



2018



ERRIN European Regions
Research and Innovation Network

Last year marked several changes for ERRIN internally as our new strategy started to take shape. With the strategy process we aim to sharpen our profile and to provide focus on priority areas so that we can deliver even better support to members. The strategy includes a set of forward-looking missions that will provide a more ambitious direction for the organisation. It also clusters the Working Groups following the Horizon Europe model, which will serve to maximise the benefits of future funding programmes, as well as to ensure synergies between the Working Groups and the projects where ERRIN is involved. We have created a [dedicated page](#) on our website about the strategy process where you can find more information.

2018 was an important year from the policy perspective with the publication of the post-2020 proposals, and as such the Horizon Europe proposal have guided many of our activities. We have engaged in policy dialogues with the EU institutions and continued to advocate for the importance of the regional and local perspective in research and innovation policy. Introducing place-based regional innovation ecosystems and opportunities for them to connect in Horizon Europe has been at the heart of our advocacy work. An overview of our policy work can be found [here](#).

We continued to work as a platform connecting members and creating partnerships. Last year several Working Groups organised brokerage and project development events, and together with two of our members – Ile-de-France and Aragon – ERRIN joined the S3 Partnership on “Safe and Sustainable Mobility”. Our Working Groups have organised over thirty different activities on topics ranging from investment platforms and blockchain to value-based care and new bio-based materials. Our member regions have also represented ERRIN across Europe sharing their regional experiences and expertise. It is through this bottom-up and member-led approach that we successfully can position regional interests in the European research and innovation landscape.

Project development remained an important part of ERRIN’s work over the year. Many Working Groups arranged events to look at calls and discuss project ideas. We are also developing a more strategic approach regarding the projects the ERRIN secretariat is involved in. For current projects this means to ensure an added value for members and to increase synergies between them and the Working Groups. For future projects, it translates into aligning the projects with our priorities, ensuring the outcomes are relevant for and bring benefits to members, and that the projects contribute to increasing our visibility towards the EU institutions.



MEMBERS

6

NEW MEMBERS

131

MEMBER REGIONS

25

**COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED**

Thanks to our member-led approach, there are plenty of opportunities for members to represent ERRIN and profile their regions in different forums.

During the spring, ERRIN was represented at the European Maritime Day in Burgas, Bulgaria, where we spoke and participated in a workshop bringing in the regional perspective. We also had members representing the network at events organised by the Committee of the Regions and several European project events such as [Innovact](#).

In October, ERRIN collaborated with the EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development and the European Bioeconomy Alliance resulting in three of our members being invited to Strasbourg to speak about practical examples in the field of bioeconomy to a group of MEPs and their assistants.

Towards the end of the year ERRIN was represented at the Digital Innovation Hubs Annual Event in Warsaw, Poland, to speak as a follow-up of the ERRIN policy dialogue about connecting the Digital Innovation Hub to the wider regional innovation ecosystem.

Needless to say, this list is not exhaustive as there were many more conferences, events, and workshops where members represented ERRIN. To see more – follow us on social media!



STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Oslo, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings. In the foreground, a large mural is painted on the side of a building. The mural features the text 'THE FUTURE IS EUROPE' in a stylized, 3D, blue and white font. The background of the mural is a blue grid pattern, and it includes illustrations of a yellow bird, a blue bird, and green leaves. The sky is blue with some clouds.

In 2018 the new ERRIN strategy started to take shape. The strategy encompasses a more forward-looking and ambitious set of missions, a more structured clustering approach to the Working Groups, and a number of processes to guide the work of the ERRIN secretariat.

The objective is to further profile and position ERRIN, to increase the impact of the organisation, and to generate more benefits for members. To do so it provides focus on priority areas and works as a roadmap for the organisation to go forward with a shared vision, which will also facilitate for members to represent and speak on behalf of ERRIN.

A drafting group consisting of four Management Board members was appointed to support the process. The ERRIN secretariat also gave input on the strategy and how it could be used to develop key processes for its daily work. The Working Group leaders discussed the strategy during the planning meetings in late autumn and a [webpage](#) was created to share the development process with all members.

ERRIN'S MISSIONS

BRINGING A PLACE-BASED PERSPECTIVE

ERRIN brings a bottom-up place-based perspective to European research and innovation policy and funding programmes. Through our member-driven Working Groups ERRIN strengthens EU policy development via the promotion of a regional innovation ecosystems approach and Smart Specialisation.

MAKING CONNECTIONS AND FACILITATING EU ENGAGEMENT

ERRIN builds close informal relationships between member regions, EU institutions, and other partners and works as a bridge between them. We facilitate access to people, knowledge, and ideas and encourage members to pool resources to more effectively respond to these opportunities.

