocks (for example, cost of living, supply chain disruptions, market, volatility, etc.) and adapt to long-term and structural trends (for example, economic transformation triggered by automation, skill gaps, etc.).

- **Social-institutional resilience**, which refers to the capacity to effectively respond to, adapt to and recover from significant disruptions and challenges that threaten their stability, integrity and functioning.

Table 3.1. Dimensions and major crises, shocks and uncertainties of urban resilience

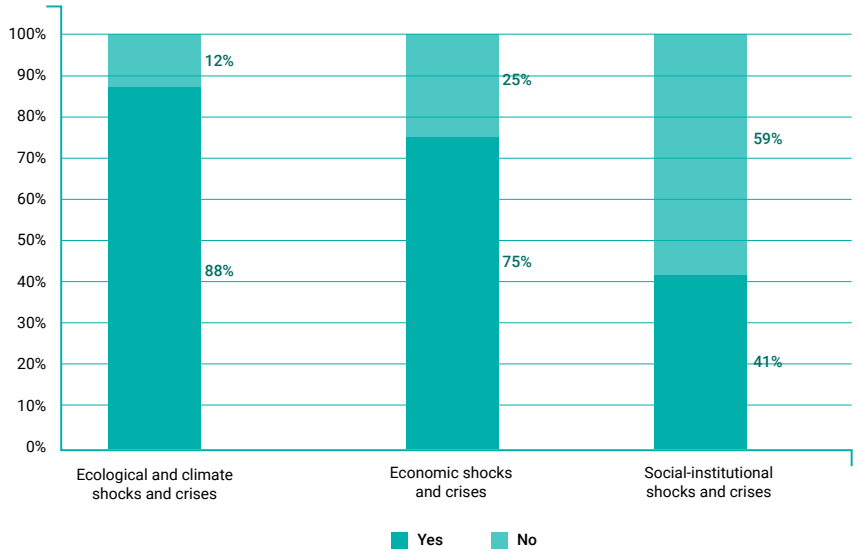
Dimensions	Climate and ecological resilience	Economic resilience	Social-institutional resilience
Major crises, shocks and uncertainties	Climate-related disasters (floods, heatwaves, forest fires, droughts)	Economic structural transformation, jobs & unemployment, skill gaps	War, terrorism, territorial conflicts, cybersecurity
	Long-term climate impacts (sea level rise, coastal erosion, and the loss of biodiversity)	Supply chain and logistics disruptions, energy and food crises	Political turmoil, erosion of trust and democracy
	Non-climate related natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes)	Inflation, cost of living crisis	Large scale migration, refugees
	Natural resources scarcity (e.g., raw materials, water)	Chronic diseases and other health crises (e.g., COVID-19)	
		Market volatility, financial crisis, debt crisis	

Source: Author's elaboration.

The country survey revealed that NUP is used as tool to tackle all the three thematic dimensions of urban resilience – the economic, the climate and ecological, and the social-institutional (see table 3.1). Among them, NUPs mostly address climate and ecological shocks, which are included in 88 per cent of NUPs. However, the economic dimension of resilience has also a high level of inclusion, being present in 75 per cent of NUPs, while social and institutional shocks and crises are included only in 39 per cent of NUPs (see figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Dimensions of resilience included in national urban policies

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)



Note: Each value considers the dimension related to shocks, crises and uncertainties included and potentially addressed in NUPs.

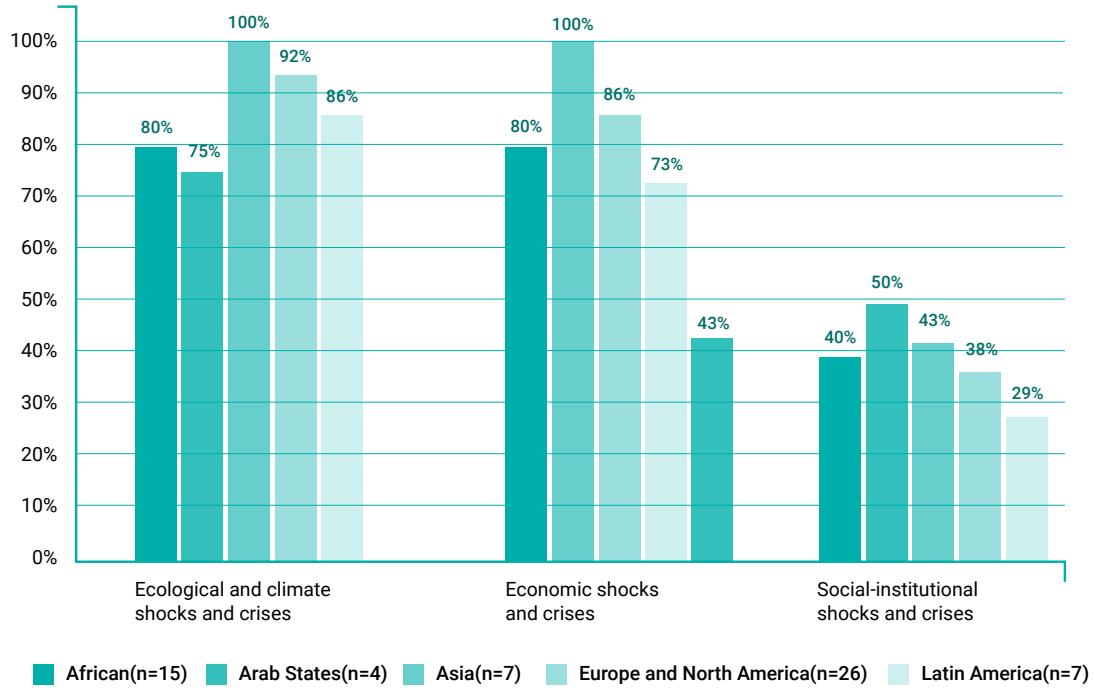
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The dimensions of resilience included into NUPs show a certain degree of variation across global regions (see figure 3.3).

- The ecological and climate dimension is included in all NUPs in Asian countries in the sample (n=7), followed by 92 per cent of NUPs in Europe and North America, and 86 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 80 per cent in Africa and 75 per cent in the Arab States.
- The economic dimension is included in all NUPs by Arab States, followed by NUPs in Asia (86 per cent), Africa (80 per cent), Europe and North America (73 per cent), while NUPs in Latin American and Caribbean countries are on average less focused on economic resilience (43 per cent).
- The social-institutional dimension is included in relatively more NUPs in Arab States (50 per cent), followed by NUPs in Asia (43 per cent), Africa (40 per cent), Europe and North America (38 per cent), Latina American and Caribbean Countries (29 per cent).

Figure 3.3. Dimensions of resilience included in national urban policies, by global region

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)

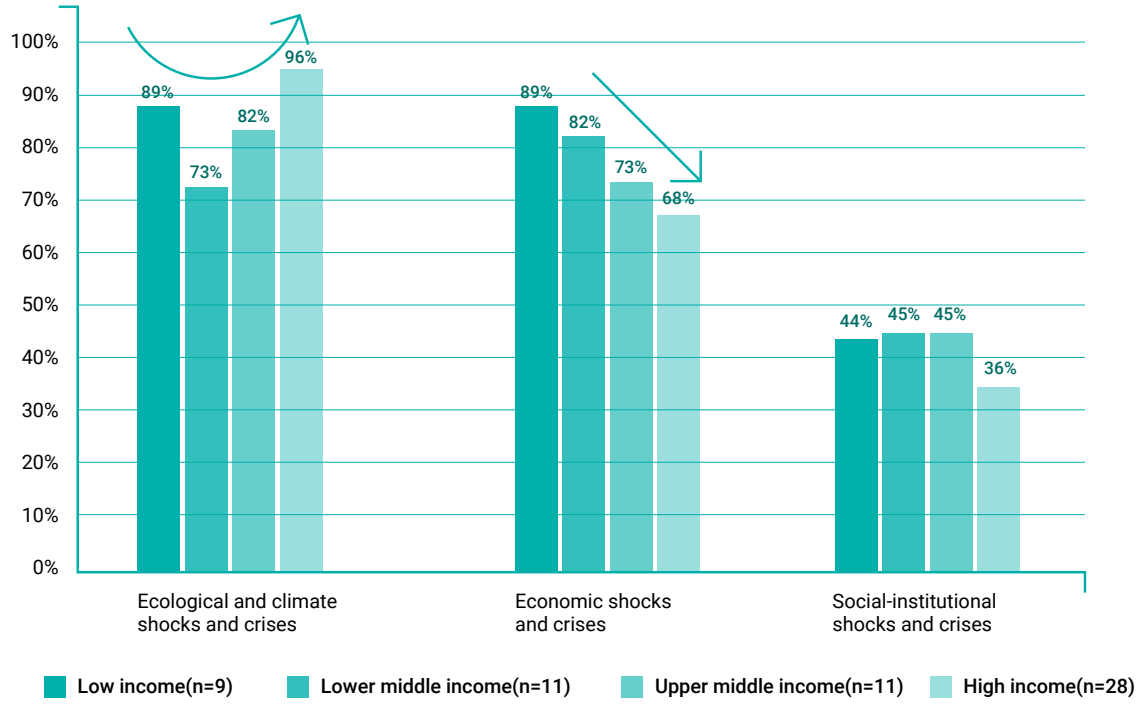


Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The embodiment of resilience into NUP shows also some differentiations related to the level of income (see figure 3.4), in particular for ecological and climate resilience and for economic resilience (while social-institutional resilience does not show significant variations). The inclusion of ecological and climate shocks and crises into NUPs seems to follow a U shape, since the highest shares are found in both "high income" (96 per cent) and "low-income" (89 per cent) countries, while middle-income countries have lower shares (lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries have respectively 73 per cent and 82 per cent of their NUPs including ecological and climate resilience). The inclusion of economic shocks and crises appears to be negatively related with income level since it decreases from 89 per cent in low-income countries to respectively 82 per cent, 73 per cent and 68 per cent in lower-middle-income, upper-middle-income and high-income countries.

Figure 3.4. Dimensions of resilience included in national urban policies, by income level

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)



Note: Countries are classified based on Gross National Income per capita (OECD/European Commission, 2020, p. 13).

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey and World Bank classification by income (The World Bank, 2022).

A NUP on average includes more than one dimension (see table 3.2). Namely, 22 countries (40 per cent of the respondent countries) include all three dimensions – climate and ecological, economic, and social-institutional. For instance, In **Costa Rica**, the National Habitat Policy (2023) addresses urban resilience across all dimensions of urban systems. Twenty countries include two dimensions, which in almost all cases are the ecological and climate and the economic dimensions (except for Togo, which includes the economic and the social-institutional dimensions of resilience).

Table 3.2. National urban policies by number of dimensions of resilience included

One dimension	Two dimensions	Three dimensions
Ecological and climate	Ecological and climate + economic	Ecological and climate + economic + social-institutional
Chile	Burkina Faso	Belarus
Israel	Colombia	Benin
Lithuania	Croatia	Cameroon
Luxembourg	Czechia	Costa Rica
Madagascar	Egypt	Ecuador
Malta	Ethiopia	France
Mexico	Finland	Germany
Netherlands	Ghana	Italy
Peru	Indonesia	Japan
Spain	Ireland	Latvia
Sweden	Republic of Korea	Mali
	Malawi	Nigeria
Economic	New Zealand	Norway
Bulgaria	Niger	Philippines
Morocco	Portugal	Poland
	Romania	Qatar
	Rwanda	Saudi Arabia
	Slovakia	Serbia
	Slovenia	Somalia
		Türkiye
	Economic + social-institutional	Ukraine
	Togo	United Kingdom

Note: Data based on question 21 of the country survey: "How are the major crises, shocks and uncertainties included and potentially addressed in your NUP? For each challenge, please specify if is addressed or not in the NUP."

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

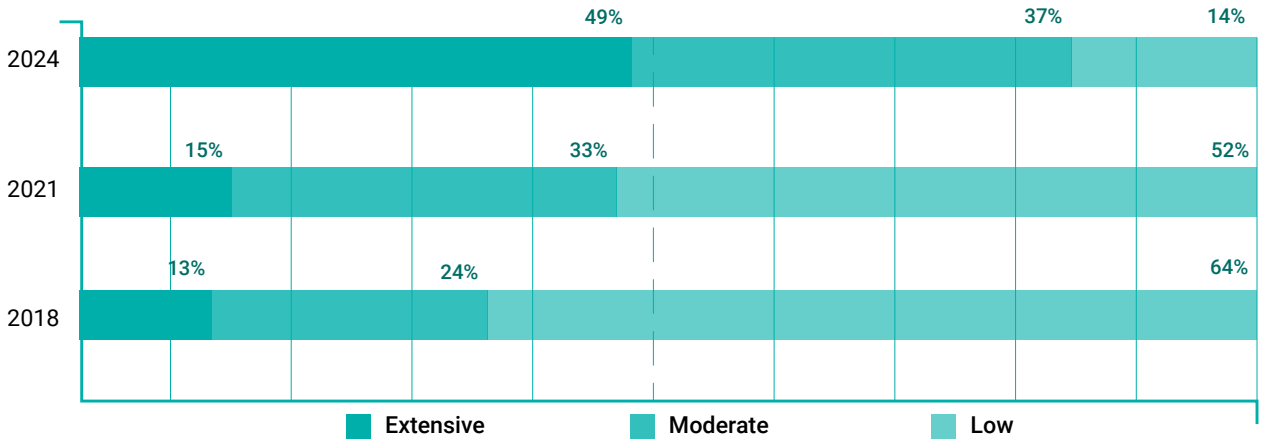
If a NUP covers only one aspect of resilience, it is in almost all cases ecological and climate resilience, with a few exceptions that focus on economic resilience. For instance, Bulgaria focuses on the economic dimensions, dealing with supporting the health system (in the aftermath of COVID-19) addressing the economic consequences of the decarbonization in urban areas.

2. Ecological and climate resilience in national urban policies

Ecological and climate resilience has been prioritized by NUPs across the years. Figure 3.5 shows that almost half of the countries have said they give extensive attention to climate action (both mitigation and adaptation), which can be used as a proxy for the attention given to climate resilience. While in 2021, only 15 per cent of NUPs had extensive attention on the theme, it was 13 per cent in 2018. Similarly, in the current survey, only 14 per cent of countries report low attention to the theme, while in 2021, more than half of countries had low attention (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021, p. 134) (see box 3.2).

Figure 3.5. Level of attention given to climate resilience in national urban policies across the three editions of GSNUP

Share of countries with available information



Note: For 2018, data are based on a sample of 88 countries with information available (data were retrieved by desk research). For 2021, the analysis included 162 countries with available information (either responding to the survey question "what level of attention does your NUP grant to climate resilience" or with information obtained by desk research). For 2024, the analysis includes 71 respondent countries responding to the question asking what level of attention their NUP gives to "mainstream climate action (both mitigation and adaptation) into urban planning and design, urban infrastructure investments, and/or urban service delivery frameworks".

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey, (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021) and (OECD/UN-Habitat, 2018).

Box 3.2. Climate resilience in national urban policies: key findings from Global State of National Urban Policy 2 (2021)

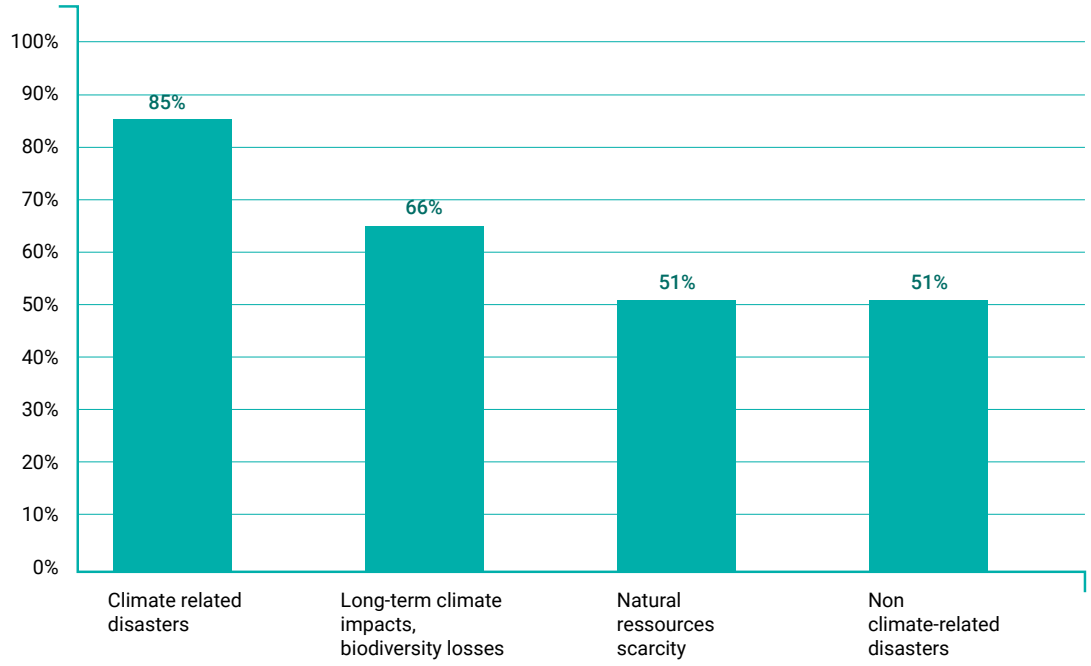
- 48 per cent of countries reported giving high to moderate attention to climate resilience.
- Most NUPs included both climate resilience and the low-carbon transition: 54 out of 67 responding countries (81 per cent) reported focusing on climate change, of which 52 NUPs included climate change via both mitigation and adaptation measures.
- Two-thirds of the NUPs paying attention to climate change featured special measures to improve the resilience of vulnerable urban populations (31 out of 46 countries, 67 per cent).
- Two categories of NUP dominated: those that comprehensively included climate change, and those that served as a portal to other sectoral climate policies.
- Countries incorporated climate measures under the umbrella of traditional urban planning instruments in their NUPs for "quick wins".
- Countries increasingly used NUPs to go beyond traditional urban policy by embedding less common climate considerations.
- Institutional and capacity-building mechanisms to coordinate climate action in NUP were commonly used, while financial mechanisms for investment in cities aligned with NUP objectives, and mechanisms to track subnational climate finance were less common.
- Common obstacles to integrating climate in the NUP were a lack of expertise at the intersection of climate change and urban policy (39 per cent of respondents), and limited coordination mechanisms between national and local levels on this subject (30 per cent).

Source: GSNUP2 (2021, p. 132).

Within the ecological and climate resilience dimension, climate-related disasters — such as floods, heatwaves, forest fires and droughts — are the most included issues in NUPs, featured in 85 per cent of them. This highlights countries' strategic alignment of NUPs with the pressing need to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Climate-related disasters are followed by long-term climate impacts (for example, sea-level rise, coastal erosion) and biodiversity losses, which are included in 66 per cent of NUPs. Natural resource scarcity (for example, minerals, water) and other, non-climate related natural disasters (for example, earthquakes) each appear in 51 per cent of NUPs (see figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6. Climate and ecological shocks and crises included in national urban policies

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)



Note: respondents could choose more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

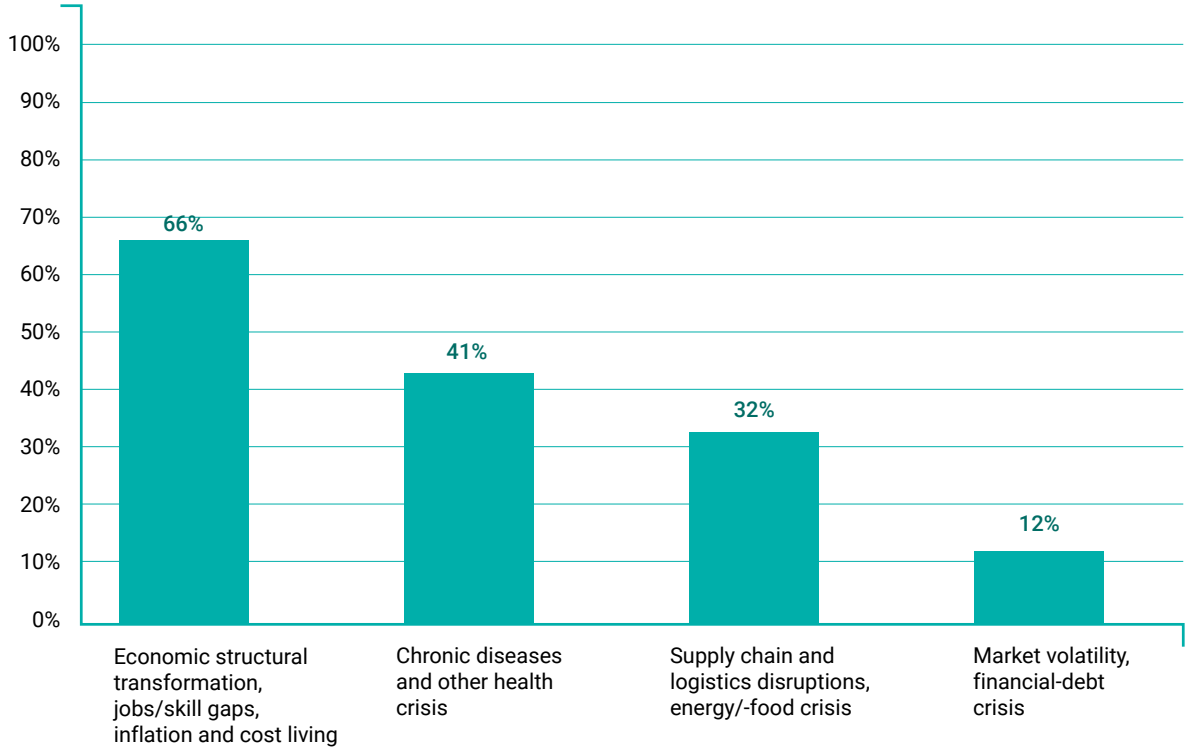
3. Economic resilience in national urban policies

The survey revealed a marked variability in the economic challenges that NUPs incorporate (see figure 3.7). Namely, 66 per cent of NUPs focusing on resilience incorporate shocks, crises and uncertainties prompted by economic structural transformations, such as jobs and unemployment, skill gaps, inflation and cost of living. Chronic diseases and other health crises are a focus for 41 per cent of NUPs, implying countries' reflection on the COVID-19 pandemic. Supply chain and logistics disruptions, and energy and food crises are noted in 32 per cent of NUPs, while market volatility and financial crises, including debt crises, are noted in 12 per cent.

In **Serbia**, a NUP has led to the introduction of employment-related strategies in urban areas not only to increase economic resilience that would contribute to a better quality of life for all population and age categories, but also to prevent the brain drain and emigration which are prevalent in the country. NUPs and Regional Development Policies (RDPs) in **Canada**, **Croatia** and **the Czech Republic** have seen the development of strategies aimed at attracting and retaining skills, talents and labour, including immigration programmes.

Figure 3.7. Economic shocks and crises included in national urban policies

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)



Note: respondents could choose more than one option.

