

# Position paper on Strategic Planning and Missions in Horizon Europe

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## European Technology Platforms in Horizon Europe

The European Parliament, in its plenary vote on the Horizon Europe Regulation and Decision, voted for one amendment promoting European Technology Platforms (Amendment 66, [Article 6 Regulation](#)) in general and another referring to their importance in energy especially (Amendment 73, [Annex I – part II – point 4 – point 4.1 Decision](#)).

We are glad for the EP's recognition of our work and we hope its amendments survive trilogue.

ETPs (in our case, "ETIPs") could have a valuable role to play in Horizon Europe's "Strategic Planning". ETPs are a forum that takes in stakeholders from industry and academia, often with Member State participation. They are free to join and operate transparently. Their recommendations, published as Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas, Implementation Plans, Deployment Strategies or similar documents, are public. Their input is therefore both high-quality and community-approved.

## Strategic planning

Described in the Commission's proposal as "a multiannual strategy for the development of work programme content", strategic planning is to our understanding a more elaborate process of consultation than the [public consultations that have been used to shape some parts of Horizon 2020](#). We look forward to it being the **channel by which all external input is sought**, including from Member States' or Associated Countries and the European Parliament. We thus understand and want strategic planning not to be a one-off exercise, but to be **repeated in good time in the run-up to every Work Programme**. Our vision of a Strategic Plan is that it provides guidelines for the Work Programme. As such, a number of bodies or activities that sometimes competed to provide this input in the Horizon 2020 era be phased out. We support the retiring of the Advisory Group on Energy and feel activities like the [Strategic Foresight study](#), [Strategic Programme overarching document](#) and the "Outline of the strategic approach for the Energy work programme 2018-2020" will be redundant in Horizon Europe unless they are offered by the Commission as an input to the Strategic Planning process.

Horizon Europe Work Programmes must be consistent with the Strategic Plan that results from the consultation process. The drafting of the Work Programme can remain in the hands of the European Commission and be overseen by a Programme Committee, but Member States should not be allowed to push topics that they have not declared or argued for at the Strategic Planning stage. Strategic planning must increase transparency around Work Programme creation.

We would ideally like Strategic Planning to include the possibility for deserving external stakeholders to meet the Commission and Member State representatives (Parliament, too, depending on its involvement) to discuss their ideas and reach compromises if possible. Alternatively, these external stakeholders should receive public written feedback from the Commission. **Feedback is an integral part of strategic planning.** The reasoning behind the choice of topics for the Work Programme should be expressed in summary form in that document, like the European Parliament requests in its Amendment 80<sup>1</sup> to the Horizon Europe Regulation.

## “Missions”

### A Mission on cities

The latest statement of the Council’s position on the Horizon Europe Decision shows that agreement is close on allowing “Climate neutral and smart cities”<sup>2</sup> to be one of five Mission Areas.

Making city air clean and cities’ energy requirements greenhouse gas-free is a challenge that must be met. People living in cities are an ever-greater proportion of the world’s population, and their unwillingness or inability to improve the energy performance of their buildings or adopt environment-friendly habits is an obstacle to decarbonisation. There’s an important task in achieving behavioural change, in getting investment flowing and in showcasing best practice<sup>3</sup>. A Mission focused on helping some ambitious cities to blaze a trail by achieving deep decarbonisation using regulatory and technological approaches<sup>4</sup>, and on encouraging others to catch up with them, has our support. We also support the suggestion made by Mariana Mazzucato in [her report for the EC](#) for 100 such cities in Europe by 2030. We define “Climate-neutral and smart cities” in Box 1.

A “climate neutral and smart city” will exploit its as yet untapped potential for renewable energy generation and energy saving. This will be achieved by deploying more renewable energy capacity for electricity, heating and cooling, and using technology that affords flexibility, including demand response, large-scale energy storage (as electricity, heat or fuels, for example), smart grids and energy system management, and technologies to enable sector coupling (e.g. electric vehicles, waste industrial heat for homes). Energy from energy-positive buildings (for example) will be redistributed to areas where demand is greater than local supply.

Energy demand will be addressed in part by encouraging behavioural change in the population, for example by switching from driving to cycling or changing people’s patterns of energy consumption in the home.

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<sup>1</sup> “[...] The work programme shall explain why a particular action is to be funded with reference to the outcome of specific previous projects and to the state of science, technology and innovation at national, Union and international level and of relevant policy, market and societal developments. [...]”

<sup>2</sup> [6797/19](#)

<sup>3</sup> Simon Skillings E3G, May 2018 [Designing a mission for the EU’s clean energy innovation strategy](#)

<sup>4</sup> The [Final Report of the High-Level Panel of the European Decarbonisation Pathways Initiative](#) (2018) describes cities as “melting pots where decarbonisation strategies for energy, transport, buildings and even industry and agriculture coexist and meet”

Energy will flow into and out of the city depending on the needs of the city and the wider system.

Any net imports will come from renewable energy sources.

