

# ***Harnessing EU policies to achieve greater impact on city-level UA development***

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# Background

- UA-supportive policies at city level exist
- Less often the case at the regional and national level, and even less so at the supranational level (EU)
- Why these missing links?
- From a top-down perspective there are existing policies, strategies and policy instruments at EU level, which can be considered of relevance to the practice of UA.

## AIM AND QUESTIONS

*To analyse the ways in which EU-level policies and other support instruments applicable for UA initiatives and practices are interpreted and implemented on city-level*

- *Which* policies etc. are applicable and relevant from a city-level perspective?
- What are the *implementation* experience?
- How do city-level authorities and local UA experts assess the *impact* of relevant EU policies and instruments – What are the *potential* and observed benefits as well as *constraints*? - And how can they be unlocked and transgressed?

# METHOD AND DATA



## Semi-structured interviews



- municipal level authorities and actors engaged in the field of urban development , i.e. urban planning experts located at the municipal level, city officials and/or consultants
- have familiarity with the state of urban agriculture and/or are involved in broader urban greening agendas.

## 14 interviews

12 municipalities/cities: Amsterdam, Berlin, Dortmund, Loures, Oostende, Nantes, Paris, Rome, Sofia, Thessaloniki, Lejre, Vilnius

in 10 European countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal

# RESULTS

		EU-level policies' impact on UA practices and governance
<b>Project title</b> <b>European Forum for a Comprehensive Vision on Urban Agriculture</b>		
<b>Deliverable no:</b>	4.3	
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*EU-level policies and policy instruments applicable for UA practices and governance models*

8 key observations

## Observation 1

*Some respondents struggled to easily and quickly identify concrete impacts and furthermore, to identify concrete potentials for UA practices via current EU policy pathways. This is an important finding and is likely to be an outcome of the currently limited role for urban agriculture in EU policies and policy instruments.*

## Observation 2

*Expanding the UA agenda in EU cities is inhibited by urban land ownership and accessibility barriers and in relation to competing uses such as housing development. If the EU more strongly recognized the multiple values of UA, this could support its prioritization at the level of urban governance.*

## Observation 3

*EU agriculture policies, policy instruments and funding continue to favour large-scale agriculture, which inhibits the development of UA. Yet, new EU policy strategies such as Farm to Fork may still serve as fodder for political negotiation at the city level, despite their primary focus on larger-scale approaches, given the broader context of concern for climate goals to which UA can contribute.*

## Observation 4

*UA is “many things” and touches upon many policy areas. This is an opportunity, as UA “can fit into a lot of different financing tools” at the EU level. Yet greater awareness of this by municipal actors will be essential if the UA agenda is to spread across European cities.*

## Observation 5

*City networks across Europe (and beyond), many of which are supported by EU policy and policy instruments, appear to be a primary means by which the EU- even indirectly- is promoting the UA agenda in European cities.*

## Observation 6

*Awards can be an important policy instrument for positive recognition of UA by the EU and can lead to tangible impacts. At the same time, respondents expressed frustration with the generally limited attention UA currently receives from the EU, which has implications for its policy based and material support.*



## Observation 7

*Cities need to cultivate their own capacity building to be able to identify the relevant EU policy instruments. Many of these are not targeting UA but disappear in other policy areas with no clear connection to urban agriculture.*

## Observation 8

*Commercially oriented urban farmers are more likely to be aware of EU policies and their impacts, than non-commercial UA actors. An explicit target on UA could stimulate both UA actor groups' awareness of the relations between policy and projects.*

# Conclusions

## Potentials

UA linkages to multiple EU agendas, incl. climate change, urban resilience, nature based solutions, net zero carbon economy, social integration, supporting vulnerable populations, new business opportunities, biodiversity.

Funding programmes, EU projects and networks, and awards help *“push the agenda of UA”*

## Barriers

Fall between policy areas

Weak linkages to EU food policies and food production projects

# Conclusions

## Recommendations

- an increase in food policy officers in European cities,
- greater municipal participation in EU funded projects (city officials connect with EU decision makers),
- maintain and increase support for urban networks.
- more funding and support for citizen driven initiatives,
- more UA specific EU policies and policy instruments