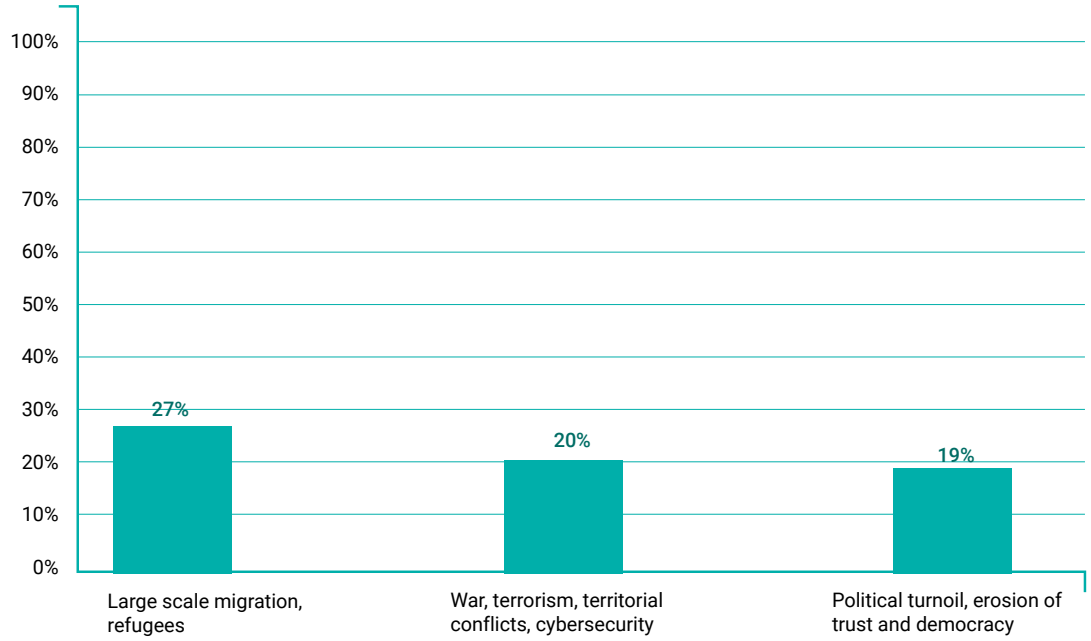
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

4. Social-institutional resilience in national urban policies

With social-institutional shocks, crises and uncertainties, there are no marked variations. The challenges related to large-scale migration and refugees are included in 27 per cent of NUPs, followed by war, terrorism, territorial conflicts, cybersecurity (20 per cent) and political turmoil, erosion of trust and democracy (19 per cent) (see figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8. Social-institutional shocks and crises included in national urban policies

Share percentage of respondent countries (n=59)



Note: respondents could choose more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Different examples were identified that incorporated large-scale migration and refugee challenges in NUPs. For example, NUPs were found to have applied service delivery strategies to address demographic shifts due to ageing populations, and changes in reproductive behaviour, among other things. Different examples were identified that incorporated large-scale migration and refugee challenges in NUPs. For example, NUPs were found to have applied service delivery strategies to address demographic shifts due to ageing populations, and changes in reproductive behaviour, among other things. In Poland the NUP has strategies to improve access to housing in the country's urban areas by addressing housing challenges due to the war-related migration from Ukraine.

C. Concrete actions foreseen by national urban policies to promote resilience

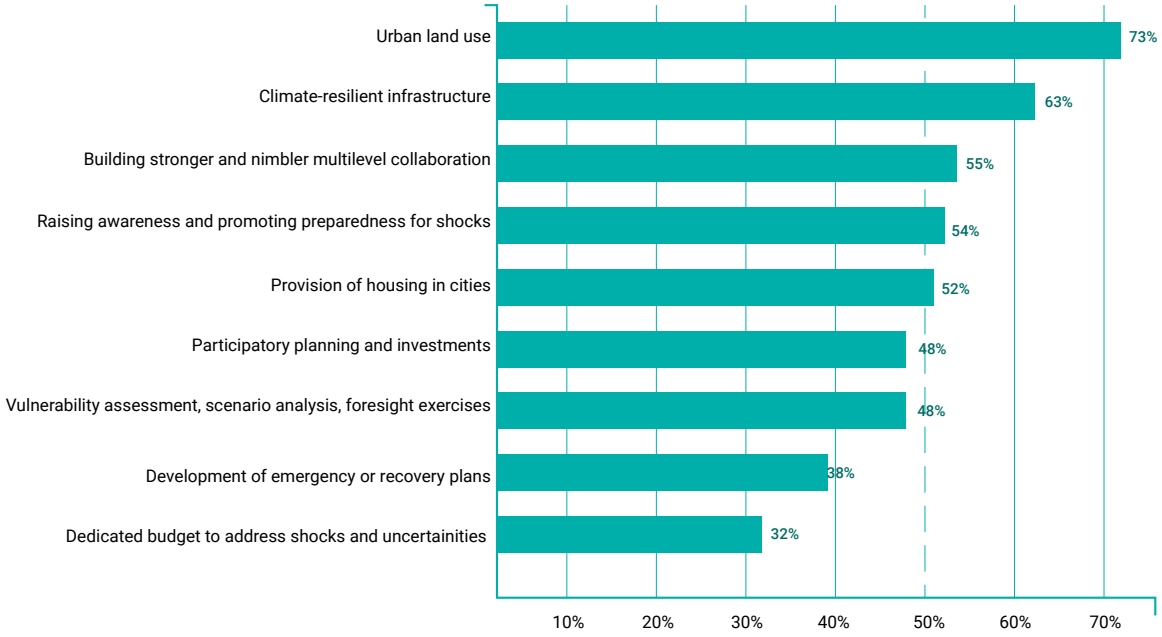
NUPs promote resilience by prompting a variety of actions (see figure 3.9). Sevent-three per cent of NUPs that include resilience mention urban land-use as actions to be taken to promote resilience, for instance integrating disaster risk into urban planning or building regulations This is followed by resilient urban infrastructure to address climate-related disasters, such as early warning systems, energy and transport (55 per cent); strengthening and making multilevel collaboration more agile (55 per cent); raising awareness and promoting preparedness for shocks (54 per cent); and providing housing, including shelters in case of natural disasters and temporary housing for migrants and refugees (52 per cent).

Other actions are used in fewer than half of the NUPs, including participatory planning and investment by engaging vulnerable populations (48 per cent), vulnerability assessments, scenario analyses and

foresight exercises to better anticipate and prepare for shocks and uncertainties (48 per cent). The development of emergency plans, evacuation or shelter plans, contingency or business continuity plans, and recovery plans are included in 38 per cent of NUPs, and a dedicated budget to address shocks and uncertainties, such as emergency funds, is only referenced in 32 per cent of NUPs.

Figure 3.9. Foreseen actions within national urban policies to promote resilience against different shocks, crises and uncertainties

Share of respondent countries with a national urban policy promoting resilience (n=56)



Note: respondents could choose more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Below, a variety of concrete actions by countries to promote resilience against different shocks, crises and uncertainties in NUP are outlined.

Urban land-use instruments to promote resilience:

- **Burkina Faso** addresses urban development with consideration for fragile areas, in particular by preserving flood-prone zones.
- In **Chile**, a National Commission for Disaster Risk Reduction and Reconstruction has been established as the body responsible for assessing threats and integrating mitigation and adaptation measures into the urban and housing projects designed and executed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, which oversees the NUP (Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo, 2018).
- **Costa Rica** targets compact and planned cities for safe human settlements and requires planning instruments to consider the zoning of the areas to differentiate zones susceptible to natural threats, as well as considering the effects of climate change and adaptability.
- **Indonesia** integrates disaster risk into urban planning and building regulations by addressing mitigation and response to potential hazards and disasters within the urban environment. This

includes: a) identifying and mapping areas prone to natural disasters, b) implementing resilient building codes, and c) developing emergency response plans.

- In **Ireland**, the NUP, being guidance-oriented for the medium to long term vision for Ireland to 2040, provides a framework to support medium to long-term planning characterized by stability and certainty. The NUP is reviewed every six years, to consider changing circumstances and reflect them in the guidance for land use.
- **Lithuania** applies the principle of compactness in land use to all cities, where the optimal development rates are related to the specific structure of each settlement.
- In **Portugal**, the NUP maps the critical vulnerabilities of the country and establishes a set of actions and guidance linked with those vulnerabilities. The most relevant include those related to urban land use by means of urban renewal and the containment of urban expansion and sprawl, improvement of public urban spaces, including their adaptation to climate change, the introduction of bioclimatic design and of nature-based solutions in urban spaces as key measures for the long-term resilience of cities.

Resilient urban infrastructure to address climate-related disasters, such as early warning systems, energy and transport:

- **Madagascar** is targeting the reduction of domestic energy consumption (for example, for cooking or lighting), the development of eco-districts and enhancement of green solutions in urban areas.
- Within its main objectives, the NUP in **Mali** has a specific goal to improve the economic infrastructure of cities, identify and promote urban professions, and enhance local economies of cities and their surrounding areas.
- **Serbia** is targeting nature-based solutions to increase urban resiliency.

Actions to strengthen and make multilevel collaboration more agile:

- **France** has a fund for the prevention of major natural hazards ("*fonds de prevention des risques naturels majeurs*"). This fund can be accessed by local authorities and small businesses, individuals, public land institutions and state services. To be eligible, a local authority must have a natural risks prevention plan, which is developed under the authority of the prefect and by involving local authorities in a consultative process.
- In **Lithuania,** detailed development of urban centres is determined by strategic plans and lower-level integrated territorial planning documents.
- In **Nigeria**, the NUP prescribes mainstreaming climate resilience planning into spatial planning at all levels, starting with hazard vulnerability risk analysis and mapping.
- In **Poland**, the NUP provides the local government authorities and the local communities with tools and opportunities to ensure their active engagement in actions targeting the mitigation of negative effect of climate changes in cities.

Raising awareness and promoting preparedness for shocks:

- **Ghana** reported the use of participatory planning and investments.
- In the **Republic of Korea**, the 5th Comprehensive National Territorial plan (2020-2040) focuses on various foreseen actions, particularly urban land use. The plan has implemented a comprehensive disaster prevention system, encompassed all phases of disaster response, and has established an integrated climate change response system, while also employing advanced smart technologies for intelligent disaster prevention.
- **Peru** focuses on the production of land in safe zones as well as a service on projects for the resettlement of populations settled in areas declared as non-mitigable risk zones.
- In **Austria**, the city of Vienna has a Heat Action Plan to stay resilient against rising urban heat. The focus is on informing and communicating with the public the short-term measures for different target groups to be taken in the event of an urban heatwave.

Participatory planning and investment:

- In **Cameroon**, the NUP has a focus on mobilizing local stakeholders, including local authorities, the private sector, civil society, women, organizations representing young people and people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, professionals, academic institutions, trade unions, employers' organizations, migrant associations and cultural associations. To this extent, the country plans to implement tools such as participatory budgeting, children's councils, youth councils, seniors' councils, migrants' councils, etc.
- **New Zealand** is implementing participatory planning, through partnership with Māori.
- **Serbia** highlights the role of participatory practices in planning to increase resilience and foster inclusiveness and democracy, and therefore be resilient to social instability and to contribute to more sustainable development that considers more diverse needs and interests.

Vulnerability assessments, scenario analyses and foresight exercises to better anticipate and prepare for shocks and uncertainties:

- **Indonesia** uses assessment analysis to enhance anticipation and preparation, by evaluating the current conditions, vulnerabilities and the potential risks for urban areas.
- In **Latvia**, the national disaster management system prescribes preventive measures under the civil protection system based on risk assessment results and performed by the competent ministries involving the authorities that are subordinate to the Ministry of Interior Management or local government. Considering risk assessment and disaster management measures, responsible authorities develop and manage implementation of various civil protection plans. All developed plans are based on the content specified in a Cabinet of Ministers regulation "provisions regarding the structure of civil protection plans and the information to be included therein", which implies that developed plans include preventative measures.
- In **Mexico**, the country is preparing the Official Mexican Standards on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management, with the objective to promote the implementation of regulatory instruments that strengthen the NUP. In particular, the standards will incorporate a risk analysis to identify and prioritize areas vulnerable to disasters and climatic phenomena within cities, which will enable more informed and strategic decision-making in urban development and risk management by facilitating the implementation of appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures.

Emergency plans, evacuation or shelter plans, contingency or business continuity plans, and recovery plans:

- In **Benin**, all the municipalities are equipped with contingency plans.
- In **Ghana**, the NUP includes emergency and contingency planning.
- In **Latvia**, the Cabinet Regulation "Procedures for Surveying Critical Infrastructure, Including European Critical Infrastructure, and for Planning and Implementation of Security Measures and Continuity of Operation" prescribes provisions on critical infrastructure to ensure their continuity (Republic of Latvia. Cabinet, 2021).

Dedicated budget to address shocks and uncertainties, such as emergency funds:

- **Benin** has a National Fund for Disaster Response and has microcredits and subsidies to support vulnerable populations.
- In **Costa Rica**, the National Habitat Policy (2023) allocates specific budgets for emergency care in the wake of climate-related shocks and crises. It outlines the integration of climate change adaption into urban planning, zoning strategies for urban areas prone to natural threats, demonstrating a strategic and prepared approach to risk (Government of Costa Rica, 2023).

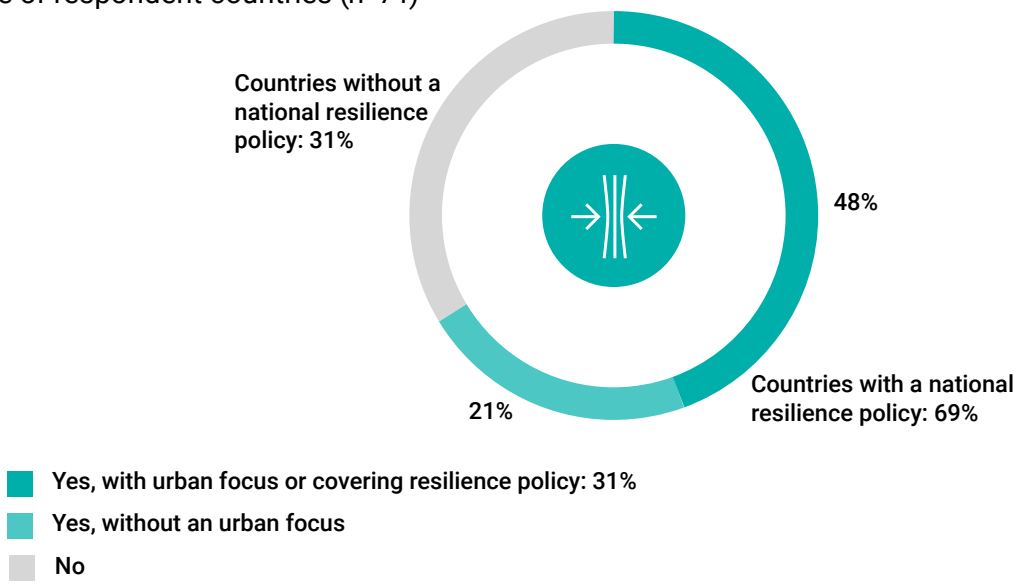
D. Coordination between national urban policies and other resilience policies

5. Presence of national-level resilience policies

According to the survey data, 48 per cent of countries with a NUP have a dedicated national urban resilience policy or strategy, or a national resilience policy or strategy with an urban focus (see figure 3.10). Twenty-one per cent of countries with a NUP also have a general national resilience policy (that is, without an urban focus). Together, the survey revealed that 69 per cent of countries with a NUP have a national-level resilience policy, while the remaining 31 per cent do not have any national-level resilience policy. Overall, the results show that national-level resilient policies are being practised widely.

Figure 3.10. Existence of national resilience policy for countries with a national urban policy

Share of respondent countries (n=71)



Note: The figure also covers 14 countries without a NUP.
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The survey also identified several countries that have a specific focus on cities or urban resilience, either through a dedicated urban resilience policy or within their national resilience policy:

- The National Development Plan 2022-2026 in **Colombia** includes many goals related to climate and resilience, with goals such as protecting and recovering national ecosystems and biodiversity, but equally identifying and mitigating risks of disasters to protect urban communities and their infrastructure.
- In **Croatia**, the national urban resilience policy (National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021–2026) is spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and focuses on reforms and investments. A key area is decarbonizing cities and improving urban air quality (European Comission, 2023). Additionally, the plan entails sustainable urban renewal strategies, aligning its urban resilience initiatives with the country's broader strategy to improve citizens' adaptability to the green transition as well as the challenges emerging from climate change (European Parliament, 2024).

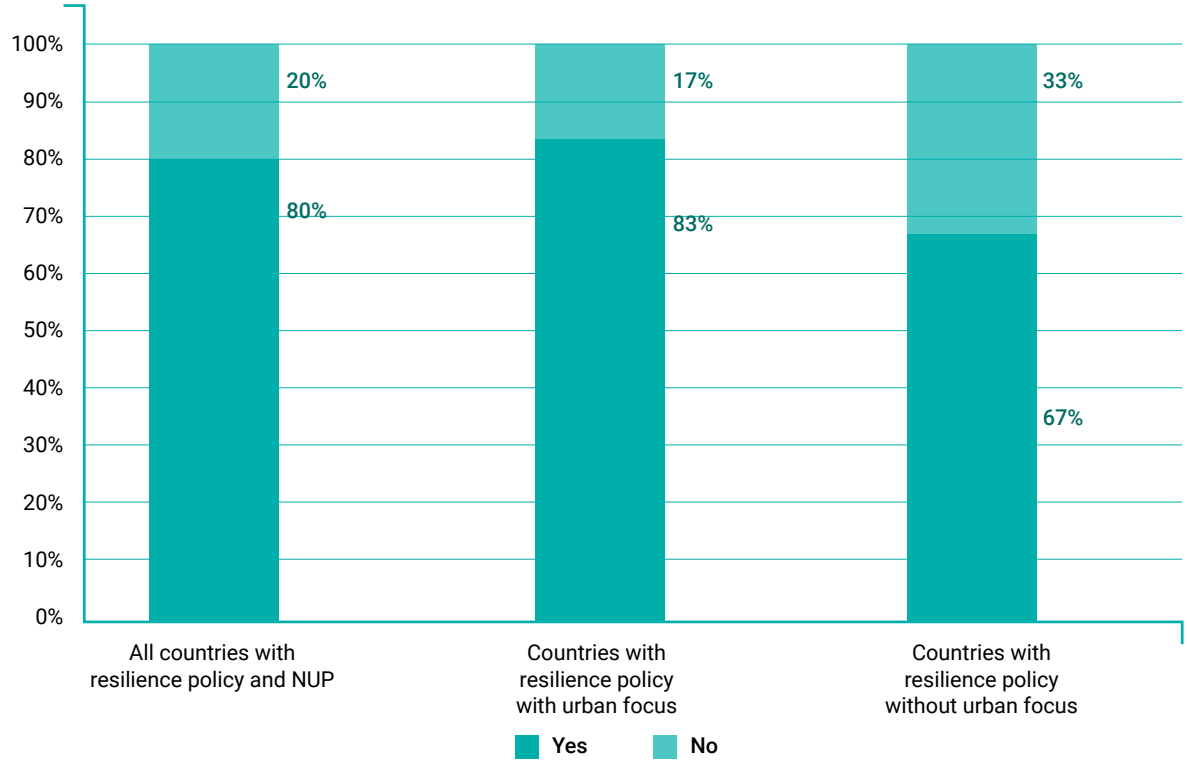
- In **Estonia**, the Climate Change Adaption Development Plan until 2030, reported as a national resilience policy, focuses on reducing the country's vulnerability to climate change. Recognizing the long-term impacts of climate change on urban development, the plan highlights the importance of considering cities' preparedness in urban planning to tackle future risks such as floods, storms and heat waves. The plan includes a working group in the formulation of a development plan, which engages among others the Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities (Republic of Estonia - Ministry of the Environment, 2013).
- In **Germany**, the resilience policy "*Strategie zur Stärkung der Resilienz gegenüber Katastrophen*" (Strategy for Strengthening Resilience to Disasters) from 2022, concentrates on community resilience through the Federal Ministry of Interior and Community (Federal Office for Population Protection and Disaster Relief, 2022). It focuses on protecting livelihoods, prioritizing community well-being in the face of shocks, disasters and unforeseen events. The strategy emphasizes the imperative of community-based initiatives that promote investment in disaster preparedness and comprehension of disaster risk (Federal Office for Population Protection and Disaster Relief, 2022).
- In **Malta**, the Recovery and Resilience Plan, overseen by the Ministry for Economy, European Funds and Lands (MEFL), focuses on promoting the green and digital shift to improve urban resilience. The strategy aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, decarbonize transport, increase energy efficiency in building stocks, and promote waste and water management. The strategy follows European Union guidelines by emphasizing a minimum climate spend of 37 per cent and 20 per cent for digital initiatives. Malta is focused on achieving a sustainable, egalitarian, green and digital recovery to support national and European Union objectives, with a particular emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals (Government of Malta, 2021).
- In **New Zealand**, the National Adaption Plan (NAP) from 2022 addresses the complex nature of climate change, including increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, sea-level rise and intensifying natural hazards. With more than 120 actions, the NAP seeks to tackle the disruption of essential aspects of communities' livelihoods, such as infrastructure, access to water and health services, highlighting the recognition of the economic and social implications that climate shocks and crises have on particularly vulnerable demographics (Government of New Zealand, 2022).

6. Mechanisms to align NUP with their national resilience strategy

The survey showed that 80 per cent of countries that had both a NUP and a national resilience policy or strategy (with or without an urban focus) also reported the existence of one or more mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between the NUP and the national resilience policy or strategy (see figure 3.11). The existence of mechanisms for policy coherence was more frequent in countries where the national resilience policy had an urban focus or targets urban areas, with 83 per cent of these countries having mechanisms for policy coherence, while the existence of such mechanisms in countries with a resilience policy without an explicit urban focus was reported by 67 per cent.

Figure 3.11. Existence of mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between existing national resilience policies/strategy and national urban policies

Share of respondent countries with a national level resilience policy (n=54), with a focus on urban resilience (n=30) and without a focus on urban resilience (n=12)

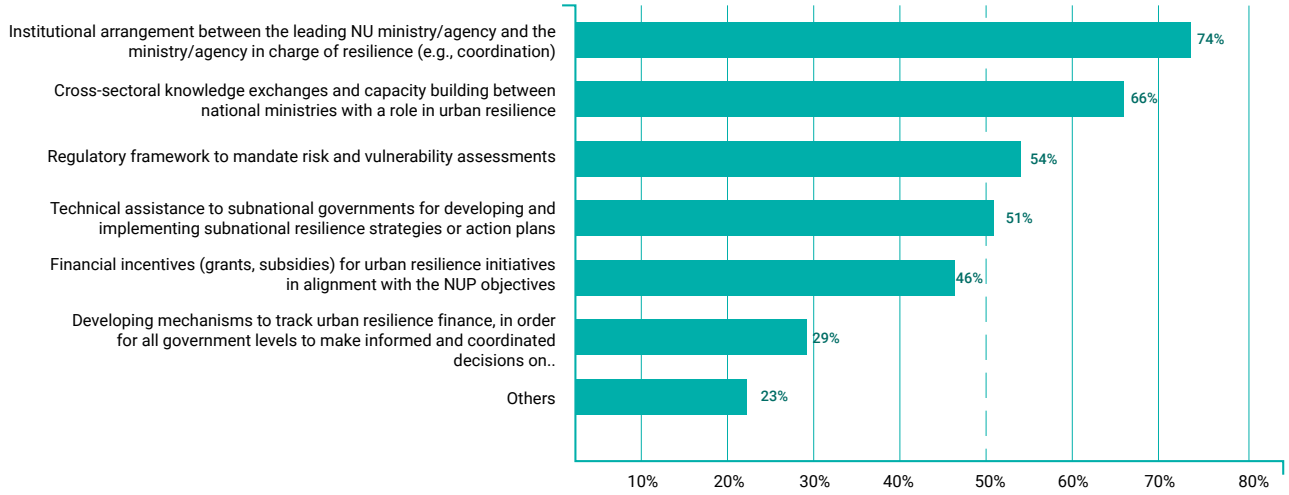


Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The survey showed that 74 per cent of the 35 countries with both a NUP and a national resilience strategy had set institutional arrangements between the leading NUP institution and the national institution in charge of the resilience policy, to ensure consistency (for example, by using a coordination committee) (see figure 3.12). In addition, 66 per cent of countries engaged in cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges and capacity-building between national ministries with a role in urban resilience, highlighting the importance of interdepartmental collaboration. Over half of the countries, at 54 per cent, provided a regulatory framework which mandated risk and vulnerability assessments, reflecting a proactive approach to resilience planning. Providing technical assistance to subnational governments for the development and implementation of subnational resilience strategies or action plans was a mechanism used by 51 per cent of countries, indicating recognition of the need to support local levels of government. Finance-related mechanisms, such as incentives (for example, grants and subsidies) for urban resilience initiatives that align with the NUP objectives, and the development of mechanisms to track urban resilience finance (for all government levels to make informed and coordinated decisions on resilience) appeared less used (respectively by 46 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively), highlighting an untapped potential.

Figure 3.12. Mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between existing national resilience policies/strategy and national urban policies

Share of respondent countries with mechanisms for policy coherence (n=35)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

In terms of respondents with a national-level resilience policy encompassing urban policy, 54 per cent included a regulatory framework to mandate risk and vulnerability assessments.

