

2022

YEAR IN REVIEW



INTRODUCTION

During 2022, ERRIN Working Groups have done formidable work relating to the [EU Missions](#). Strong emphasis was placed on the Mission for Adaptation to Climate Change via a [high-level Sounding Board event](#), providing [inputs to the Mission Implementation Charter](#) and participating in the first Adaptation Mission Forum. The existing work on the Mission on Climate Neutral and Smart Cities, and the related projects, [NetZeroCities](#) and [MOSAIC](#), were complemented by two successful Adaptation Mission related projects, Pathways2Resilience (co-developing pathways to climate-resilient regions in Europe) and RESIST (regions for climate change resilience through innovation, science and technology), that have kicked off at the beginning of 2023. With the help of the Policy Working Group, ERRIN also submitted its first inputs to the [Horizon Europe Mission Work Programmes 2023](#) in May 2022. With this work gradually intensifying, our aim is to further coordinate and strengthen ERRIN's mission-related activities. The EU Missions have also been defined as one of the main priority areas by the ERRIN Management Board.

Last year, we actively worked on the New European Innovation Agenda that was adopted in July 2022 by the European Commission. [ERRIN provided input](#) to the call for evidence for the Innovation Agenda and later welcomed the proposals in the adopted document that strengthen ecosystem thinking and help to connect regional ecosystems across Europe. One of the five flagships – flagship three – puts an emphasis on regional innovation and the ecosystem perspective; and will support, for example, the creation of 100 Regional Innovation Valleys. Also the Partnerships for Regional Innovation (PRI) Pilot, in which almost [50 out of the 74 participants](#) come from the ERRIN membership, is one of the promising actions that aims to strengthen regional innovation strategies by expanding their scope to sustainable transition and broader stakeholder engagement.

The Innovation Agenda proposals also emphasise tackling the innovation divide, which remains a challenge for enabling the full R&I potential of Europe. This approach was welcome, with [widening and deepening](#) engagement in research and innovation being the second main priority for ERRIN. This was demonstrated, for example, through the [recommendations on the WIDERA Work Programme](#) that were developed in 2022.

The start of the new year has been busy with the ERRIN Team now having 15 staff members to facilitate connections with R&I ecosystems across the EU. With a strengthened team we can further support partnership creation, enhance tapping into project opportunities and help to ensure that the local and regional dimension is strongly embedded in the EU research and innovation landscape. For the first months of the year, our focus will be on the Horizon consultation where we have created a dedicated drafting group to prepare our inputs. This is an important occasion for the ERRIN community to be mobilised to impact the upcoming Horizon Europe priorities and start developing our vision towards the next Framework Programme (FP10).



ERRIN MEMBERS

2022 was a year full of new initiatives which have spurred large interest among the ERRIN membership.

- **13** ERRIN Working Groups were led by **50** engaged co-leaders representing **39** member regions
- In total **60** meetings and events were organised
- On average, the meetings had more than **40** participants
- ERRIN mobilised members to influence the EU policy and programmes through **12** input papers and recommendations
- **287** new user web accounts were created enabling member engagement across ecosystems



ERRIN PRIORITIES 2022-2023

ERRIN's Management Board has set their work plan for 2022-2023 based on last year's survey results, the joint session with the Working Group leaders from earlier this year, as well as two co-creation sessions carried out during the Spring 2022. Two main priorities were defined as EU Missions and Widening and deepening engagement with a continuation of a dedicated Management Board Task Force. Two other priorities, skills and higher education, as well as entrepreneurship and industrial ecosystems, were considered as development areas, which should be further explored. The Management Board priorities will serve as a general framework to guide ERRIN's activities and create a connection with the Working Groups.

The four priorities aim to:

- Structure ERRIN's work further on the EU missions, which is a key initiative where place-based and ecosystem approaches are coming together
- Widen and deepen engagement in R&I to create further trusted partnerships among regions and their ecosystems across Europe
- Strengthen collaboration with higher education institutions and RTOs to encourage joint priority setting to further foster the ecosystem approach
- Foster entrepreneurship, bringing different ecosystem approaches closer together and to explore the skillset for the future.

