*Implementing the Urban Agenda – The role of the digital transformation and financing mechanisms*

The event will raise awareness on the growing synergy between the Urban Agenda for the EU and the UfM Urban Agenda in integrating urban infrastructure and services in the Euro-Mediterranean region, by showcasing the Urban Projects Finance Initiative (UPFI) as a catalyst and facilitator to this end. At the same time, the session will highlight how the Urban Agenda for the EU has recognised the role of the digital transformation and how the implementation of interoperable, standard-based urban digital platforms could facilitate the scaling up of digital solutions. The session will showcase cities in different parts of the world that have benefitted from these digital enablers, and demonstrate the impact of the funding mechanisms to replicate cases in other places.

The event will bring together key urban development actors for the implementation of the evolving UfM Action Plan for Sustainable Urban Development for 2020s through bankable programmes and projects with regional added value, which would maximise opportunities and alleviate challenges for sustainable urban development in the region.

The session will also present the pathway towards an ‘EU ecosystem for the communities of the future’, built on open, digital and trustworthy urban platforms, while at the same time respecting citizens’ digital rights. It will demonstrate how a set of principles and open standards, endorsed by numerous European cities, could be re-used by cities and communities in other parts of the world. As such, the session aims to trigger the interest of potential partners that may wish to re-use some of the presented European solutions.

The groundwork for a UfM Action Plan is already underway. This Action Plan will enhance regional interaction, cooperation and convergence, foster inclusive and sustainable development, reinforce and expand the stakeholder base, and align the UfM work with other regional and global action agendas and best practices. To implement innovative projects at local level that often combine urban development, housing, air quality, mobility, energy efficiency and public services, the role of digital technologies cannot be underestimated. At the same time, however, sufficient investment is needed to launch and sustain innovative urban digital projects.

The UfM has been successful in identifying and sharing good practices and in mobilising financing instruments, such as UPFI. UPFI identifies and prepares potentially replicable and innovative integrated urban projects, in order to accelerate their implementation and enable them to become bankable. The initiative offers technical assistance for project preparation and subsequent access to funding.

Other Organization name: The European Commission (DG CONNECT and DG REGIO) and the Union for the Mediterranean are lead organisers; the EIB, the AFD and OASC are associated

Prospective moderator, speaker(s) or panelist(s)

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|  | First name | Last name | Role | Organization |
| 1 | Wallis  | Goelen Vandebrock | Welcoming speeches | Senior Expert to the Deputy Director-General of Inclusive Growth, Urban and Territorial Development, European Commission, DG REGIO |
| 2 | Amb. Ayşe  | Asya | Welcoming speeches | Deputy Secretary-General for Transport and Urban Development, Union for the Mediterranean |
| 3 | Martin  | Brynskov | Moderator | Open and Agile Smart Cities (OASC) |
| 4 | Peter  | Diry | Panellist | Minister Counsellor for Digital Policy, EU delegation to the United Arab Emirates |
| 5 | Gerry  | Muscat | Panellist | Head of Urban Development Division, Projects Directorate, European Investment Bank (EIB) |
| 6 | Noureddine  | Selmi  | Panellist | Minister of Equipment Housing and Territorial Planning, Tunisia |
| 7 | Roberto | Rocco | Panellist | Associate Professor of Spatial Planning at the Delft University of Technology, in The Netherlands |
| 8 | Frédéric  | Audras | Panellist | Head of Urban Development Department,French Development Agency (AFD) |
| 9 | Lena  | Weiler | Panellist | Senior Expert on urban development and and Head of the International Building Exhibition project, German Cooperation Agency (GIZ) |
| 10 | Davor  | Meersman  | Panellist | CEO of Open and Agile Smart Cities (OASC) |
| 11 | Takehiko | Nagumo | Panellist | Co-Founder & Director of Smart City Institute Japan |