- In **Colombia**, urban development and disaster risk management are aligned within regulatory frameworks, including in the 2012 Law 1523, in which requirements for incorporating risk management studies into land-use plans of municipalities and districts were established.
- In **Latvia,** the State Civil Protection Plan (SCPP) from 2021 regulates disaster-management procedures, focusing on preventive, preparedness, response and mitigation measures to ensure national and regional resilience (European Commission, 2019). The Civil Protection System is an integral part of the SCPP, comprising state, governments at various tiers, legal and natural entities, each outlined with specific roles. The Civil Protection and Disaster Management Law outlines legislative directives for the disaster management entities, ensuring safety, while the Cabinet Regulation on Critical Infrastructure provides directives for monitoring and planning endeavours, contributing to a holistic and comprehensive approach to resilience (Republic of Latvia, 2021).
- In **Mexico**, several regulatory frameworks have been established in order to guarantee comprehensive disaster response and management. One element of this strategy involves three general laws (la Ley General de Asentamientos Humanos, Ordenamiento Territorial y Desarrollo Urbano, la Ley General de Protección Civil, and la Ley General de Cambio Climático), which foster institutional agreements for disaster response, ensuring alignment and coherence in the implementation of strategies and public policies.
- In **Peru,** Law 29664 regulates the objectives, composition and operation of the National Disaster Risk Management System – SINAGERD, the purpose of which is to identify and reduce risks associated with hazards, minimize their effects and respond to hazardous situations through targeted guidelines.

With regard to institutional arrangements, 74 per cent of respondent countries have ensured consistency

between the leading institutional body in charge of NUP and the ministries or agencies responsible for resilience.

- **Benin** has implemented important mechanisms to coordinate policies across territorial scales. Specifically, the Ministry of Development and Coordination of Government Action and the Ministry of Decentralization ensure alignment.
- **Canada** employs diverse mechanisms to ensure policy coherence and coordination in line with the National Adaptation Strategy. Environment and Climate Change Canada ensures a comprehensive and coordinated approach is pursued that focuses policy efforts to protect communities and advance climate adaptation at the community-level.
- In **Thailand**, the Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Committee coordinates all agencies involved in disaster management.
- To ensure policy coherence between national resilience policies and other policies affecting urban and rural areas, the **United Kingdom** has established Local Resilience Forums (LFRs). These are multi-agency partnerships that are made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the National Health Service, the Environment Agency and others.
- In **Zambia**, a Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit has been established under the Office of the Vice President to coordinate mechanisms for resilience at the national level, while Disaster Management and Mitigation committees have been established at provincial and district levels to facilitate resilience interventions at the local level.
- **Türkiye** laid out the governance structure that shapes its urban framework. Specifically, the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change is responsible for urbanization policies, while the Ministry of Industry and Technology is responsible for regional plans. Importantly, both ministries are in the process of drafting new plans that ensure alignment between sectors through legislative agreements.

Capacity-building is another mechanism adopted by respondent countries to ensure policy coherence between NUP and national resilience policy. While 66 per cent of respondents have fostered cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges and capacity-building between national ministries with a role in urban resilience, 51 per cent have provided technical assistance to subnational governments for developing and implementing subnational resilience strategies or action plans.

- In **Costa Rica**, Capacity-Building and Technology Transfer, and Education, Culture and Awareness Training, are two of the National Climate Change Strategy's five pillars to address current threats from climate change. The others are mitigation, adaptation, and measurements.
- In **Croatia**, the Committee of the Croatian Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction brings together all relevant state administration bodies, scientific institutions, citizens' associations, and other representatives that implement some of the measures and activities of disaster risk reduction in their daily activities.
- In **Ethiopia**, the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure implements initiatives, including the establishment of training programmes and knowledge-sharing platforms, to provide technical support to regional and local governments. These efforts aim to bolster the understanding of

national resilience strategies and strengthen their capabilities for development.

- In **Germany**, the NUP was enhanced by the implementation of the Resilience Strategy in 2022, in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. The strategy focuses on urban resilience in response to shocks, crises and uncertainties, and encompasses a comprehensive disaster risk management approach, preventative actions and preparedness, and recovery plans spanning departmental boundaries. The strategy is implemented through the Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BKK), focusing on cross-sectoral collaboration and continuous progress. It supports the establishment of synergies and coherence between existing efforts, to ensure coordinated actions in tackling shocks and crises. Future steps involve interdepartmental collaboration and a progress report in 2025, underscoring the dynamic nature of disaster risks. (Federal Office for Population Protection and Disaster Relief, 2022).
- Within **Indonesia**, cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges and capacity-building is facilitated between national ministries involved in urban resilience. This involves promoting collaboration, sharing information, aligning and coordinating actions.
- **New Zealand** has prioritized the collaboration, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building among various government agencies involved in climate action. Indeed, working groups at chief executive-level , and other government officials, that include ministerial leadership regularly take part in the conversations.
- In **Nigeria**, the National Urban Development Policy aims to foster partnerships with national and international organizations that are involved in climate change initiatives within the country. This includes collaborating with the National Climate Change Desk to shape policy, partnering with multinational bodies on urban climate change, aligning with state and urban councils on local policies, and enforcing mitigation and adaptation measures.

In addition, a considerable percentage of countries that took part in the survey had implemented financial mechanisms, either in the form of financial incentives (for example, grants subsidies) for urban resilience initiatives in alignment with the NUP objectives (46 per cent), or as mechanisms to track urban resilience finance so that all levels of government can make informed and coordinated decisions on resilience (29 per cent).

- In **Ethiopia**, the process of applying for grants and mobilizing urban resilience finance provides the opportunity for the Ministry of Urban Development and Construction (in charge of the NUP) and the Ministry of Planning and Development (the primary government institution responsible for national planning and development and responsible for national resilience policies) to formally collaborate and align their priorities. For instance, the NUP includes the targets and indicators set in the national resilience strategies. The two ministries also formally collaborate on mobilizing sources of urban resilience finance.
- In **Italy**, the Monitoring Committees of the Cohesion Programme fund sustainable urban development strategies, manage financing, delineation, and non-overlapping mechanisms in alignment with the European Union Urban Agenda.
- In **Saudi Arabia**, finance plays a role in aligning NUP and national resilience policy through several bodies and committees such as the Council of Economic and Development Affairs and the Strategic Management Office. They provide recommendations and direction to the different stakeholders, approve budgets and allocate funds, thus ensuring coherence and engagement.



4. National urban policy to promote adequate, affordable and sustainable housing

This chapter features an analysis of the main urban housing challenges reported by countries, which impact housing affordability, adequacy and sustainability on the national and city scales. The analysis is of the attention given by national urban policies to housing challenges, and the subsequent actions undertaken by NUP. There is also a report on the existence of housing policies outside NUP, and the existence and type of mechanisms to ensure policy coherence and alignment between NUPs and other national housing policies.



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Key findings

- The majority of countries that responded to the survey give significant attention to housing issues in their national urban policies. Indeed, 81 per cent of NUPs give moderate to extensive attention to mainstreaming housing sustainability issues, 80 per cent to adequate housing, and 77 per cent to strategies for ensuring affordability.
- 82 per cent of countries have a national-level housing policy or strategy outside the NUP to address specific housing challenges related to cities and urban areas.
- Two-thirds of NUPs mention the lack of social housing; this and high property prices were highlighted by over half participating countries as the most pressing challenges to accessing adequate, affordable and sustainable housing.
- The top three housing challenges that the actions of NUPs sought to address include inadequate location of housing and lack of accessibility to services and opportunities (such as proximity to public transport, access to jobs, schools, hospitals, recreations) (31 per cent), stringent land-use, planning regulations, or building permit processes (30 per cent), and a lack of social housing (28 per cent).
- Governments are enhancing policy harmonization mechanisms to ensure policy coherence between NUPs and housing policies. Of the respondents, 79 per cent reported having no misalignment and tensions between their NUPs and existing national and subnational housing policies. Nevertheless, aligning NUPs and national housing remains a challenge for 21 per cent of respondents. Misalignment included lack of timely investment in urban infrastructure and associated services, and conflicts between housing supply targets or available locations for new housing services. For instance, a NUP restricts new infrastructure investment in urban suburbs although a national housing policy has housing supply targets that would require large-scale suburban development.
- 40 per cent of respondents have established institutional arrangements between the leading NUP ministry/agency and the housing ministry, such as coordination committees to ensure that housing investments in the NUP are fully consistent with national policies for addressing access to housing.

A. Housing: an urban policy challenge

As a sector and a "development multiplier", housing touches every aspect of a country's economy and has an interface with practically every social development sector, playing a quintessential role in the growth of cities and communities. However, adequate and affordable housing remains elusive, its actual realization as a fundamental right inconsistent, and thus an urgent policy priority in many countries worldwide.

Making up nearly 60 per cent of the built environment globally, housing lies at the centre of many essential needs of urban residents. At its base, it serves as a shelter where people may feel safe and secure. It is an important determinant of people's well-being, including their wealth, health, safety, work-life balance and social connections. It is a connector to the labour market, to infrastructure and public goods and services, such as water and electricity. It also determines a city's urban identity through the density of housing, the height of buildings and the walkability it affords. Together, such factors contribute to shaping the "feel" or imagery of a city. Moreover, housing not only plays a "physical" role in cities, but it is also a key driver of their level of social cohesion. As such, where adequate and affordable housing is lacking, disparities appear and social segregation is aggravated, pointing to the need to strategically position housing as a national development priority and as part of economic and ecological transition planning (UN-HABITAT, 2023).

As the world continues to urbanize, the supply of adequate and affordable housing continues to fail to keep pace and meet the corresponding growth in demand for housing (UN-HABITAT, 2023)). In recent decades, cities across the world are battling with a housing crisis, driven in large part by the increasing unaffordability of housing. This is putting pressure on household finances, especially for lower-income groups and the young, which has been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis that saw among the highest inflation rates in the most developed countries, raising the broader issue of homelessness. Furthermore, the impacts of housing quality and the role of housing in climate-change mitigation have also been invoked. Poor-quality housing is a serious challenge in many cities, affecting residents' wellbeing and health, given that many homes are also energy inefficient (OECD, 2023).

Housing is the single largest land use in the urban built environment. It is one of the strongest influences on the quality of life in cities. As such, access to affordable, adequate and sustainable housing has been among the most daunting and pressing global challenges of urbanization.

UN-Habitat estimates that roughly 2.8 billion people are affected by different forms of inadequate housing conditions, that at least 318 million people worldwide are experiencing homelessness, and that one in four people live in conditions that are harmful to their health, safety, and prosperity (UN-HABITAT, 2023)). The progress in achieving targets of upgrading slums is far off track, with 23 per cent of the world's population still living in inadequate housing conditions and the world producing more slum dwellers faster than it can address existing slums. In addition, around 70 per cent of the world's households live with precarious tenure and some 15 million are forcibly and illegally evicted every year. It is estimated that an additional three billion people will require adequate and affordable housing by 2030. To meet the affordable and accessible housing needs by 2030, its estimated that 96,000 new units must be added to the global housing market every day (UN-HABITAT, 2023; OECD, 2023). Additional contributory factors to the crisis are a decline in public investment in new homes in many countries in recent decades, increasing lack of developable land, restrictive building regulations (for example, zoning laws), and rising construction costs, thus impacting on private investment, especially

of affordable housing. Vacancy was also exacerbated by the rise of teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in underused commercial spaces and office buildings (OECD, 2023) as well as the financializaton (where housing is treated more as a commodity rather than a social good) of the housing sector (OECD, 2023; UN-HABITAT, 2023; UN-HABITAT, 2022).

Limited human and financial capacity of subnational governments and fragmented housing governance arrangements add to these systemic issues. More than half of OECD countries have three or more ministries directly involved with housing policy, and many OECD countries lack a spatial planning framework that aligns national, regional and local housing goals. This often leads to incoherent housing policy. Efforts to expand housing supply are also hindered by limited financial and human resources in subnational governments, such as lack of administrative procedures or insufficient means (OECD, 2023).

In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the premise and commitment of "leaving no one behind" – access to affordable, adequate and sustainable housing for all – has been a key priority for policymakers. It embraces a "housing at the centre" approach, and – as the top priority of national and local urban agendas – it supports the development of pro-people evidence-based policies (UN-HABITAT, 2024).

Recognizing housing as a central part of the urbanization ecosystem extends to national urbanization and housing policies that effectively coordinate, facilitate and monitor that rights to adequate housing are fulfilled and can foster a socioeconomic transformation. Equally, when developing, formulating and implementing policies' strategies and programmes to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, special attention must be given to the housing needs of the poor, most disadvantaged and vulnerable (UN-Habitat, 2020).

Such potential was evident in the Global State of National Urban Policy 2021, which indicated that "achieving decent and affordable housing" and a "reduction of the regulatory burden in housing production" are among the key drivers of many national urban policies. Over 47 governments have urban policies that give moderate to extensive attention to ensuring the delivery of adequate and affordable housing (GSNUP, 2021). The 2023 Global Survey on National Urban Policies highlighted how national urban policies gave attention to, and addressed, the key challenges in accessing adequate, affordable and sustainable housing. It also revealed how other sectoral policies (for example, transport, environment) and subnational housing policies were aligned with NUPs in their goal of effectively addressing housing challenges. However, misalignments persist, proving an obstacle in compact urban development and accessible and integrated housing developments.

B. Urban housing challenges and priorities in national urban policies

1. Lack of access to developable land and pressure of non-residential demands are among the key housing challenges national urban policies need to address at the city level

Globally, urban areas have faced a significant challenge in keeping up with the pace of demand for housing and its related services. Nevertheless, the specific housing circumstances differ across countries and regions. The GSNUP3 global survey examined some of the most pressing challenges

regarding access to adequate, affordable and sustainable housing at the country level, and in specific urban areas, as well as the actions that are implemented through national urban policies to address such difficulties.

Responses to the survey identified the lack of social housing (67 per cent or 47 countries), high property prices (54 per cent or 38 countries), low energy inefficiency in housing (51 per cent or 36 countries), inadequate housing for groups with special needs (51 per cent or 36 countries, and housing shortage (49 per cent or 34 countries), as the top five cumulative housing challenges affecting both countries and their specific cities (see figure 4.1). Out of the ten most pressing urban housing challenges, six relate to ensuring access to affordable housing, three concern a lack of access to sustainable housing, and two concern the lack of access to adequate housing.

The priority order of the challenges varies depending on the respondent country. Although the biggest challenge for countries with rapidly growing cities is to keep pace with demand for housing and services, in other regions, governments are developing plans and policies to resolve challenges related to vacant housing units.

- Despite having housing shortages, **Bulgaria** has a large stock of uninhabited dwellings.
- **Japan** and the **Republic of Korea** are working on an expansion of use and proper management of vacant houses.
- In **Malta**, lack of affordable housing and mismatches between housing demand and housing supply in specific districts as well as high vacancy rates is evident.

The lack of social housing programmes indicates that many countries neglect or give inadequate attention to providing adequate and affordable housing to all segments of the population. While this may exacerbate inequality, it also makes housing expensive for the poor and the vulnerable and blocks them from enjoying their "right to the city". The access is made worse by high property prices, as is evident from the second ranking challenge which equally may push the poor and vulnerable groups further away from the city, making them less productive and equitable. Social housing programmes are effective national tools to curb the proliferation of informal settlements. High property prices may be because of stringent building regulatory standards such as floor-area ratios, plot coverage and height limits, among other restrictions, that may make housing unaffordable for some segments of the population.

The survey revealed the centrality of land for urbanization and specifically housing. Housing accounts for more than 70 per cent of land use in most cities. The survey results indicated a lack of developable land as the most pressing housing challenge (46 per cent or 32 countries), followed closely by the pressure of non-residential demand (for example, short-term rentals) (44 per cent or 31 countries), vacant housing units (41 per cent or 29 countries), high rental prices (41 per cent or 29 countries), inadequate location and accessibility to services (40 per cent or 28 countries) (see figure 4.2). While the above challenges are interrelated and cut across the three priorities of adequate, affordable and sustainable housing, most of the prominent challenges relate to housing affordability issues.

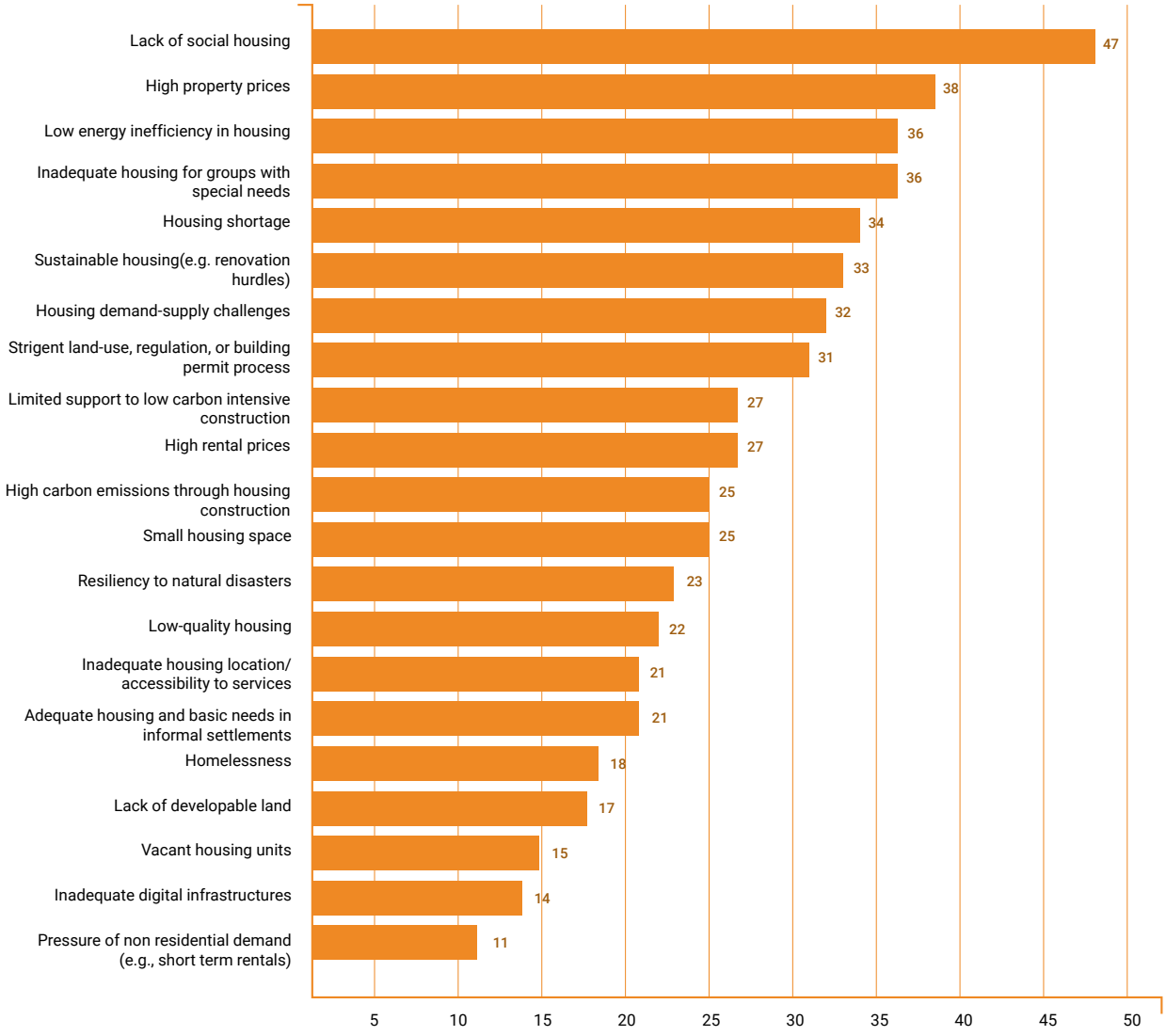
Inadequate policies and programmes create bottlenecks for generating fair and equitable land use in cities. From the survey, it is evident that poor land governance and inappropriate regulatory systems have raised the cost and reduced availability of land to urban residents, eroding the possibility of realizing the right to adequate and affordable urban housing. Unaffordability means that inadequate housing remains the only housing choice for low-income households.

Appropriate urban policies and legal frameworks to facilitate efficient, functioning land and housing markets, sufficient rental units and rent controls, and access to infrastructure services could support increased access to affordable housing and addressing homelessness.

Overall, sustainability challenges seem less highlighted at city level by most countries. Out of the 70 countries, resilience to natural disasters and low energy efficiency in housing by 17 countries each, high carbon emission through construction (13 countries) and limited support to low carbon-intensive construction was highlighted by 10 countries. NUPs offers great opportunities to boost environmental values in the housing sector by addressing resilience and energy efficiency through innovations and addressing carbon emissions in the housing construction sectors, among other sustainability issues. This is evident in a later section of this report, which indicates that a high number of countries have extensively included sustainability issues in their national urban policies.

Figure 4.1. National urban policy identifying country level housing challenges

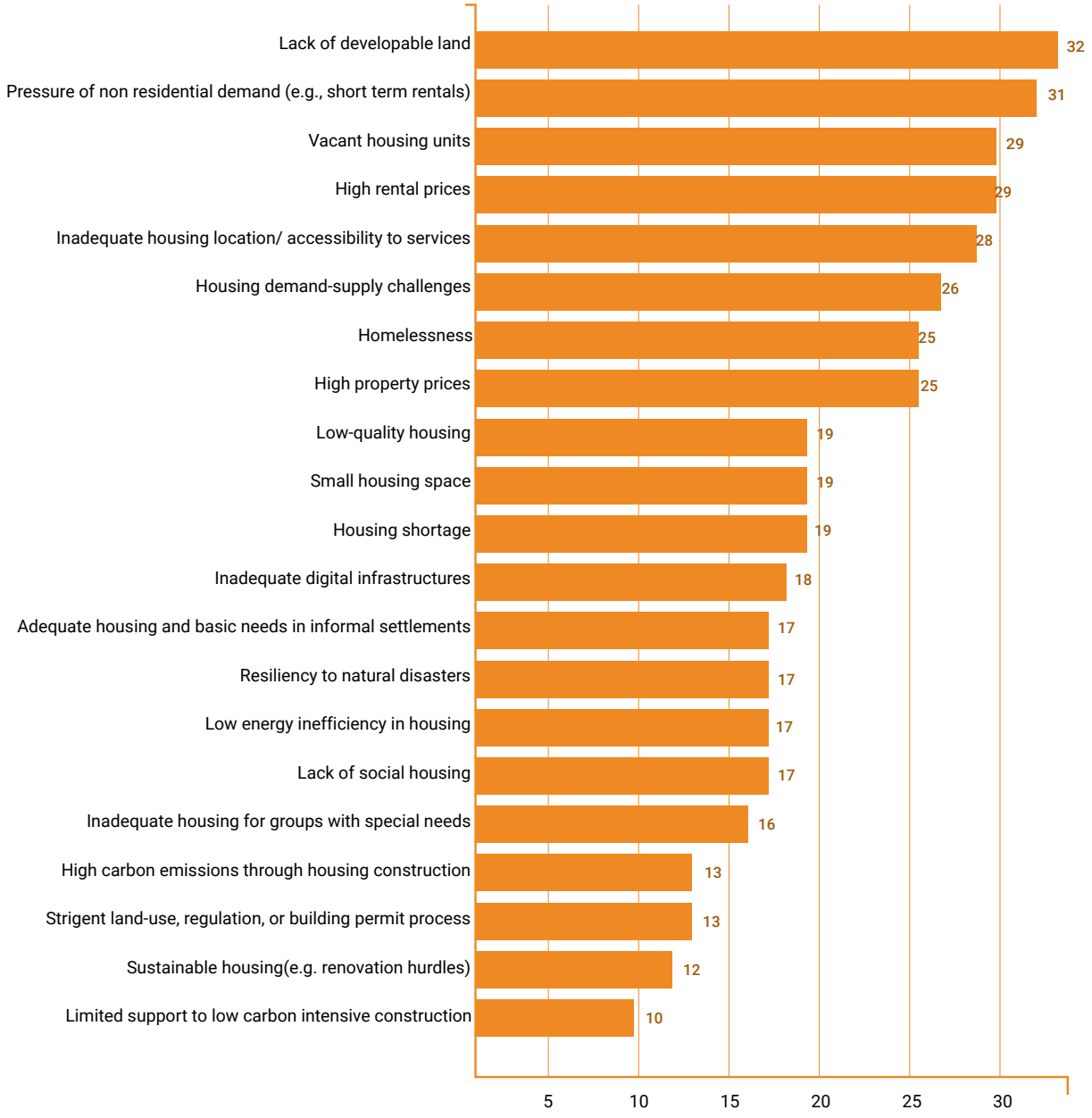
Count of respondent countries (n=70)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Figure 4.2. National urban policies identifying city level housing challenges

Count of respondent countries (n=70)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

2. Affordability is becoming a major housing challenge and an elusive concept in many countries

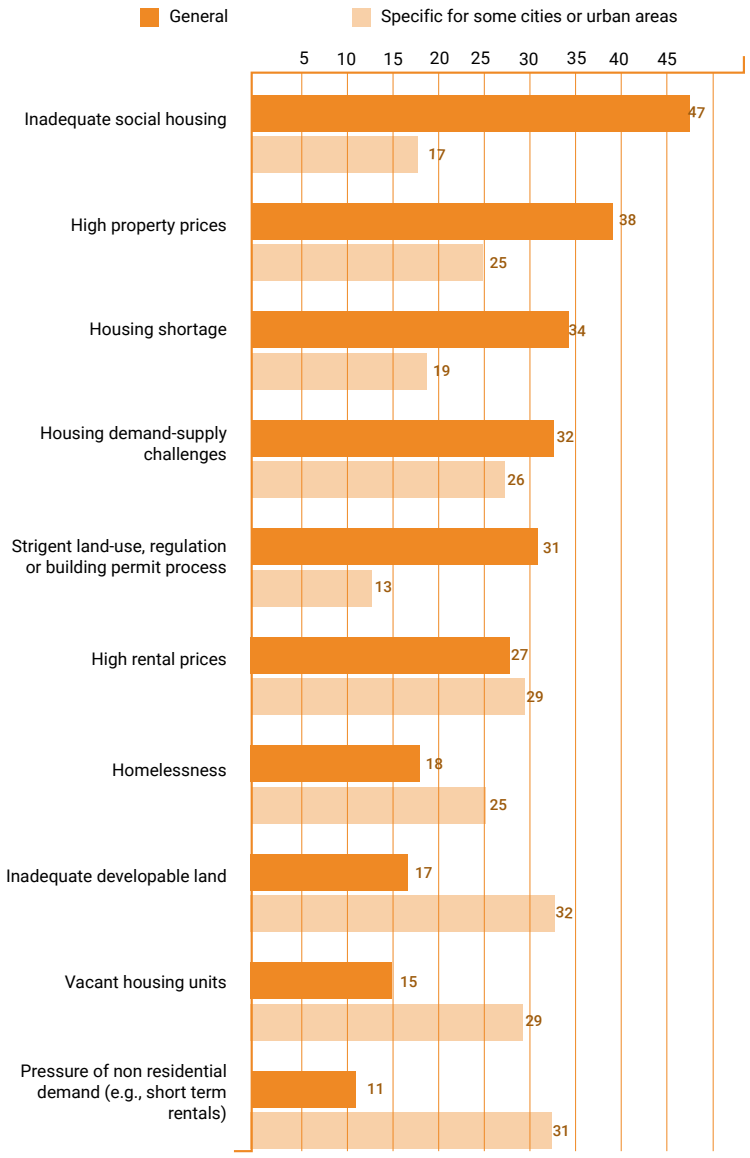
Affordable housing has been the core concern of many national urban development and housing frameworks. Lack of access to affordable housing is a major cause of homelessness in all countries. While determining housing affordability is complex, "the right to adequate housing" adopted by UN-Habitat considers that "affordability as costs associated with housing should not threaten or compromise the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs" (UN-Habitat 2020a). While UN-Habitat defines affordability as the housing expenditure taking up to no more than 30 per cent of a monthly income, many countries have had challenges achieving this.