INCREASING PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

ERRIN supports regional collaboration and project development by providing networking opportunities for members to share project ideas, best practices, and personal contacts. We develop and participate in projects that further members' and the wider network's interests.

POSITIONING REGIONAL INTERESTS IN THE R&I LANDSCAPE

ERRIN supports EU policy development through the promotion of regional experience and expertise. We create platforms and participate in events to share members' knowledge, further ERRIN's reputation, and enhance the understanding of regional perspectives. This activity is essential to successful delivery of the other ERRIN missions.

WORKING GROUP CLUSTERS

The Working Groups form the core of ERRIN's work. All Working Groups are led by three to five ERRIN members. This means that the Working Group Leaders have an instrumental role in defining thematic priorities as well as steering the work in these areas.

Building on the existing activities, the clusters will coordinate activities in the different thematic areas and ensure synergies between the Working Groups and ERRIN's work in European collaborative projects. The ERRIN clusters align with the clusters seen in next framework programme Horizon Europe, which will give us the possibility to make concrete recommendations when the new programmes are developed. The intention is also that this will maximise future funding opportunities and that it will allow further flexibility to address new and emerging themes.

The three Working Groups with a more strategic policy focus – Smart Specialisation, Policy and Innovation & Investment – will be further coordinated, as this is important to increase the impact of our advocacy work. A close link is also being created between the Management Board and these Working Groups.

To start working in the clusters, we organised a set of workshops at the end of the year where the Working Group leaders met in the respective clusters to share ideas and plan for 2019.



A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PROJECTS

As part of the new strategy, we have also developed a more strategic approach regarding the projects that ERRIN is involved in. For current projects this means to ensure an added value for members and to increase synergies between Working Groups and projects. For future projects, it translates into aligning the projects with our priorities and to make sure the outcomes are relevant and bring benefits to members. The projects should also contribute to reinforce our credibility and visibility towards the EU institutions. To ensure this, a selection process has been put in place where the management team in the Secretariat, together with a designated project task force in the Management Board evaluate the proposals based on a set of criteria before making a decision on whether to join the project proposal or not.



STRATEGIC



POLICY



SMART SPECIALISATION



INNOVATION & INVESTMENT

NATURAL RESOURCES & FOOD



BIOECONOMY



BLUE GROWTH

LOW CARBON ECONOMY



SMART CITIES



TRANSPORT



ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE



TRANSVERSAL



OPENING SCIENCE



ICT



DESIGN & CREATIVITY



TOURISM



HEALTH

CULTURE & CREATIVITY

HEALTH

THE SECRETARIAT



PIRITA LINDHOLM

DIRECTOR



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PROJECT MANAGER



RYAN TITLEY

DIRECTOR OF PROJECTS



ANNA TRANBERG

MEMBER RELATIONS



ELIN MARTINSSON

PROJECT OFFICER



HEIDI JOHANSSON

PROJECT OFFICER



VIVIANE DEWERSE

FINANCIAL OFFICER



ILARIA D'AURIA

**PROJECT & OUTREACH
MANAGER**



TERESA VIO

**PROJECTS & ADMIN
ASSISTANT**



ELIN DAMBERG

**COMMUNICATIONS &
PROJECTS ASSISTANT**

COMMUNICATIONS

OFFICER

**-
STARTING**

SPRING 2019

POLICY & ADVOCACY

ERRIN brings a bottom-up and place-based perspective to the European research and innovation policy and funding programmes. Our strength lies in our membership and our ability to bring practical examples based on regional expertise and experiences.

ERRIN advocates for a fundamental change in the way that local and regional actors work together in the quadruple helix model, focusing on a wider regional development agenda and ecosystem thinking. By including place-based regional innovation ecosystems in the next framework programme, the EU can better coordinate research and innovation priorities at all governance levels, which will ensure an increased impact of the research and innovation policies and programmes.

Cooperation between innovation ecosystems provides actors with better access to complementary skills, infrastructure, and markets. As such, these connected ecosystems would also allow for increasing European innovation excellence and for strengthening and widening of the European research and innovation community.

On the right you find a summary of our policy work in 2018 and more information regarding each activity can be found [here](#).

Would you like a short overview of ERRIN's policy position? [Read our one-pager!](#)

JANUARY

Policy recommendation. Together with DG RTD and Director Kurt Vandenberghe, ERRIN organised an event where ten members presented their regional innovation ecosystems. The outcome was compiled into key recommendations for the EU institutions.

