

# YEAR IN REVIEW

# 2025



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# Connecting Regions and Driving Innovation

The European Regions Research and Innovation Network (**ERRIN**) is a well-known Brussels-based association established in 2001, currently bringing together 122 regional organisations from 27 European countries.

ERRIN supports its members to enhance their regional and local research and innovation (R&I) capacities and further develop their R&I ecosystems. It provides a platform for knowledge exchange, enhances regional collaboration and facilitates access to EU funding through project development activities.

The network maintains a long-standing relationship with the EU institutions and other organisations to strengthen the regional and local dimension in EU R&I policy and programmes. Through its Working Groups, ERRIN facilitates continuous dialogue between members and EU institutions, particularly the European Commission, and ensures that regional experience and expertise feed into EU R&I policy discussions.

## ERRIN'S Missions:



Bring a place-based perspective to EU R&I policy and programmes



Make connections and facilitate EU engagement between member regions, EU institutions and others



Increase project opportunities for members



Position regional interests in the R&I landscape



**WHO WE ARE**

# Taking Stock of an Eventful 2025

With the European Commission's proposals on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034 presented in July, advocating for a stronger place-based dimension of future EU funding was a central focus of ERRIN's work in 2025.

Competitiveness being a key buzzword in the Brussels debates, ERRIN also launched a dedicated workstream on competitiveness. This enabled the network to closely monitor EU-level developments such as the Competitiveness Compass and to advocate for a stronger regional dimension across related initiatives.

The year began with a [high-level event](#) with Members of European Parliament in January, strengthening ERRIN's presence in parliamentary discussions on the future of R&I funding. The collaboration with the Parliament was further reinforced through ERRIN's engagement in the Widening Task Force launched by Member of European Parliament Eszter Lakos, culminating in a key milestone [event](#) hosted in the Parliament in October 2025.

Another major milestone was the completion of ERRIN's [Towards the 10th Framework Programme \(FP10\) paper series](#). The papers were developed through in-depth discussions with ERRIN members and launched in connection with high-level policy events to maximise impact. The paper on [connected regional innovation ecosystems](#) was presented during the Regional Innovation Valleys event co-hosted by all current Regional Innovation Valleys projects, while the paper on [European Partnerships](#) was highlighted at the European Partnership Forum organised by the Commission and ERA-LEARN, providing strong visibility for ERRIN's key messages.

In June, a delegation of ERRIN Management Board members joined the ERRIN Director in a [meeting with Commissioner Ekaterina Zaharieva](#) to present ERRIN's key messages on the next MFF. In addition to connected place-based innovation ecosystems and Widening, the meeting focused on the EU Missions – another key priority for ERRIN.

In 2025, the ERRIN Team visited the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission for its Away Day. This was an important moment for the team to exchange with and gain insights from the Commission's research team focusing on place-based transformation.

Finally, the year also marked the start of seven new projects, offering a multitude of opportunities for the ERRIN membership. These projects are instrumental in enhancing the expertise of the ERRIN team across key R&I policy areas.



# ERRIN Members at the Heart of the Network

ERRIN members are at the heart of the network, and their active engagement drives our work forward. ERRIN brings together regional and local organisations across Europe committed to exchanging knowledge, building partnerships and maximising the benefits of European R&I instruments and funding opportunities.

The core of the membership consists of Brussels-based local and regional representations, uniquely positioned to collaborate closely at European level while remaining firmly connected to their local and regional R&I ecosystems. Through these ecosystems, member organisations mobilise a wide range of stakeholders to engage in ERRIN activities – including regional and local administrations, universities, innovation and business development agencies, chambers of commerce and cluster organisations.

Meet our members [here](#).

2025 was a year of growth for the ERRIN membership. The network welcomed 12 new members, including several actors from Central and Eastern Europe, further strengthening its diversity and geographical balance. Reflecting this growth, the number of active users on ERRIN's website increased from just over 1,500 to more than 1,850, highlighting the growing number of individuals actively engaged in the network and its activities..

At the end of 2025, the ERRIN Community Counted:

1850+

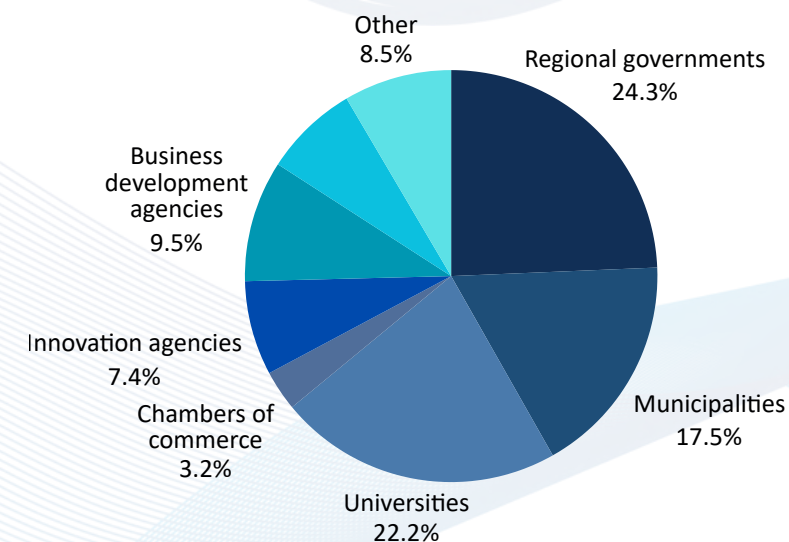
Individuals

122

Regional R&I ecosystems

26

European Countries



Stakeholders involved in ERRIN according to the ERRIN Annual Survey 2025.