The survey found there to be many affordability challenges at the country level. Most countries that highlighted inadequate social housing as a key challenge (for 47 countries at a national level, and for 17 countries for some specific cities) indicated the pivotal role that national governments play in providing

housing, especially for the most vulnerable (see figure 4.3). Equally, the mismatch between housing demand and supply can be responsible for high property prices (reported as a common challenge by 38 countries and as a specific challenge for some cities by 25 countries) and high rental prices (reported as a common challenge by 27 countries and a specific challenge for some cities reported by 29 countries), as the overwhelming focus on large-scale housing production and financialization of housing has occurred at the expense of attention to rental accommodation. This has driven up rental prices beyond the means of many. Equally, stringent land-use planning regulations (reported as a common challenge by 31 countries and as a specific challenge for some cities by 13 countries) and a lack of well-located developable land in cities (reported as a common challenge by 17 countries and as a specific challenge for some cities by 32 countries), have inhibited the development of large-scale, low-income housing projects.

Figure 4.3. Affordable housing challenges

Count of respondent countries (n=70)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

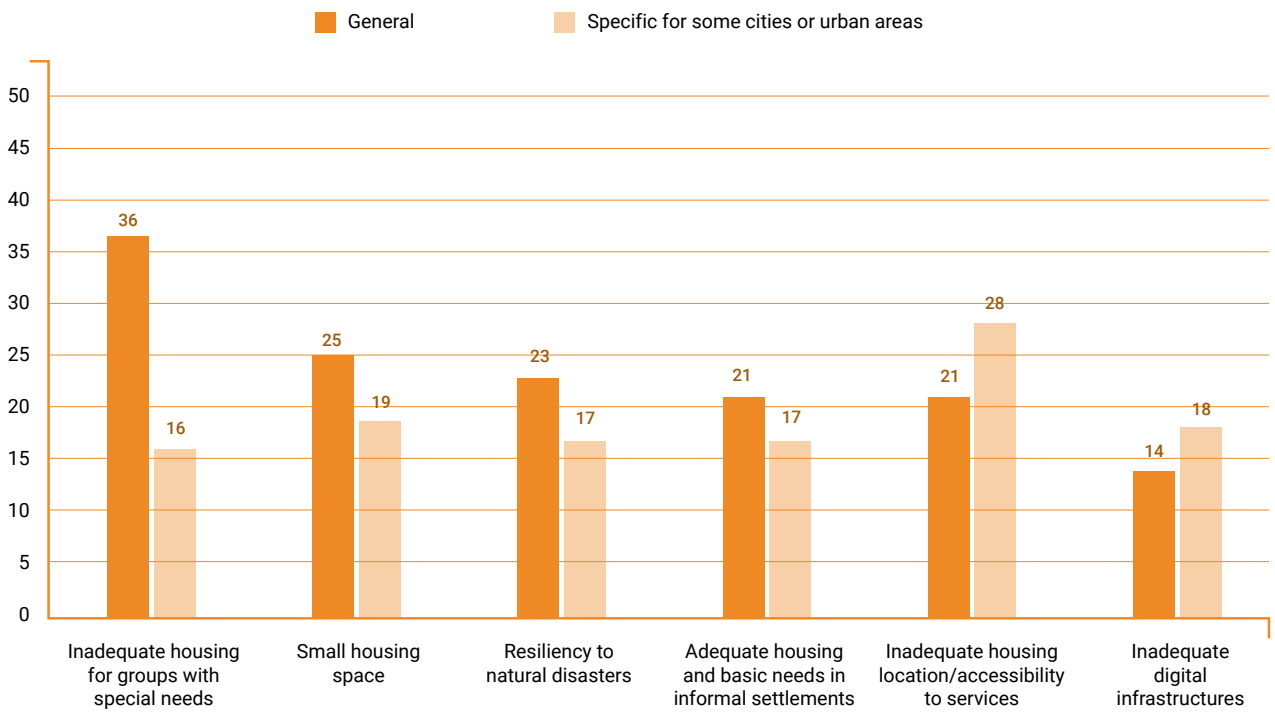
3. Major challenges impacting adequate housing

Adequate housing remains a large global, urban sustainability challenge with over 150 million people worldwide being homeless; it is, however, also a development opportunity (UN-Habitat 2020a.) The right to adequate housing, is one that may recognize or violate other fundamental rights, including the right to work, education, health and security. However, the adequate housing challenge could be addressed by implementing effective national urban policies, though such policies should not lose focus of the most vulnerable. The survey found that a high number of countries (36 countries) identify inadequate housing for groups with special needs (for example, older people, people with disabilities) as a key challenge (see figure 4.4). Given their fragility, for example, older people may have more difficulties navigating complicated housing and service systems. They face limited housing options and income support, lack of accessible community health services, and complications due to chronic illness or infirmity, making them more susceptible than other groups. It is essential that governments provide appropriate housing and infrastructure solutions for these groups in tandem with an appropriate mix of livelihood and social services.

The high number of countries with inadequate housing for groups with special needs also reaffirms a lack of social housing as a leading affordability challenge. The challenge cuts across all regions, with examples coming from Africa (Ghana, Mozambique); Asia and the Pacific (Georgia, Indonesia); the Arab States (Egypt, Morocco); Europe and North America (Luxembourg, Malta), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica). Small housing space (25 countries), insufficient resilience to natural disasters (12 countries), adequate housing and basic needs in informal settlements (21 countries), and a lack of access to basic services (21 countries), were also among the top challenges regarding adequate housing. Evidently, some of these challenges were most common for some specific cities, such as the inadequate housing location and accessibility to services (reported as a specific challenges for some cities by 28 countries). This could indicate the need for governments at the national level to coordinate more with the subnational and local levels to address these challenges. In addition, improving housing and infrastructure (for example, roads, water, sanitation) in poor-quality neighbourhoods is critical to improving the lives of low-income residents, as it allows them to continue with their social and economic networks while also improving their housing quality.

Figure 4.4. Adequate housing challenges

Count of respondent countries (n=70)



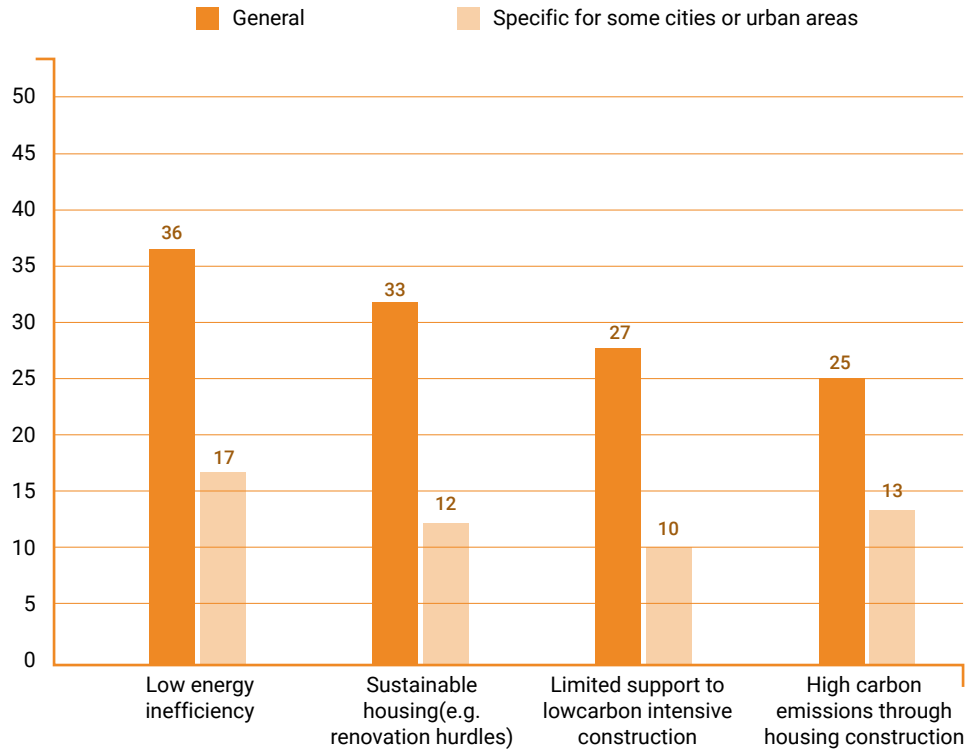
Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

4. Challenges related to sustainable housing

The survey defined key country-level housing sustainability challenges includes low energy efficiency in housing and buildings renovation hurdles as was highlighted by 36 and 33 countries respectively (see figure 4.5). In addition, the findings revealed that limited support to low carbon-intensive construction is also a common challenge among 27 of the surveyed countries, while high carbon emissions through housing construction are identified as a challenge for 25 countries. Such issues may stem from energy usage for the heating and lighting of residential houses (see figure 4.5). Countries may need to generate urban policies that encourage housing programmes that will promote the efficient use of available space and generate substantial savings in resource use and carbon emissions. Such policies may need to be linked to national and subnational physical development plans that define the scope and scale of national housing and infrastructure programmes, and that form the basis for the development of housing improvement programmes.

Figure 4.5. Sustainable housing challenges

Count of respondent countries (n=70)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

5. National urban policy priorities to manage housing challenges

Most of the countries that identified challenges related to adequate, affordable and sustainable housing at the country and urban levels, also acknowledged that their national urban policy and regional development plans were taking strategic actions to address these challenges. The five leading priority challenges that were highlighted by most countries were that NUPs were taking action for addressing 1) the lack of social housing (35 countries), 2) inadequate housing location and accessibility to services (3 countries), 3) Stringent land-use, regulation, or building permit processes (31 countries), 4) low energy inefficiency in housing (29 countries), 5) housing shortages (29 countries) and high property prices (29 countries)

Conversely, a few countries indicated that their NUPs have actions to address other housing challenges, such as pressure of non-residential demand (15 countries), inadequate digital infrastructure (17 countries), vacant housing units (18 countries), small housing space (18 countries), high carbon emissions through housing construction (19 countries).

C. Attention given and actions undertaken by national urban policies to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable urban housing.

The survey evaluated efficacy of NUPs in tackling housing issues, and especially the level of attention and actions undertaken to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable urban housing. An intricate relationship was observed, demonstrating how NUPs are increasingly focusing on addressing persistent

urban housing challenges, more importantly through establishing comprehensive frameworks that prioritize housing affordability, accessibility, and sustainability. The survey revealed that in many of the countries, NUPs have enhanced regulatory frameworks to streamline housing in the urban development processes, including integrating housing components into broader urban and territorial planning tools, and offering incentives for the development of adequate and affordable housing.

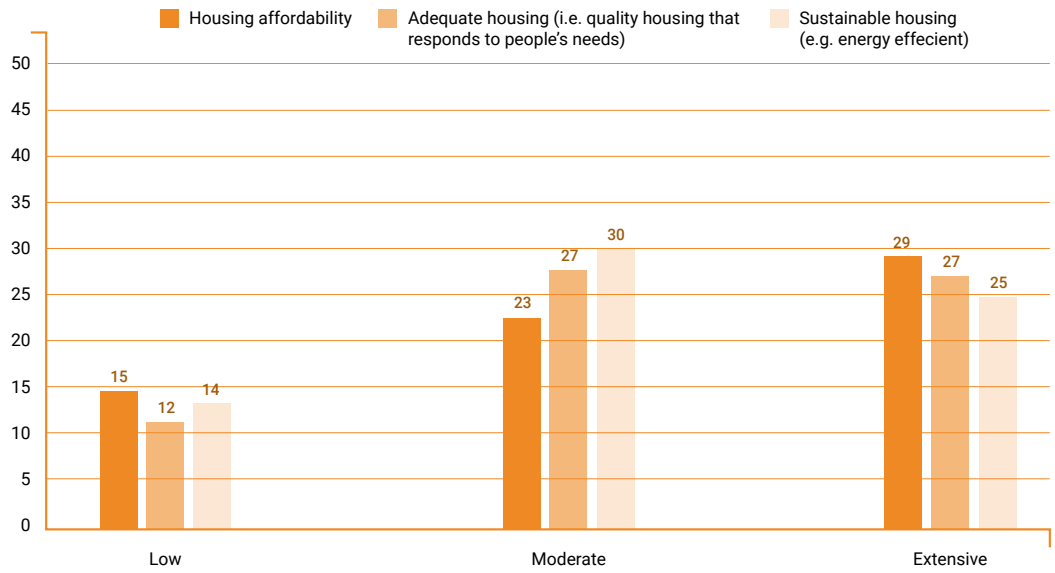
1. National urban policies' attention to promoting affordable, adequate and sustainable urban housing

To evaluate the efficacy of NUPs in tackling housing challenges in cities and urban areas, the level of attention given to, and actions undertaken by NUPs to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable urban housing were evaluated across a spectrum ranging from low to moderate to extensive (see figure 4.6). Indeed, the analysis reveals that many countries surveyed give extensive to moderate attention to housing affordability, adequacy and sustainability issues within their national urban policies. The highest number of countries, 55 (81 per cent), give moderate to extensive attention to housing sustainability issues in their NUPs, followed closely by those that ensured adequacy 54 (80 per cent) and affordability at 52 (77 per cent). This clearly indicates while countries are keen to ensure a high number of their citizens have access to housing, ensuring such housing meets people's need and is energy efficient, and addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation requirements is gaining a lot of traction. Equally, these results amplify the significance of NUPs in providing a coherent framework that integrates growth potential that promotes the equity, inclusion and resilience elements of urban housing.

It is worth noting that attention to affordability, adequacy and sustainability issues differed between regions. While countries in developed regions were keen on sustainability, developing regions were keen on adequate and affordability housing elements. In Somalia for example, key among objectives during NUP formulation were to foster the provision of adequate yet affordable housing to the most vulnerable sections of the community in urban areas. Equally in Canada, the strategy has been to re-engage in affordable housing by investing in the growth of liveable communities and the resilience of the community housing sector. There are programmes to attract partnerships with and investments from the provinces and territories, municipalities, non-profit organizations and cooperatives, and the private sector, to focus on construction of new houses and the preservation and renewal of the existing affordable housing supply. Equally, it has dedicated programmes and funding for retrofits and renovations of the existing community housing to address the increasing demand, improve efficiency and reduce energy use. In Estonia**,** low energy efficiency of older residential apartment buildings is a major characteristic of the country's housing stock, and national policies foresee construction of 14,000 apartment buildings by 2050 and NUP foresee retrofitting of existing stock to improve energy efficiency. Equally, in Denmark, the extensive focus on sustainable housing relates to the large focus on transitioning the Danish construction sector towards a sustainable and green future, with recent legislation changes originating from the National Strategy for Sustainable Construction supporting this.

Figure 4.6. National urban policy attention to housing in cities and urban areas

Count of respondent countries (n=68)



Note: "Low" indicates that the category is either not mentioned as a concern in the NUP, or only briefly without much information on the situation nor any guidance or directions for future action. "Moderate" corresponds to cases in which the NUP provides a clear reference and description of the category, as well as the opportunities and challenges to address within it. For instance, the NUP provides background and analysis of the situation related to the category, as well as objectives and general directions to improve it. "Extensive" indicates a strong importance given to the category, which is prominently featured among NUP objectives, with a detailed analysis of the situation, concrete goals and targets, as well as implementation measures to achieve them (for example, indicators, roadmap, timeline, budget, etc.).

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

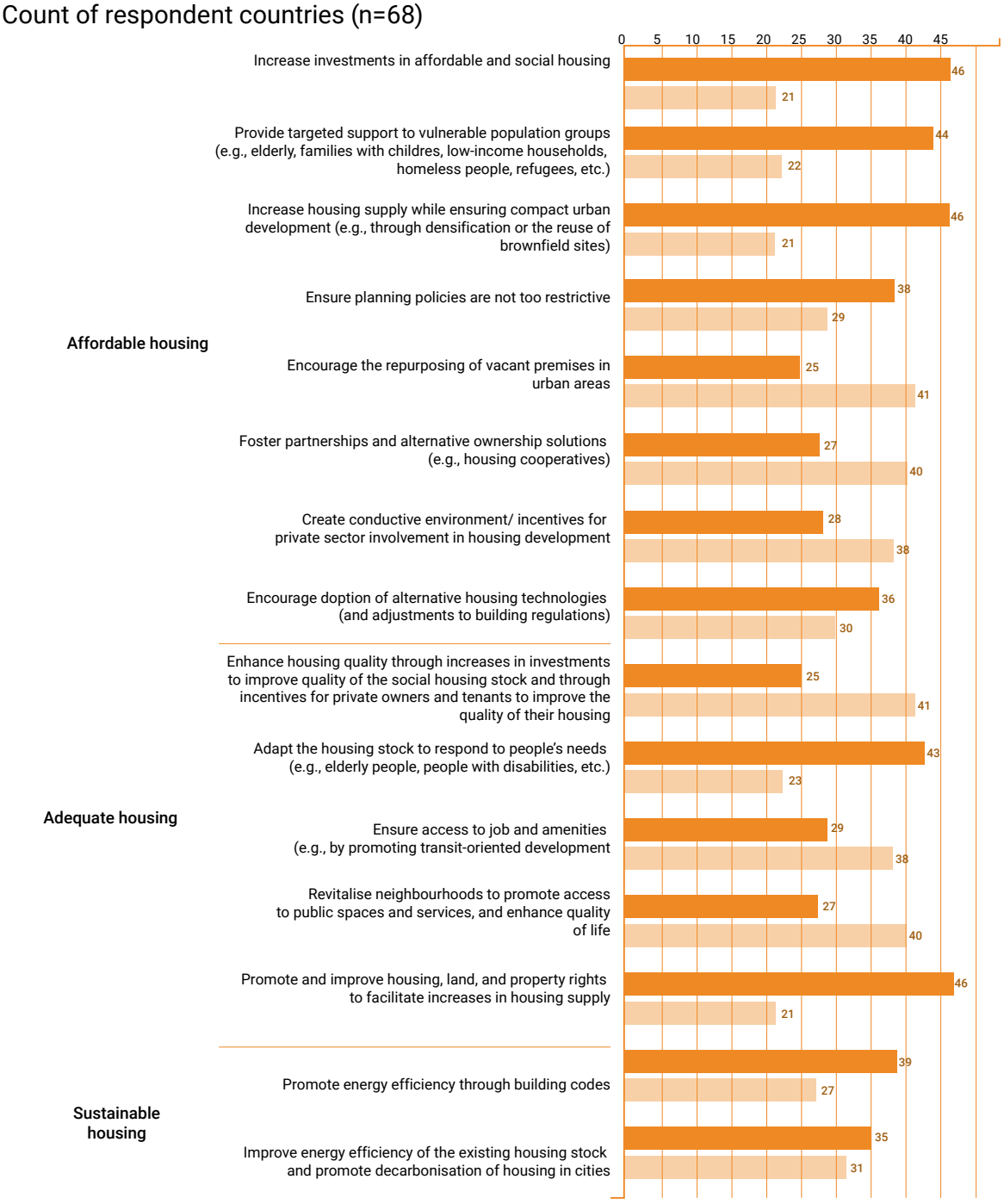
2. National urban programme actions have been at the centre of promoting affordable, adequate and sustainable urban housing

In addition to the level of attention given by NUPs to housing, the survey also revealed that NUPs from different countries have undertaken diverse actions to address affordability, adequacy and sustainability of urban housing.

Actions to promote affordable housing

While countries have indicated different priority actions within their NUPs towards promoting affordable housing, five of these actions stand out and were identified by over 50 per cent of the 68 countries that responded to the question. Sixty-eight per cent (46 countries) identified a) increasing investments in affordable and social housing and b) increasing housing supply while ensuring compact urban development (for example, through densification or the reuse of brownfield sites) each as two of the most prominent NUP actions to enhance affordability. This was closely followed by c) providing targeted support to vulnerable population groups (for example, older people, families with children, low-income households, homeless people, refugees, etc.) as identified by 65 per cent (44 countries) d) promoting and improving housing, land, and property rights to facilitate increases in housing supply as indicated by 56 per cent (38 countries) and e) creating conducive environment/incentives for private sector involvement in housing development as evident from 53 per cent (36 countries) (see figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7. Actions foreseen within national urban policies to promote affordable, adequate and sustainable housing



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Incidentally, only 37 per cent (25 countries) indicated they ensure planning policies are not too restrictive and encourage the adoption of alternative housing technologies (including adjustments to building regulations) as actions to promote affordability of housing. Repurposing of vacant premises in urban areas and fostering partnerships and alternative housing ownership solutions (for example, housing cooperatives) was evident from 40 per cent and 41 per cent of the countries respectively. While social housing remains a challenge, policy actions to repurpose and return recoverable vacant properties back to viable use would not only increase supply of housing but revitalize and regenerate urban communities and national economic development. Slightly over half (53 per cent) of countries

indicated they have urban policies that have strategies to create a conducive environment and leverage the strength of public and private sectors in housing development. While the partnerships have been used with great success to construct and maintain low-income housing in developed countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom, they are beginning to become popular in urban housing policy in developing countries across Asia and Africa, with some success in India and Nigeria. Urban policies and institutional frameworks that develop enabling strategies and effectively balance public / private sector roles would effectively enhance housing markets.

Actions to enhance adequate housing

Adequate housing must provide more than four walls and a roof to be of a minimum quality to enhance liveability. Besides rights to land and tenure, housing stock needs to enhance access to other infrastructure services, respond to needs of different segments of the society and enhance access to livelihoods. The survey identified the key NUP actions to promote adequate housing. Sixty-eight of NUPs (46 countries) were identified as having included strategies to "revitalize neighbourhoods to promote access to public spaces and services and enhance quality of life". Including public spaces in the design of urban policies and programmes can act as a catalyst for slum upgrading, making them places of higher-quality living. They compensate for a lack of adequate indoor housing spaces and promote social cohesion by providing a space for interaction and participation by different population groups in urban life.