MARCH

Public consultation. ERRIN submitted its position paper "A European Budget that Fosters Regional Innovation Ecosystems and Interregional Collaboration" to the public consultation on Cohesion Policy and the next framework programme for research and innovation.

APRIL

Reflection paper. ERRIN responded to the European Commission's call for feedback on missions in the next framework programme for research and innovation.

SEPTEMBER

Policy analysis. Analysis of the Horizon Europe proposal and reactions to the European Parliament's rapporteurs' draft reports.

NOVEMBER

Policy dialogue. ERRIN organised two policy dialogues with the European Commission - one on the Horizon Europe cluster for climate, energy and mobility in collaboration with and hosted by DG RTD - and one on Digital Innovation Hubs, which brought together three different DGs to discuss the issues at hand.

WORKING GROUPS

ERRIN currently has 13 Working Groups, all led by our members. The Working Groups are at the core of our work and play a key role in delivering our missions. In 2018, the Working Groups organised over 30 different activities, ranging from informative meetings on thematic research and innovation areas to project development and policy dialogues with the European institutions.

Below is a short summary of what each Working Group focused on in 2018.



BIOECONOMY

Hosted a circular economy conference looking at industry challenges, region and city challenges, funding, and matchmaking. The group also organised a session with best practices in the field of new bio-based materials.



BLUE GROWTH

Focused one of their meetings on marine big data and its many applications and challenges. The group also organised a blue growth project meeting.



DESIGN & CREATIVITY

Focused one of their meetings on the topic “Design-driven innovation and support for creative industries”. They also organised the seventh edition of Design Days, this time looking at digitalisation and creativity.



ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Started to develop a regional network for energy efficiency in SMEs. The three Working Groups Smart Cities, Energy & Climate Change, and Transport organised the ERRIN-DG RTD event on the Horizon Europe cluster “Climate, Energy and Mobility”.



HEALTH

Organised meetings on value-based care, migration and health, and health in the next programming period. In the late autumn, the group invited members for a partnering event where topics in the upcoming Work Programmes in Horizon 2020 were the focus.



ICT

Looked at blockchain and how it can be used across different applications. They were also one of the Working Groups involved in organising a policy dialogue with DG RTD, DG GROW, and DG CONNECT on Digital Innovation Hubs.



INNOVATION & INVESTMENT

Looked at successful uses of financial instrument in regions and shared best practices. They also teamed up with other Working Groups to discuss investment platforms in different thematic areas.



OPENING SCIENCE

Focused on the mission approach in Horizon Europe. They also organised a conference on cultural heritage that looked at war memorial sites and hosted a meeting to discuss post-Brexit collaboration between universities and regions.



POLICY

Closely followed the development of Horizon Europe. Organised and coordinated policy dialogues with DG RTD and other Commission services to demonstrate the relevance of regional innovation ecosystems.



SMART CITIES

Hosted a meeting on the URBIS and the Circular Bioeconomy Investment Platform. The group also cooperated with the UNaLab project and organised a session at the Nordic Edge Conference in Stavanger (NO).



SMART SPECIALISATION

Analysed and discussed Smart Specialisation in the post-2020 proposal for Cohesion policy with the European institutions. They also exchanged information on the implementation of S3 and the experience from participating in S3 Partnerships and started a dialogue with DG REGIO on the Interregional Innovation Investment instrument.



TOURISM

Focused their efforts on the experience economy and innovative business models for smart destinations. They also organised a side event during the EU Industry Days on how to foster resilience in the tourism industry through innovative value chains.



TRANSPORT

Organised meetings on the transport calls in the Connecting Europe Facility and Horizon 2020, alternative fuel solutions, and inland waterways. They worked to strengthen the collaboration with external organisations such as POLIS, ALICE, and HYER.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT OUR WORKING GROUPS?**

[PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

PARTNERSHIPS

On the partnership side, several Working Groups organised project development meetings looking at future funding calls. ERRIN joined the S3 Partnership on “Safe and Sustainable Mobility”, where two of our members and co-leaders of the Transport Working Group – Ile-de-France and Aragon – are among the leading partners and the majority of the participating regions are ERRIN members.

We continued to work with other networks such as EUROCITIES, POLIS, the Vanguard Initiative, EURADA, and EARTO, exchanging policy information and opinions on research and innovation policy and programmes. We have presented the network at numerous conferences – always bringing the importance of the regional and local perspective in research and innovation policy. This year we were, to name a few, speaking at the European Week of Regions and Cities, the WIRE conference, Baltic Sea Region as a Powerhouse, and Nordic Edge.

EU PROJECTS

One of our core missions is to increase project opportunities for our members. In addition, ERRIN also takes part in several collaborative projects that support our core activities. The projects are mainly funded through Horizon 2020.



