

## ANNUAL PLAN 2024

### SMART CITIES WORKING GROUP

#### LOW CARBON CLUSTER

#### WORKING GROUP LEADERS

- Pieter Faber, Cities Northern Netherlands EU Office, [p.faber@citiesnorthernnetherlands.eu](mailto:p.faber@citiesnorthernnetherlands.eu)
- Miia Paananen, Turku-Southwest Finland European Office, [miia.paananen@turku.fi](mailto:miia.paananen@turku.fi)
- Runa Monstad, Stavanger Region European Office, [Runa.Monstad@stavangerregion.no](mailto:Runa.Monstad@stavangerregion.no)
- Helle Bech Sørensen-Hylle, South Denmark EU Office, [hbh@southdenmark.eu](mailto:hbh@southdenmark.eu)
- Alis Socea, ADR Nord-Est, [alis.socea@adrnordest.ro](mailto:alis.socea@adrnordest.ro)

#### OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Working Group is to act as a platform to offer early information on priorities and funding opportunities linked to Smart Cities, with a focus on the EU Mission on 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030. The WG aims to facilitate sharing of experiences and support matchmaking to develop new partnerships and projects. The WG targets the smart city topic from an integrated and holistic approach, addressing issues such as citizen engagement, data-driven policy and smart governance models, while exploring synergies between the areas linked to smart cities as addressed by the ERRIN WGs on Energy and Climate Change, Transport and ICT.

#### CONTEXT

The long-term priority: EU Mission on 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030 (Cities Mission)

The Smart Cities Working Group has since 2019 followed and contributed to the development and implementation of the Cities Mission by organising information sessions and exchanges with the Mission Secretariat, producing input papers, and facilitating best practice exchanges between ERRIN members. The Cities Mission will, therefore, continue being a priority topic for the WG in 2024, with a focus on project development, exchanges of best practices and lessons learned, and maintaining the dialogue with the Mission Secretariat.

Key EU-level priorities, strategies, events, work programmes and priority calls for proposals that the Working Group aims to follow up in 2024:

- Horizon Europe Programme

- Mission on 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030 (Cities Mission)
  - The continuation of the EU Missions, linking to the discussions on the next Framework Programme (FP10)
  - Continue the dialogue with the Cities Mission Secretariat
  - Project development around the Cities Mission calls for 2024
  - Follow up on Climate City Contract process experiences and lessons learned
  - The smart aspect of the Cities Mission (Positive Energy Districts, Digital Twins, the use of AI on local level), linking to the NetZeroCities Pilot City projects
  - Links to other EU Missions, the New European Bauhaus and the Urban Transition Mission
- European Partnerships
  - Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) Partnership
- European Urban Initiative
- City to city exchanges within the initiative, which also focuses on smaller cities

#### Events:

- R&I Week (18-21 March 2024, Brussels, Belgium)
- Nordic Edge Expo (7-8 May 2024, Stavanger, Norway)
- Third Cities Mission Conference (25-26 June, Valencia, Spain)
- Smart Cities Expo (5-7 November 2024, Barcelona, Spain)

## OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTPUTS IN ERRIN PROJECTS

#### ERRIN projects:

- NetZeroCities - Mission Platform to support the cities selected for the Mission on 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030 to develop and implement their Climate City Contracts.
  - ERRIN is responsible for tasks related to multi-level governance; building strategic partnerships with other initiatives, projects and EU Missions; supporting policy innovations at local level and facilitating policy discussions at EU level; and supporting cities in the development of their Climate City Contracts through two City Advisors.
  - ERRIN's role in the project provides an opportunity for the Transport Working Group and the Low Carbon Cluster to influence the implementation of the Cities Mission through the NetZeroCities project.
  - Activities in 2024: The project will expand its focus to also include cities that are not among the 112 selected Mission Cities, which ERRIN will support through different activities. ERRIN will also continue its work around multi-level governance, especially looking into the role of regions in the Mission and focus on creating stronger links between the Cities Mission and the Adaptation and Soil Missions.

