INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Funded by the European Union

IURC-Phase (2025-2027)

Asia, Australasia and Latin America

Landing IURC Call for European Cities & Regions- Info session Finland

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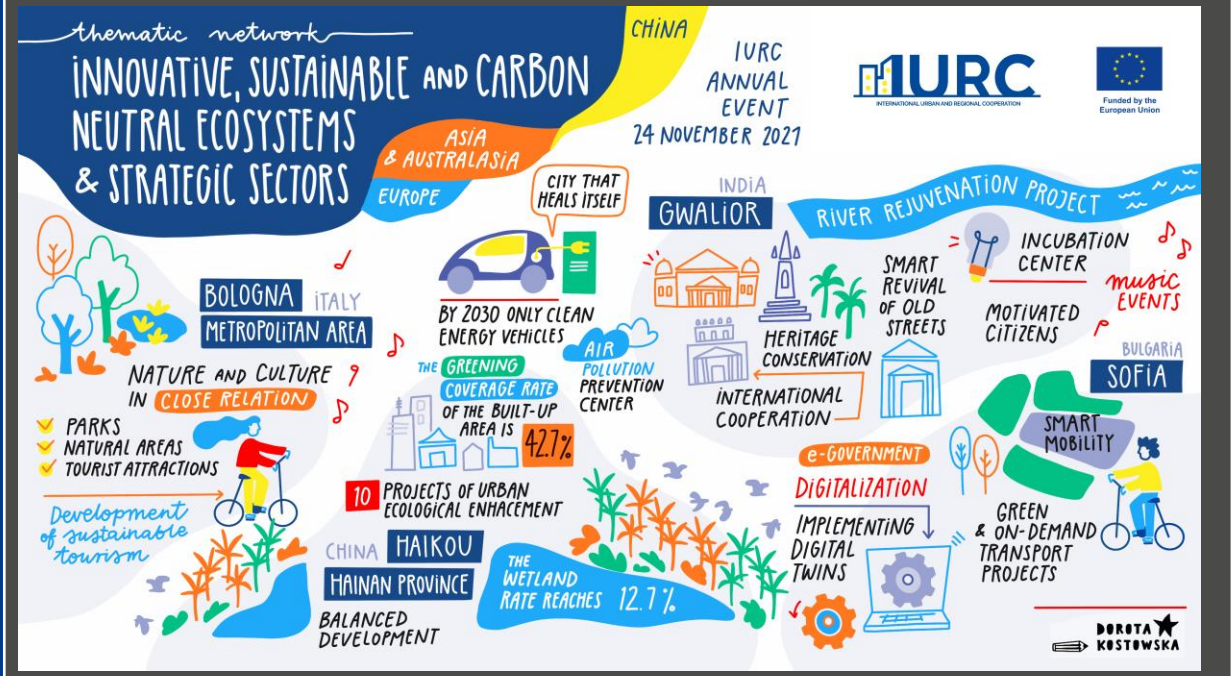
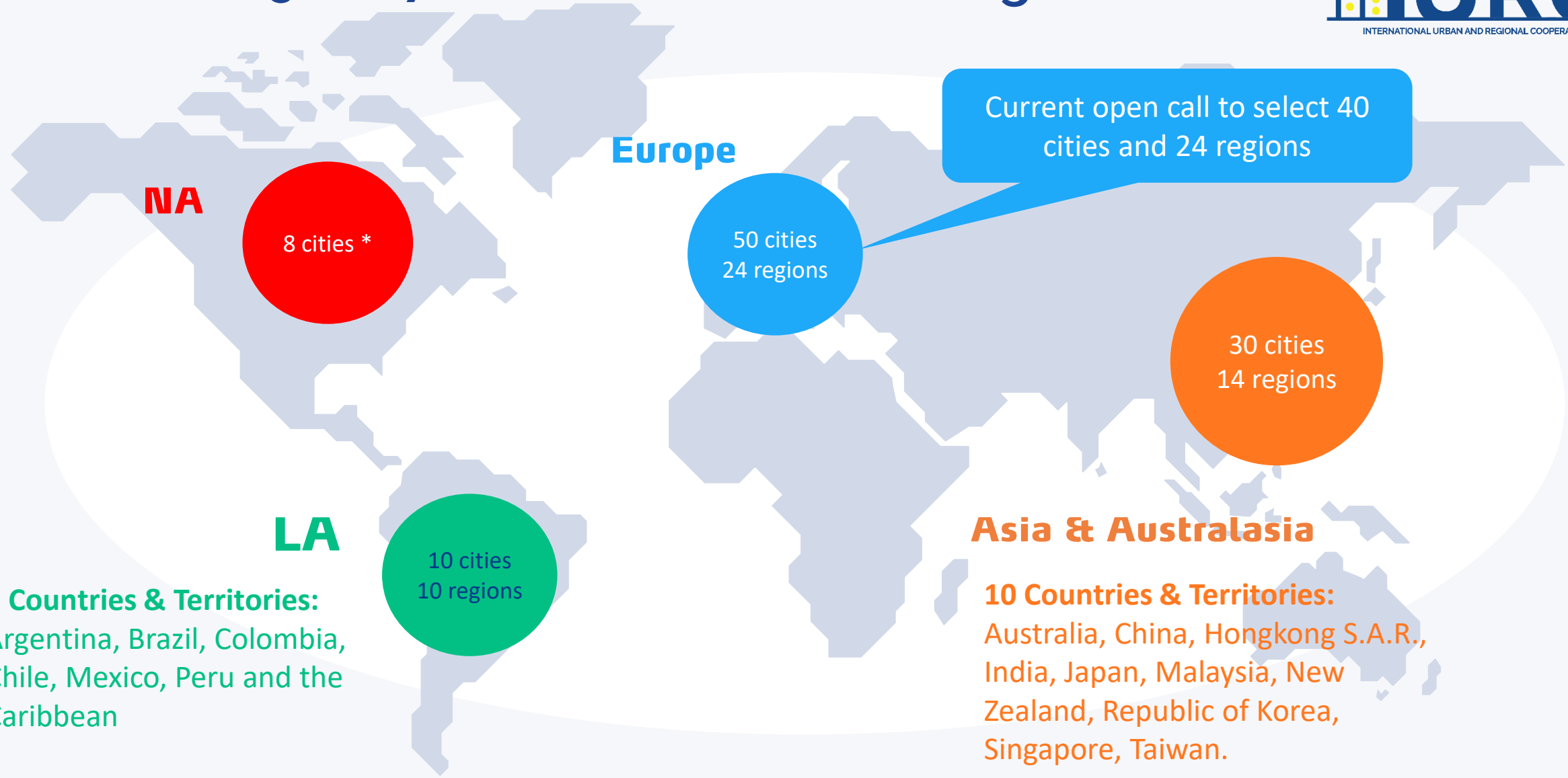
Knowledge Transfer Manager & City-to-City Coordinator