[JOIN ERRIN](#)



# ERRIN Management Board Steering the Network

ERRIN is led by its Management Board, which plays a crucial role in guiding the network's strategic direction. Comprised of up to 15 directors of Brussels based local and regional delegations, the Board oversees the development and execution of ERRIN's Annual Work Programme and ensures its alignment with the ERRIN budget.

ERRIN's Management Board has set two network-wide priorities: 1) supporting member engagement in the [EU Missions](#) and mission-oriented approach, and 2) [widening and deepening engagement in R&I](#) with the aim of achieving a more inclusive ecosystem approach across Europe. These priorities serve as a general framework to guide ERRIN's activities, ensuring a cohesive approach to advancing regional innovation in Europe.

The Management Board has also taken an active role in guiding ERRIN's work in the ongoing discussions on the EU long-term budget post-2027. The Management Board is committed to enhancing ERRIN's policy influencing through common activities, identifying key policy makers and organising targeted meetings, as well as enhancing communication through joint messages.



 [MEET THE BOARD](#)

# ERRIN's Cluster Approach

ERRIN members collaborate through Working Groups that cover both thematic areas and cross-cutting policy issues based on members' priorities and current EU funding opportunities.

Each Working Group is led by three to six members who, in close cooperation with the wider membership, help define ERRIN's thematic priorities and develop annual work plans outlining the activities of the year. Taking on a leadership role offers members increased visibility and the opportunity to act as ERRIN Ambassadors, amplifying joint messages at EU-level. In 2025, more than 65 leaders representing 48 member ecosystems took on this role, actively driving ERRIN's mission and impact.

To enhance coordination and foster collaboration beyond thematic silos, the Working Groups are organised in clusters, in which policy and project work go hand in hand. This cluster structure mirrors Horizon Europe's Pillar II on Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness, allowing ERRIN to tackle cross-cutting themes effectively while aligning with EU R&I priorities.

As the new Framework Programme is in the making, ERRIN's structures continue to evolve. In the beginning of 2025, a new Competitiveness Workstream was introduced and towards the end of the year the thematic clusters have also undergone a small restructuring in line with the emerging EU and regional priorities as well as the new Programmes expected under the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034.

## ERRIN Working Groups and Cluster Structure:



[CLUSTER OVERVIEW](#)



# Shaping the Future EU-Long term Budget

The Strategic Cluster brings together the Science and Education for Society, Smart Specialisation (S3) and Policy Working Groups. In addition, the Cluster also features a Competitiveness Workstream, which was introduced under the Policy Working Group at the start of 2025 in response to competitiveness becoming a central priority of the European Commission.

Linking to this development, the [high-level ERRIN event](#) in January with Members of the European Parliament on connected regional innovation ecosystems as key drivers of Europe's competitiveness set the tone for the network's advocacy in 2025. These discussions continued at the Strategic Cluster kick-off meeting, where members exchanged with Commission representatives on how regions can contribute to shaping and implementing initiatives under the new Competitiveness Compass. Throughout 2025, the Strategic Cluster focused on the territorial dimension of overarching EU competitiveness policies, while more thematic competitiveness initiatives were addressed through various Working Groups.

The publication of the '[Connected Regional Innovation Ecosystems – key for Europe's competitiveness](#)' and the '[European Partnerships](#)' input papers completed the '[Towards the 10th Framework Programme series](#)'. These papers provided a solid basis for subsequent policy discussions on the critical role of regional ecosystems in achieving a competitive EU, including when representatives of the Strategic Cluster [met with Commissioner Ekaterina Zaharieva](#) to discuss ERRIN's key messages for the next MFF. In addition, three ERRIN [responses](#) to the Commission's consultation on MFF post-2027 proposals, dedicated to National and Regional Partnership Plans, future Horizon Europe and European Competitiveness Fund, further consolidated the network's messages.

The S3 Working Group played a key role in shaping debates on the future of Smart Specialisation Strategies under the new MFF. A [peer-learning event](#) enabled members to exchange experiences and reflect on future needs. The resulting [reflection paper](#) has been recognised by DG REGIO as a valuable contribution to ongoing policy discussions.

To complement, the Science for Education and Society and the S3 Working Groups organised a dialogue between ERRIN and [YERUN](#) members on [challenges and opportunities for research institutions using cohesion funds](#), resulting in a [workshop report](#) with practical recommendations on how the future cohesion policy could better respond to the needs of the R&I sector.



ERRIN met with the European Commissioner Ekaterina Zaharieva

## What our members say:



*ERRIN's advocacy on FP10, the future of S3 and the innovation dimension in Cohesion Policy has given us an opportunity to participate in and influence policy discussions.*

– West Finland European Office



*ERRIN has made it easier for us to anticipate and influence EU funding development through facilitating meetings with EC representatives on specific policy and EU instruments.*

– Greater Copenhagen EU Office



# Bringing the Place-based Perspective to EU policy

The Strategic Cluster also worked on the European Research Area (ERA) Policy Agenda 2025–2027, **committing** to five new structural policies and actions with dedicated members following each of the policy areas. With the launch of the new ERA Policy Agenda, the regional dimension was explicitly acknowledged as crucial, as the ERA governance was enhanced with a new stakeholder category for Regional Organisations.

