

Smart City Development: Applying European and International Experience to the Mediterranean Region

Urban development has become a key priority for the countries of the Mediterranean region, both at the national and international level, and within the EIB via its FEMIP programme. The “Smart City” concept (originally defined as the “considered” application of ICT to facilitate efficient, inclusive and integrated urban development, but more broadly to include sustainability, innovation and governance, as well as investments in public transport, energy efficiency and research facilities) is potentially an important dimension. However, there is a need to forge a framework to connect the technology and public policy aspects with the realities of city management, municipal financing and investment programming in the region.

The university research centre receiving support under the EIBURS would be expected to pursue a research programme focused on the following key questions, building on European and other international experience:

- How can Smart City initiatives contribute to meeting urban development priorities?
- How can we best define a Smart City concept suited to application in the region?
- Which features and examples of European and international best practice are most suitable to draw on for such application?
- What is the array of tangible investments potentially feasible under a Smart City investment programme, and how should alternatives be prioritised?
- How do potential Smart City initiatives map to the municipal management, governance and financing presently existing?
- How should Smart City investments be appraised economically for comparison with alternative investment options, to ensure that they deliver value to society?
- How can Smart City investments or investment programmes best be developed and implemented?

The regional focus of the proposals would be focused on but not limited to FEMIP countries. Applicants are encouraged to establish partnerships with other universities and research centres. The Bank may facilitate the involvement of the selected university/research Centre in its networking activities via the Union for the Mediterranean or the Centre for Mediterranean Integration.