



PROGRAM STATEMENT

The current economic and social development of the EU countries, including Slovakia, is closely connected with the development of a knowledge-based society intervening in all spheres of social life. Cities and urban regions, as places of concentration of economic, social and cultural activities, play the role of drivers of this development and represent the driving force of an innovation-based economy, use and evaluation of knowledge and invention both in the position of technical and technological as well as social innovation. Not only do they create an environment for the development of science and research and thus for knowledge-based economic activities and innovative entrepreneurship, but they also play an important role in their rural background. This quality is currently becoming a key competitive advantage. At the same time, cities and urban regions are a key market for the products of the knowledge-based economy XXI. century, abbreviate and actively use the synergy of innovative solutions and approaches, they become smart, ie sensible.

The Slovak Smart City Cluster initiative was created as a response to this development not only in the Slovak business environment, but also in local governments, especially in the context of developing new synergies, which we need for the 21st century economy integrating innovations in data processing, sustainable energy sources and their sustainable use and the shared economy. Slovak Smart City Cluster as an interest association of legal entities integrating representatives of the business environment, carriers of technological innovations, representatives of public administration and academic environment are open to all entities interested in supporting the development, promotion and dissemination of smart cities and urban regions in Slovakia.

The Concept of Smart City is understood by the Association as an umbrella and integrating for various areas of the city's development and its background, naturally affecting a wide range of entities, communities and individuals. Although Smart City concepts developed for individual cities and urban regions have common elements, each must be specific and unique, as each city and urban region is unique, with unique needs and conditions for the use of the latest technologies, social, economic or technical innovations. . Therefore, their creation must be based on knowledge of the needs and interests of communities, business and other entities of the city and its background, a reasonable assessment of their potential and the potential of their reasonable cooperation.

The focus of the Smart City concept must be the cooperation of key actors in the development and functioning of the city and its background in the implementation of individual activities fulfilling the concept of smart city development from city management and municipalities in its hinterland, through state and self-government institutions research institutions, interest groups up to end users, visitors, entrepreneurs and residents, but also support for implementation by foreign experts.

A sensible city is driven by effective communication, partnership and cooperation of key stakeholders and groups in order to exploit the synergies of their activities, including the use of technical, economic and social innovations to effectively develop and function the

city and its hinterland - the urban region. The key role is played by the city self-government, which coordinates and frameworks the space for self-government initiatives within the city region and individual stakeholders.

- Government management, sectoral administration bodies
- Self-government of the region
- Residents, active citizens, NGOs and enthusiasts
- City self-government as the core of the urban region
- Educational and research institutions
- Subjects of urban and regional economy, producers
- Neighboring and cooperating municipalities and their municipalities

The Slovak Smart City Cluster Association, aware that the term "smart" is very often associated only with technological aspects, emphasizes the fact that technologies represent only part of the quality of "smart". Technological innovations can only be used effectively and efficiently for the benefit of people if they are linked to human needs and at the same time understandable, accessible and easy to use for different social groups of the population. Therefore, the concept of smart city must balance both technological and social and economic aspects in line with the three pillars of sustainability. Smart urban development must not only use the latest technologies to address specific challenges, but also take into account their accessibility for individual groups of inhabitants and their ability to contribute to a higher quality of life than the target quality of smart cities. The smart city and urban region is a place where the quality of life of the inhabitants, the quality of the environment for entrepreneurs and the satisfaction of visitors are the main goals.

The Smart City concept is understood by the Association as a chance for all cities and their hinterland to operate efficiently and sustainably, effectively using and valuing all its resources (natural, financial, human, technical, technological, creative, cultural) as well as potential for cooperation and division of labor. Therefore, the aim of the Association is to support the real availability of the implementation of this concept for the practice of development of all cities and urban regions in accordance with their specific potential, needs and economic possibilities.

The Smart City concept must be based on the use and capitalization of the specifics and uniqueness of cities and urban regions, which form the individual building blocks of its development and prosperity following the principle of reasonable specialization with its 4 basic principles: choosing the main priorities and concentrating on them, using competitive advantages, leadership in cooperation with key stakeholders and support for cooperation and clusters.