More information about the ERRIN Management Board can be found [here](#).



ERRIN PRIORITIES: EU MISSIONS

The EU Missions are a key priority for ERRIN and the network has actively worked on the Missions since the start of their development process. The ERRIN Management Board adopted the EU Missions as one of its priority areas for 2022-2023 and the network has, through its Working Groups, closely followed and contributed to shaping the Missions through various events, input papers and formal and informal dialogues with the European Commission.

The Missions have gained strong support among ERRIN members as they place the local and regional level in the centre of the Mission objectives, while also promoting the ecosystem approach of bringing together all stakeholders to collectively define and implement the solutions needed to achieve the ambitious goals set by the Missions. The ecosystem approach is further strengthened by the Missions' strong focus on social and governance innovation – both on the local level and across governance levels.

Read about ERRIN's work on the EU Missions [here](#), in particular the [ERRIN messages](#) on the EU Mission work programmes for 2023 and the involvement of regional actors within the Missions developed in May 2022.



ERRIN PRIORITIES: WIDENING

Following its creation in 2021 in line with ERRIN's [20th anniversary priorities](#), ERRIN Management Board Task Force on widening and deepening engagement continued work in 2022 with the goal to achieve a more inclusive ecosystem approach in R&I. Several Task Force meetings were organised, targeting especially members from CEE, discussing themes such as the Excellence Hubs call for proposals, possible measures to enhance participation in R&I and the Week of Innovative Regions in Europe (WIRE). Task Force members also took part as speakers in the XII edition of WIRE and cooperated to influence the EU policy e.g. by co-creating ERRIN messages for [the Horizon Europe WIDERA Work Programme 2023-2024](#) and ERRIN response to the call for evidence for the new European Innovation Agenda.

On a more practical side, more visibility and roles of responsibility were granted within the network to members from CEE, with a representative of South Moravian Region elected to the Management Board and a representative of Wielkopolska Region having joined the I3 Expert Group on behalf of ERRIN for the duration of other member's leave. ERRIN's membership base was broadened by the first member from Latvia – Riga City Council. Participation of various stakeholders in the network's activities was also increased by adding diversity and learning potential criteria to selecting regional examples to be presented during Working Group meetings.



INNOVATION AGENDA

ERRIN welcomed the New European Innovation Agenda as an initiative to strengthen the innovation dimension of European R&I policy and actively contributed in its development phase before its adoption by the European Commission in July 2022.

The New European Innovation Agenda aims to position Europe at the forefront of the new wave of deep tech innovation and start-ups. It sets out 25 dedicated actions under five flagships, including accelerating and strengthening innovation in European Innovation Ecosystems across the EU; funding scale-ups; improving policymaking tools; enabling innovation through experimentation spaces and public procurement; and fostering, attracting and retaining deep tech talents. In line with ERRIN members' priorities, ERRIN's first point of focus is on the ecosystem flagship that will support the creation of regional innovation valleys, help Member States and regions direct at least € 10 billion to specific interregional innovation projects, and foster integrated use of cohesion policy and Horizon Europe instruments.

The Commission's new communication should bridge the research and innovation fields and their different actors. Connecting the dots between innovation and research policy, ERA Forum, EIC Forum, but also various ecosystem driven programmes and initiatives such as European Innovation Ecosystems or Joint Cluster Initiative. Tackling the innovation divide and fostering widening will also be crucial for enabling the full R&I potential of Europe, alongside societal innovation.

ERRIN contributed to the development of the EU Innovation Agenda by submitting an [input to the call for evidence](#) in May, organising a thematic policy debate during its [Spring Annual General Meeting](#) in June as well as several discussions in the framework of our Policy Working Group. ERRIN views were also taken up by [Science | Business](#) and [Council Conclusions](#).