What is IURC?

- An **EU-funded** programme, the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) aims to lead **decentralized** subnational cooperation in the fields of sustainable urban development and regional innovation.
- It brings together **cities** and **regions** from the EU, Asia, Australasia and the Americas.
- Focuses not only on developing partnerships, but also on **practical implementation of concrete projects**.
- A **pathway to connect** governments, businesses, research institutions and civil society (**quadruple-helix**) to get together and make a difference for the future through their actions.



IURC (2025-2027): EU-funded Global Programme



7 Countries & Territories:
Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Peru and the Caribbean

10 Countries & Territories:
Australia, China, Hongkong S.A.R., India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan.

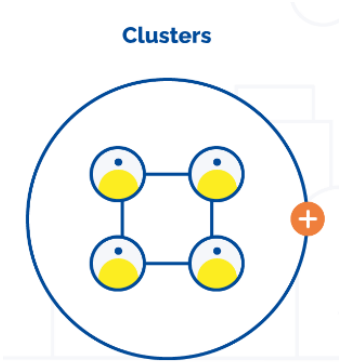
(*) until end 2025

IURC (2025-2027): How does it work?

Thematic Clusters

The programme facilitates **knowledge-exchange & transfer** through a combination of **online tools and face-to-face support**:

Entry Point



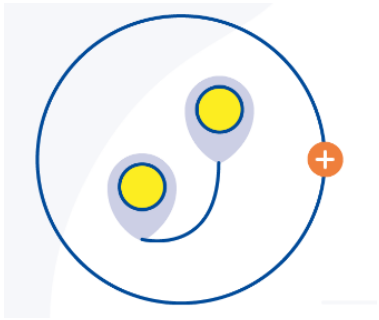
Tools

Joint participation in on-line and in-person Thematic and Networking Events (one/year)

Capacity Building / Training

Did you identify a partnership and a joined pilot action?

Advanced Cooperation



Results

Partnerships

Cooperation Action Plan/ Roadmap

EU CITIES & REGIONS ⇄ **Study Visits** ⇄ **NON EU CITIES & REGIONS**

- **Pilot Actions** ← **Competitive Fund**
- **Takeaways Factsheets**
- **MoU Agreements**
- **Guidelines & reports**

Which are the Thematic Clusters?

Thematic Areas & Cross Cutting Challenges

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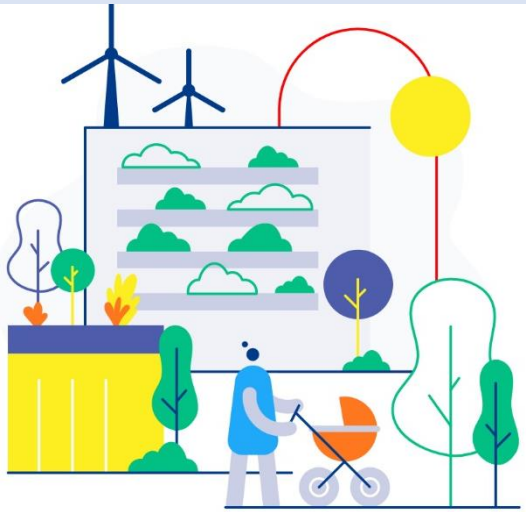
Cross-Cutting