Furthermore, the Regional Innovation Valleys **insight-sharing and matchmaking event** brought together members to exchange experiences from ongoing RIV projects, explore proposal ideas and early-stage matchmaking to prepare for the 2025 calls, supporting members' continued success in the initiative.

Another highlight was **the launch** of the EU Preparatory Action 'Innovation for place-based transformation', an initiative coordinated by the Joint Research Centre where ERRIN works as a partner to promote and support transformative innovation in European territories.

During a **high-level exchange with the cabinet of Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu**, the SEFS Working Group highlighted why anchoring the place-based dimension in the roll-out of the Union of Skills matters, while ERRIN members showcased how regions each face specific skills challenges across Europe. The Cabinet acknowledged the role of regional authorities to ensure territory-specific approaches to foster skills circulation, enhance knowledge diffusion and attract and retain talent to secure competitiveness across all regions in Europe.

## What our members say:



*ERRIN provides an opportunity to influence R&I policy discussions within a larger group of regions, which gives a critical mass (e.g. meetings with DG Regio, participation in R&I and Cohesion Managing Authorities network, Interregional Innovation Investment Expert Group and Widening Task Force).*

– Wielkopolska Region



ERRIN participated in the high-level launch event of the EU Preparatory Action 'Innovation for Place-Based Transformation'



The SEFS Working Group exchanged with the cabinet of Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on the Union of Skills



# Linking Competitiveness and Decarbonisation

The Low Carbon Cluster brings together the Transport, Energy and Climate Change and Smart Cities Working Groups. In 2025, it played a central role in ERRIN's Competitiveness Workstream.

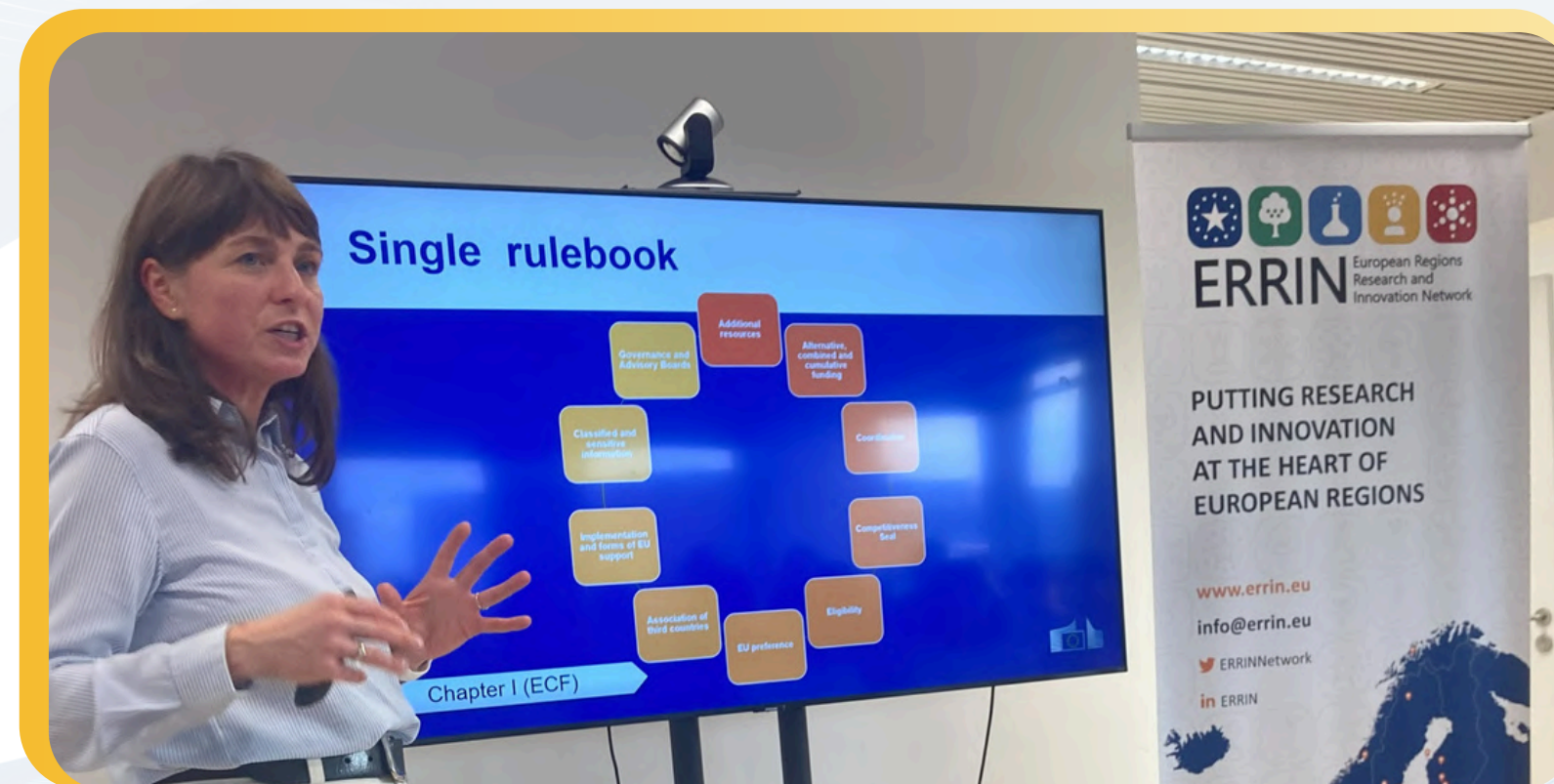
The Clean Industrial Deal (CID) was a key priority, with a dedicated meeting exploring its role in steering investment in clean technologies. The Transport Working Group took a more detailed look into the mobility dimension of the CID, including the Strategic Dialogue on the Future Automotive Industry. These discussions enabled members to exchange with the European Commission on how regions can contribute to and benefit from initiatives on industrial decarbonisation and clean technologies.

