



# Sustainable cities from digital solutions: Mission-led innovation in Horizon Europe

Horizon Event: Citizen engagement practices  
towards climate neutrality  
Olli Voutilainen, 24 March, Helsinki



Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö  
Arbets- och näringsministeriet



Image: City of Lahti

**2 departures for the event**

**Horizon SPARCS and Light House  
projects**

**New Mission based innovation  
strand within the Horizon**

# Perspectives to the current circumstances



- While the view is now to the present, yet we need **to look over the crisis** and build a bridge towards normal
- Also **positive impacts** to the digital and sustainable development can be foreseen
- **Resilience of the connectivity** likely to grow in importance, including physical and especially digital connectivity replacing face-to-face meetings
- **Additional leap** at digital front may influence in carbon footprints and indirectly to the broader sustainability

# Why is carbon-neutrality dependent on the utilization of digital opportunities?

Cons/capita x Consumers x Technology available

> Technology => Digital

*“Digital Innovation for the Planet”*

# Starting question for the Mission on Climate-neutral and Smart Cities



How can cities help getting Europe  
Climate Neutral as fast as possible?

*“Man to the moon”*

# Proposal: "100 climate neutral cities by 2030, by and for the citizens"



- **The Mission Board for *climate neutral and smart cities*** proposes that the EU Commission should:
  - Establish a mission that will support and promote 100 European cities in their systemic transformation towards climate-neutrality by 2030
- **Build a multi-level, co-creative process** - formalised through a Climate City Contract - that is adjusted to the realities of each city while contributing to the overall goal of the mission;
  - Promote these cities as national, European and global frontrunners in addressing the European Green Deal and its headline goal of climate neutrality in Europe by 2050,
  - Inspiring many more cities in doing so;
  - Bring about a just transition by helping to deliver on the UN's Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals to improve citizens' wellbeing;
  - Bring associated benefits such as improve air quality, creating jobs, promoting healthier lifestyles, improving mobility

# Five key enablers to push transition



1. Plan a transformative agenda to **become innovation hubs**
2. Develop new forms of participative governance
3. Develop a new economic model for climate action
4. Put in place an integrated urban planning model
5. Deploy and **use smart systems and data platforms**

# The Climate City Contract (CCC)



- Support, promote and showcase **100 European cities** to make a systemic transformation towards climate neutrality by 2030, and to make these cities experimentation and innovation hubs for all cities
- Offer cities **financial means** to achieve the mission goals through Horizon Europe and other European funds

## Contracts to

- Identify the policy and implementation gaps as a basis to inform a roadmap for transition
- Coordinate all stakeholders within the city towards a common climate goal
- Coordinate national and EU authorities to deliver the necessary legal, governance and financial necessary framework conditions
- Create a one-stop-shop for multi-level negotiations in order to facilitate city activities to make the transition reality



# Digital Innovation for Sustainable Cities: Cross-thematic Cluster Pilot

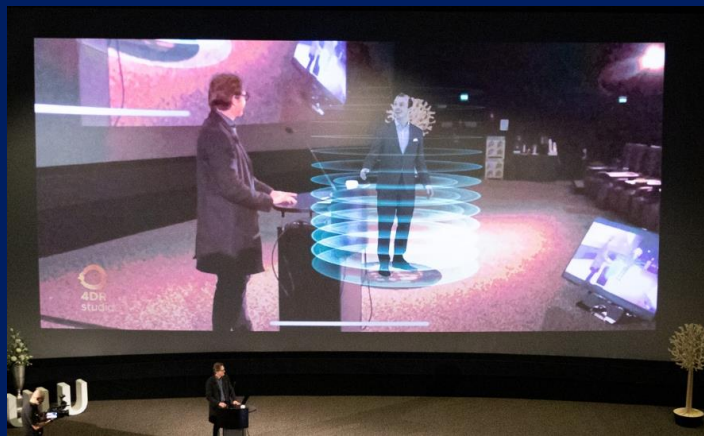
- Pilot action within the **Urban Agenda** for the EU
- Achieving the goal of sustainable and carbon-neutral urban development is, to large extend, dependent on the full utilization of digital opportunities in cities
- The **Cluster Pilot gathers** relevant theme Coordinators and Action Leaders to cross-fertilize and identify common issues on digitalization
- Funding for the one-year pilot is reserved from FI

# Summing up

**Smart and digital is largely visible in various instruments, now also as Mission**

**Digital increasingly meets carbon-smart goals**

**Opportunity to highlight society-driven innovation, in cities**



**Thank you**

**Further information (FI):**

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