*Box 1 Our preferred definition of a “carbon-neutral and smart city”. An interdisciplinary approach is essential for a good mission according to expert Mariana Mazzucato<sup>5</sup>.*

EG3 has called for “innovators [to have] the freedom to adapt the regulatory and market rules that currently govern the interaction with consumers and do so in a range of different environments.” This is an idea we wholeheartedly support, and we are encouraged by moves in Austria, Germany and possibly soon in Sweden to create ‘regulatory sandboxes’ in districts.

### Rationalise

In keeping with Horizon Europe’s aim of rationalising the number of networks and bodies, **the Mission would, we hope, subsume three existing initiatives on cities shown in the table below.** The similarity of their overall aims is clear. The Mission would work closely with the Covenant of Mayors, independent organisations like ECTP and Eurocities (members of IWG 3.2) and energy network operators to pursue an integral system goal.

Crucially for us, the advent of a Mission on cities must create no further complexity over and above the SET Plan’s current governance: no new layer of governance in the form of a Mission Board and or Mission Manager unless existing layers are removed.

Three initiatives ripe for amalgamation. Could Missionification be the means?

	EIP-SCC	IWG 3.2	JPI Urban Europe
<b>The broad aims</b>	<p>“The European innovation partnership on smart cities and communities brings together cities, industry, SMEs, banks, research and others.</p> <p>It aims to improve urban life through more sustainable integrated solutions and addresses city-specific challenges from different policy areas such as energy, mobility and transport, and ICT.”<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>“[We] developed an integrative approach to Positive Energy Districts (PED) including technological, spatial, regulatory, financial, legal, environmental, social and economic perspectives. PEDs will be developed in an open innovation framework, driven by cities in cooperation with industry and investors, research and citizen organisations.”<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>“Our task is to connect public authorities, civil society, scientists, innovators, business and industry to provide a new environment for research and innovation”<sup>8</sup></p>
<b>Key activity</b>	Soon after its inception in 2011, a high-level group was	Charged with delivering “100 Positive Energy Districts by	Produced Strategic

<sup>5</sup> EUREC position paper 2017, [Mazzucato report](#) (2018)

<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/city-initiatives/smart-cities\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/eu-regional-and-urban-development/topics/cities-and-urban-development/city-initiatives/smart-cities_en)

<sup>7</sup> [https://setis.ec.europa.eu/system/files/setplan\\_smartcities\\_implementationplan.pdf#page=2](https://setis.ec.europa.eu/system/files/setplan_smartcities_implementationplan.pdf#page=2)

<sup>8</sup> <https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/about/intro/>

	<p>formed and a Strategic Implementation Plan written<sup>9</sup>. Now it mainly exists as ‘EIP-SCC Marketplace’, which aims “to facilitate €1 billion worth of smart city project investments in 300 European cities by 2020” via an annual conference where “smart city actors meet, network, learn, shape views, develop plans, exchange best practices, present projects [and] find partners”<sup>10</sup></p>	<p>2025 in Europe,” it identified the actors, divided up the work, and estimated budget needed.</p>	<p>Research and Innovation Agenda in 2015<sup>11</sup>. Now runs transnational calls, including with China.</p>
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*Table 1 Notice the similarity in the broad aim that each initiative has. They might get greater political visibility if they banded together as a Mission.*

## Another mission coming: a net-zero-carbon economy by 2050

If the European Council sets the EU on course towards emissions reduction consistent with limiting global warming to a 1.5°C rise in average temperatures, then the EU will have created a new mission for itself. The scenarios published last year<sup>12</sup> suggest the EU must commit itself to achieving greenhouse-gas neutrality by 2050 if it is to lead in the fight for 1.5°C.

This will be a mission with a small ‘m’ because it will exist outside of the Horizon Europe process, but undeniably it meets many of the requirements of a big-“M” Mission: “Greenhouse-gas -neutral EU by 2050” (once abbreviated to the catchier “Carbon-neutral EU by 2050”) is inspirational, easy to communicate, clear and time-bound.

A huge amount of innovation is needed to build a net-zero-carbon-economy: new and renewable sources of energy are needed, new ways to manage and direct energy flows, and changes in the behaviour of citizens. The achievement of energy system milestones (e.g. periods of time where there’s been the greatest reliance on renewable energy or the least reliance on fossil fuels) creates press interest and public comment, so the public will be well informed of progress.

This mission will have at least as much visibility as the Mission on cities. It will strain every cog and piston of the EU legislative machine. As the Commission writes, “The IPCC report provides us with this encouraging message: limiting global temperature increase to 1.5°C is doable, provided we act now and coherently use every tool at our disposal.”<sup>13</sup> We believe a plan to act over a wide range of policy areas is the hallmark of a good mission. The public won’t fail but to notice the effect.

<sup>9</sup> <https://e3p.jrc.ec.europa.eu/articles/european-innovation-partnership-smart-cities-and-communities>

<sup>10</sup> <https://eu-smartcities.eu/events/eip-scc-general-assembly-2018>

<sup>11</sup> <https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/app/uploads/2016/09/JPI-UE-Strategic-Research-and-Innovation-Agenda-SRIA.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> [Clean Planet for All](#) and accompanying [in-depth analysis](#)

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