The work continued through discussions on the proposal for the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF). A meeting co-organised with the Strategic Cluster, with speakers from the Commission, helped regions better understand the Fund and the tools proposed under it. Members' feedback from the meeting informed [ERRIN's input on ECF](#), ensuring regional perspectives were well represented in the policy debate.

The Transport Working Group further focused on the decarbonisation and digital transformation of mobility, including a meeting with representatives from the European Partnerships to explore funding and innovation opportunities for resilient transport infrastructure. The digital component of transport was also explored with a focus on AI, data-driven mobility and Multimodal Digital Mobility Services, helping members anticipate future policy developments and identify opportunities linked to digital tools that improve safety, sustainability and efficiency.

The Energy and Climate Change Working Group supported members in the rollout of the Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA). A session with the Commission deepened members' understanding of strategic net-zero projects, skills needs and the first Net-Zero Acceleration Valleys. Hydrogen Valleys also remained a key focus. By maintaining dialogue with the Smart Specialisation (S3) Partnership on Hydrogen Valleys, the Clean Hydrogen Partnership and Hydrogen Europe, the Working Group ensured that regional needs remained visible as the Hydrogen Valleys Facility evolved and links with the NZIA and ECF were strengthened.

As of 2026, the Energy and Climate Change Working Group has been renamed 'Energy and Clean Transition Working Group' to align with the terminology used in the future ECF and Horizon Europe, emphasising EU leadership in clean transitions, industrial decarbonisation, and a seamless investment journey.



ERRIN facilitating dialogue between members and the Commission on the European Competitiveness Fund



Discussing transport-related innovation funding for regional ecosystems with European Innovation Council and EIT Urban Mobility representatives



# Supporting Cities' Path to Climate Neutrality

Throughout 2025, the Smart Cities Working Group continued to guide members' engagement in the EU Cities Mission. Regular exchanges with the Mission Secretariat ensured that regional and local experiences informed the Mission's ongoing implementation and future direction.

With 28 new Mission Cities from ERRIN member regions receiving the Mission Label in 2025, the Working Group provided timely updates and a platform for members to exchange on how the Mission Label supports the implementation of climate neutrality actions and access to public and private funding. Altogether, 61 cities from ERRIN member regions have been awarded the Label in the past two years – demonstrating the strong commitment and leadership of ERRIN members in the transition to climate neutrality.

Following extensive promotion by ERRIN, nine cities located within ERRIN member regions joined the Twinning Learning Programme, enabling cities outside the 112 Mission Cities to accelerate their climate transition. Seven Mission Cities from ERRIN member regions are participating and paired with the twinning cities as part of the programme. ERRIN facilitates seven of these pairs and closely coordinates the exchange of best practices in local climate action.

ERRIN's role in the [NetZeroCities project](#) remained central, providing members with first-hand insights through Mutual Learning Events and Policy Dialogues on the Mission's future, the role of regional and national authorities and further engagement of academia and industry. ERRIN also co-developed an EU Policy Lab to inform the European Commission's upcoming Heating and Cooling Strategy and Electrification Action Plan, helping ensure these policies respond to the real challenges faced by local communities.

The launch of [CapaCITIES 2.0](#) in May marked an important step, enabling ERRIN to deepen its work on multi-level governance and expand its support to national platforms working with cities on the ground. These activities reinforced ERRIN's position as a key actor in supporting cities and regions in aligning their climate neutrality pathways.



28 Mission Cities from ERRIN member regions received the Mission Label in 2025



ERRIN at the launch of the CapaCities 2.0 project in Vilnius



# Positioning Regions in EU's Green Policies

2025 represented another year of strong engagement, project development support and policy impact for the Bioeconomy, Blue Economy Working Groups and Climate Adaptation Task Force, operating within ERRIN's Natural Resources and Adaptation Cluster.

Building on the momentum of previous years, the Bioeconomy Working Group continued to position regions as key drivers of Europe's green transition. A major milestone was [ERRIN's contribution to the new EU Bioeconomy Strategy](#). Through coordinated inputs from members and targeted advocacy actions, ERRIN emphasised the need for a place-based approach to bioeconomy development. The impact of this work has been reflected in the [newly adopted Strategy](#).