## ACTIVITIES

### **Low Carbon Cluster project facilitation session: Cities Mission calls**

**Date: 23 January | 15:00-17:00**

**Cluster Activity: with Energy & Climate Change and Smart Cities WG**

The draft Cities Mission calls for 2024 present the opportunity to develop and apply diverse solutions, including mobility and energy solutions, in cities to support them on their journey towards climate neutrality. To better understand ERRIN members' interests in the proposed calls, the Smart Cities Working Group will, together with the two other Working Groups of the Low Carbon Cluster – Transport and Energy and Climate Change, organise two project facilitation sessions in 2024.

The aim of the first project facilitation session is to map ERRIN members' interests in the draft calls and to understand what stakeholders from their regional ecosystems that could be interested in joining potential project proposals on these calls. This session will be followed up with a second session in June to continue the project facilitation process.

This networking and project facilitation session is directed towards Brussels-based colleagues and will be organised as an in-person event.

### **Cities Mission: Experiences and lessons learned in the Climate City Contract process**

**Date: 25 March (hybrid meeting)**

As a follow-up to the Smart Cities Working Group meeting organised in 2023, the Working Group will invite cities that have successfully developed their Climate City Contracts to share their experiences and lessons learned from the process. Cities that have been awarded the Mission Label will also be invited to share insights on how they have used the label, while the European Commission will provide an update on the Mission Label and how it can support cities in accessing funding and financing for the climate neutrality journey.

The objective of the meeting is to provide ERRIN members with an update on the Mission Label, and to provide cities that are yet to submit their Climate City Contracts with an opportunity to learn from the experiences of other cities that have completed the process. The meeting will be a combined information and best practice sharing session directed towards Brussels-based colleagues and regional stakeholders.

### **Low Carbon Cluster project facilitation session: Cities Mission calls**

**Date: 19 June (in-person/hybrid meeting)**

**Cluster Activity: with Energy & Climate Change and Smart Cities WG**

Building on the project facilitation session organised in January, the Smart Cities Working Group will, together with the two other Working Groups of the Low Carbon Cluster – Transport and Energy and Climate Change, organise a follow-up project facilitation session.

The aim of the second project facilitation session is to follow up on the mapping done in the first session. Based on the skills and expertise among members' regional ecosystems that came to light during the first session, and with the addition of input from ERRIN's project development tool, this session will give participants a chance to elaborate on the roles they foresee for themselves in potential project proposals and discuss complementary expertise for potential partnerships and consortia. Furthermore, the session will provide an opportunity for potential project proposal coordinators to present concrete project ideas.

This project facilitation session is directed towards Brussels-based colleagues. Online participation of regional stakeholders will also be explored.

### **Digital tools for smart cities**

**Date: November (hybrid meeting)**

The Smart Cities Working Group will organise an information sharing session on topical EU initiatives and projects linked to the development of digital tools for smart cities. The Working Group is planning to invite:

- A project funded under last year's Cities Mission call HORIZON-MISS-2023-CIT-01-02 to present how they are developing Positive Energy District digital twins (TIPS4PED, EXPEDITE or BIPED).
- A Data Space for Smart and Sustainable Cities and Communities (DS4SSCC) project to present the development of the data space for smart cities and communities and the pilots that run under the project.
- Living-in.eu to give updates from the initiative and opportunities for ERRIN members to participate in it.
- ERRIN members to present examples of innovative digital tools for smart cities that can support the implementation of the Cities Mission (e.g. RECIPROCITY, USER-CHI, 1.5-degree city).

The meeting will be organised in a hybrid setting and is directed towards Brussels-based colleagues and regional stakeholders. The meeting will be organised together with the ERRIN ICT Working Group

### **Issues/topics to be monitored further:**

- The continuation of the EU Missions, linked to the discussions around the next Framework Programme (FP10)
- Driving Urban Transitions Partnership and its links to the Cities Mission
- Links between the Cities Mission and the other EU Missions, the New European Bauhaus, and the Urban Transitions Mission