ERRIN WORKING GROUPS

STRATEGIC AND TRANSVERSAL



POLICY



SMART SPECIALISATION



SCIENCE & EDUCATION FOR SOCIETY



INNOVATION & INVESTMENT

NATURAL RESOURCES AND FOOD



BIOECONOMY



BLUE ECONOMY



SMART CITIES



TRANSPORT

CROSS-CUTTING



ICT



ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE



TOURISM & CULTURAL HERITAGE



DESIGN & CREATIVITY

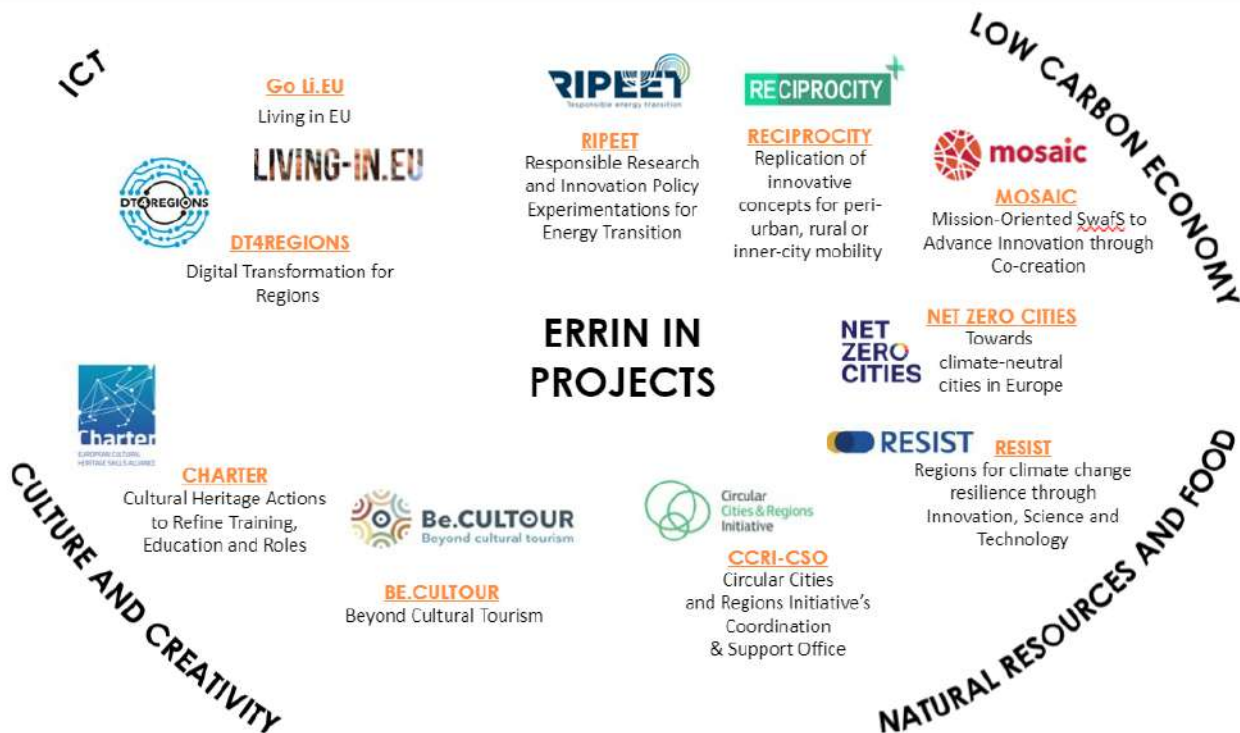


HEALTH

CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

HEALTH

ERRIN PROJECTS



OUR ROLE IN PROJECTS

ERRIN had a successful year in 2022 with the submission of several strategic project proposals that have great potential to drive ERRIN and its members forward. These projects will continue to strengthen the links between ERRIN, its members, and the EU Missions. The second round of funding within the Cities Mission has created a stronger foundation for ERRIN and the [NetZeroCities project](#), in which the network will have a new focus on partnership and policy.