RESILIENT DIGITAL TRANSITION

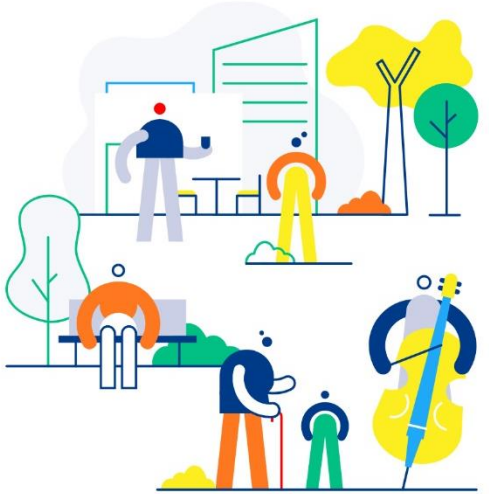
RESILIENT ENERGY TRANSITION

Thematic Networks

Productive, Smart and Connected



Green & Clean



Just and Inclusive

Thematic Clusters

Cities

- **Mobility & Transport:** Active mobility, micro-mobility, walkable cities, logistics, traffic management, smart city (mobility)
- **Strategic Sectors:** Sustainable tourism, cultural heritage preservation, legacy of mega events
- **Urban Innovation**: Open innovation & ecosystems, innovation precincts, job creation & entrepreneurship

Regions

- **Regional Cluster Agri-food:** Regional value-chains, food policy, food packaging, high tech farming, smart data management, food innovation, traceability and big data

- **Circular Economy:** Waste and recycling; water management; waste management; construction & built environment, GIS/BIM Smart City (buildings)
- **Climate Adaptation,** Nature based solutions (NBS), resilient environments, green infrastructure, biodiversity and nature protection
- **Clean Energy:** Energy transition, sustainable buildings, smart grids, bioenergy, mining, sustainable mobility.
- **Blue Economy:** Blue biotechnology, fisheries, aquaculture, ports and maritime transport

Cities

- **Urban Regeneration**: Revitalization of city centres, conversion of abandoned spaces (brownfield regeneration), shrinking cities, civic participation, tactical urbanism, urban prototyping, silver economy
- **Social Cohesion:** Affordable Housing, inclusive and participatory design, economic accessibility, habitability and comfort

Regions

- **Regional Cluster Industrial Modernisation:** Digitalisation, AI-based automatization, innovation of SME, advanced materials, circular approaches.

Timeline, Thematic Clusters and Partnerships

IURC TEAM SUPPORT (HELPDESK SERVICES)

Continuous online collaboration to develop and refine action plans (whole project)

Swift **Kick-Off** (incl. experts' mobilisation). EU (FPI/REGIO/EUDs) consultations. Assess/select non-EU cities & regions (Feb-June 2025)

Disseminate EU Cities/Regions Participation at URBACT City Festival (April) and at EU Cities Forum (June)

Launch of the call for EU cities & regions (19 May-30th June). Evaluation & Selection of EU cities & regions (July-August 2025).

Information/Promotion Videos & Webinars (May-June)

Selection (July-August)- Communication (August)

Thematic Webinars Series from September 2025

Online cooperation. Conduct the *Thematic Networking Event* in **Europe** within the **Barcelona** *Smart City Expo* **(4-6 Nov 2025)**.