While it was noted that 68 per cent have strategies to increase investment in social housing, 63 per cent of countries have NUPs that have strategies to improve the quality of the existing social housing stock, including incentives for private owners and tenants to improve the quality of such housing stock.

NUPs have also been used to ensure that existing housing stock is used to respond to people's needs. The survey established that 43 per cent of NUPs adapt housing stock to the needs of older people and people with disabilities. Equally, 40 per cent of NUPs aim to ensure access to jobs and amenities, including ensuring transit-oriented development. Such NUPs facilitate strategies to locate housing near jobs and livelihood opportunities and where there is access to affordable services and effective public transport, especially for poor households. In many developing countries, commitment to adequate and affordable housing for the poor has been through slum-upgrading programmes mainstreamed in the housing policies of such countries.

Actions to enhance sustainable housing

National governments play a vital role in delivering environmentally sustainable cities with adequate and affordable housing. As such, enhancing the sustainability of housing was identified as a pivotal consideration within the NUPs of countries. The survey established that 57 per cent (39 countries) have NUPs actions that promoted "energy efficiency through changing building codes", while another 51 per cent (35 countries) improved energy efficiency of the existing housing stock and promoted decarbonization of housing in their cities. Such actions ensured sustainable building design is considered in order to minimize negative impacts to the urban environment. Meeting the challenges of housing energy consumption reliant on fossil fuels has great potential to improve the sustainability and resilience of cities.

Examples of actions to enhance affordable, adequate and sustainable housing

National urban policies in different countries have adopted different actions to ensure affordable, adequate and sustainable housing:

- In **Burkina Faso,** the NUP promotes social and decent housing that meets a minimum level of comfort and functionality. It advocates the use of appropriate local materials to build affordable and sustainable housing that considers energy efficiency and decarbonization of homes by offering incentives for the construction of zero-carbon neighbourhoods.
- In **Canada**, the Government goes beyond just addressing the need for affordable, adequate and sustainable housing by establishing an integrated approach where housing programmes align with public investments in job creation, skills training, transit, early learning, healthcare and cultural and recreational infrastructure. The whole-of-government approach builds strong partnerships to empower communities to achieve affordable housing for all. It provides funding to the provinces and territories to achieve suitable and more affordable housing. It invests in municipalities and creates new opportunities to innovate through partnerships with the community housing sector, cooperative housing movement, private sector and researchers.
- The Government of **Indonesia** continues to provide support for homeownership and residence through various policy instruments and financing such as tax Incentives, Housing Financing Liquidity Facility (FLPP), Down Payment Assistance Subsidy (SBUM), Interest Rate Subsidy (SSB), Self-Help Housing Stimulus Assistance (BSPS), Savings-Based Housing Financing Assistance (BP2BT) State Capital Participation (PMN) for State-Owned Enterprises (PT SMF, BTN) among others.
- In the **Netherlands**, the NUP promotes the long-standing Dutch tradition of social housing and embraces innovative solutions such as modular and flexible housing to address housing shortages. The NUP applies area-based approaches to tackle housing challenges in specific neighbourhoods or regions. The Dutch NUP has facilitated the implementation of long-term planning strategies to address housing needs with strategies that include setting ambitious housing targets, conducting regular evaluations, and adapting policies to changing circumstances.
- In **Austria**, the Spatial Development Concept (ÖREK 2030) supports the issue of affordable housing for all. The city of Vienna focuses not only on low-income and vulnerable groups, but also on middle-income groups. Its urban planning includes developing integrated urban districts with affordable housing for all groups of the population. Each new development area that is zoned as residential must include housing of which two thirds is in the form of subsidized apartments, which leads to a high proportion of council apartments and subsidized housing, subsequently dampening overall rent prices. Its planning approach equally strives towards decarbonizing buildings through the "out of gas" strategy, showing owners options for a climate-neutral heat supply. There is also a municipal focus on providing heating and cooling via district heating, powered by heat pumps or using thermal energy from purified wastewater.
- In **Nigeria**, the NUP identifies affordable housing as a "priority" and outlines measures to deliver it to vulnerable populations. Strategies highlighted in the NUP to achieve affordable, adequate and sustainable housing include "the business unusual approach", which considers affordable

housing delivery as an integrated service along with public and social services. Others include Sites and Services or the "15-minute neighbourhood" and the Neighbourhood Delivery Units as well as the expansion of Slum Upgrading Units to the local councils.

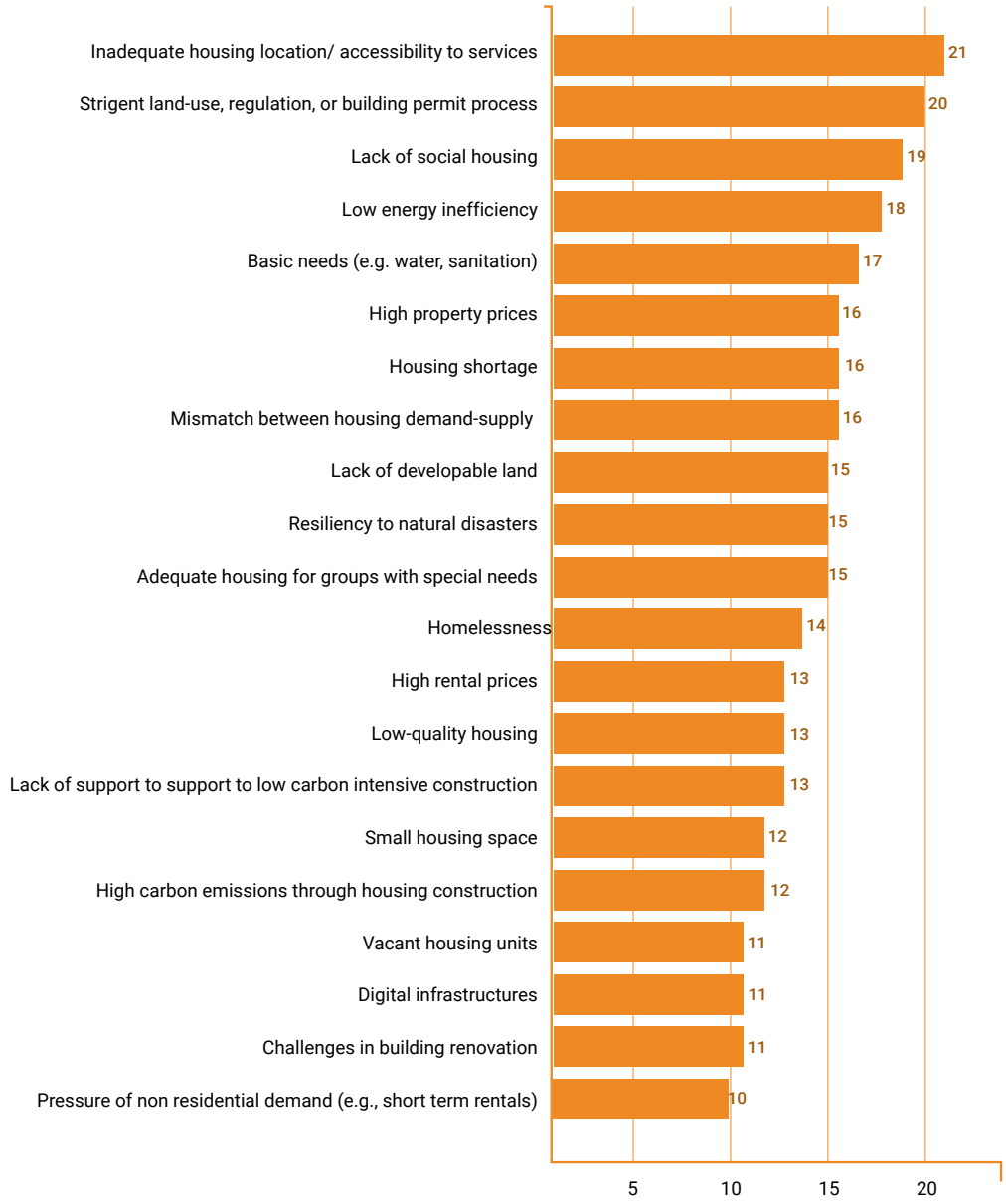
- In **Germany**, municipalities must present heat plans to ensure efficient heating to address the energy crisis and heat-induced stress.

Case examples from most of the countries that responded to the questions report having developed NUPs and regional development frameworks with a specific intention to enhance access to affordable, adequate and sustainable housing as priority objectives (see figure 4.8).

- In **Peru,** the NUP's third priority objective is aimed at increasing and expanding access to adequate and quality housing in the country's cities and urban centres, giving priority to populations living in poverty or who are socially vulnerable.
- In **Romania**, the NUP is aligned with the country's National Housing Strategy, which establishes the medium and long-term objectives for the period 2022–2050. The strategy aims to improve access to housing for all citizens; increase the public housing stock; increase the housing quality in the country; match housing and spatial planning policies; enable the green transition through safe and sustainable housing framework and through strengthening the regulatory governance framework of the housing sector.
- In the **Philippines**, a key part of the National Urban Development and Housing Sector Plan is a shelter plan with programmes to address specific challenges to enhance access to land and housing, especially for poor and low-income families. It envisages accurate profiling of the housing demand and intended beneficiaries, and expanding the coverage of housing programmes through funding new innovative modalities, such as a vertical housing programme for metropolitan and highly urbanized cities.
- In **Mali,** housing challenges are addressed in general objective number 1 of the policy. The objective is to improve the quality of life in cities through increased access to basic urban services by improving the urban environment, increasing access to drinking water, electricity, sanitation, transport, new information technologies and security, in addition to social services, such as basic health and education, and to preserve the urban environment and promote the use of renewable energies through the use of renewable and energy-efficient methods and techniques.
- In the **Netherlands,** where the housing sector is under pressure**,** the NUP has a focus on increasing supply of affordable housing, particularly for middle-income households. It promotes the construction of energy-efficient and climate-resilient homes. Equally, it emphasizes the revitalization of existing urban neighbourhoods, promoting mixed-use developments and improving housing quality. Furthermore, it supports innovative approaches such as modular construction and temporary housing solutions to address the immediate housing needs. Lastly, it emphasizes the critical need for the efficient use of land, which is a resource in short supply in the Netherlands. Overall, the NUP aims to create a more balanced and inclusive housing market in Dutch cities by addressing affordability, sustainability and neighbourhood improvement.

Figure 4.8. Respondent countries with national urban policy actions on housing challenges

Count of respondent countries (n=68)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

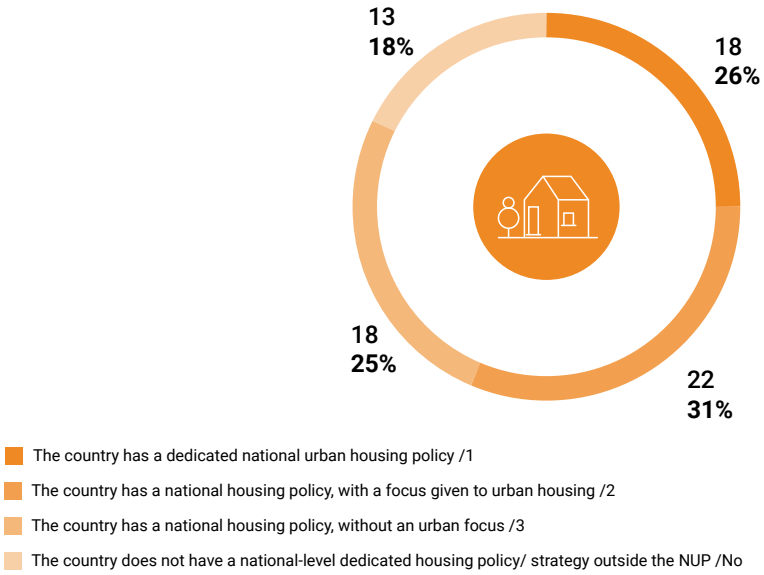
D. Housing policies outside national urban polices

National governments enact policies outside NUPs with the aim of broadening access to housing across all social groups by correcting market failures and increasing efficiency in the delivery of urban housing. Sustainable urban development has housing at the centre of its approaches. It envisages that progressive housing sector policies have addressed but not been limited to housing priorities in relation to land access, infrastructure, finance, sustainable building materials and construction, disaster resilience and mitigation, among many other fundamentals necessary in realization of affordable, adequate and sustainable housing for all. The impacts of national housing policy instruments on urban development and housing access and affordability are diverse and complex. Beside the housing policies, NUPs provide an overarching framework where issues of affordable, adequate and sustainable housing can be integrated. The global survey evaluated housing sector linkages and their relation to the countries' NUPs.

The global survey established that 58 (82 per cent) countries that participated in the survey have a national-level dedicated housing policy or strategy outside the NUP to address specific housing challenges related to cities and urban areas. Of these, 18 countries, (26 per cent) have a dedicated national urban housing policy compared to 22 (31 per cent) that have a national housing policy that has a specific focus on urban housing, while 18 countries (25 per cent) have a general national housing policy without any special focus to urban housing (see figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9. National housing policy beyond NUP

Count of respondent countries (n=71)

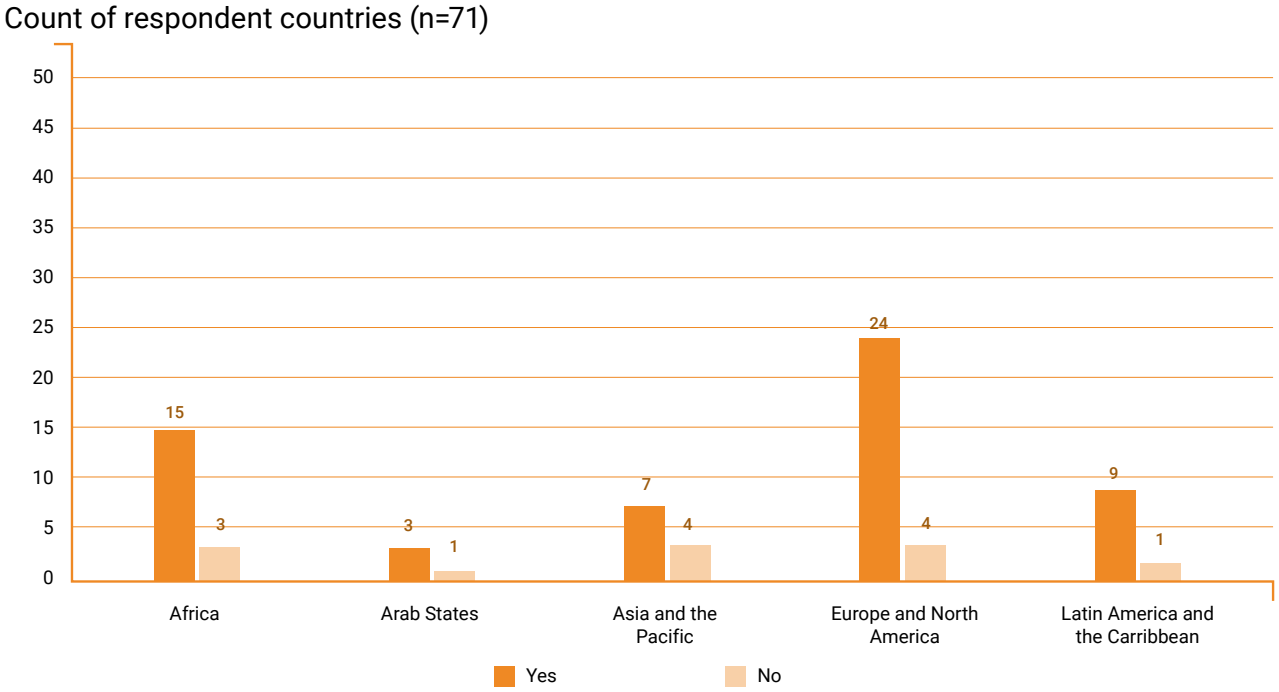


Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

There are regional differences in the development of national housing policies to address urban housing challenges. The survey revealed that, while many countries have continued to formulate national urban policies, some with elaborate chapters and sections that focus on or are dedicated to urban housing, the majority of the countries throughout the five regions continued to develop national level dedicated housing policy / strategies that were outside the NUPs (see figure 4.10).

Such policies fall into different categories with some focusing on general housing issues, others are specific only to urban areas while others have sections or chapters on urban housing. The development of national housing policies to address urban housing challenges differed regionally, with 50 per cent of countries from Africa and Arab States that responded indicating they have developed dedicated national urban housing policies, compared to 27 per cent and 20 per cent in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean countries respectively. Europe and North America led with the highest percentage share (39 per cent) of countries with national housing policies without an urban focus, while Asia and the Pacific have the highest share (36 per cent) of countries that do not have a national level dedicated housing policy / strategy outside the national urban policy. National urban policies are important frameworks for national governments to provide an overarching structure to coordinate housing, related infrastructure services and even other policies that affect urban areas. Through legislation they can influence investors' decisions, and the location of housing through control of, access to and use of land for housing.

Figure 4.10. Countries with a national-level dedicated housing policy or strategy outside the national urban policy, by region



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

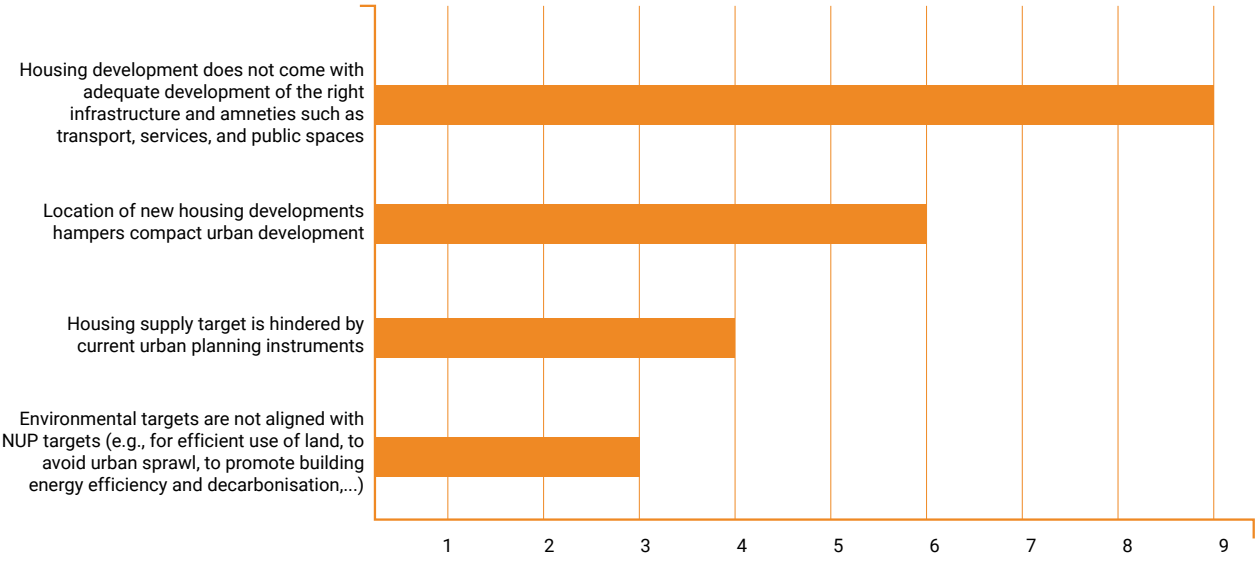
E. Existing national housing policies are mostly aligned with their countries' national urban policies

The survey established that existing national housing policies/strategies were found to be strongly aligned with the countries national urban policies. Of the total respondents, 79 per cent reported that there was no misalignment observed between NUPs and existing housing policies, Such NUPs were found to embed and coordinate housing strategies among other sector policies within their broader vision of the urban areas and beyond their administrative boundaries. Such alignments also ensured the policy support provision of adequate and affordable housing at scale by ensuring national and subnational governments worked closely, including in ensuring adequate infrastructure service provision.

Nevertheless, misalignment was reported between NUPs and national housing policies in 21 per cent of the cases. The three main misalignments reported in the survey included that the housing development in these countries did not come with adequate development of the appropriate infrastructure and amenities such as transport, services, and public space – this was reported by 17 per cent; the location of new housing developments hampered compact urban development; and the housing supply target was hindered by current urban planning instruments (see figure 4.11). Such misalignment is evident in countries such as Norway where, in some smaller cities and villages, the location of new housing developments hampers compact urban development, whereas such development in the larger cities does not come with enough public space or public transport. The state housing development fund in Slovakia provides a subsidy for both rental housing and individual construction of family houses without adequately considering territorial criteria, that is that it is regardless of whether the construction will be in a city, town or village.

Figure 4.11. Misalignments between national urban policies and national housing policies

Count of respondent countries (n=54)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

In the United Kingdom**,** while misalignment is not pronounced, and despite planning policies that encourage more compact urban housing development, the evidence is that there are still many areas where new housing sites are poorly connected to key amenities, widening economic and health inequalities. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (2023) contains provisions for a new infrastructure levy and contains reforms for ensuring affordable housing and infrastructure is delivered on new housing schemes. On the other hand, housing development in Indonesia diverges from the national urban policy, and it can lead to issues related to inefficient land use, social exclusion, inadequate infrastructure, environmental degradation and a lack of community engagement.

Aligning housing developments with national urban policies is crucial for creating sustainable, inclusive and well-planned urban settlement development, and is a challenge for many countries, for instance, Germany. Housing policies that are fully aligned with national urban policies can encourage compactness, which is among the main driver for climate friendly development. Equally, a more compact urban form can halve land used per housing unit, lower the costs of providing public services by 10–30%, decrease the need for motor travel and associated costs by about 20– 50%, and lower congestion, accident, and air pollution.

1. Mechanisms for policy coherence between national urban policy and housing policies

With increasing urban and housing challenges, countries face a growing need for strengthening decision-making and coherence in housing provision and overall urban development. The survey established that NUPs have been used to enhance coherence across different sector policies with an urban focus at both the national and subnational levels. The policy provides a coherence framework that coordinates across sectors and actors, and that aligns with other important sectors that play a key role in urban development.

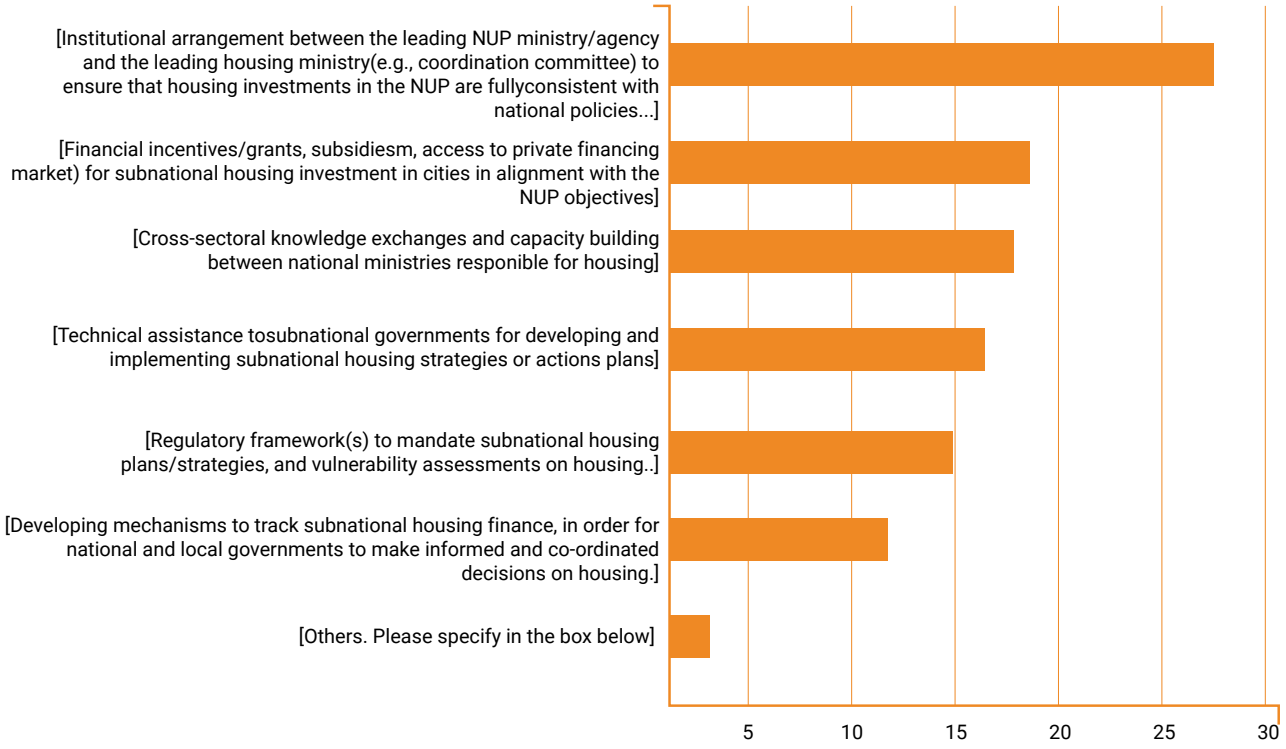
The survey established that where governments have a national level dedicated housing policy, they were also found to have put in place key policy harmonization mechanisms to ensure that there was policy coherence between the overarching goals of their NUPs and the existing national and subnational housing policies.