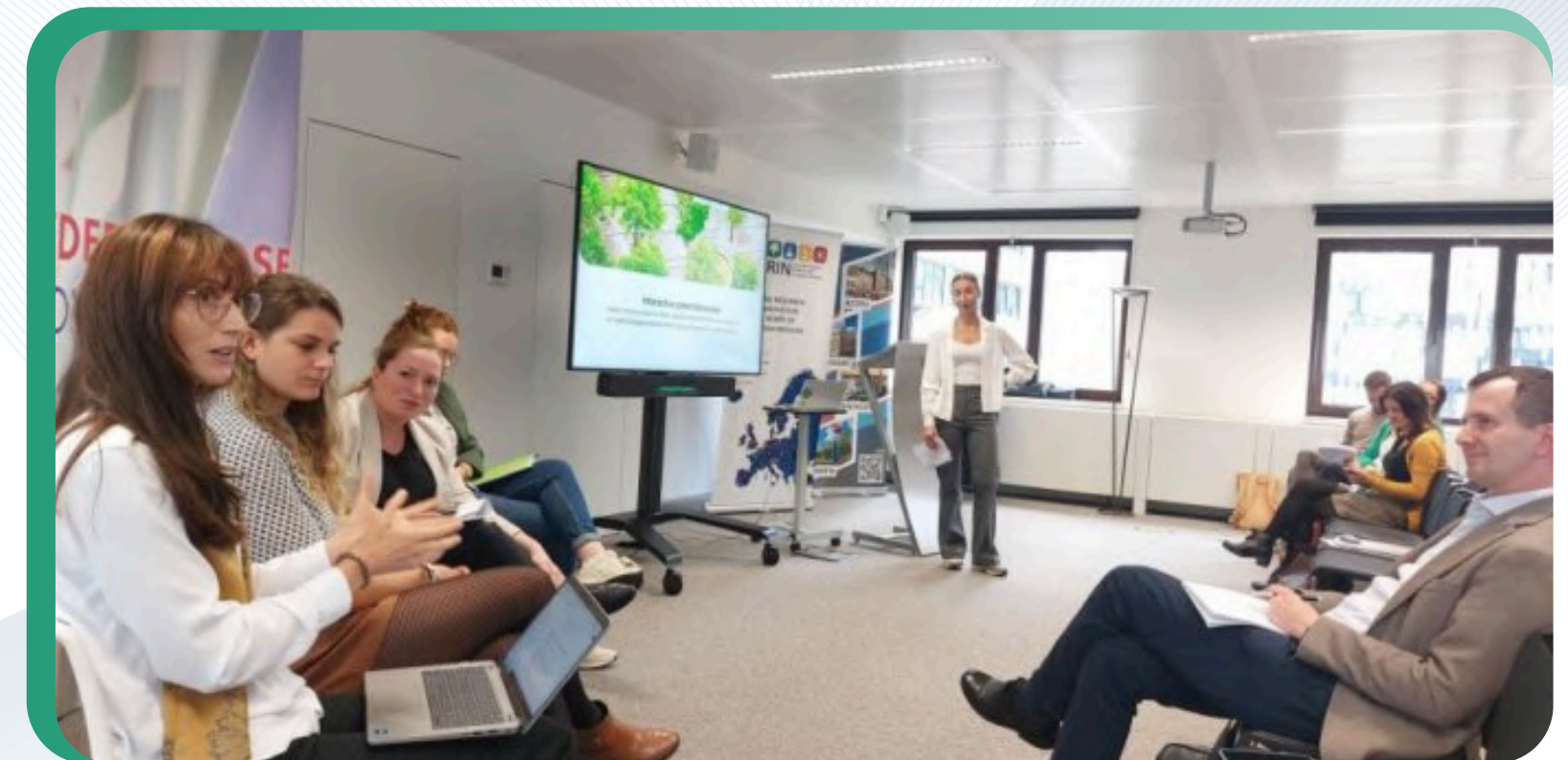
In parallel, the Bioeconomy Working Group ensured that regional perspectives informed the EU policy process on the Circular Economy Act. ERRIN mobilised members to provide concrete, place-based evidence on what is needed to effectively implement circular economy solutions on the ground. ERRIN amplified these messages through a [meeting](#) with the European Commission, enabling members to showcase their local actions and ensuring that lessons from the [Circular Cities and Regions Initiative](#) and member-driven Regional Innovation Valleys fed into the policy debate. By consolidating these contributions into the network's [response to the Commission's consultation](#), ERRIN reinforced the role of regions as key enablers of circular transitions.

To strengthen regional engagement in EU blue policies, the Blue Economy Working Group organised an [exchange with the Commission on the Water Resilience Strategy](#), enabling regions to better understand its implications and align their regional priorities and actions with upcoming EU implementation processes. ERRIN also participated in the [first stakeholder consultation on the European Ocean Research & Innovation Strategy](#), highlighting the importance of aligning regional strategies and embedding a mission-oriented, place-based approach in the development of this framework.

In addition, the Adaptation Task Force advanced policy work on the forthcoming European Climate Resilience and Risk Management initiative by submitting a [response to the Commission's consultation](#), highlighting the vital role of regions and cities in developing and implementing effective resilience policies.



ERRIN presenting the network's input on the EU Bioeconomy Strategy at the ERIAFF Conference 2025



Cluster meeting with members showcasing their local circular economy actions



# Deepening Engagement in the EU Missions

In 2025, ERRIN's Natural Resources and Adaptation Cluster strengthened members' engagement in the three EU Missions covered under the Cluster: Climate Adaptation, Restore our Ocean and Waters and A Soil Deal for Europe.

The [project development session on Horizon Europe EU Missions and Cluster 6 calls](#) supported ERRIN members and their stakeholders in building effective partnerships to access EU funding.

ERRIN's involvement in the [SOILL project](#) reinforced regional engagement in soil-related initiatives. Through SOILL, ERRIN organised a timely [event on the Soil Monitoring Law](#), providing members and stakeholders with the opportunity to explore the opportunities it offers and to discuss how regions and Mission Soil Living Labs can leverage the law's implementation.