Involve academia, business & civil society

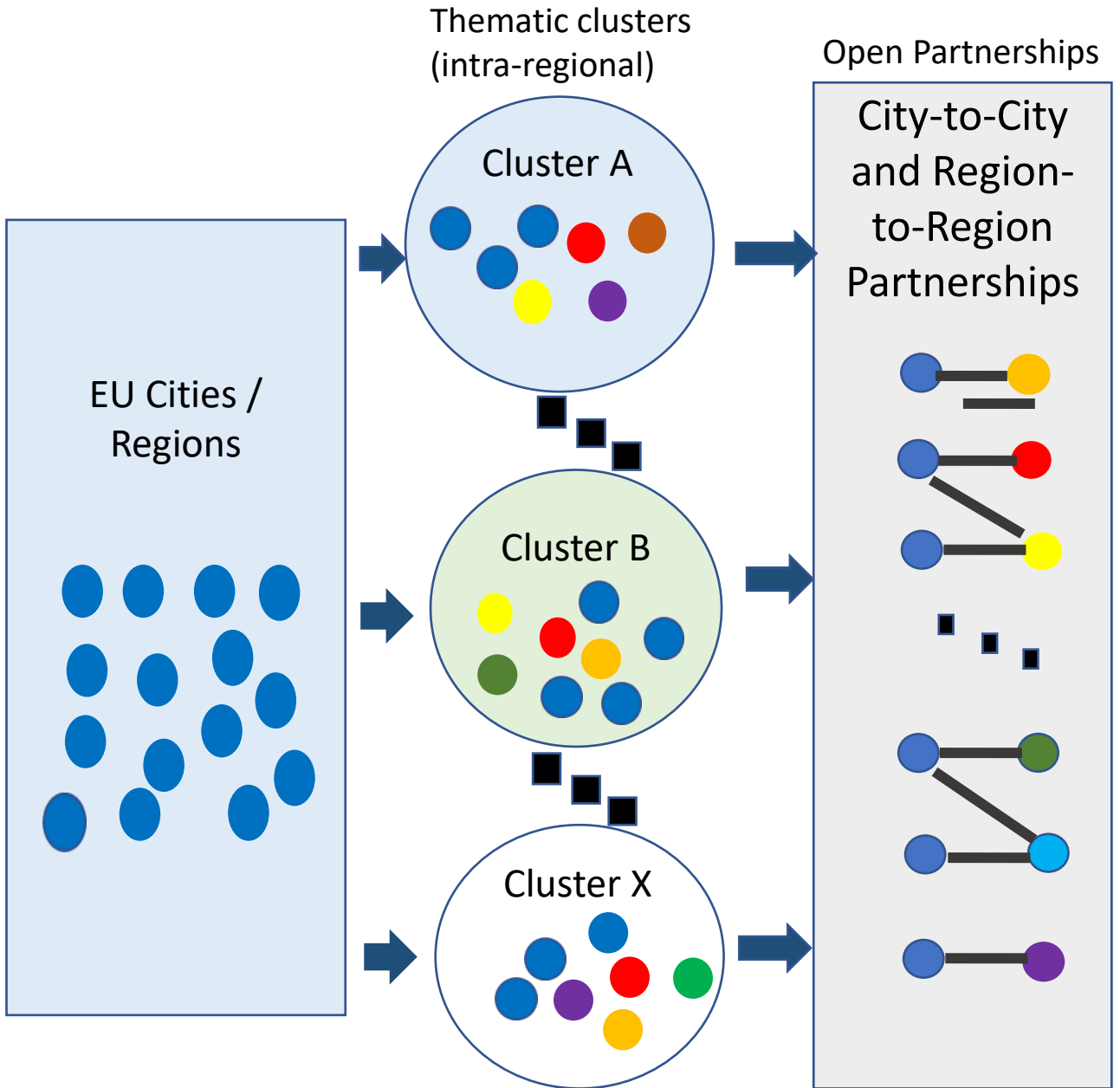
Draft pilot actions / develop knowledge-based products

Conduct the *Annual Thematic Networking Event* within the **Singapore** *World Cities Summit*, 14-16 June 2026. **Latin America TBD**

Study Visits in Asia / Australasia/ in June 2026 *(LA TBD)*
Study Visits in Europe from July 2026 to June 2027

Implement pilot projects (July 2026 – September 2027)

Present results at *EU Week of Regions & Cities* in **Brussels**, **Oct 2027**



What do we understand by a Pilot Action?

MILAN(IT) – SAO PAULO(BZ)

Urban regeneration integrated interventions through SUD practices

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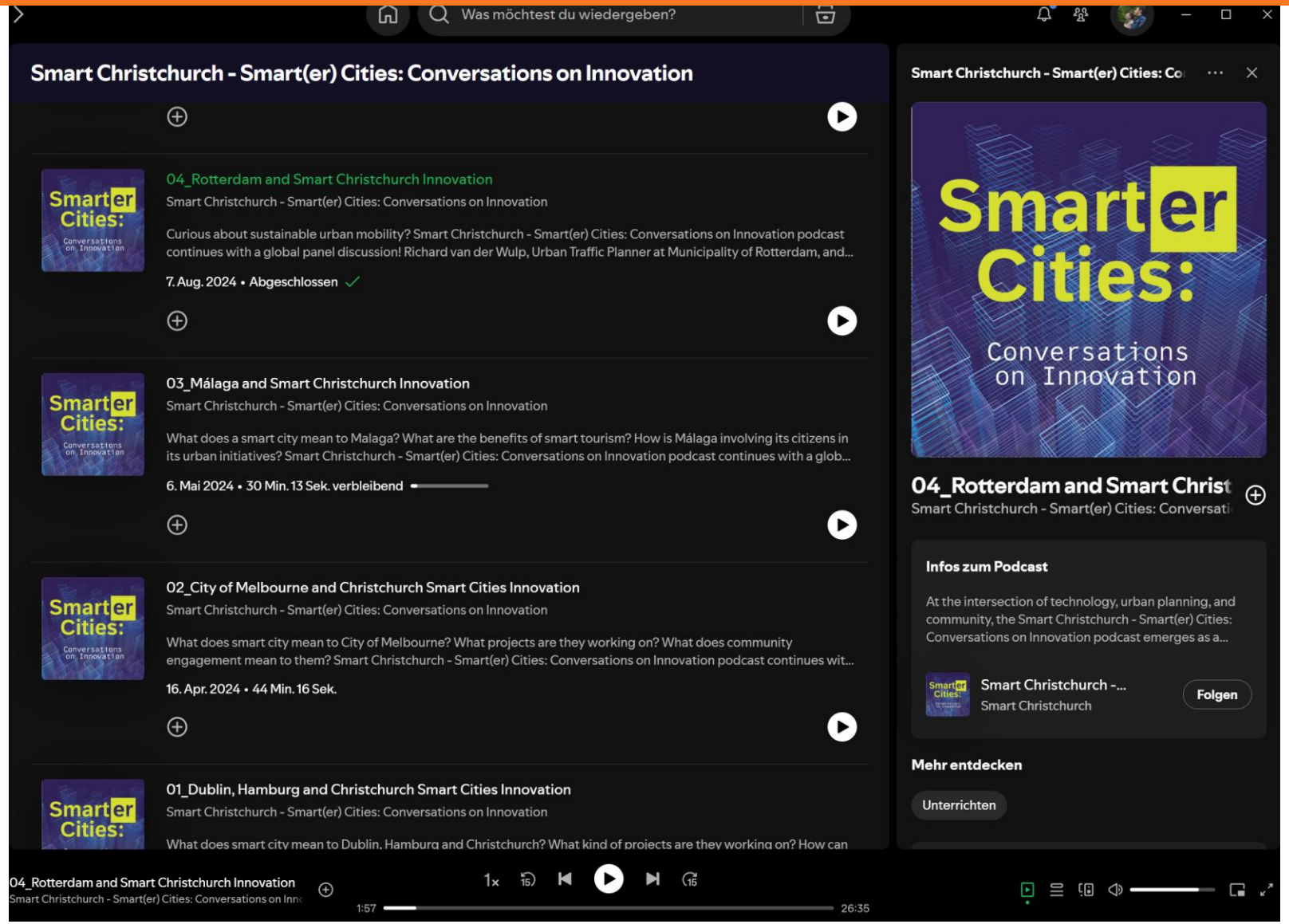
Co-creating studies and guidelines to regenerate industrial heritage and brownfield areas, with the goal of achieving more livable and sustainable neighborhoods. Focus on Bras area in Sao Paulo's Central District

