



EUROPEAN WEEK of Regions & Cities

Strong Regions, Strong Europe



12-14
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#EURegionsWeek

From Fragmentation to Focus: Finland's model for urban innovation

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innocities



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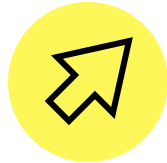


What is InnoCities?



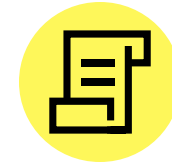
EU's sustainable urban development

- Cities are the platforms of European innovation operations. Simultaneously, different sustainability challenges are identified and need to be solved in cities.
- InnoCities are a **Finnish way of implementing SUD**, the EU's sustainable urban development, with green and digital transition at its core.



Innovation ecosystem development

- The objective is to strengthen **innovation ecosystems**, that is, to promote the development of innovation activities founded on collaboration and network-based partnerships.



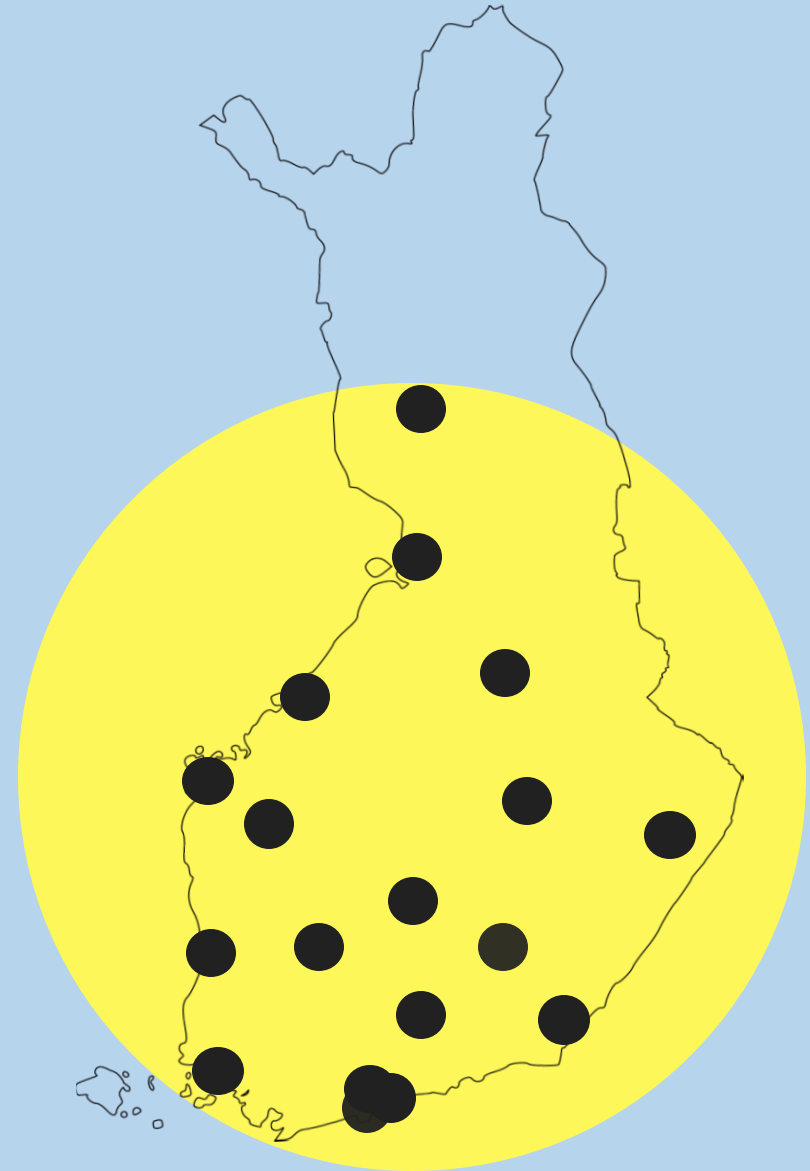
Ecosystem agreements

- 16 long-term agreements **between** university and university consortium **cities and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.**
- By allocating public, EU, national and private RDI funding we strengthen globally competitive ecosystems.

Cities with Ecosystem Agreements

Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa
Joensuu
Jyväskylä
Kokkola
Kuopio
Lahti
Lappeenranta (+Imatra)
Mikkeli

Oulu
Pori
Kajaani (+Sotkamo)
Rovaniemi
Seinäjoki
Tampere
Turku
Vaasa



258

Projects
479 individual
projects running

1 60 M€

Combined funding
for 2021-2027

16

Agreements,
18 cities,
80+ RDI-
organizations

What Ecosystem Agreements?