The Blue Economy Working Group further strengthened regional engagement in the Mission Ocean and Waters. Through the [CO WATERS project](#), ERRIN contributed to shaping a new collaboration between regions, cities and ports focused on accelerating action across marine and freshwater areas. In parallel, the [Blue Action BANOS project](#) was launched, which enables close monitoring of the support offered to territories as they prepare transition agendas and community led actions. ERRIN's involvement helped anchor regional needs in the early stages of both projects. ERRIN continued to use its role in the [Mission Ocean Implementation Platform](#) to ensure associated regions could better access opportunities and strengthen the impact of EU-funded projects.

During the 2025 European Ocean Days, the Blue Economy Working Group hosted the first edition of its Blue Economy Get Together Drink. This networking event gathered over 100 members and key stakeholders of the Mission Ocean, broadening collaboration opportunities across the network.

Through the Adaptation Task Force, ERRIN brought regional perspectives to the [Fourth Mission Forum on Adaptation to Climate Change](#), ensuring that the Mission's next steps reflect the needs and experiences of regional ecosystems. The Task Force continued its dialogue with the Mission Secretariat, sharing evidence of how the Mission has supported regional adaptation efforts, highlighting lessons learned, assessing Mission support services and contributing to discussions on the Mission's future direction.



Through the SOILL project, ERRIN organised an event on the Soil Monitoring Law



The Blue Economy Working Group hosted the first edition of its Blue Economy Get Together during the 2025 European Ocean Days



# Strengthening Regional Adaptation & Resilience

Throughout 2025, project activities played a central role in translating the Adaptation Mission into concrete action on the ground, supporting regions in strengthening climate resilience and implementing mission objectives through hands-on collaboration and peer learning.

In [RESIST](#), ERRIN worked with the four demonstrator regions that focused on transferring and adapting innovative solutions to the eight twinning regions, helping accelerate learning and strengthen adaptive capacity across diverse territories. The RESIST Community of Interest organised two events for ERRIN members, one [exploring digital solutions for climate adaptation](#) and one highlighting [the importance of building regional ecosystems to implement the Adaptation Mission activities](#), both offering concrete examples and creating space for peer learning. Through RESIST, ERRIN also organised a session during the European Week of Regions and Cities to showcase regional achievements and inspire further collaboration.

Through [Pathways2Resilience](#) (P2R), ERRIN supported regions in engaging with the Adaptation Mission and advancing their long-term climate resilience planning. ERRIN promoted the cascade funding call for territories to join the project among its members, helping them better understand the Mission's expectations and encouraging participation. In parallel, ERRIN gathered insights from P2R regions on progress made and remaining challenges in adaptation planning, which fed into the discussions with the Mission Secretariat on the regional implementation of the Mission. Building on this work, ERRIN is preparing a new exchange space between regions and researchers to showcase concrete adaptation solutions, to be launched in early 2026.

Another major milestone of the year was the launch of [AdaptationHubs](#), a flagship initiative that will establish 27 national hubs to improve coordination between national, regional and local authorities and enhance access to knowledge, data and tools for climate adaptation.

As of 2026, the Climate Adaptation Task Force will be transitioned into a 'Climate Adaptation and Resilience Working Group'. Reflecting the strategic importance of resilience as a theme for ERRIN members, the Working Group will be reinforced and its scope expanded to go beyond its original focus on the Mission on Climate Adaptation.



ERRIN took part in the official kick-off of the AdaptationHubs project in Zagreb

## What our members say:



*Our region managed to integrate the RESIST project as a partner thanks to ERRIN's involvement in the project. ERRIN's involvement and close follow-up of the Adaptation Mission also facilitated access to information on the Mission's calls and activities.*

– Normandy Region



# Championing Culture-driven Innovation

2025 was a dynamic and forward-looking year for ERRIN's Culture & Creativity Cluster, bringing together the Cultural Heritage & Tourism and the Design & Creativity Working Groups and the New European Bauhaus Task Force. The Cluster played an active role in EU-level policy debates, contributed to shaping major initiatives, expanded project work and further strengthened cooperation across regional R&I ecosystems.

A key milestone was ERRIN's participation in the high-level roundtable consultations for the [Culture Compass](#), the new strategic EU cultural policy document published at the end of 2025. At the invitation of Commissioner Glenn Micallef, ERRIN joined key culture and creative sector networks and stakeholders to highlight the importance of regional ecosystems, place-based innovation and territory-specific needs when discussing the contribution of Culture and Creative Industries (CCIs) to sustainability, inclusion and quality of life.

The [Cultural Heritage & Tourism Working Group](#) centred its activities on the theme *Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis*, addressing both [climate-related](#) and conflict-driven threats. Two events showcased the latest policy developments at EU and international level, as well as regional strategies and solutions for managing heritage under pressure. ERRIN also participated in two meetings of the European Commission's Expert Group on Cultural Heritage, ensuring that regional experiences informed EU-level reflections and actions.

The [Design & Creativity Working Group](#) co-organised the [13th edition of EU Design Day](#), focusing on the skills and technologies needed to build more resilient CCIs. The event brought together designers, policymakers and regional experts to exchange approaches that support innovation and adaptability.

ERRIN also organised a [study visit to LaVallée](#), a leading Brussels 'third place', where members gained practical insights into community-driven creative hubs that foster collaboration, cultural expression and entrepreneurship.