BARCELONA (ES) & BRISBANE (AU)
Urban Transformation through major events (Olympics)

Joint paper on *Major Event Led City Transformation* with Brisbane (Olympic games 2032) and Barcelona (Olympic games 1992) as case studies on how to use Olympics as a driver to boost existing innovation precincts and knowledge corridors. Stakeholders involvement: Boggo Road Innovation Precinct (Brisbane) & 22@ Ciudadela of Knowledge (Barcelona)

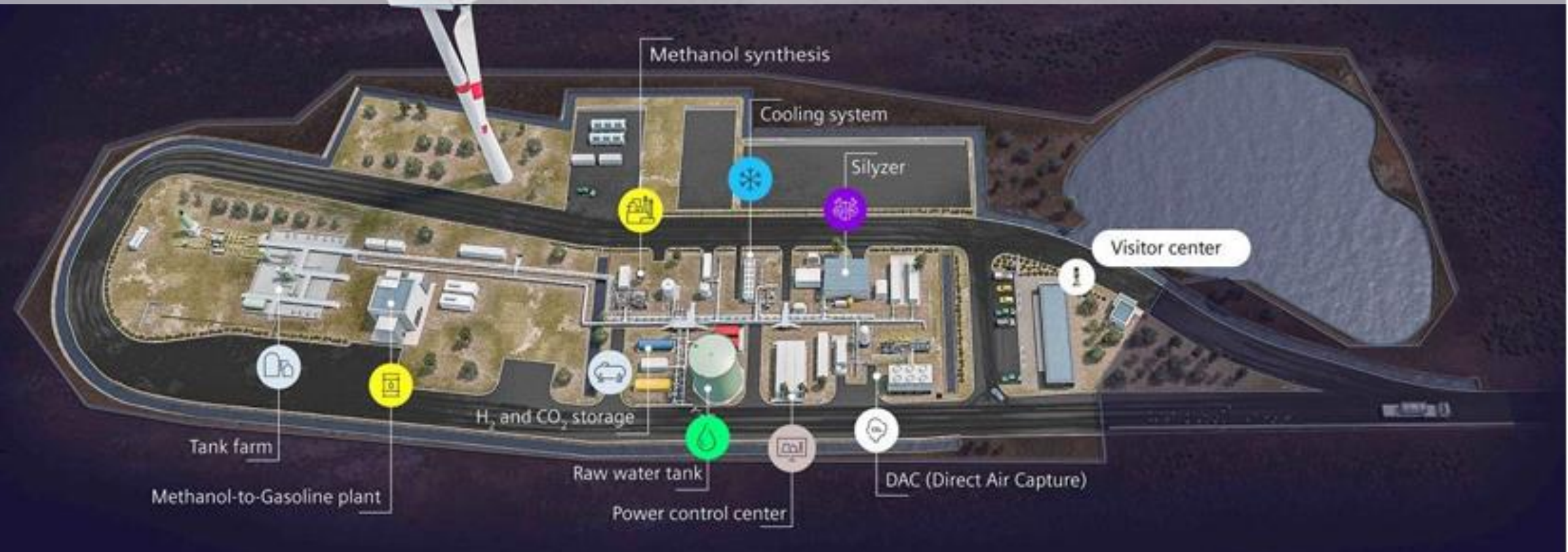
Malaga & Victoria Gasteiz (ES) & Christchurch (NZ)
Smart City Podcast, Horizon Europe Application & Business



- Christchurch was just awarded with a Horizon Europe **climate related** project as a **lead city** and demo site.
- In 2023, **Christchurch** hosted a business and research visit from Málaga for the **Smart Christchurch Innovation Expo.**
- The cities are collaborating on adapting the **Christchurch Smart View App**. to Málaga.

