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## EUROPE, LEIPZIG CHARTER

### Supra-National Coordination for Universal Sustainability

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European cities differ greatly in their urban models and the development challenges they face, possessing diverse historical, economic, social and environmental backgrounds. They each bear unique cultural qualities and exceptional possibilities for economic development, but also suffer from demographic problems of social exclusion along with issues of affordable housing and employment opportunities. It is with the knowledge of these pressures that the European Union proposed a supra-national policy to integrate urban management across the member states and proactively minimise negative externalities.

The EU Member State's Ministers responsible for Urban Development Policies adopted the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities in 2007. These common principles and strategies for urban development policy propose integrated urban development as the path to achieve successful urban sustainability. The key objectives in achieving this were underlined as delivering economic growth at a national, regional and local level while also overcoming social and spatial exclusion.

In signing the Charter, Ministers agree to initiate political debate to integrate its principles into local development policies and to promote balanced territorial organisation. Ministers adopted a 'Reference Framework for Sustainable European Cities' (RFSC) which operationalized the Charter. The RFSC is an online tool which provides local actors with indicators to assess the degree of sustainability of their urban development projects or strategies.

The importance and value of setting urban policy frameworks at a supranational level is demonstrated by the City Region Project. This project of local and regional authorities has gathered extensive and relevant information in city-regional planning cooperation agreements and launched specific regional pilot projects to explore new planning cooperation in the fields of land use management and transportation. The Dialogue for Change City-Network has developed since the signing of the Leipzig Charter, establishing the first peer-to-peer network of cities, and enabling pairs of transatlantic cities to jointly revise and update daily urban planning mechanisms.