In addition, ERRIN also deepened its involvement in digitalisation in 2022 with the kick-off of the Living-in.EU governance action, [GO.LIEU](#).

Finally, two new projects, Pathways2Resilience and RESIST, which are part of the Adaptation Mission were approved. In 2023, ERRIN will continue its work in the Soil and Oceans Missions through EU-funded projects and tenders.

The [Pathways2Resilience](#) project aims to mobilise at least 150 regions and communities to engage in the Adaptation Mission, while supporting at least 100 regions and communities in designing and implementing climate resilience pathways and connected innovation agendas.

The [RESIST](#) project will look to support twelve regions - eight of which are ERRIN members - across the European Union in building resilience against the impacts of climate change. Four regions will serve as large-scale demonstrators, testing adaptation solutions to key climate-related challenges in their areas. Each of these four regions will be twinned with two other regions that have similar biophysical characteristics.



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

As laid out in ERRIN's project development process, the network engages in projects that are aligned with its missions, which includes fostering regional collaboration in research and innovation, supporting the implementation of EU policies and programmes, and promoting the transfer of knowledge and best practices among regions.

In practice, ERRIN aims to develop European projects bottom up through its Working Groups, bringing members and strategic priorities together in order to respond to European funding calls. Over the course of the last year, several Working Groups have created a range of project development activities and engagement opportunities.

These events included a [CBE JU proposal call session](#) in the Bioeconomy WG, discussions on Smart Cities and Excellent Hubs calls, partnership building for the Built4People Partnership in the [Energy & Climate Change WG](#), collaborative events with networks such as European Innovation Ecosystems and UASEurope, the [Transport WG's](#) informal coffee meeting to review Horizon Europe calls and exchange interests, and an informative session on the [I3 instrument](#) in the Smart Specialisation WG.



ERRIN CLUSTER WORK

STRATEGIC AND TRANSVERSAL CLUSTER

The New European Innovation Agenda was the main recurring theme in the [Policy Working Group](#) work in 2022. Highly anticipated as an initiative to strengthen the innovation dimension of the European R&I policy, it was adopted in July 2022 and ERRIN has been actively engaged in discussions and [providing feedback](#). Among the undertaken initiatives were participation to the call for evidence, member events, contributions to press articles and input to the CoR opinion. The Policy WG also focused on providing messages to Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2023-2024 on [EU Missions](#) and [WIDERA](#). This work will also continue with planned input to the Horizon consultation.

A great number of ERRIN members, 48 out of 74 participants, are taking part in the Partnership for Regional Innovation (PRI) Pilot launched in May 2022, with ERRIN directly following its developments in frame of the [S3 Working Group](#). Several sessions linking to this initiative were organised by the S3 WG in 2022 with JRC, CoR and the European Commission, and in the next year they will be sharing experiences and mutual learning with the wider membership. With regard to the Interregional Innovation Investment (I3) instrument, the S3 WG has been providing input to the Expert Group to shape the instrument, as well as organised a dedicated project [development session](#) with EISMEA. In 2023, new calls under I3 will be followed to inform and support interested members.

In 2022 the [Science and Education for Society Working Group](#) looked into the new European Strategy for Universities and the links between European Universities and regional R&I ecosystems. The WG looked in to why [S3 is relevant for European Universities](#), and vice versa, and how European universities alliances can create a leverage effect beyond the university boundaries and the bilateral cooperation already in place - based on the S3 - in the region. As the number of alliances will continue to grow, ERRIN will monitor this initiative in 2023 and explore the approaches of alliances that can maximise their positive impact on regional innovation ecosystems.

The [Innovation and Investment Working Group](#) focused on EU Cluster policy in 2022. The WG aimed to identify key policy areas in which ERRIN and its members can promote clusters and the ecosystem approach, and provide a first overview of funding opportunities for 2023. As one of the major instruments in the scope of the Innovation and Investment Working Group, a specific focus was also put on the EIC, through consultation of our members and creation of an [input paper](#) for a European Parliament report on the EIC implementation practices.