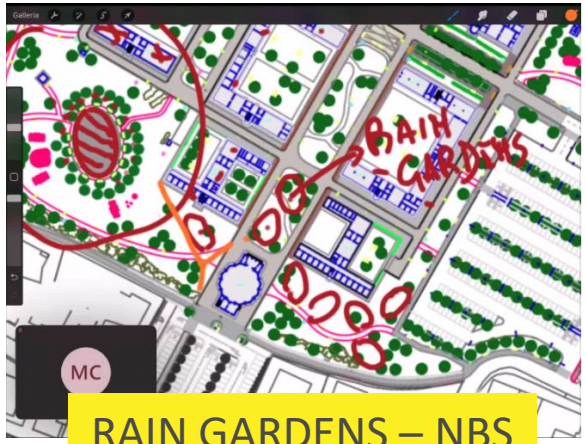
OSTROBOTHNIA (FI) – MAGALLANES(CL)
Regional H2 Ecosystem & Hydrogen Hub

Key institutions in Ostrobothnia's renewable energy ecosystem, such as the Novia University of Applied Sciences and the University of Vaasa, will partner with the University of Magallanes to test innovative strategies for implementing the H2 project.

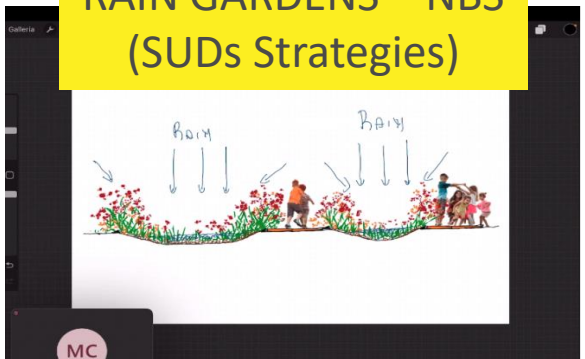


Famalicao & Maia (PT), NBS Malaysia
Circular Economy activities

ZERO WASTE MARKET



RAIN GARDENS – NBS (SUDs Strategies)



VOCATIONAL ECO-SCHOOL E-WASTE – YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION

Video : Chief Minister of Penang signing the plaque

ECO-SCHOOL : PORTUGUESE STUDENTS in PENANG

ECO-SCHOOL : PENANG STUDENTS in PORTUGAL

Banana Peel Steaks_1

Composting_1

Glass Table_1

Old Clothes_1

Reusing Jar_1

Vertical Garden_1

EN_Creating objects with newspaper

EN_Reusing plastic packaging

CIRCULAR ECONOMY: 8 DO-IT-YOURSELF VIDEOS NATIONWIDE DISTRIBUTION

ESSEN(DE) & GRENOBLE-ALPES MÉTROPOLE (FR)–KORIYAMA AND TOYOTA CITY (JP)

Innovation platform to boost new energy technology and hydrogen

Creation of a physical and virtual place that helps their private contractors meet innovators, start-ups, and SMEs of the partner cities on the topic of new energy technologies and hydrogen

NCI BOLOGNA (IT) - YANGZHOU (CN)

Joint Green Design Centre with one infrastructure in each city

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Fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration in the areas of green design, and resilient urban development through a joint Green Design Centre, emphasizing nature-based solutions, ecological transition, and cultural heritage preservation

Hamburg (DE) Canberra & Melbourne (AU) Digital Twin

- **Canberra's Government (ACT)** and **Hamburg** agreed to a **staff exchange** for a **professional "deep dive"** in technical exchange and – estimated –shared development of solutions in the field of **Digital Twin**:
  - Hamburg urban data specialists (**Hamburg State Agency for Geoinformation & Surveying - LGV**) visited ACT to exchange technologies, identify gaps and solutions.
- **Hamburg** – running an own city-*Building Information Modelling (BIM)* unit - connected its specialists with the **University of Canberra** experts to share experiences and approaches, if possible: adapt solutions to each other**.**
- **Melbourne:** Hamburg experts participated in the *International Transportation Summit 2023* and discussed projects with city authorities (climate/transport/urban data).

More examples in our Knowledge Library

IURC Knowledge Library

Find all the resources produced by IURC and deep dive into our findings below!