While such mechanisms varied between countries, slightly over half of the countries – 52 per cent – indicated they had an established institutional arrangement between the leading NUP ministry and the housing ministry (such as coordination committees) to ensure that housing investments in the NUP were fully consistent with national policies for addressing access to housing (see figure 4.12). In some countries, such committees are in the form of national urban policy commissions that help to improve the consistency between levels of government and to ensure coherence between different policies across national, regional and local level policies.

Equally, 35 per cent of countries indicated they had used financial incentives including grants, subsidies and access to private financing markets to ensure subnational housing investment in cities aligned with the NUP objectives, while 33 per cent indicated there were enhanced cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges and capacity-building between national ministries responsible for housing, to enhance coherence. This is evident in Niger, which has given tax exemptions to private financing for housing and technical assistance to local authorities for the development and implementation of housing strategies. Other key mechanisms that featured prominently were technical assistance to subnational governments for developing and implementing subnational housing strategies or action plans; formulation of regulatory framework(s) to mandate subnational housing plans/strategies; and vulnerability assessments on housing which featured in 16 and 15 countries respectively.

Figure 4.12. Mechanisms for policy coherence between national urban policies and housing policies

Count of respondent countries (n= 54)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

2. Mechanisms for national urban policy, national and subnational policy coherence

Coordination and alignment between NUPs, national housing policies and the subnational policies was seen to take different forms in different countries to guarantee consistency and coherence:

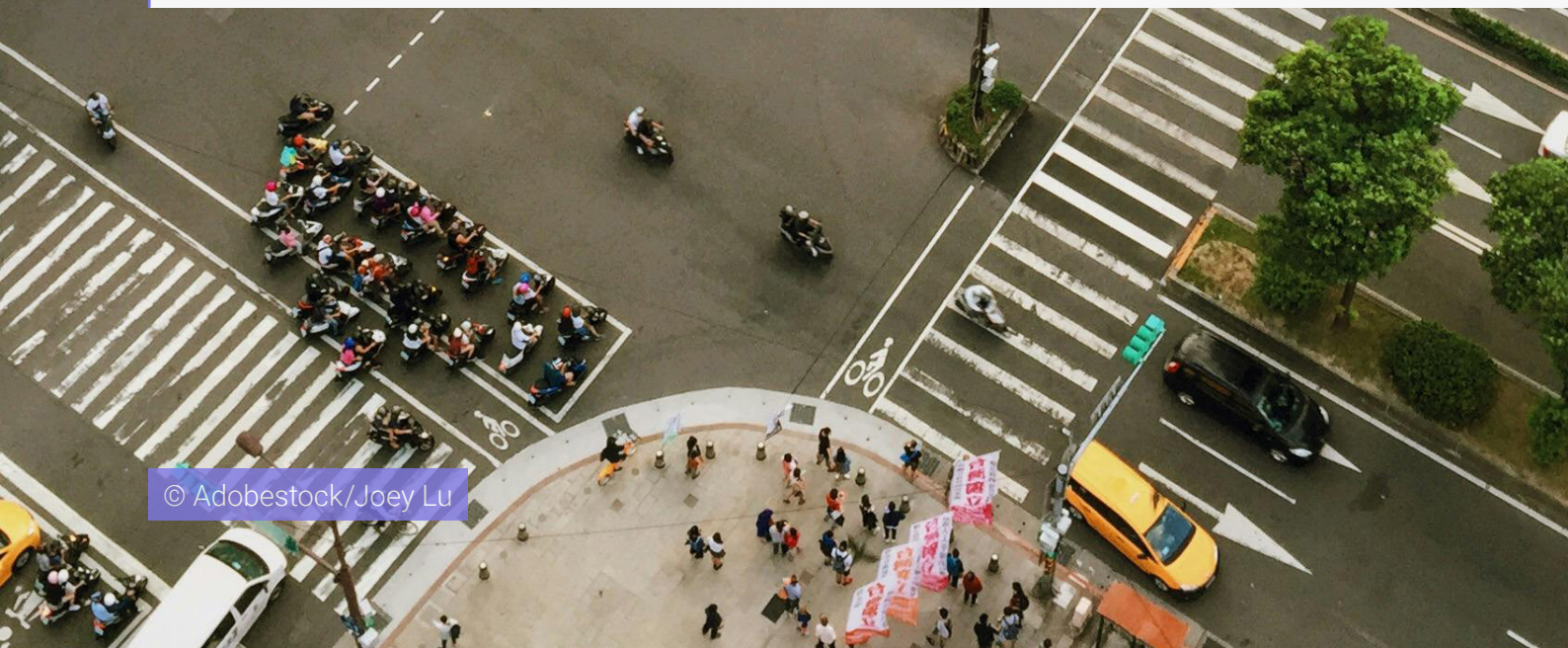
- In **Indonesia,** institutional arrangement has been developed between the ministry leading the NUP and the one leading housing to ensure that investments in access to affordable housing align with national policies.
- Equally, in **Poland** both the creation and implementation of NUP 2030 are done with coordination between the leading NUP ministry (MFiPR) and the ministry leading housing (MRiT). Both NUP and the housing policy are also in line with the Polish strategy – the Strategy for Responsible Development.
- In **Chile**, where housing inequality is a hallmark of the society, the Regional City, Housing and Territory Commissions (CORICIVYT) coordinate development of matters and definitions that affect the urban and territorial development of the country. These commissions are made up of the regional governments, the regional secretaries of the ministries that make up the inter-ministerial commission (COMICIVYT) and the other heads of service or unit.
- In **Ghana**, the NUP has been formulated in line with pre-existing national and subnational housing policies to guarantee policy consistency. This is accomplished through cross-sectoral cooperation, collaborative legislation and regulatory harmonization.

- In **Japan**, both the NUP and the national housing policy are led from the same ministry (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), hence the ministry provides guidelines and financial incentives (subsidies, tax grants and loans) to support subnational housing development.
- Similarly, **Niger** has given tax exemptions to private financers in housing and technical assistance to local authorities in development and implementation of housing strategies.
- In the **United Kingdom,** many of the issues relating to housing and planning policies are cross cutting and cross government. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) acts as the lead department for both urban policy and housing and planning policy to ensure there is coherence between these policies at a national and subnational level. At a subnational level, the DLUHC works closely with local housing and planning authorities among other key stakeholders on policy developments and changes affecting the delivery of housing policies at a local level, including technical and financial assistance, dissemination of guidance and requests for data to track housing expenditure and impacts at a local level.
- **Saudi Arabia** has several committees to align different strategies and policies before activation. They provide recommendations and directions to the different stakeholders to align technical capabilities and ensure synergies, and their approval is essential in adopting any strategy at the national level.
- In **Portugal**, to align local housing strategies and sustainable urban development objectives under the National Spatial Policy Programme, municipalities should assess their housing needs while drafting and revising municipal spatial plans, and they should encourage the increase of affordable housing in the local rental market by means of urban rehabilitation and regeneration instead of urban expansion.



5. Monitoring and evaluating national urban policy

The success of NUP depends on how effectively it aids policymakers in the understanding of the impacts the policy has on the lives of intended beneficiaries. Effective formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NUPs, building on robust urban scale data, supports the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda (NUA), among other urban global agendas and frameworks. The rigorous and regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of urban policy assess process, effectiveness, identify best practices and recommend adjustments to policy implementation.This chapter starts with an analysis of the existence of NUPs' monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and how these approaches have been used to monitor and evaluate NUPs in different countries. This is followed by a review of the results achieved by implementing the NUPs. The chapter also has an analysis of NUPs' contribution to the three qualifiers of Goal 11.a.1 as well as NUA targets.



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Key findings

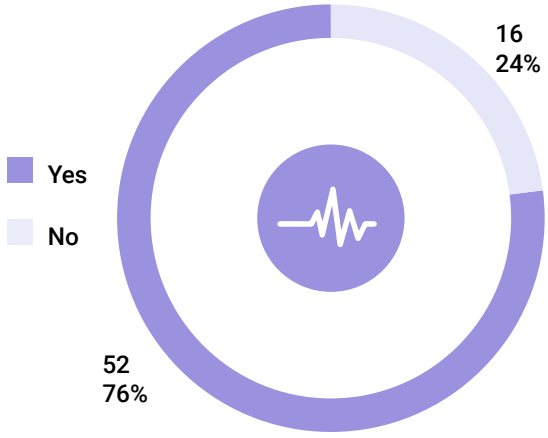
- Fifty-two of the surveyed countries (76 per cent) have an NUP monitoring and evaluation framework. Of these, more than half (52 per cent) reported that the successful implementation of national urban policies was delivering tangible impacts at the country level; in "innovative urban planning instruments and processes" and in the promotion of "inclusive design and use of urban spaces and services". Forty-four per cent indicated that their NUPs had enabled them to achieve "better institutional arrangements", and that their NUPs had contributed to achieving "greater urban resilience". Only 38 per cent (nine countries) attributed the "ability of local authorities to significantly increase local revenues" as an impact of their NUP.
- Countries use various approaches to monitor and evaluate their national urban policies, with some using a single method and others adopting a combination of approaches. The most common approach is the use of "targets and indicators", used by 37 countries out of 52 countries with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (71 per cent), a sharp increase from 38 per cent in 2021. "Publication of monitoring and evaluation reports" was reported by 28 countries (54 per cent), a slight decrease from the 33 countries reported in 2021.
- Sixty-eight countries that responded to the survey have NUPs and regional development plans that fulfil at least one of the three qualifiers of Goal 11.a.1: "respond to population dynamics", "ensure balanced territorial development" and "increase local fiscal space". There was an increase in the number of NUPs that fulfil the first qualifier, from 54 in 2021 to 59 (87 per cent) in 2023. The number of NUPs fulfilling the second qualifier remained unchanged at 55 (81 per cent). A notable increase was evident in the number of countries with NUPs fulfilling the third qualifier from 26 (45 per cent) in 2021 to 33 (49 per cent).
- From a regional point of view, all regions have a relatively high proportion of NUPs that fulfil qualifier one "responds to population dynamics", with Asia at 90 per cent, Europe and Latin America and Caribbean at 89 per cent each, Africa at 83 per cent, and the Arab States at 75 per cent. A similarly high proportion fulfil the second qualifier, "ensure balanced territorial development" with NUPs in Africa leading with 83 per cent, followed closely by Europe and North America (81 per cent), Asia and the Pacific (80 per cent), Latin America (78 per cent), and the Arab States (50 per cent).
- There was a notable increase in the number of countries using NUPs to support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NUA, from 60 per cent in 2021 to 80 per cent in 2023. Countries also used various approaches to monitor NUA implementation. The most frequent approach used is "formulates medium and long-term disaggregated urban demographic projections and trends, considering economic, social and environmental forces" as reported by 52 (80 per cent) of the countries.

A. Over two thirds of the countries have monitoring and evaluation frameworks for their national urban policy (most of which are based on urban scale data and indicators)

A NUP monitoring and evaluation framework helps a country to review progress made, results achieved, challenges met and to identify corrective actions needed to achieve the objectives set by the NUP. While many countries have developed monitoring and evaluation frameworks for their policies, very few have shared impacts emerging from the frameworks. As such, monitoring and evaluation of NUPs and regional development plans is a new challenge, especially in these plans' capacity to produce and accumulate knowledge, learning and associated impacts. The country survey found that 76 per cent of respondent countries (52) had a monitoring and evaluation framework for their national urban policy compared to 24 per cent (16 countries) who did not (see figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1. National urban policies with monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Share of respondent countries (n=68)



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

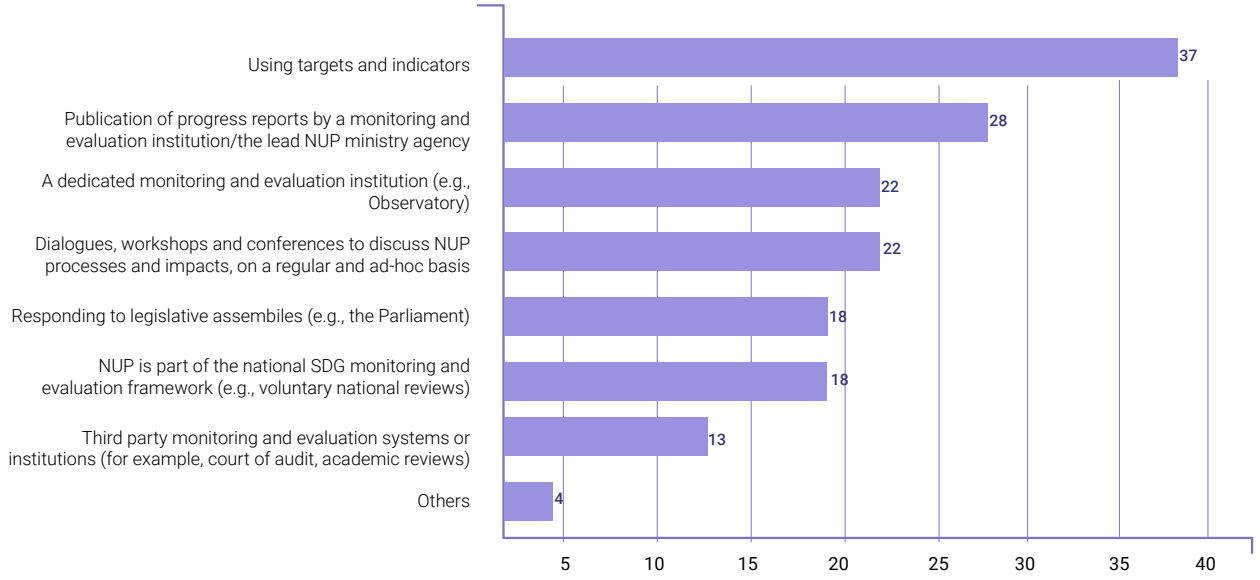
Countries that had monitoring and evaluation frameworks were found to use several methods and frameworks to monitor and evaluate their national and subnational urban policies. Development and use of "targets and indicators" was the most popular strategy, used by 37 countries (51 per cent of respondents) (see figure 5.2). This marks a significance increase from the 38 per cent (26 countries) reported in the 2021 survey and is a clear indication that despite challenges highlighted in its collection in the previous edition, urban data is becoming a more powerful tool for pursuing implementation, monitoring and evaluation of urban policies and related impacts on the Sustainable Development Goals. The use of data and indicators would enhance evidence-based policymaking, quantitative comparability of policy performance and the quantifying of the impacts of urban policies.

Additionally, 28 countries (39 per cent) reported the use of "publication of progress reports by a monitoring and evaluation institution or by the lead NUP ministry/agency". Although this represented a slight decrease from the 33 countries using this strategy in 2021, it remained the second most popular monitoring framework, as similarly observed in the 2021 survey. Such monitoring reports could be a quantitative or qualitative analysis of policy process and achievements. "Dialogues, conferences and forums to discuss NUP processes, progress and impacts on regular and ad hoc basis" and "a dedicated monitoring and evaluation institution, for example an observatory" were adopted by 22 countries (31

per cent) each. Communicating policy progress and impacts through such forums enhances public participation, hence is a determinant factor for continued policy implementation. Moreover, countries were observed to use their NUPs as a part of the "national Goal monitoring and evaluation framework, such as the voluntary national reviews", as reported by 18 respondents (26 per cent). Finally, the role of "third-party monitoring and evaluation systems or institutions (for example, court of audit, academic reviews)" has become less prevalent, with only 13 countries (18 per cent) adopting it as a mechanism, compared to 15 in 2021.

Figure 5.2. Types of monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Count of respondent countries (n= 72)

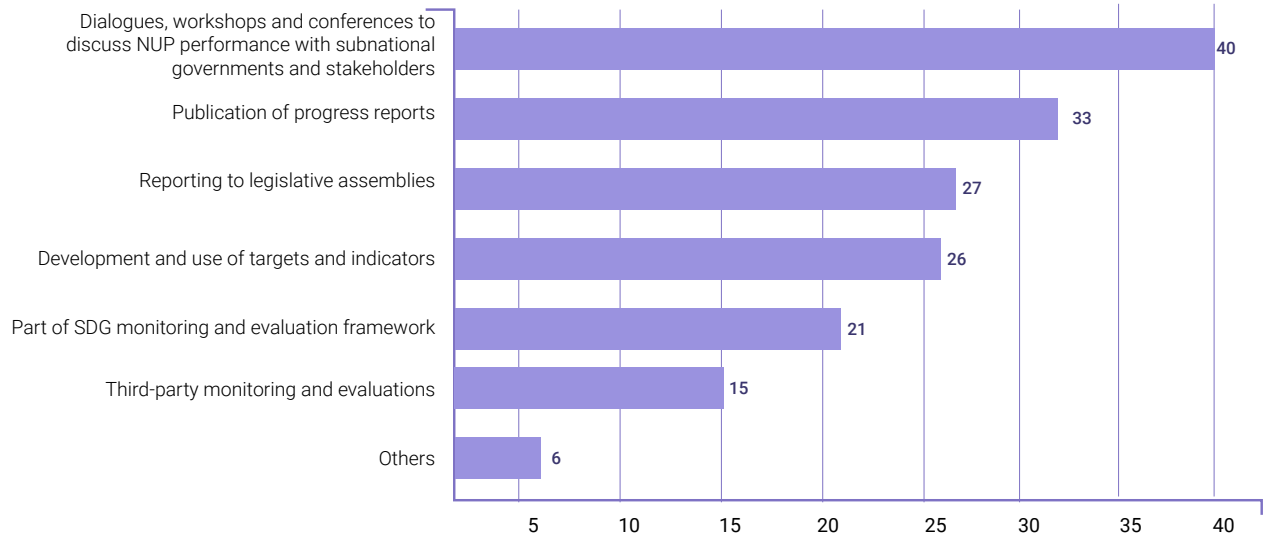


Note: Countries could select more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Figure 5.3. Types of monitoring and evaluation frameworks found in the Global State of National Urban Policy 2 report

Count of respondent countries (n=68)



Source: (OECD/UN-Habitat/UNOPS, 2021, p. 102).

The survey further revealed that countries used a combination of frameworks for the effective monitoring and evaluation of urban policies.

- To enhance monitoring, in **Burkina Faso** the NUP's monitoring and evaluation framework contains a three-year rolling action comprising 5 strategic objectives and 27 impact indicators.
- In **Chile**, the National Council for Territorial Development, together with the National Institute of Statistics, developed the System of Indicators and Standards for Urban Development. This framework is used to measure, monitor and evaluate the progress of Chilean cities in terms of quality of life.
- In **Ethiopia**, the Ministry of Planning and Development, responsible for monitoring and evaluating national developmental progress, collaborates with the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) to prepare key performance indicators for the urban development and construction sectors. Quarterly reports on key performance indicators are prepared by MoUI and presented to the Ethiopian Parliament standing committee on urban development sector. High-level meetings, involving national and subnational (regional and local) governments, as well as other non-governmental stakeholders, are conducted by the ministry every six months to present biannual performance reports and gather their inputs.
- In **France**, the Urban Policy Observatory oversees the performance assessment of the policy, with results being compiled in an annual report.
- In **Indonesia**, the NUP 2045 establishes a set of targets and indicators for each identified objective to enhance regular monitoring. The indicators serve as measurable criteria to assess the progress and effectiveness of the policy.
- The National Observatory of Cities of **Mali** maintains a comprehensive list of "qualitative" or "quantitative" indicators, covering all aspects of the policy, to facilitate its monitoring and evaluation.
- The monitoring and elaboration strategy for the first Urban Policy of **Romania** is based on a set of indicators collected and published during the 2020–2021 period, with technical assistance provided by the World Bank. Although obtaining granularity and updating of these indicators is a significant challenge, the country is actively working to revise them through the National Institute of Statistics.
- The **United Kingdom** underlined the role that digitalization and mapping can play in helping policymakers to understand the spatial dynamics, performance and benefits of NUP.
- On the other hand, as of 2000, the **United States** no longer carries out a biannual report on the state of its NUP for Congress, although the elements of national urban policy remain.

B. Delivering results through the national urban policy

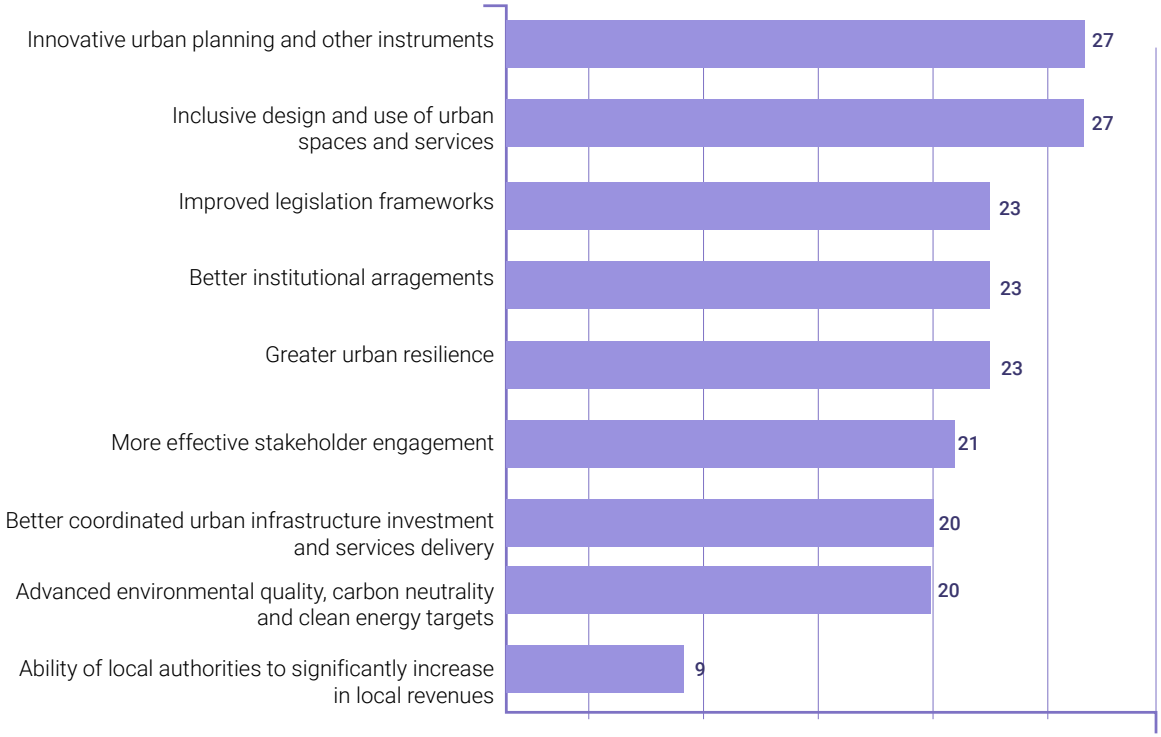
The extent of positive outcomes and impacts delivered by NUPs largely depends on their successful implementation. The urban policy survey revealed a diverse set of implementation approaches employed by the respondent countries to achieve positive policy outcomes. Resilience thinking has adopted the "building back differently" mentality: The evolving schools of thought on urban resilience now highlight the significance of positive change in recovery processes to mitigate urban poverty and inequality, which are crucial determinants of vulnerability and risk exposure. This approach involves tackling spatial and environmental, as well as social inequality and injustice evident in the urban built environment (UN-Habitat, 2022)

The surveyed countries that have monitoring and evaluation frameworks reported having achieved various impacts resulting from implementation of their NUPs. Forty-four per cent (27) countries indicated "innovative urban planning instruments and processes" and the promotion of "inclusive design and use of urban spaces and services" each as among the key results achieved by their NUPs. Equally, 37 per cent (23 countries) indicated that their NUPs had enabled them to achieve "better institutional arrangements", "improved legislative frameworks" and that they have contributed to achieve "greater urban resilience". The survey further established that in 34 per cent (23) of the respondent countries' NUPs have facilitated "more effective stakeholder engagement" (see figure 5.4). In 32 per cent (20) respondent countries, NUPs that were identified as having helped national urban policies were also identified as having helped to "advance environmental quality, carbon neutrality and clean energy targets", and led to "better coordinate urban infrastructure investment and services delivery".