ERRIN CLUSTER WORK

LOW CARBON CLUSTER

With 71 cities from ERRIN member regions selected for the [Mission on 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030](#), the [Smart Cities Working Group](#) continued its work on the Mission by focusing on funding opportunities and initiatives supporting its implementation. The WG also continued following and participating in the activities organised by the two ERRIN projects related to the Mission – [NetZeroCities](#) and [MOSAIC](#). The WG will continue to actively follow and shape the implementation of the Cities Mission in 2023, while also ensuring the successful continuation of the Mission by providing input to the Horizon consultation and the subsequent review of the EU Missions.

One of the main topics for the [Transport Working Group](#) in 2022 was the [revision](#) of Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) guidelines, which resulted in an opinion developed by the WG members. The promotion of regional priorities in the transport sector has been the main focus of the other WG activities, in particular around the New EU Urban Mobility Framework, the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) and youth in the mobility sector.

The [Energy and Climate Working Group's](#) main activities in 2022 were around the [Fit for 55 Package and Repower EU](#), aiming to discuss how the new legislations can help to accelerate the energy transition and the take up of renewable energy at local and regional levels. The WG also looked at the policy context regarding sustainable buildings and funding opportunities of the Built4People Partnership.

NATURAL RECOURCES CLUSTER

The [Blue Economy Working Group](#) continued its work on [Mission restore our ocean and waters](#) by exploring funding opportunities related to the Mission and the opportunities it provides to local and regional actors. The WG also continued the dialogue with the Mission Secretariat by developing an [input paper](#) on the Mission Charter which was shared with the Secretariat, and inviting them to a meeting to present the current state of play of the Mission. The WG will continue this dialogue and providing inputs to the Horizon consultation to further shape the implementation of the Mission.

As a continuation of its previous work on Mission: A soil deal for Europe, the [Bioeconomy Working Group](#) explored soil projects and activities taking place in ERRIN member regions, as well as links between the EU Soil Strategy and the [EU Soil Mission](#). The WG will continue following the implementation of the Soil Mission in 2023 as the Mission Charter will be launched, while also maintaining a dialogue and collaborating with the Mission Secretariat. Additionally, the WG started looking into the new Nature Restoration Law, especially the regulations concerning the restoration of urban ecosystems, and will continue this work in 2023 by looking into innovative solutions to fulfil the requirements set out in the new law.

ERRIN CLUSTER WORK

CCI CLUSTER

The [Cultural Heritage & Tourism Working Group](#) focused on raising awareness of the co-creation process of the [Tourism Transition Pathway](#) and shedding light on the regional involvement expected by the Commission. During their meeting, in line with the call for commitments and participation published by DG GROW, members presented their future initiatives and committed to the tourism sector development in the areas of green transition, digital transition, resilience and skills. The WG also organised a meeting on the DG GROW consultation on transition pathway for tourism, with the idea of submitting a joint input to the consultation on behalf of the whole Working Group.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the [Design & Creativity Working Group](#) organised a special edition of EU Design Days which took place as a side event of the Festival of the New European Bauhaus. Several speeches, breakout sessions and networking opportunities offered the chance to share experiences, discuss challenges and learn about each other's success stories. By doing so, the EU Design Days format provided a platform where researchers and designers came together with stakeholders, policy-makers and SMEs from regions all over Europe. The WG also provided members with the latest information on the [EIT Culture & Creativity KIC](#) where the newly announced KIC was presented, and the soon-to-be-available opportunities for regions and local stakeholders were explored. This topic will stay important for the WG and will be followed up throughout the next year.

