

## KEY MESSAGES

### Horizon Europe: Climate, energy & mobility cluster

Seminar co-organised with DG RTD | 13 November 2018

#### Introduction

In collaboration with DG Research and Innovation, ERRIN organised a half-day seminar on the new Horizon Europe cluster titled “Climate, energy and mobility” on the 13 November 2018. The aim was to explore how this cluster could be implemented by providing practical experiences from local and regional actors, as well as to discuss how to build on this expertise.

The new clusters in Pillar II of Horizon Europe clearly show the Commission moving from a segmented approach to a system-wide approach with more coherence, and with the goal to overcome silos. The cluster approach has also brought a new form of collective governance inside the Commission with strong collaboration across DGs.

#### Connecting place-based innovation ecosystems

A **place-based perspective is key to tackle the societal challenges in the cluster**, something that was echoed by the Commission that emphasised the essential role of regions and cities to take R&I strategy forward and to bring that closer to citizens.

To take a place-based approach and **to connect regional innovation ecosystems at a European level** are essential in ERRIN’s vision for the future framework programme. It is through these connections that we can link complementary skills, infrastructures, and markets as well as enable the creation of new value chains, leading to increased impact of the framework programme and European competitiveness. Place-based regional innovation ecosystems in Horizon Europe would also offer the opportunity to better coordinate R&I priorities and practices, and thus **achieve improved coherence between the regional and European level**.

As a starting point, ERRIN explored how this cluster could **draw from the positive elements of the current “smart cities approach” in Horizon 2020** and how this approach could be expanded to encompass regional innovation ecosystems. The key elements were defined as follows:

- Support bottom-up solutions that **bring together the full quadruple helix** (research, industry, public authorities, and citizens) as it is key to achieve sustainable and long-term impact of the actions, both in the cluster and wider Framework Programme. All these actors should be involved in developing and implementing innovative solutions – and to foster engagement and empower all actors in the ecosystem to work together.
- Identifying and communicating the benefits of working in an **integrated way across sectors** such as mobility, energy, and ICT. In the discussions circular economy was mentioned as a cross-cutting element to be considered in this cluster, which would also imply a close link with nature-based solutions and the Horizon Europe cluster tackling food and natural resources. The abovementioned thematic areas are often integrated on a local and regional level as part of their climate and energy strategies, connecting climate mitigation efforts – as found in the climate, energy and mobility cluster – with climate adaptation and nature-based solutions.

- Consider **excellence combined with an aspiration to scale up innovations**. This approach has to some extent been included in Smart City Lighthouse projects, where innovations are tested in a number of cities and then ideally “transferred” to other districts and cities. Such an approach could be more powerful when expanded to a regional level where innovations could be scaled up, for example, in several municipalities within a region with a support of structural funds, or at a national level with national funding programmes.
- More emphasis could also be placed on learning from more experienced cities and to enlarge that knowledge base to other “less developed” cities and municipalities, thus also supporting the **widening excellence** part of the framework programme. Whilst doing so, it is crucial to keep in mind that role models (such as light houses) should be everywhere in Europe.

During the seminar, four examples were presented to highlight how regions have worked across climate, energy, and mobility. The examples underlined important elements to create effective solutions and what they would like to see in the Horizon Europe cluster to ensure a successful implementation. A summary of their key messages can be found below, and more detailed descriptions of each example.

- It is essential to **facilitate bottom-up solutions where the full quadruple helix can be involved**. Thus, **too prescriptive calls should be avoided to provide the possibility for new actors and different solutions** to participate. The example from the Orkney Islands (Scotland, UK) even emphasised that a quintuple helix approach is necessary adding the environment as another actor to be included.
- **Build on Smart Specialisation strategies and S3 Partnerships**. European partnerships could be developed in coherence with Smart Specialisation strategies and the Smart Specialisation Partnerships that are currently been developed under the Smart Specialisation Platforms, such as the Safe and Sustainable Mobility Partnership presented during the workshop. When appropriate Horizon Europe funding could be dedicated to such partnerships to develop activities with a research and demonstration dimension, which would create further synergies between Cohesion policy and European Structural and Investment Funds.
- **The strategic planning should provide further possibilities to connect regional innovation ecosystems via partnerships or collaborative projects**. The challenges present in the cluster go beyond one ecosystem and to connect several ecosystems would allow for a wider impact of the Research & Innovation results.
- **Wide-scale market uptake** is not funded under the Horizon Europe programme. Therefore, it is also crucial to assess and to propose under which programme(s) such wide-scale replication activities on the thematic areas of this cluster could be funded. For that reason, assessing and understanding complementarities of the different funding programmes and instruments are essential. (i.e. the Digital Europe Programme is the programme that funds the wider market uptake measures in the field of digital transformation). Understanding these complementarities would also facilitate **to build on existing knowledge and solutions**. For example, Smart Cities Lighthouse projects that have created innovative solutions are often ready to be scaled up to other cities and municipalities. However, barriers for scaling up persist due to for example lack of transferable business models and adequate financial models.
- **Intervention areas** should go beyond sectors/thematic areas and consider issues such as urban – rural interaction (regional perspective), the role of small and medium sized cities,

systemic and strategic approaches, processes such as demand-driven pre-commercial procurement, innovative financing, and co-creation methods such as participatory foresight, design thinking, etc.

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