A paltry 15 per cent of the countries reported to have achieved tangible impacts in using their NUPs to enhance the "ability of local authorities to significantly increase local revenues" within their respective countries. This points to the necessity of developing or revising NUPs to further strengthen the generation of own-source revenues at the local level. The inability to raise local revenues may be associated with constricted implementation of the urban policy and could primarily be an indication of why most countries may not have achieved greater impacts in previous highlighted areas.

Figure 5.4. Measuring the impacts of national urban policies

Count of respondent countries (n=62)



Note: Countries could select more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The results achieved by different countries are evident from improved legislation frameworks, innovative urban planning and design, and urban resilience among others.

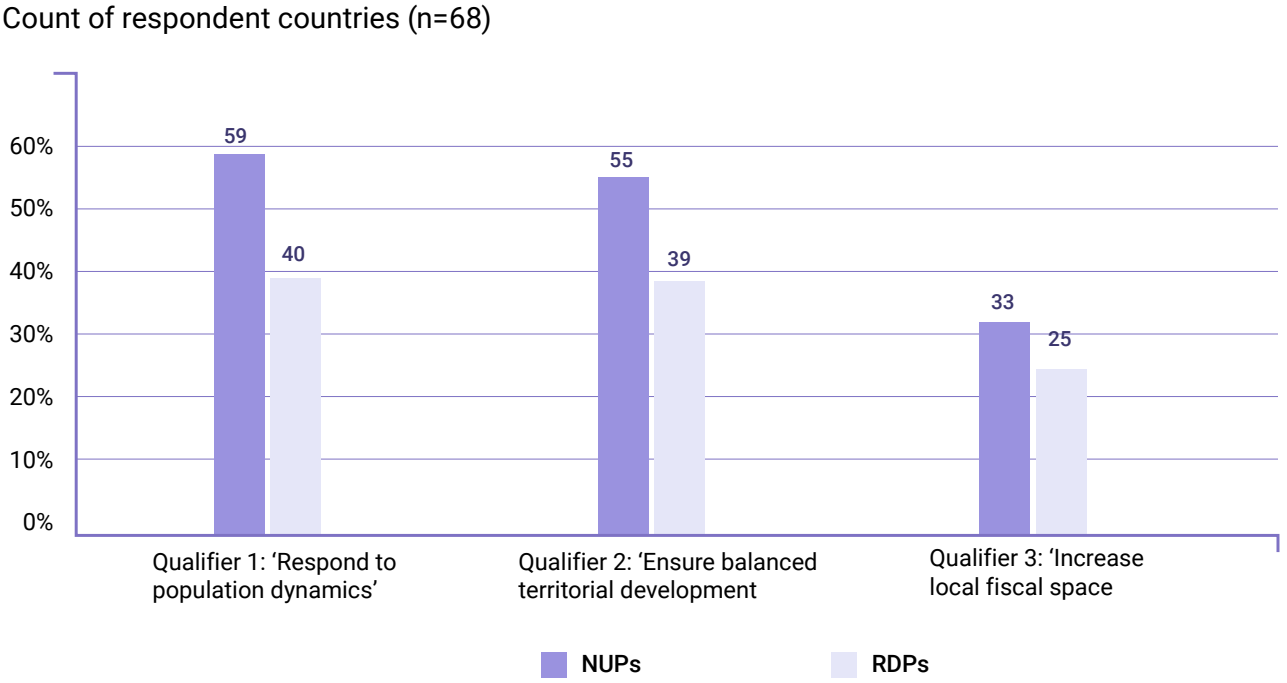
- In **Ecuador**, as part of the efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the construction sector, the Ministry of Urban Development has developed housing typologies that adhere to sustainability and energy efficiency criteria, focusing on water and energy consumption. Additionally, these typologies incorporate strategies for thermal comfort and use materials with low environmental impacts. Moreover, typologies tailored to the climate of each region have been designed and implemented.
- The implementation of the NUP in **Malawi** has led to enhancements in the country's urban institutional frameworks and arrangements, resulting in the improved performance of its urban functions. In addition, there has been a recognition of the necessity to prioritize urban resilience as a major challenge in the country. The urban resilience priorities have garnered financial support from the World Bank to implement key projects in Blantyre , which is frequently impacted by severe weather events, natural disasters and catastrophes.

- In **Morocco**, the State's deployment of a NUP has enabled the management of increased urbanization through effective town planning, which allows each territory to take advantage of its potential and address socioeconomic and environmental challenges. This approach ensures equitable and balanced urban development. For example, city-wide projects, particularly those resulting from the urban policy or urban housing programmes, have made it possible to improve the living and housing environment of people through the deployment of high-quality, adequate and sustainable housing. Morocco ascribes the success of these programmes to effective multilevel governance coupled with funding through public-private partnerships a key element in the policy.
- While urban policy implementation in **Peru** is still in its early stages, the results are a product of the changes generated by the adoption of the New Urban Agenda. This adoption has led to the development of innovative regulatory frameworks, exemplified by the enactment of Law 31313 on sustainable urban development (2021) and Law No. 31199 aw on the management and protection of public spaces (2021). These legal developments occurred concurrently with the approval of the Housing and Urbanism National Policy (2021).
- In **Saudi Arabia**, the innovative urban planning and design instruments are driving positive change. National frameworks and guidelines such as the "National Public Realm Manual" have been developed to prioritize people in urban development. Programmes have been established and financed to support transformative interventions and foster change. Plans are underway to establish "urban studios" in major cities to assist local authorities in promoting inclusive design and ensuring equitable access to urban public spaces and services.

C. Monitoring Goal 11.a.1. through national urban policies has been a strategic opportunity, yet an important challenge for national governments

The survey established that NUPs and regional development plans were increasingly being used by countries to advance global agendas, particularly in monitoring the implementation of Goal 11, target 11.a. The target is to "support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning". The progress towards attainment of the target is measured through indicator 11.a.1, which is to consider multiple development at territorial levels, alongside other forms of aggregation and disaggregation. The survey led to an analysis of national urban policies and regional development plans that implemented the three qualifiers to measure indicator Goal 11.a.1 (see figure 5.5): "(a) respond to population dynamics, (b) ensure balanced territorial development, (c) increase local fiscal space".

Figure 5.5. National urban policies and regional development plans that fulfil Goal 11.a.1 by qualifier



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

The survey established that 68 countries had NUPs or regional development plans that fulfilled at least one of the three qualifiers of Goal 11.a.1. Further analysis indicated that 59 per cent (40 countries) had NUPs and regional development plans that fulfilled all three qualifiers, compared to 34 per cent (23 countries) that fulfilled two qualifiers, and 7 per cent (5 countries) that fulfilled one qualifier. Analysis of the results indicated that when compared to the 2021 survey, it was apparent that while absolute numbers had not changed, the share of countries of countries with NUPs and regional development plans implementing all the three qualifiers had increased from 40 per cent (40 countries) in 2021 to 59 per cent (40 countries). Equally, a similar trend was observed in both 2021 and 2024 results, where a higher number of national urban policies and regional development plans fulfilled the first two qualifiers "respond to population dynamics" and "ensure balanced territorial development", compared to third qualifier "increase local fiscal space".

Fifty-nine countries (87 per cent) reported that their NUPs fulfilled the first qualifier compared to 54 countries (94 per cent) in 2021 (see figure 5.5). Although the absolute number of countries with NUPs fulfilling the second qualifier remained unchanged at 55 (81 per cent), the percentage share reduced from 95 per cent to 81 per cent. While there was a notable increase in the number of countries with NUPs fulfilling the third qualifier to 33 (49 per cent) from 26 (45 per cent) in 2021, the percentage share of these countries remained low.

Fulfilment of the three qualifiers is corroborated by results from thematic focus of NUP and RDPs discussed in chapter II of the present report, where qualifier one was covered under thematic area "inclusive growth and opportunities for all", and indicated that 80 per cent of NUPs moderately to extensively provided opportunities for all urban residents, in particular by ensuring that urban development was sensitive to vulnerable populations, promoted diversity and inclusion, and reduced gender and general gaps. Equally, under the second qualifier, NUPs were effectively implanting thematic

area "urban systems and networks and urban rural cooperation", with 83 per cent of NUPs moderately to extensively maximizing the potential of cities of all sizes and promoting a balanced national urban system; 90 per cent of NUPs moderately to extensively targeting an effective territorial scale in urban areas, and 75 per cent of NUPs moderately to extensively supporting urban rural cooperation. On the third qualifier, "increase local fiscal space" under the financing urban infrastructure thematic area, 64 per cent of NUPs were found to moderately to extensively help to diversify the sources of finance, such as increasing autonomy to use levies, fees and charges, leveraging private investments and promoting the use of municipal bonds.

The notable low fulfilment of the third qualifier by NUPs and RDPs, compared to other two qualifiers, could be attributed to the inherent nature of urban policies developed in some countries and the extent to which they define fiscal relationships between national and local governments. Evident is fact that, while important progress may have been made on advancing the decentralization reform in many countries in past decades, such reforms may not have been effectively captured in urban policies, and the autonomy of local governments in these countries may have remained a great challenge. As such, local and regional governments are only able to mobilize a small share of local revenues to cater for local expenditures owing to inappropriate fiscal autonomy. This leaves them dependent on intergovernmental transfers from the central government budget as the only important source of funds for execution of local functions and service delivery. Clear examples are evident from the survey in Chile, where the country's NUP does not have established guidelines regarding increasing local fiscal space, or in Ukraine where fiscal policy remains exclusively at the state level, with no fiscal autonomy granted to local or regional levels. However, other countries such as Colombia have policy axes that are focused on adequate and efficient planning and oriented towards the modernization of existing financing instruments and the adoption of new ones for financing at the local level.

Other relevant country cases include:

- **Austria** (2 qualifiers) considers and addresses demographic change and relies on the Sustainable Development Goals and European Union principles of balanced territorial development, such as the Territorial Agenda of the European Union. However, local fiscal space falls under budget policies rather than territorial or urban policies, encompassing a broader range of sectors than urban development alone. Every six years, the national budgetary framework is negotiated among the federal, regional and municipal levels. A major share of municipal budgets comes from intragovernmental transfers, through a complex system of re-distribution of revenues across all levels of government regulated in the Fiscal Equalisation Act, which is negotiated every three to eight years between the three levels of administration. The act defines the amount of shared revenues that municipalities are granted.
- In **Czechia** (2 qualifiers), the principles of urban policy focus on demographic change, specifically on the ageing population, changes in reproductive behaviour and related areas. Equally it focuses on strengthening urban-rural links and functional regions towards ensuring a balanced territorial development. A specific feature of the Czech urban policy environment is zero fiscal autonomy at local or regional level.
- In **Finland** (2 qualifiers), while the national Government has adopted financial support for municipalities to undertake nature-based solutions and services to restore urban and peri-urban recreational areas, local authorities in the country have relatively wide fiscal autonomy,

encompassing the right to levy taxes and provide catalytic seed money to support local level actions. Equally, fiscal and financial incentives from the national and seven biggest city regions in Finland have been made to support investment and implementation of sustainable infrastructure services in the areas through agreements on land-use, housing and transport.

- In **Indonesia** (2 qualifiers) Kebijakan Perkotaan Nasional 2045 outlines a visionary urban scenario for the country, emphasizing strategic objectives and anticipatory measures. It addresses population dynamics, particularly the challenge of increasing urban population growth in the country. Recognizing the trend of population migration towards urban areas, the policy outlines strategic responses to manage and accommodate the growth. KPN 2045 also emphasizes the need for balanced and inclusive urban development, considering the demands of a growing population and aiming to create cities that are resilient, equitable and capable of supporting the well-being of their inhabitants. KPN 2045 anticipates optimized urbanization potential, ensuring that cities become hubs of balanced growth, inclusivity and competitiveness.

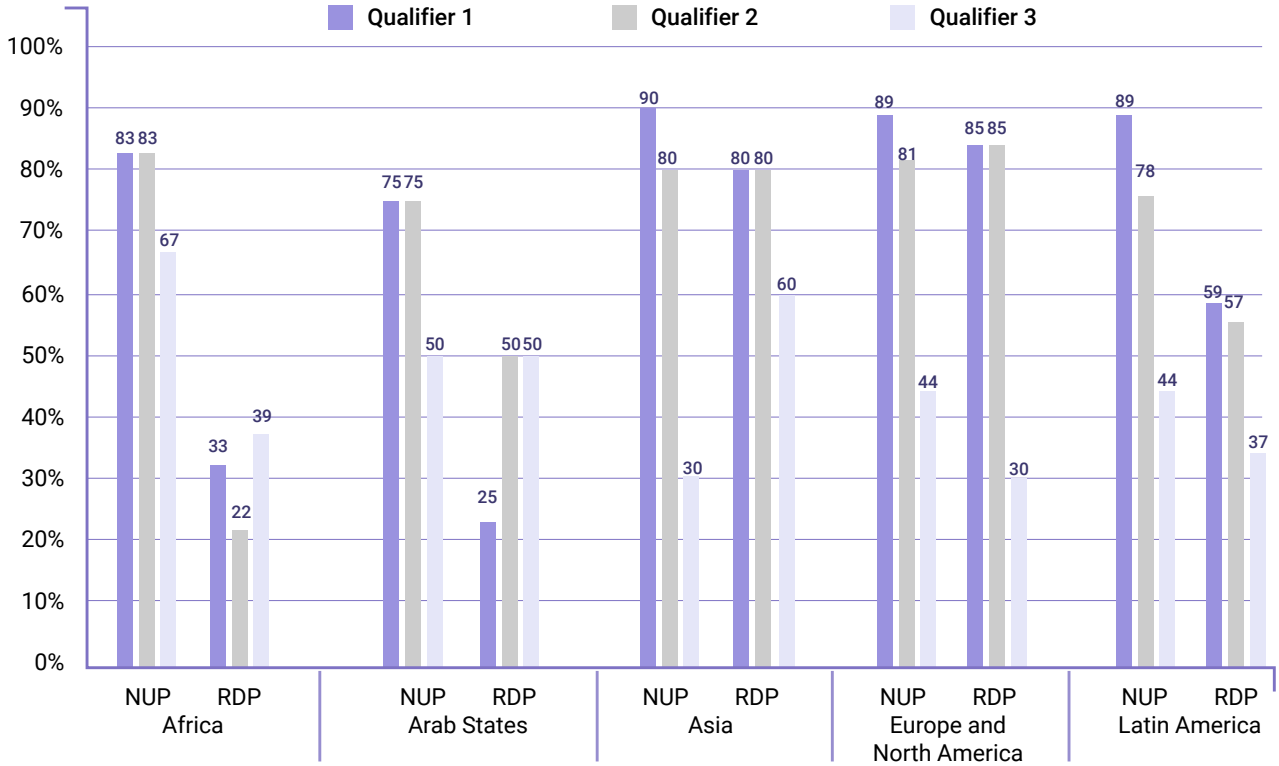
- In **Paraguay** (3 qualifiers), the Programme Development of Regions (PDR) sets out an ambitious goal to tackle negative demographic trends and to reduce regional population disparities. It also aims to enhance balanced territorial development through the development of a polycentric network of cities as prescribed in the country's National Spatial Development Concept (NSDC). Both the PDR and the NSDC provide measures to enhance economic growth. The NSDC for example proposes enhancing regional competitiveness as well as stimulation of development of specific territories to provide sustainable economic growth by preserving the natural, social and cultural potential of the territory.

- **Solomon Islands** (3 qualifiers): In the Solomon Islands, the NUP is cognizant of policies that address population challenges in the country, considering factors such as aging populations, urbanization and migration. There is collaboration with other stakeholders on family planning initiatives, healthcare programmes and education reforms and there is respect for fair and effective migration policies that consider both domestic and international migration trends. Equally, the NUP encourages provincial and local governments to mobilize, allocate and use financial resources for their development priorities and responsibilities. The Valuation Division of the Ministry of Lands assists local authorities to generate revenue through property rates and ensure implementation of strategies that address the specific needs and demands of their communities.

While an increase in population in a region may lead to inequality, especially if it is not coupled with increased revenues, it needs to ensure that NUPs and RDPs include objectives that reduce regional disparities and promote equitable social, economic and infrastructural development growth across urban and rural territories. While revenue that central governments transfer are important, they are only useful in financing existing facilities and use; they may not effectively finance services development. Urban policies that put in place strategies for effective collection of their own revenues could enhance the capacity of such authorities to enhance their economic potential. Central governments, through NUPs, should work on increasing the economic potential across towards the long-term steady state of such regions. This would be effective especially if such NUPs enhance fiscal autonomy and empower local and regional government units with the right means to mobilize resources for better services delivery and better allocate funds based on citizens' needs.

Regional variations exist in the way countries have formulated and are using both NUPs and RDPs to implement the three Goal 11.a.1 qualifiers. A common trend is observed across Africa, Arab States and Latin America, with a high proportion of countries observed using NUPs more that RDPs in fulfilling the three G 11.a.1 qualifiers, as compared with Europe, North America and the Caribbean, and the Asia Pacific regions, where the share of NUPs fulfilling the qualifiers is almost equal. Similarly, all regions have a high proportion of countries with NUPs that primarily focus on qualifier one, "respond to population dynamics", and two, "ensure balanced territorial development", compared to qualifier three, "increase local fiscal space" (see figure 5.6). These results are a clear indication that, comparatively, the three regions are embracing the new generation national urban policies, with key among the development being to align and monitor Sustainable Development Goals among other global agendas.

Figure 5.6. Regional comparison of national urban policies fulfilling the three qualifiers



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

It is evident across the globe that NUPs are popular as tools to support countries and regions to address population dynamics, demographic shifts and to enhance efforts to reduce growing territorial inequalities through the promotion of coordinated and integrated development across urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and in making cities and regions more inclusive and resilient. All regions were identified as having a relatively high share of NUPs that fulfil qualifier one "respond to population dynamics", with Asia at 90 per cent, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean at 89 per cent each, Africa at 83 per cent and Arab States at 75 per cent. Similarly, a high share of countries was identified as having NUPs that have fulfil qualifier two – "ensure balanced territorial development", with NUPs in Africa leading at 83 per cent, followed closely by Europe and North America (81 per cent), Asia and the Pacific (80 per cent), Latin America (78 per cent) and Arab States (50 per cent). On the other hand, the Asia, Europe and North American regions recorded higher number of regional development plans supporting the implementation of first two qualifiers at 85 per cent each of the two qualifiers, followed closely by Asia at 80 per cent for each of the two respectively. In Latin America, implementation of population

dynamics was identified to be supported by 59 per cent of RDP as compared with 57 per cent for territorial development. NUPs in Africa and RDPs in Asia were identified as highly implementing the third qualifier 'increase local fiscal space' at 67 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. This could be an indication of realization of the resources needed in countries in the developing regions to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In Europe, at the regional scale, while many regional governments are largely dependent on financial transfers from the State or the European Union funding subsidies, fiscal policy in general has not been integrated with the spatial and urban development policy in countries such as Serbia.

Policies in developing regions such as Africa have been developed with recommendations based on the recognition that the urban population of the regions will experience an upward trend. Thus, some countries have offered fiscal incentives and mechanisms for resource mobilization for housing investment. For instance, in Kenya, the NUDP recommends the adoption of technology to maximize revenue collections within urban areas. The policy also recommends the exploration and development of innovative and effective finance sources to fund urban development and provision of services. It recommends the establishment of a financing mechanism – an Urban Development Fund – to fund infrastructure and service provision within urban areas.

D. National urban policies are increasingly used to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

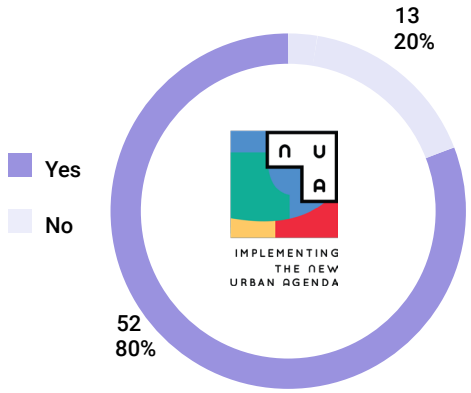
NUP is among the key drivers[16] of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) that accelerates the achievement of other global goals and especially the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus, they continue to be important tools for supporting the implementation of the NUA. The NUA is a necessary accelerator for the Sustainable Development Goals. It defines ways in which better planning, design, management, governance and finance will allow cities to enable the realization of the 2030 Agenda (UN-Habitat, 2023). While implementing the NUA, NUPs not only provide an opportunity to undertake periodic reviews to track progress, assess its impacts and ensure effective and timely implementation, but they also help to deliver integrated and sustainable territorial development. This ensures well-functioning and sustainable cities that align national development programmes with global priorities. To achieve their NUA targets, including reporting on the targets, many national governments have committed to developing and implementing NUPs. National governments reviewing their NUPs have ensured the integration of NUA reporting as a key objective. UN-Habitat's goal has been keen to support governments with integrating the NUA reporting with NUP and National Urban Forum processes (UN-Habitat 2024a.)

The global survey on NUPs sought to evaluate whether NUPs support the implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda and the relevant mechanism(s) anchored in such policies to support the process. The survey established that compared to 2021, there was a notable increase in the percentage share of countries that are using NUPs to support implementation of monitoring and evaluation of the New Urban Agenda from 60 per cent to 80 per cent in 2023 (see figure 5.7). These results highlight the important role national governments play among other stakeholders in the implementation of the urban dimension of the Goals and NUA through their NUPs. Equally, data and information collected by governments on NUA using the NUPs has been instrumental in developing country's national progress reports on NUA (see box 5.1)

16. The others include urban governance, urban planning, municipal finance and technology.

Figure 5.7. National urban policies that support implementation of New Urban Agenda

2023 NUP support for the New Urban Agenda



Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Box 5.1. Preparing the New Urban Agenda National Reports

Member States are encouraged to "carry out a periodic follow-up to and review of the New Urban Agenda, ensuring coherence at the national, regional and global levels, in order to track progress, assess the impact and ensure the Agenda's effective and timely implementation, accountability to our citizens and transparency, in an inclusive manner" (NUA, par. 61).

The National Progress Reports are a basis for qualitative and quantitative analysis of the progress made in the implementation of the NUA and internationally agreed goals and targets relevant to sustainable urbanization and human settlements. The analysis is to be based on activities of national, subnational and local governments, supplemented by data from other relevant stakeholders. The reports are prepared every four years. Data and analysis from NUP processes and reports form the key foundation of the reporting. The NUA reporting is based on the following four key pillars, all of which are related to national urban policy processes.

- ***Realistic and evidence-based***, including use of data that are appropriately disaggregated and enable analysis of trends.
- ***Analytical*** of the trends observed in the evidence base and able to adequately identify the key drivers of change.
- ***Connected to local best practices***, case studies and illustrative actions that demonstrate the drivers of change.
- ***Prepared*** in an open, inclusive, multilevel, participatory, and transparent manner.