HEALTH AND ICT

Following the legislative proposal for the European Health Data Space and in anticipation of the Health Data Regulation, the [Health Working Group](#) organised a meeting focused on [European Health Data Space](#) and how to unlock its potential for regional stakeholders, exploring the financial, legislative, conceptual and practical aspects. During the autumn, the WG organised a meeting on innovation in health promotion and disease prevention to discuss the new [EU Care Strategy and the EU public health policy](#) with representatives from the European Commission and regional practitioners.

The [ICT Working Group](#) organised several meetings in cooperation with other ERRIN Working Groups, involving the Health WG, Smart Cities WG and Bioeconomy WG, and focusing on different aspects of data. Mutual learning was reinforced at an event dedicated to regional digital strategies. Links were also created with ERRIN [DT4REGIONS](#) and [Go.LiEU](#) projects to offer opportunities for member engagement during a networking session on digital transformation of public services. Such opportunities for exchange with the wider membership will be strengthened in 2023. The ICT WG was also involved in consultation on the CoR opinion on the European Chips Act.

ERRIN TASK FORCES

ADAPTATION TASK FORCE

The EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change continues to be an important topic for ERRIN and its members. Earlier this year, ERRIN, continuing its dialogue with the Mission Secretariat, co-organised a [Sounding Board](#) event to allow for an open exchange between regions and Commission officials working with the Climate Adaptation Mission. This event enabled participants to understand the progress of regions towards climate resilience and the tools they use, provide suggestions about how regions can best be supported to become climate resilient and propose what priority actions should the Mission plan for the coming years. In March, ERRIN submitted its [input on the Mission Charter](#) of the European Commission, which lays out a set of commitments for the regions and communities signing the Charter and committing to the Mission and its objectives. ERRIN also became a friend of the Mission. Seeing the growing interest of members in the Mission's implementation, ERRIN planned the launch of an ERRIN Adaptation Task Force (TF) led by the members. Its objectives are to structure ERRIN's work on the Adaptation Mission – building on previous activities and the active group of ERRIN member regions, address and work on topics relevant to the local/regional implementation of the Mission, and help steering the work of ERRIN's adaptation projects, [RESIST](#) and [Pathways2Resilience](#).



NEB TASK FORCE

The New European Bauhaus (NEB) Task Force has continued its work on the initiative by showcasing the different perspectives, taking stock of what has been implemented so far, increasing understanding of the initiative, and exploring the next steps. An event was organised on 29 November to showcase regional projects and exchange with the JRC and European Parliament (EP) representatives, with an overall aim to answer the key questions on the NEB, in particular on the expectations, challenges, funding and involvement of the regions going forward. The ERRIN Secretariat will open the NEB Task Force to the wider membership due to growing interest in the ongoing and future activities. The ERRIN NEB webpage is available [here](#).

LOOKING TOWARDS 2023

While ERRIN is busy preparing its response to the Horizon consultation – assessing the feedback from the first years of Horizon Europe and making proposals for the future R&I priorities – also other EU programmes are soon facing mid-term reviews. This is an opportunity to increase synergies and links between the different programmes, and also to reflect on how the cohesion policy post 2027 could have a stronger R&I dimension and further increase the innovation potentials across EU.

EU Missions continue to be a priority for the ERRIN Working Groups, however further coordination and consolidation of that work is expected. As a Management Board priority, we also aim to ensure that the EU Missions meet the challenges and needs coming from the ground, and thus keep up a continuous dialogue with the Mission Secretariats. Also, new ways of increasing opportunities for members to join Missions-related projects will be explored. ERRIN is strongly advocating for the Mission approach, even if the evaluation of the EU Missions comes too soon. Implementation of such a new transformative approach requires time – even if the deadline of 2030 is approaching fast.

In 2023 we are also exploring opportunities provided by the Swedish and Spanish Council Presidencies, as well as the changing leadership of the Research and Innovation Directorate General within the European Commission. With a clear set of priorities from the Management Board, thirteen active Working Groups and two new Task Forces, we are heading towards an exciting new year!

Pirita Lindholm,
ERRIN Director



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