Knowledge Library | Cities & Regions | Events | Media

Refine Your Search » Show all languages

+ Resource type | + Geographical focus | + Thematic Cluster | + Cross Cutting Challenges

Promotional Material past phase

IURC 1 (2021-2024) -"Purpose" Video

To transmit the objective of International Urban and Regional Cooperation in an open and general way which can be used for future programmes.
https://youtu.be/qk01J8q62QY

IURC 1 (2021-2024) - Interactive Publication

A document with 30 selected Case Studies from all Geographical Areas, diving into the contributions of a facilitating programme to the international reference frameworks. https://fr.zone-secure.net/236027/1861122/

IURC 1 (2021-2024) - Final Insights Video

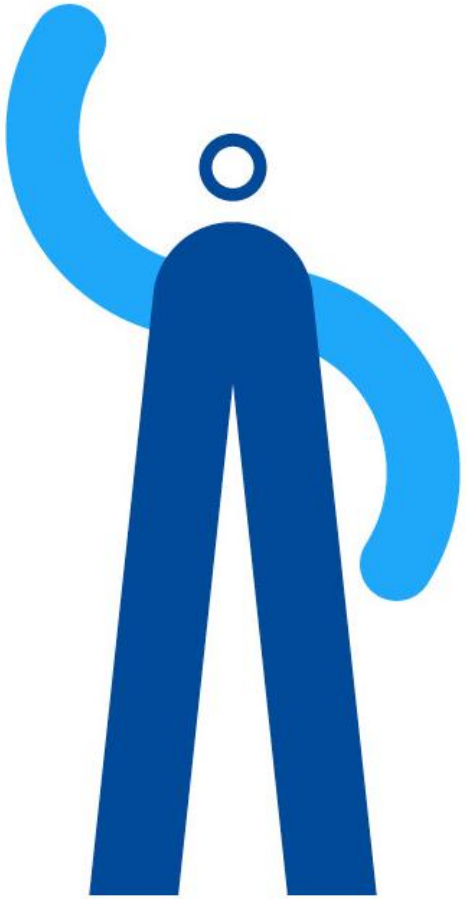
Gathering the in-person activities IURC develops: annual events, study visits, regional events, etc.
https://youtu.be/cWLY89ZV_Hk

IURC 1 (2021-2024) - Final Newsletter

https://www.iurc.eu/2023/12/07/iurc-global-dispatch-no-6/

How to apply?

Who is eligible to apply?



For **City-to-City Cooperation:** public authorities from Cities, Metropolitan Areas or Functional Areas* (a lead entity must be designated) in EU Member States with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

For **Region-to-Region Cooperation**, public authorities or agencies, from EU Member States' regions

**A contiguous grouping of municipalities that share some key functional services and belong to the same region/province*

Project Website www.iurc.eu

IURC
INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Latin America | North America | Asia & Australasia

IURC | Funded by the European Union

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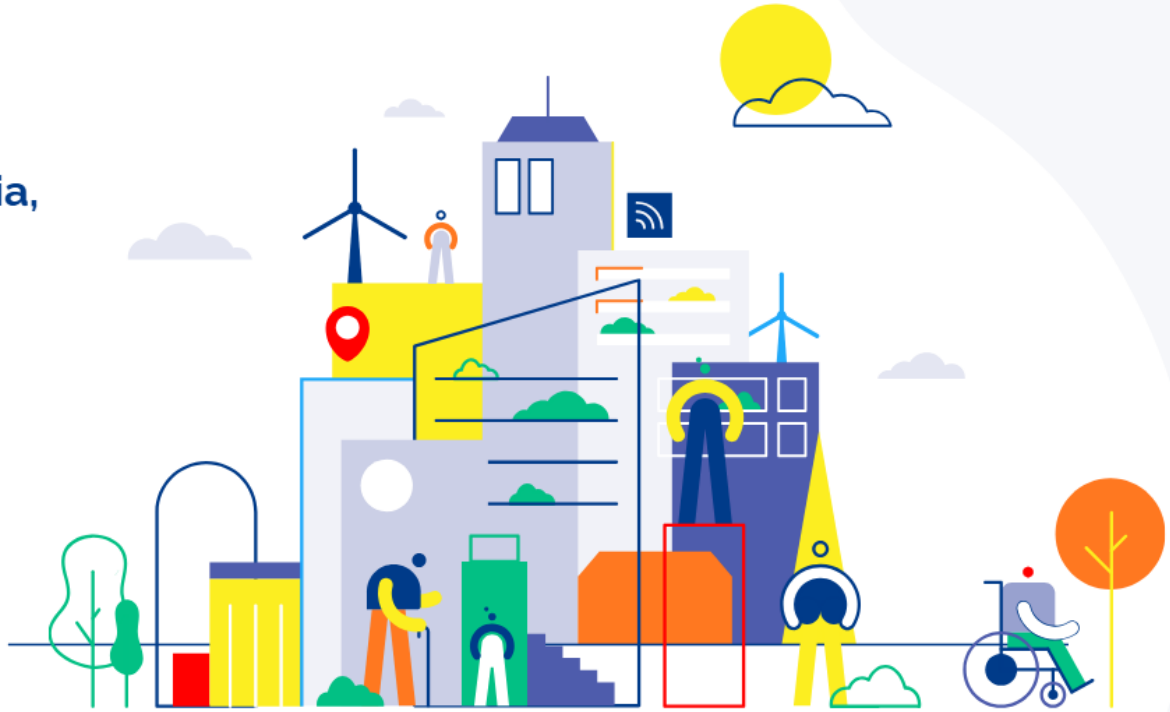
EU Cities and Regions: Apply to cooperate with Asia, Australasia and Latin America

Applications are now open for European cities and regions to join the IURC Programme 2025-2027.