ERRIN participated in the high-level roundtable consultations for the Culture Compass



ERRIN organised the 13th edition of the EU Design Day



The Culture & Creativity Cluster organised a study visit to LaVallée



# Driving Implementation of NEB on the Ground

ERRIN continued its close engagement with the [New European Bauhaus \(NEB\)](#), reinforcing the initiative's emphasis on sustainability, inclusion and beauty through strong regional and local action.

A [NEB Task Force event](#) explored how regional and local policies and practices support NEB implementation, providing a platform for members to share their models, tools and challenges.

The Cluster also expanded its NEB and Culture-related work through the organisation of a [Project Development Session](#), which facilitated exchange and matchmaking between members and stakeholders interested in Horizon calls within Cluster 2 and NEB Facility, as well as through launch of two new projects.

ERRIN joined the Horizon Europe project [NEB Junction](#), which aims to establish a new hub for consolidating NEB results and impacts, strengthening the connection between local initiatives and EU-level ambitions.

In parallel, the Interreg Europe project [PROSPERO](#) began its work to enhance regional policies with a view to strengthen the role of cultural and creative ecosystems in sustainable, inclusive and aesthetic development of territories, further embedding the NEB principles on the ground.

Together, these project activities strengthened the Cluster's contribution to shaping Europe's cultural and creative transformation and deepened cooperation across regional innovation ecosystems in this field.

As of 2026, the NEB Task Force and the Design and Creativity Working Group will merge into the 'NEB and Creativity Working Group', reflecting the growing relevance of NEB policies across wider EU initiative and the central role that design and creativity play within the NEB initiative.



ERRIN at the NEB Junction project kick-off at Ars Electronica



ERRIN at the PROSPERO project launch in Mantova



# Advancing Adoption of Digital Technology

In 2025, the ERRIN ICT Working Group played a key role in supporting the presentation, communication and uptake of EU strategies and programmes related to digitalisation and advanced digital technologies.

Given the rising importance and deployment of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Twins and Data Spaces, the Working Group sought both to position the regional perspective in high-level policy dialogues as well as to support the roll-out of these technologies across European regions.

In close consultation with its members, ERRIN contributed to the Committee of the Regions' consultation on the [AI Continent Action Plan](#). Building on a dedicated [Working Group Meeting](#) on the AI Continent Action Plan, this input highlighted the importance of the place-based dimension in the development and roll-out of EU digital policies, ensuring that regional capacities, challenges and opportunities were reflected in the debate on this flagship initiative.

The Working Group hosted several meetings and information sessions covering the uptake of digital services in the public sector including via the [European Digital Infrastructure Consortia](#) and the [European Digital Innovation Hubs](#) as well as through transversal opportunities such as those presented by [digital health](#). These exchanges supported regions in navigating EU digital initiatives and identifying concrete opportunities for engagement.

Another key impact pathway for the ICT Working Group in 2025 was ERRIN's continued involvement in the [Living-in.EU project](#) and the establishment of an expert group, which provides key technical guidance to strengthen the LORDIMAS tool, an interactive digital maturity assessment tool designed for local and regional governments to evaluate their digital transformation journey. This involvement was mainly concretised through a [wealth of best practices](#) now available on the Tool, as well as updating of the internal [policy recommendations](#) provided by the platform. Moving forward, the LORDIMAS expert group has the potential to serve as an integral part of the Living-in.EU's leadership in grassroots digitisation as the project moves into its final year.



Exchanges with the Commission on European Digital Innovation Hubs



ERRIN at the plenary meeting of the Annual Living-in.EU Digital Assembly



# Empowering Regional Healthcare Systems

In 2025, ERRIN's Health Working Group played an active role in a number of key policy and priority areas for regional healthcare, life sciences and biomedical research.

Through active engagement with members and alignment with DG SANTE's agenda for the year, the Working Group held meetings focusing on the digitisation of healthcare and health infrastructure, in collaboration with the ICT Working Group, and the integration of the regions in the broader [EU Cancer Mission](#). These events enabled members and their regional stakeholders to showcase their cutting-edge work and exchange experiences, supporting mutual learning and stronger collaboration.

Building on previous activities tied to the EU Cancer Mission, the Health Working Group deepened its engagement with the [ECHOS Project in 2025](#). Through its successful and ongoing partnership with [EUREGHA](#), the Working Group helped strengthen the regional and territorial dimension of the deployment of the EU Cancer Mission Hubs. This work culminated in both networks supporting the first ever [ECHOS Town Hall Meeting](#), ensuring that the regional perspective was clearly represented at this critical moment of reflection for the project as a whole.

ERRIN also played an active role in a high-level meeting at the European Parliament organised in the frame of the European Regional Innovation Valley project [PRECISEU](#), highlighting the importance of an ecosystem approach in healthcare. ERRIN moderated a session on the role of regions in European competitiveness, allowing participants to reflect on ways to ensure that innovation-driven growth is shared across all of Europe rather than concentrated in a limited number of hubs.



ERRIN and EUREGHA did a joint presentation on the National Cancer Mission Hubs during the ECHOS Town Hall Meeting



ERRIN moderated a discussion the role of regions in European competitiveness at the European Parliament



# Supporting Collaboration in Project Development

2025 marked a great year full of project development opportunities for ERRIN members. The [Project Development Tool](#) was pivotal for streamlining the early stages of project development, allowing members to share project ideas, identify synergies and connect with relevant partners across the network.

The Project Development Tool was complemented by ERRIN's matchmaking and project development events, such as the Regional Innovation Valley Matchmaking session and the project development sessions organised by the Natural Resources and Adaptation and the Culture and Creativity Clusters. These events were based on insights from the Tool to identify shared interests and facilitate targeted discussions.