Innovations within the Smart City concept are understood by the Association as a tool for streamlining the use of three basic pillars of city development (resources, community, economy) for the benefit of quality of life, quality of business environment and visitor satisfaction (Smart Twin City Concept Bratislava, 2017):

The concept of a smart city goes beyond the simple implementation of information and communication technologies as well as other advanced innovative technologies supporting better use of resources and minimizing the burden on the environment. It is above all a concept of their economically efficient use bringing not partial solutions, but conceptual

approaches enabling in the synergy of individual measures to achieve much higher economic, environmental and social effects of the use of public funds. Therefore, the Association understands the concept of Smart City as a tool suitable for all cities and urban regions, regardless of their size or economic strength.

In order to achieve such synergies, the Smart City concept must be integrating across different policies and activities of the city and its background and stakeholders, bringing not only innovative approaches to solving partial problems, but must be focused on the interaction of individual measures to increase their effectiveness.

The Smart City concept is a tool for its holders, primary municipalities and municipalities in the urban region, framing their more interactive, sensitive and problem-responsive city administration. Defining the most realistic and clear challenges for the development of the city and the urban region by local governments is, in fact, key to providing effective comprehensive solutions within the Smart City concept. However, these require not only the consent but also the active participation of citizens and other stakeholders in their implementation. Therefore, an integral part of this concept is participatory management and development of the city.

In order to develop and promote the Smart City concept in the Slovak Republic, the Association focuses on:

- a) support, promotion and awareness raising of the Smart City concept,
- b) interconnection of the academic and commercial spheres in the field of Smart City and transfer of know-how,
- c) cooperation with other organizations and interest groups with a similar subject of activity,
- d) co-operation with state administration and self-government bodies in the preparation and commenting of conceptual documents and relevant legal norms,

To fulfill these tasks, the association implements and supports a number of activities such as:

a) Creating a platform for sharing experiences, generally accepted standards and practices as well as challenges faced by Smart City professionals through:

- (i) regular meetings / discussions of members of the Association and working groups;
- (ii) specific events, trainings and workshops on specific topics;
- (iii) the development of the Association's website.

b) Development and promotion of appropriate, certification schemes for the Smart City area.

(c) Initiating and actively participating in discussions with relevant bodies, institutions and bodies involved in the preparation, implementation and enforcement of relevant legislation and the regulatory framework.

d) Support and cooperation with universities, secondary schools, professional and research institutions for the implementation of research and development activities in the field of Smart City, including experimental activities.

e) Initiating dialogue with public administration bodies, representatives of non-governmental organizations and chambers of commerce in order to support the development and implementation of the Smart City concept.

- f) support for practice-oriented research, development and innovation to increase the competitiveness of cities and urban regions in the Smart City area,
- g) support of communication between business, public, self-governing and non-profit organizations in the field of Smart City,
- h) promotion of the Smart City concept and its individual areas, including the organization of cultural, social and charitable events related to the promotion and support of this concept,
- i) lectures and publications,
- j) cooperation and support of members of the Association in the field of marketing, information acquisition and sorting, education, joint purchase of selected services and materials, joint sale of selected services and products and other services according to current needs of members of the Association in connection with development and implementation of Smart City concept
- k) support of members or joint preparation of projects for obtaining grants and subsidies from the EU structural funds and other sources in the field of Smart City,
- l) processing of analyzes, market research, competitive environment and evaluation of economic and social impacts of innovations in the field of Smart City,
- m) preparation of expert opinions and assessments in the field of Smart City,
- n) establishing and developing contacts with similar institutions abroad and concluding cooperation agreements with these partners,
- o) cooperation with state administration and self-government bodies in the territory of the Slovak Republic and abroad in the development and support of research, development and business activities of its members and for the implementation of development plans of the state administration and self-government bodies concerned.

Through its activities, the Smart City Association is open to all entities interested in the development and implementation of the Smart City concept, sharing the goals of the Association and the understanding of this concept as declared in this program statement. As a non-profit organization, it wants to offer its members a platform for interconnection, access to the latest knowledge, approaches and conceptual solutions based on cooperation and mutual benefit, supporting a common vision of smart cities and urban regions in Slovakia effectively providing their residents with better living conditions.