

Press Release

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A research and innovation agenda for European urban areas and cities

The Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Urban Europe is today presenting its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) that will guide the activities and research priorities in the programme until 2020. The launching takes place during the conference “Transition towards sustainable and liveable urban futures” in Brussels on Tuesday the 29th and Wednesday the 30th September 2015.

Cities throughout Europe increase their efforts to become more sustainable by developing smart cities strategies, aiming at enhancing inclusiveness, economic growth and resilience at the same time. There is however no ready off the shelf model for this pursuit of merging conflicting priorities and tackle unforeseen consequences. The current refugee crisis in Europe adds to the sense of urgency and gives a foresight of the possible magnitude of future urban challenges due to climate change, migration flows etc. Against this background the JPI Urban Europe launches today a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) with the ambition to develop and implement new models that can help cities to tackle complex challenges and become more sustainable.

“JPI Urban Europe must deliver impact in our cities and the SRIA defines the strategic priorities and gives us the necessary tools for that”, says Ingolf Schädler, Chair of JPI Urban Europe Governing Board, Deputy Director-General for Innovation, Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology.

The SRIA is the result of a two year intensive co-creative process involving research communities, funding agencies, business sector, cities and city stakeholders throughout Europe. It marks a new paradigm in public funding of research and innovation as it clearly proposes research priorities to tackle the most pressing urban challenges. Through this SRIA more than 15 European countries are committing to align national research funding and investments in urban development through technological and social innovation in a long term program in order to support European cities in their transition processes. The SRIA further marks the JPI Urban Europe ambition to establish a European hub for urban research in Europe inviting more countries and actors to join.

“We have the ambition to realise a strong cooperation between researchers from different scientific disciplines and actors from different sectors and to develop new concepts, tools, technologies and methods for urban decision making and urban development”, says Inger Gustafsson, Vice-chair of the Urban Europe Governing board and Head of department at VINNOVA the Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems

The launch of the SRIA is timely in relation to European initiatives such as the priorities of the Juncker Commission as well as international initiatives such as the UN millennium goals. The SRIA contributes to the jobs and growth agenda of the Union: it promotes a systemic approach to innovation where researchers, social innovators, civil society and urban planners co-create and shape new solutions in urban localities that provide implementation platforms on the ground. The SRIA also provides elements for an EU Urban Agenda under debate that calls for improved urban intelligence.

The SRIA can be downloaded from www.jpi-urbaneurope.eu

About JPI Urban Europe:

The Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe is a Member State-led initiative that coordinates the urban-related research programmes of the participating countries in order to exploit synergies between the national research programmes and European ones. JPI Urban Europe represents a forward-looking research initiative with an integrated approach to sustainable urban development across its research interfaces of economy and innovation, mobility, society and ecology. The aim is to create attractive, sustainable and economically viable urban areas, in which European citizens, communities and their surroundings can thrive. Please visit www.jpi-urbaneurope.eu.

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