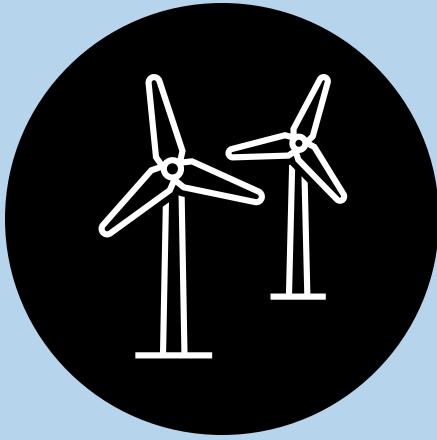
CITY

- Allocates min. 25 % funding
- Defines the innovation ecosystems and thematic focus areas to the agreement
- Collects regional RDI stakeholders into setting the common goals and steering the implementation
- Chooses the projects for funding

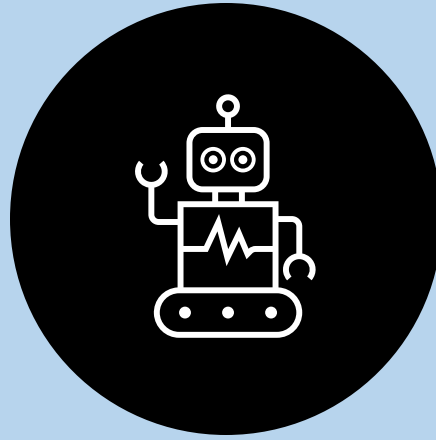
GOVERNMENT

- Provides 60 % ERDF + national funding with a long term commitment
- Sets a national coordination team to support the cities
- Organises regular discussions with the cities about funding needs, implementation and impacts

Themes



Sustainable
transition



Digitalisation and
new technologies



Wellbeing

Actions



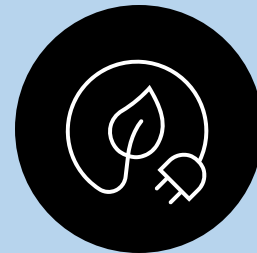
Cities as platforms for
development
and experiments



Development of the
start-up ecosystem



Investments,
planning and
public procurement



Demonstrations
promoting energy
efficiency and
circular economy



Attracting
the international
experts and their
availability



Accelerating the digital
investments
of businesses

From Fragmentation to Focus

- Understanding the region's growth drivers: economic structure, research priorities, talent pool, and industrial capabilities.
- Clear identification of themes with high growth and internationalisation potential.
- Allocating resources and building portfolios around selected themes.
- Building visibility and ecosystem leadership with a long-term commitment.



Mikkeli Water ecosystem
Image: Vilja Pursiainen



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Case studies and success stories



[Kajaani became the Arctic capital of data centres and supercomputers - Innokaupungit](#)



[Tampere can save Europe's future with its chip expertise - Innokaupungit](#)



[Finland is number one in forest artificial intelligence and Joensuu is its lodestar - Innokaupungit](#)



[Mikkeli is the capital of clean water, where sludge is used to solve water-related problems across the globe - Innokaupungit](#)



[In Kokkola, seaweed from the Caribbean is transformed into raw materials for the wellness industry - Innokaupungit](#)



[“We’re conquering the world one variable frequency drive at a time” – Vaasa is the Nordic Energy Capital - Innokaupungit](#)

Partnerships between cities across Finland:

From Competition to Complementary Roles

- National level innovation ecosystems that combine at **least three cities** to a common thematic priority.
- Focus on national level spearheads and competitiveness.
- Strengthen the international visibility and appeal of Finnish innovation ecosystems.
- Improve the attractiveness and accessibility of Finnish RDI environments in the global competition for RDI investments.

In Finland, we like to
move it, move it.



Creating tourism business that
moves people to nature

innocities



From 187,000 lakes
to global solutions



Innovative water expertise
comes naturally to Finland

innocities



**Finland is
foodland**



Finnish food does not compete on
mass production, but on food
innovations.

innocities



**This is a real life. Not
just a fantasy.**



Finland is the first country in Europe
with a comprehensive national
metaverse strategy

innocities



Multi-Level Partnerships

- Partnerships between cities, regions and the government
- Partnerships between the city and the local innovation ecosystems
- Partnerships between cities across Finland
- Partnerships between the InnoCities network and other entities / networks



The President's award boosts Forest Joensuu to international success
Image: Vilja Pursiainen



National Coordination Team

- Supports the development and ecosystem work of Innocities
- Support the competence building by bringing actors together and sharing best practices
- Increase visibility and information sharing through communication
- Staying up-to-date on implementation and monitoring the impact
- Funding national ecosystem projects that connect at least three cities

Some learnings



Long-term horizon and commitment

- Strategic planning is possible
- The city's own priorities genuinely guide the implementation (vs. general regional ERDF).
- How to preserve room for reactivity or responding to acute needs?



Cities' role in transformative innovation policy

- Cities have strengthened their understanding and capabilities to support innovation ecosystems.
- Agreements have tightened collaboration and networks in the regions and between cities.



Strategic approach and business development

- Local and national interest for the impact and results of the activities.
- Keeping companies in focus (doing good and doing business).
- How to match with other sources of funding?

Next: Comments from the partners

Mervi Hemminki, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

Maarit Randelin, Mikkeli Development Miksei Ltd

Monna Salmi, City of Tampere



#EURegionsWeek

Want to collaborate?
InnoCities.fi



Watch a video about the InnoCities model.