Cities around the world are undergoing significant transformations and they are facing substantial challenges in the form of urban densification and extreme weather conditions, due to climate change and the ongoing urbanisation. UNaLab is a project focusing on nature-based solutions and how this approach can be used to address urban challenges and achieve ecological and resilience objectives through working with nature. The aim is to do this while creating opportunities for social and economic innovation. The UNaLab consortium is comprised of 28 partners from 10 cities across Europe and beyond, including municipalities, research, business and industry. The project includes several ERRIN members.

ERRIN contact person: Heidi Johansson and Ryan Titley
<https://www.unalab.eu/>



One of the main challenges in the bioeconomy innovation chain in Europe today is the step from technology to deployment, which in most cases require access to pilot and demo plants. Pilot and demo plants are, however, expensive industrial installations that most companies do not have direct access to. One solution is the 'open access pilot- and multipurpose demo-infrastructures', open to all companies and research institutes. Yet, there is a lack of awareness of the availability, type of facility and equipment modules these offer, which impedes actors from localising a relevant facility. The aim of the Pilots4U project is to tackle these challenges and to provide solutions that will support the development of innovations into products.

ERRIN contact person: Heidi Johansson and Ryan Titley
<https://www.biopilots4u.eu/>

The MIREU project is establishing a network of mining and metallurgy regions across Europe. The aim is to share knowledge and experiences on the challenge of how to ensure a continuous and sustainable supply of mineral raw materials to the EU. The MIREU consortium is comprised of 30 partners of whom 17 are regions from all around Europe.

ERRIN contact person: Heidi Johansson and Ryan Titley
<https://www.mireu.eu/>



The ESPON 2020 Programme aims to promote and foster a European territorial dimension in development and cooperation by providing evidence, knowledge transfer, and policy learning to public authorities and other policy actors at all levels. By producing, disseminating, and promoting territorial evidence across all EU member states and four partner states (CH, IS, LI, NO), ESPON reinforces the effectiveness of European Structural Investment Funds as well as national and regional territorial development policies.

ERRIN contact person: Ilaria d’Auria and Elin Martinsson
<https://www.espon.eu/>



WE4AHA will advance the effective, large-scale uptake and impact of Digital Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA), building on a comprehensive set of support and promotion services. Through WE4AHA’s centralised administration, coordination, and external communication, relevant stakeholders will be mobilised to help develop and implement three EU guided activities: Innovation to Market (I2M), Blueprint Digital Transformation of Health and Care for the Ageing Society, and EIP on AHA.

ERRIN contact person: Anett Ruszanov
[More information](#)



The InDemand project is based on a model where healthcare organisations and companies co-create eHealth solutions, with the economic support of regional funds. The model aims to increase the capacity of health entities to identify and solve their needs, while creating opportunities for private companies. Regions that are interested in this model can receive free coaching. The model will be implemented in three pilot regions: Murcia Region (Spain), Paris Region (France), and Oulu Region (Finland), all of which are currently ERRIN members.

ERRIN contact person: Anett Ruszanov and Elin Martinsson
<https://www.indemandhealth.eu/>

PROJECTS THAT FINISHED IN 2018



LOOKING AHEAD



2019 will be the year of change in the EU institutions. In May, a new European Parliament will be elected and during the autumn a new Commission will take office. The UK is set to leave by the end of March, with many question marks still left regarding how collaboration in research and innovation could change. Negotiations on the next long-term budget will enter into a critical phase as both the Parliament and the Commission would like an agreement on the EU programmes, including Horizon Europe, before the elections.

ERRIN will of course follow the negotiations closely and provide input to the Horizon Europe strategic programming process. The Policy Working Group will continue the dialogue with the EU institutions on the third pillar of Horizon Europe – European Innovation Ecosystems. While the Smart Specialisation Working Group will follow the update of the Smart Specialisation strategies and contribute to the development of the Interregional Innovation Investment (Interreg component 5). The future of S3 Partnerships and S3 Platforms are also areas that we will monitor closely.

Overall, many of our activities in 2019 will connect to four strategic work streams:

- Connecting regional innovation ecosystems (funding opportunities and existing EU initiatives)
- Future of Smart Specialisation, S3 Platforms, and S3 Partnerships
- Challenge-driven innovation (end user needs, co-creation, missions)
- Procurement of innovation

Our thematic Working Groups will connect to these work streams as well while continuing to tackle key issues in their respective areas, looking at opportunities in the current and future funding programmes, matching regional interests, and giving first-hand information on new initiatives and opportunities.



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