Don't miss your opportunity to join a global network of forward-thinking cities and regions committed to **building smarter, greener and more inclusive futures.**

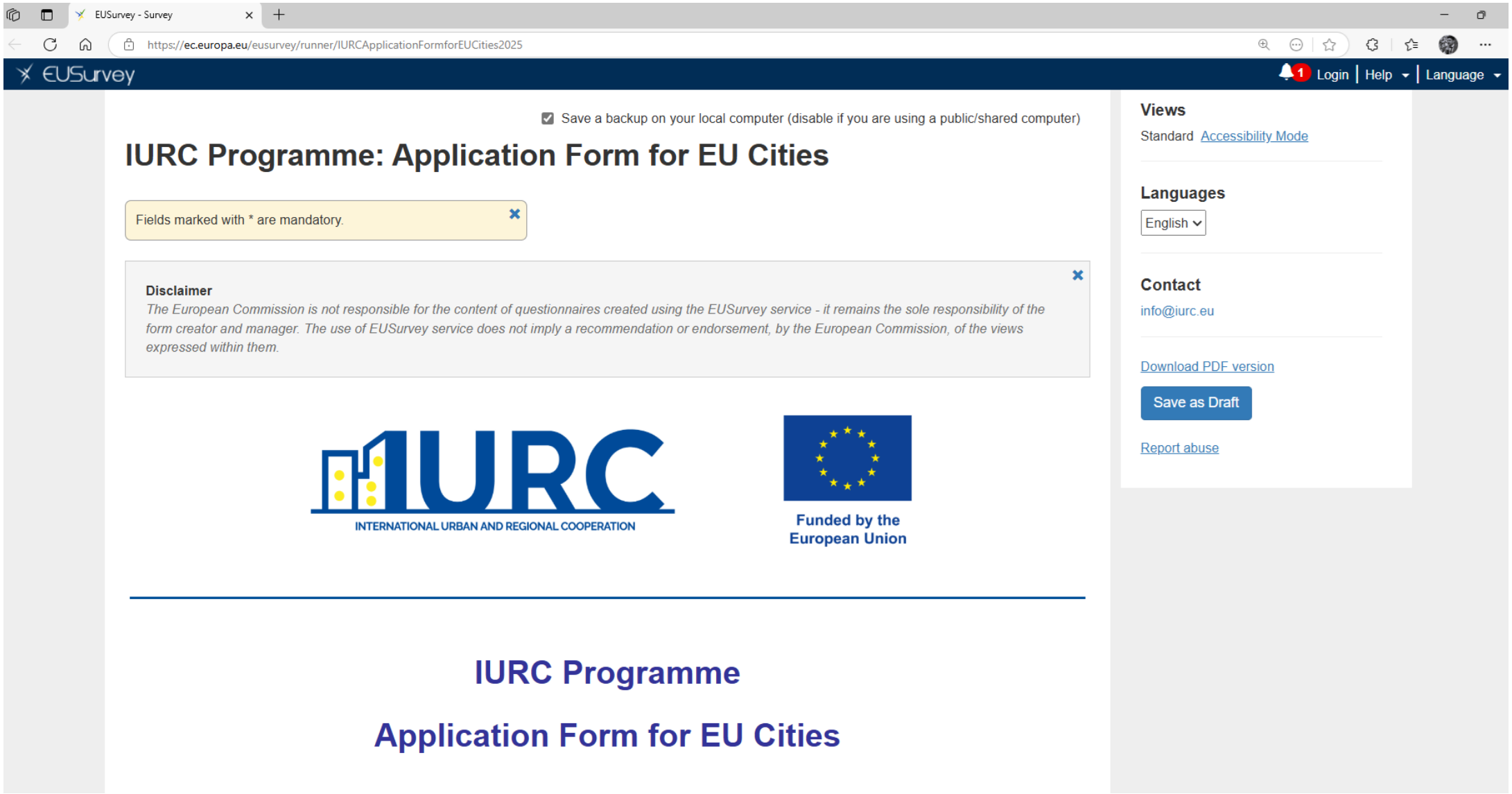
Join us now



https://www.linkedin.com/company/iurc/

BlueSky: @iurc.bsky.social
X (2021-2023): https://x.com/IURC_Programme

Open Call for EU Cities and Regions



Application timeline and first steps for 2025?

30th June

Current Call for EU cities & regions closes

July-August

Evaluation & Selection Process. Communication of results

Sep. – Oct.

Thematic Webinars Series. Meet Cluster Members. Potential Partnerships

4-9 Nov.

Meet them all at the Smart City Expo in Barcelona (ES)

Dec-

Confirm Partnerships & start defining pilot actions

WHY JOINING THE IURC?

Opening doors for cities, regions & their stakeholders to international markets & cooperation opportunities

To showcase good practices. Benchmarking & international positioning

Inspiration from different realities to implement sustainable urban development and innovation actions

Participating to a global network accessing direct experiences and lessons learned ‘dos & don’ts

Thank you!

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INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

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