Source: Adapted from UN-Habitat NUA Reporting Guidelines

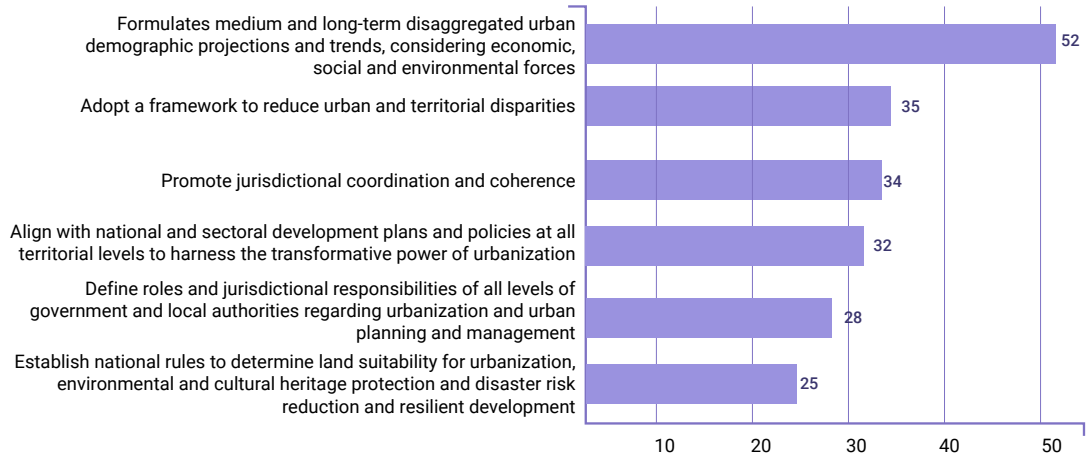
E. New Urban Agenda implementation, monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Countries use multiple and diverse mechanisms, as mainstreamed within their NUPs, to support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the New Urban Agenda. The most frequently used mechanisms identified by the survey were formulating "medium and long-term disaggregated urban demographic projections and trends, considering economic, social and environmental forc***es"*** reported by 52 (80 per cent) of the countries (see figure 5.8). The large share of NUPs using this mechanism could be attributed to fact that most countries have enhanced their urban policies towards achievement of indicator Goal 11.a.1. as earlier established in this paper and highlighted in table 5.1. Other mechanisms highlighted were "adoption of a framework to reduce urban and territorial disparities" (35 countries, 54 per cent), and the "promotion of jurisdictional coordination and coherence" (34 countries, 52 per cent). These may indicate that NUPs from these countries have developed strategies that mainstream sustainable urban and territorial development across national, subnational and local levels. Such cities and urban areas effectively address spatial segregation and growing social and economic exclusion and inequalities, including strengthening synergies between migration and development. "Align with national and sectoral development plans and policies at all territorial levels to harness the transformative power of urbanization" was highlighted by 32 countries, (49 per cent), while "define roles and jurisdictional responsibilities of all levels of government and local authorities regarding urbanization and urban planning and management" and "establish national rules to determine land suitability for urbanization, environmental and cultural heritage protection and disaster risk reduction and resilient development" was reported by 25 countries (38 per cent) and 28 countries (43 per cent) respectively.

All the mechanisms identified by the survey directly or indirectly help to implement different Goals and especially Goal 11 indicators, and are linked to monitoring the NUA (see table 5.1). They ensure that NUPs not only integrate national and sectoral plans and policies, contribute to strengthening urban rural linkages but they also ensure equitable access to infrastructures and services in the cities and urban areas of respective countries.

Figure 5.8. National urban policies monitoring and evaluation mechanism for New Urban Agenda

2023 Assessment of the New Urban Agenda: Diversity in Types of NUP Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks



Note: Countries could select more than one option.

Source: Author'WWs elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Table 5.1. National urban policy links to Sustainable Development Goals indicators and New Urban Agenda

NUP links to SDG Indicators and NUA			
Mechanism	Relevant SDG Indicator	Link to NUA	NUPs using the mechanism
Formulates medium and long-term disaggregated urban demographic projections and trends, considering economic, social and environmental forces. coordination and coherence.	SDG 11.a.1. (direct)	Paras. 2, 13c, 13g, 15c, 16, 19, 61, 62, 63, 72, 77, 80, 94, 95, 101, 123, 156, 157, 158, 159	52
Establish national rules to determine land suitability for urbanization, environmental and cultural heritage protection and disaster risk reduction and resilient development. coordination and coherence.	SDG 11.3.1; SDG15.1.1 (indirect)	Paras 49, 51, 69, 88, 98, 105, 106	25
Define roles and jurisdictional responsibilities of all levels of government and local authorities regarding urbanization and urban planning and management.	SDG 11.a.1. (direct)	Paras 1, 13b, 14a, 15c, 41, 89, 135, 148, 149, 160	28
Align with national and sectoral development plans and policies at all territorial levels to harness the transformative power of urbanization.	SDG 11.a. 1. (indirect)	Paras 13e, 13g, 14c, 15c i, ii, 50, 63, 64, 86, 96, 136	32
Adopt a framework to reduce urban and territorial disparities	SDG 11.a.1. (Direct); SDG 11.3.2; SDG 11.b.1; SDG 11.b.2. (Indirect)	Paras 4, 13e, 13g, 13h, 15c ii, 49, 50, 71, 72, 80, 95, 96, 101, 119	35
Promote jurisdictional coordination and coherence.	SDG 6.1.1. SDG 6.1.2, SDG 6.3.1. SDG7.1.1. SDG71.2. SDG9c. 1, SDG11.1.1; SDG11.2.1; SDG 11.6.1; SDG 11.7.1; SDG 12.5.1, SDG12.5.1	Paras 13e, 14a, 15c-i, 87, 88, 90, 91, 96, 99, 105, 117	34

Note: Countries could select more than one option.

Source: Author's elaboration based on the 2023 National Urban Policy Country Survey.

Different countries were also found to have used different mechanisms to mainstream NUA through their NUPs and RDPs.

- In **Czechia**, the urban policy has developed medium-term urban trends, considering economic, social and environmental forces. It ensures the need for balanced and equitable access to land and respect for property rights against sustainability concerns and the use of land as a productive resource, while at the same time avoiding regulatory constraints on land supply that could limit urban productivity and supply of affordable housing. The urban policy sets out the roles and responsibilities for all spheres of government based on the principle of subsidiarity and public participation. Equally, it ensures equitable provision and access to infrastructure, public goods and services, national and regional economic development, resilience and environmental protection.
- In **Ethiopia**, the NUP is aligned with the country's long- and medium-term plans as well as with other national policies and strategies. It defines roles and responsibilities of the federal, regional and local governments with respect to realizing sustainable urbanization. It promotes urban and or local economic development, environmental protection and resilience development.
- In **Nigeria**, the urban management system applies the principles of the NUA and sustainable

urbanism to produce cities and settlements that are well-functioning, prosperous, climate responsive, resilient, healthy, secure, inclusive, equitable and liveable for all Nigerians. The country's National Urban Development Policy clearly defines the roles and responsibilities for all tiers of government. It fosters equitable access to infrastructure and services, national and regional economic development, resilience and environmental protection. The country's and States' (subnational level governments) legal frameworks are reformed to support the establishment of municipal urban management and efficient land delivery. Urban governance bodies are established at all scales and vertically integrated to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of the NUA.

- The goal of the NUP in **Poland** is to break the silos and promote cooperation between ministries as well as all levels of public administration to achieve sustainable, integrated development of urban areas. It promotes and give incentives for cites and their functional areas to cooperate and align policies, strategies and projects. It formulates a comprehensive diagnosis of the current state of Polish cities as well as the current trends and projections.

F. Country's initiatives in reviewing national urban policies

While efforts to use urban policies to define and elaborate urban development were first adopted over a decade ago, its only recently that many countries have initiated efforts in updating to reflect most recent global trends. The designation of NUPs in 2019 by the United Nations Statistic Commission as a monitoring tool for the Sustainable Development Goals provided a window of opportunity to many of these countries to scale up NUP as a powerful policy process and to help governments shape and implement such urban policies. As a result, many countries have seized the opportunity and are already reviewing and revising their national urban policies to ensure they are effective frameworks to implement the Goals and monitor the NUA among other urban-focused global frameworks. Ghana and Nigeria are among countries who have undertaken recent reviews of their national urban policy. The review of the NUP in Ghana has highlighted the need to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable as well as implementing urban related international agreements such as NUA and Agenda 2063 of the African Union (see box 5.2).

The implementation of the urban policies in Czechia has mainly been through the regional policy and related instruments. An update was initiated in 2021 and was reformulated to reflect international trends and changes in the global context, with approval done in 2023. Between 2021 and 2022, the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory of Colombia, with the support of the OECD, carried out the Urban Policy Review. While the country's CONPES 3819 of 2014 made a commitment to a policy approach based on competitiveness, it did not include aspects that today constitute a fundamental route in urban management, according to national and international agendas (such as the NUA and the Paris Agreement on climate change) among other climate change agendas and closing intra-urban and intra-regional gaps. Equally, the diagnostic of the national urban policy identified challenges in Colombian urban areas, and led to a series of comprehensive, sectoral and governance recommendations for updating the policy. In 2023, progress had been made in the formulation of a regional convergence policy that is based on the recognition of the successes and failures of the City System Policy and seeks to take advantage of the city built on strong intra-urban and regional ties, construction and implementation of supra-municipal development models to strengthen urban-rural links and the integration of territories that complement a comprehensive habitat policy. These are articulated with

the national and regional vision and commitments of productivity, competitiveness and innovation.

In review of their urban policies, many governments have used National Urban Policy Forums. Such forums have ensured that the review process is inclusive and thus offers excellent opportunities to reflect on urbanization trends, identify achievements and impacts in the development initiatives, review the progress and outcomes of their urban policy process, identify urbanization opportunities, and propose ideas for positive transformation. Equally the forums provide an ideal place to review and evaluate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and facilitate an environment to develop the NUA progress reports.

Box 5.2. Review of the Ghana National Urban Policy

The Ghana NUP and its accompanying Action Plan was developed in 2012 to promote a sustainable, spatially integrated and orderly development of urban settlements with adequate housing, infrastructure and services, efficient institutions and a sound living and working environment for all people to support the rapid socioeconomic development of Ghana.

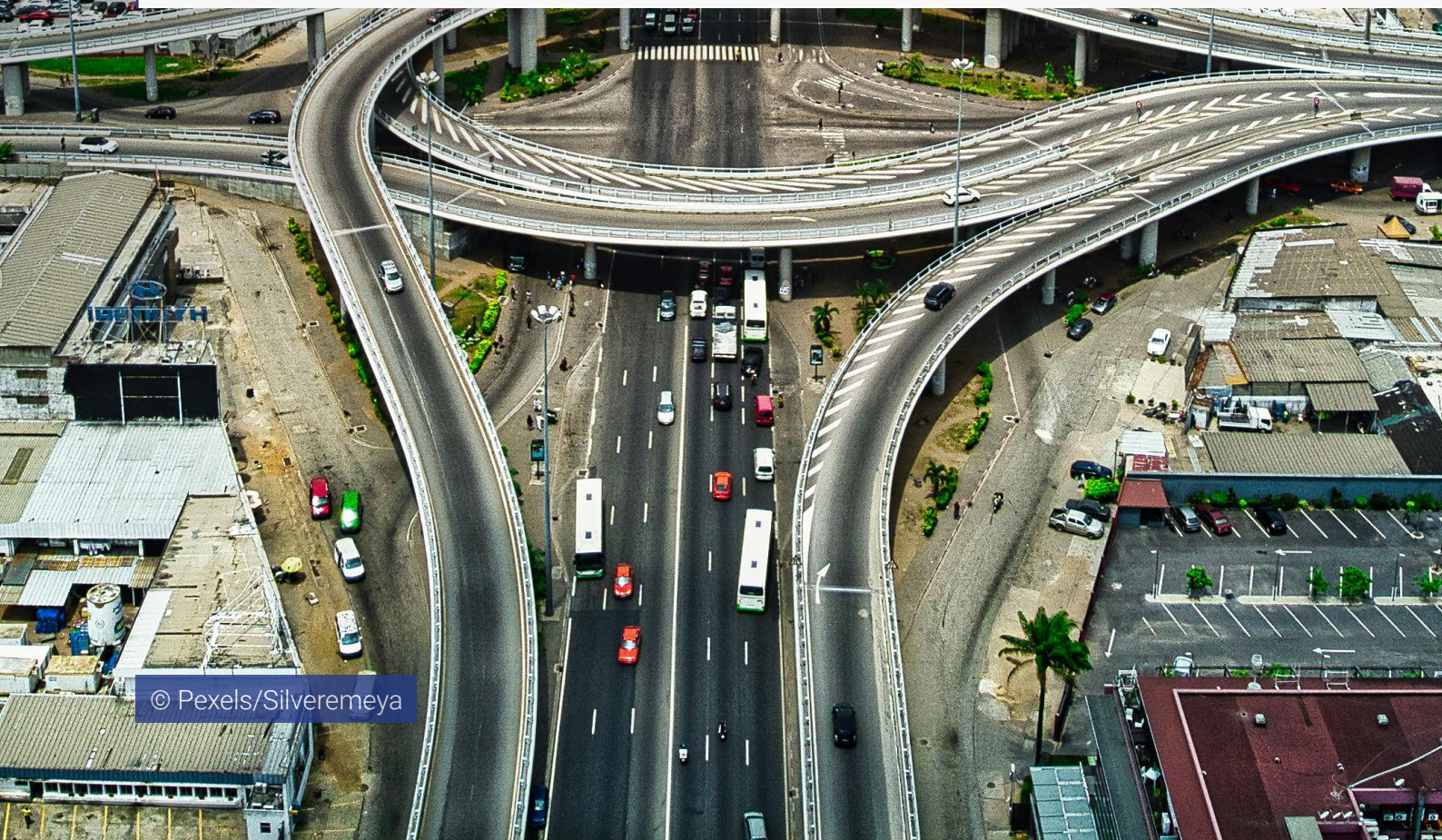
Equally, the role of Ghanian cities in addressing three key national development risks in the country (inequality, climate change and fiscal instability) is undeniable and resonates closely with the Sustainable Development Goals. However, these Goals were published after release of the country's first NUP in 2012. With some implementation limitations and an overly complex urban policy landscape, Ghana undertook to revise its urban policy with the aim of connecting the domestic urban development programme with global programmes and associated ideas, technologies, funding and investment in support of the Goals.

A review of the Ghana NUP was initiated in 2021 to make it more responsive to the national and global agenda, and to align it with particularly with Goal 11 on urbanization – "to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" – as well as other urban-related international agreements, including the New Urban Agenda, Agenda 2063 and climate change-relevant protocols. The revised NUP is pending cabinet approval and the launch for implementation.

Source: Draft Ghana National Urban Policy, 2023.

6. Ways forward

This chapter begins with a recapitulation of key findings and highlights key actions national governments should do to further advance their NUPs in the pursuit of making cities safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. Four actions stand out: a) connect sectoral ministries in charge of economic development and social policies through NUP; b) tap into the full potential of NUPs to support balanced regional development; c) enhance city governments' access to finance for urban development; and d) improve monitoring and evaluation to increase the impacts of NUPs.



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This report has provided an overview of the current global state of NUPs across 78 countries. It describes the institutional and policy frameworks in which the policies operate, the phases and state of their development; how they are financed, their main sectoral and thematic focuses, how they are monitored and evaluated, and to what extent they integrate and support larger global agendas for sustainable urban development. The information collected from the survey serves as grounds for drawing lessons and conclusions about the underlying mechanisms behind the effectiveness of NUPs across places and contexts. These can be now extracted for policy recommendations on how to design and implement more transdisciplinary, and socially, economically and ecologically viable and cogent policies for national, regional and local compact and inclusive urban development.

The report features four concrete ways of moving forward and achieving the latter goals, and by extension getting back on track with achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 by 2030.

Engage sectoral ministries in charge of economic development and social policies moreactively in NUPs

NUPs are versatile policy instruments, each tailored with distinct policy themes, dependent on a country's specific challenges and focused on delivering a wide range of objectives, from enhancing efficient urban governance to fostering balanced territorial development. It is crucial to adjust the type and focus of NUPs to the existing national institutional frameworks and the unique place-based characteristics that influence its workings.

Regardless of whether a policy is mono-sectoral or multi-sectoral (addressing one or many themes), what is of importance is its integration with other policies to foster cross-sectoral collaboration and minimize misalignment, especially in critical sectors such as urban resilience. The survey found that while climate resilience is an increasing priority in NUPs (targeted by almost 90 per cent of NUPs), economic and social-institutional resilience receive less attention (respectively, 75 per cent and 41 per cent of NUPs). Therefore, NUP processes could engage sectoral ministries in charge of economic development and social policies more actively (for example, providing a common vision, sharing resources and tackling interdependencies across policy areas) in order to make economic and social policies more tailored to address place-based challenges such as local economic transformation, health crises and migration, thus enhancing the economic and social dimensions of resilience.

More broadly, connecting sectoral ministries in charge of economic development and social policies and other forms of cross-sectoral collaboration may facilitate alignment between different sectors and urban policies and could be achieved by establishing specific urban bodies or ministries. For instance, Colombia has a National Council for Economic and Social Policy, which is the highest planning authority and advisory body to the Government in all aspects related to the country's economic and social development. It coordinates and guides the bodies in charge of the social and economic direction of the national Government, with the study and approval of policies. In France, urban policies, particularly under the "Politique de la Ville", involve strong cross-sectoral collaboration. The Ministry of Territorial Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities works closely with the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery and the Ministry of Social Affairs to integrate housing, economic development and social policies. This collaboration aims to reduce social inequalities and promote economic growth through urban renewal and housing programmes.

Cross-sectoral collaboration can also facilitate alignment between housing and urban policies. Many countries have continued to formulate national urban policies with elaborate chapters and sections

dedicated to urban housing, facilitating coordination. This survey of countries found that the majority of countries (80 per cent) had established national-level, dedicated housing policies and strategies outside their NUPs, and that most NUPs had been coordinating across sectors and among actors involved at the different levels of government and with purview over sectoral policy areas that addressed issues such as affordable, adequate and sustainable housing. However, misalignment was also noted, which calls for more coherence across different urban policies undertaken at the national and subnational levels with housing policies. Misalignment can risk hindering compact urban development or creating unintegrated housing developments that are not accessible, and/or lack of public and social services. In some cases, misalignment was not due to contradictory criteria between NUPs and the national housing policies, but due to actions generated by management problems, political decisions and economic interests, and not because both policies are misaligned in practice. Nevertheless, governments should align ministries and levels of government behind a shared vision for cities and design policy frameworks that enable subnational governments to promote denser housing and mixed-use development, which matches the needs of all parts of the population, especially vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities.

Tap into the full potential of national urban policies to support balanced regional development

Despite the widespread promotion of smart, sustainable and inclusive cities, the data gathered for this report showed that there was untapped potential for NUPs to address economic development, urban infrastructure financing, and urban-rural linkages, which are critical for fostering territorial cohesion and comprehensive urban policy. NUPs have been at the forefront of the response to population dynamics and demographic changes and they have also included efforts to reduce growing territorial inequalities across urban, peri-urban, and rural areas. However, only 45 per cent of NUPs include concrete actions to maximize the potential of urban-rural linkages and interdependencies requiring maximizing this potential. More efforts are also needed to enhance guidelines regarding increasing local fiscal space.

Strengthening the capacities of NUPs to support balanced regional development is therefore recommended. NUPs can enhance the spatial continuity and functional relations between urban and rural areas beyond a narrow territorial coverage of cities. They can also inform public investments and programme design and promote an integrated development approach. For instance, the Polish NUP focuses on strengthening the cooperation of self-governments within functional urban areas, enhancing urban-rural linkages and promoting economic development across all regions, especially in smaller cities and rural areas through improved infrastructure, better access to public services and support for local economic activities, including measures to increase the local fiscal capacity through enhanced revenue-raising powers for local governments. In Romania, urban-rural linkages are specifically addressed in their NUP, with spatial planning performed at the Functional Urban Area scale to counterbalance urban sprawl and the locality-by-locality type of development. This approach aims to avoid the incremental, unplanned residential expansion that may disrupt agricultural activity around cities, posing a threat to natural resources and adding additional pressure to existing urban utility service networks. The NUP can optimize urban development and the provision of urban services in a Functional Urban Area, so that all the residents in urban, peri-urban and surrounding rural areas can rely on the health and education services and leisure amenities provided.

Enhance city governments' access to finance for urban development

- The prominence of urban resilience in NUPs reflects a growing recognition of cities as key players in addressing major crises, including climate change, global health crises and economic disruptions. However, despite some level of integration of resilience into urban planning and infrastructure, there remains a need for more dedicated funding and stronger alignment with national resilience policies. Enhancing multilevel collaboration, ensuring policy coherence and diversifying sources of financing as a means for building robust, resilient urban environments is therefore necessary. In 2014, Japan adopted a comprehensive disaster risk management plan – Fundamental Plan for National Resilience – that provides for promotion policies for each sector of measures, and sets four basic principles: preventing loss of human life, maintaining important functions of the State and society, minimizing damage to property, and achieving swift recovery and reconstruction (Government of Japan, 2018). The plan was revised in 2018 and 2023.
- However, mobilizing funding and financing for urban development related to resilience and beyond, foreseen by NUPs, is a constant challenge and similarly to the previous edition of this report, the adoption of innovative financing tools is slow. Most of urban development projects to implement NUPs are financed by national direct investments, with insufficient own-source revenues at the subnational level and a lack of financial instruments to facilitate private investment. Governments should ensure that cities have access to sufficient and reliable sources of funding, including their own source revenue and inter-governmental transfers, to meet the needs for urban development. For instance, in Finland, local authorities have a relatively wide fiscal autonomy, encompassing the right to levy taxes and provide catalytic seed money to support local level actions.
- On top of increasing local fiscal space, NUPs can encourage and incentivize national or regional actions, outline priority areas for future infrastructure development, leverage private investment and explore innovative ways of funding, such as biodiversity offsetting, land value capture, land pooling and land banks. They can recommend the adoption of national or local financial incentives, such as grants, for investors that apply sustainable design and construction practices in their projects. National frameworks should support these efforts by establishing legal and institutional bases for new financing mechanisms, as seen in the "Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan" in Canada, which promotes and attracts public-private partnerships and municipal bonds to finance projects, including green infrastructure and public transit.
- Governments are encouraged to strengthen cities' own competences and ensure access to resources, through providing legal and institutional grounds for new funding and financing mechanisms as well as partnerships, as recommended by the G20-OECD report on Financing the Cities of Tomorrow, to meet the need for urban development. Diversifying financing mechanisms to swiftly accommodate future urbanization and adapt cities to climate change and the twin transitions is a needed way forward.

Improve monitoring and evaluation to report and amplify the impacts of NUPs

- Countries continue to use various monitoring and evaluation methods for their NUPs. While monitoring and evaluating NUPs' progress and impact continues to be popular, some countries have taken more ambitious action, including the use of targets and indicators to track progress, institutionalization such as observatories, and voluntary national reviews processes. Furthermore, compared to the GSNUP 2021, the number of countries using NUPs and RDPs to monitor implementation of Goal target 11.a.1 and related indicator targets continues to increase. The New Urban Agenda monitoring and evaluation mechanisms vary between countries too, but largely mirror those put in place for local contributions to the SDGs. They consider medium and long-term disaggregated urban demographic projections and trends and keep in mind the economic, social and environmental forces at play.
- Countries are revising their NUPs to better support the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, the NUA and other global urban frameworks. Nevertheless, more can be done to monitor and evaluate the NUP impacts, for instance through digital tools and monitoring frameworks, standards and platforms that can foster comparative assessments and mutual learning between countries, as well as through enhanced horizontal cooperation with other ministries, for example, environment ministries to develop and collect data on environmental quality. For instance, in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Planning and Development, responsible for monitoring and evaluating national developmental progress, collaborates with the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) to prepare key performance indicators for the urban development and construction sectors. Quarterly reports on key performance indicators are prepared by MoUI and presented to parliament's standing committee on urban development sector. High-level meetings, involving national and subnational (regional and local) governments, as well as other non-governmental stakeholders, are conducted by the ministry every six months to present biannual performance reports and gather their inputs. In Sweden, the interim targets to a) increase the proportion of walking, cycling and public transport, b) methods and integration for urban green spaces and ecosystem services are being monitored regularly by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning. Moreover, established in 2017, the Sustainable Cities Council (a cooperation between different levels of authorities) aims to create conditions for cooperation between authorities that contribute to the achievement of Goal 11 through, amongst others, knowledge-sharing. These approaches enhance the effectiveness of implemented measures and the transparency builds public trust, holding authorities accountable for achieving the defined urban development goals and permitting quicker adaptation to new challenges.

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Global State of National Urban Policy 2024

Building Resilience and Promoting Adequate, Inclusive and Sustainable Housing

A robust national urban policy (NUP) facilitates achieving sustainable urban development as a shared responsibility across levels of government and amongst all actors by setting a shared vision, providing adequate coordination mechanisms, and guiding investments to address national and subnational development priorities. From the analysis of 78 countries across the globe, this edition shows that NUP is increasingly becoming a critical instrument to manage urban challenges and to advance sustainable urbanization, with more than 80% of countries having a NUP in place. The report reviews how countries' NUPs are fostering adequate, inclusive and sustainable housing. The report also explores how countries are using NUP to enhance their resilience to current and emerging shocks. The report has been co-developed by UN-Habitat and the OECD as a key outcome of the National Urban Policy Programme.

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