Together, these project development services strengthened cross-regional collaboration and supported members in submitting competitive proposals.

## What our members say:



*ERRIN has been very valuable as a meeting facilitator and connection-maker between European regions across the continent. An example is how our county council found partners for their Regional Innovation Valley through ERRIN matchmaking sessions.*

– Stavanger Region European Office



## ERRIN's Project development services 2025 in figures:

**450+**

Expressions of interest  
& project ideas shared



**250+**

Connections made  
between members



**35+**

Proposals submitted



# ERRIN projects: gateways to EU collaboration

In 2025, ERRIN strategically positioned itself in seven new European projects. Over the year, ERRIN has been involved as a partner in 15 EU-funded projects, using them as key instruments to bring regional insights and recommendations for better policy alignment into European policy debates.

Beyond policy impact, this project portfolio offers concrete benefits to ERRIN members: early access to funding opportunities, structured peer learning and increased visibility for regional innovation ecosystems. Several projects also support the regional roll-out of the EU Missions and the demonstration of innovative solutions on the ground. With over 70 ERRIN members actively involved, these projects connect them to 348 European project partners across 35 European countries, demonstrating their strength as gateways to interregional collaboration in Europe.

2025 also marked an important year for strengthening ERRIN's position in priority topics of ERRIN's clusters, resulting in several successful project applications set to launch in 2026. These new initiatives will connect ERRIN, and its members, to 242 additional project partners across Europe, creating new alliances to further promote a place-based approach to research and innovation.



## ERRIN PROJECTS

### ERRIN Projects in 2025:

15

Projects

70+

Members involved,  
connecting them to

348

European partners



# Expanding Reach and Engagement

In 2025, ERRIN further strengthened its strategic communication to reinforce regional interests in the European R&I landscape, facilitate meaningful connections and share timely, actionable insights on EU R&I opportunities.

The ERRIN website remained the network’s central information hub for members and external stakeholders. In 2025, it recorded 219,000 visitors, demonstrating ERRIN’s strong reach across the European R&I community. Through 1,864 personal user accounts, members accessed tailored updates, shared regional news, events and opportunities and connected with partners across Europe.

[Apply for a user account](#) to make full use of the benefits of the ERRIN membership.

[ERRIN’s LinkedIn](#) presence maintained strong momentum throughout the year. In 2025, followers increased by around 30%, passing the 10,000 followers mark and generating 287 658 organic impressions. This growth reflects the impact of targeted content, clear messaging and active engagement with regional and Brussels-based stakeholders.

The ERRIN newsletter remained a trusted communication channel, with 22 editions reaching 3,161 subscribers, keeping members and external stakeholders informed about ERRIN’s activities, policy developments, funding opportunities and project news.

[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) to stay ahead.

Together, these channels strengthened ERRIN’s visibility, amplified regional voices and supported members in navigating EU policy debates and funding opportunities.



ERRIN’s LinkedIn posts reached

**287 658**

organic impressions



ERRIN reached

**10 500**

followers on LinkedIn



The ERRIN website recorded

**219 000**

unique visitors



On the ERRIN website,

**300+**

new user accounts were created,  
increasing the number of active users to  
1864



The newsletter welcomed

**520**

new subscribers bringing  
the total to 3161

# Looking Ahead Towards 2026

**2026 will be a decisive year for the EU long-term budget post-2027. ERRIN will continue to strongly advocate for the place-based dimension in Europe's research, innovation and competitiveness agendas.**

Influencing the future Framework Programme (FP10) and the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) are key priorities for ERRIN members in 2026, as highlighted in the 2025 member survey. The territorial dimension is still largely absent in the MFF discussions, which means that it will be crucial to further mobilise the whole network to feed into the ongoing work in the EU institutions.

2026 will also be a year of collaboration. As ERRIN works across different policy areas, from research and innovation to regional development and competitiveness, we clearly see how the policies often remain siloed. Consequently, the key stakeholders of different policies tend to keep to themselves. Working with a wide range stakeholders makes us well placed to seek collaboration across stakeholder groups, from local and regional administrations and academia to organisations representing the private sector, focused on SMEs and startups. Collaboration will be key to combatting the trend of more centralised policymaking and to ensure that EU policy and funding will remain accessible to public authorities and smaller actors.

Strong policy work will be coupled with support for the wider membership to benefit from the last two years of the Horizon Europe programme. Through our Project Development Tool and various project development activities, we will provide multiple opportunities for members to tap into the final years of the current Horizon Europe programme.

Finally, the geopolitical threats and challenges in global competitiveness that Europe is currently facing are also influencing ERRIN members and therefore our priorities. Resilience, security and defence are emerging topics for the network. With the help of the Management Board, we are currently reflecting on how to further integrate resilience and security dimensions in our ongoing work and structures.

So, another busy year ahead. However, with the combined efforts of the network and its active members – with our joint intelligence, contacts and brain power – I am confident that we can make 2026 another successful ERRIN year!

  
**PIRITA LINDHOLM**  
DIRECTOR



# Connect with ERRIN

Interested in working with ERRIN?

Visit our website to learn more about our initiatives and get in touch with the ERRIN Secretariat based in Brussels



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The ERRIN Secretariat is a Brussels-based team working closely together to support the network and its members. Combining diverse expertise with a shared passion for regional innovation and research, the team strengthens ERRIN's impact.