

LIVING-IN.EU | GO-LI.EU

Annual plan Financial working group
2025



Financial Working group

- The **Financial working group** explores sustainable measures related to joint investment plans, synergies between funds, reinforcement of investments and common public procurement practices to develop and implement common existing digital solutions on a large scale in the EU.
- In 2025, the Financial working group will build on the activities of 2024, further focusing on **matching the financial needs of cities and communities with the available funding tools and opportunities**, such as the European Digital Infrastructure Consortia (EDICs), the Technical Support Instrument and the Digital Europe Programme.
- Involving financial experts and experts from local and regional administrations, it will continue the ongoing dialogue and analysis of the financial means, needs, challenges and opportunities of cities, regions and communities to ensure a successful implementation of digital policies and initiatives, and inform signatories on funding guides, instruments, calls and activities.

Main results in 2024

In 2024, the Financial working group focused on:

- The Connecting Europe Facility's funding instrument, with a particular focus on the CEF Digital call for 5G and Edge Cloud for Smart Communities;
- Digital Europe, including contribution to the mid-term evaluation consultation of the Programme;
- Collecting information and feedback on cities' and communities' needs to support their digital transformation;
- The European Digital Infrastructure Consortia (EDICs) and multi-country projects;
- Ongoing discussions about funding synergies and financial needs for local digital transformation.

Involving financial experts and specialists from the EC and the public administration, the **Financial working group organised awareness-raising, knowledge and information exchange webinars**; shared with members **relevant funding calls and opportunities**; collaborated with the Legal working group for the development of a webinar on the development of **EDICs**, among other activities.

In line with its objectives, the financial working group built on some key activities and objectives started in 2023. **In 2025**, it will continue the ongoing discussion on funding challenges and opportunities of relevance for public authorities, identifying common financial needs, and acting as a platform for open discussions and best practices exchanges among signatories.

Lessons learned in 2024

- Exploring concrete European funding opportunities may be dependable on the individual timelines of the different funding programmes and calls. Thus, the group has to adapt its plan flexibly in some cases.
- The financial impact of some of the activities organised by the Financial working group is difficult to assess and measure, since it is expected to be realised over a longer term, as in the example of the Connecting Europe Facility's funding instruments, the Digital Europe programme and the EDICs.
- In 2024, some of the activities planned by the Financial working group focused on initiatives in their earlier stage of development. The Financial working group aims at involving a larger number of members in relevant developments at an early stage, so that they are aware and ready to participate in these instruments once they are set up. A relevant example is the EDIC, whose practical implementation aspects will be among the key focus areas of the Financial working group in 2025.
- The Financial working group will continue to discuss financial opportunities for local authorities, specifically planning activities around key funding opportunities for signatories, and exploring synergies between **1)** the different funding opportunities, e.g. in the context of the EDICs, and **2)** between the different working groups and, potentially, the Eurocities Digital Forum.

Objectives of the Financial Working Group in 2025

- Understanding better the different aspects and the practical implications of the **European Digital Infrastructure Consortia** for cities, regions and communities
- Providing information and guidance on EU funding opportunities
- Providing information and guidance on available sources of information about funding opportunities
- Showcasing best practices of project proposals
- Sharing knowledge and facilitating an ongoing dialogue on financial needs, challenges and current opportunities for local digital transformation

Financial WG: Activities and Results (1)

Activity	Results/ expected outcome	How does it contribute to the WG objectives in 2025?	Link to the other working groups and/or other stakeholders	Scheduled	Activity leader
Develop working group work plan	Finalised work plan for 2025, published on the Financial WG space of Living-in.EU	Establishing a structured framework for the WG's activities throughout the year	All Living-in.EU working groups	Q1	Eurocities
Financial guidelines for cities & regions	Dissemination of already existing handbooks and financial guidelines for cities and regions	Sharing information about funding guidelines and other sources of information and guidance on funding programmes in areas of interest for Living-in.eu signatories	All Living-in.EU working groups	Q1/Q2	Eurocities
Webinar on the Technical Support Instrument (TSI)	Raising awareness about TSI. Exchange of best practices with cities who have already applied for the instrument	Sharing structured practical information and best practices in support of local digital transformation	All Living-in.EU working groups, Eurocities Digital Forum	Q2/Q3	Eurocities

Financial WG: Activities and results (2)

Activity	Results/ expected outcome	How does it contribute to the WG objectives in 2025?	Link to the other working groups and/or other stakeholders	Scheduled	Activity leader
Webinar on the Digital Europe Programme	Explore the main aspects, challenges and opportunities for cities under the programme	Providing information and guidance on EU funding opportunities, and possibility for matchmaking	All Living-in.EU working groups	Q2/Q3	Eurocities
Webinar on EDICs	Identification of main aspects of the EDICs, and projects and funding opportunities offered to public authorities	Providing information and guidance on EU funding opportunities, and possibility for matchmaking	All Living-in.EU working groups	Q2/Q3	Eurocities
Open discussion on funding needs and opportunities for cities and regions	Identification of shared needs, current and future opportunities and challenges for financing digital transformation across Europe	Sharing knowledge on support needs for local digital transformation	All Living-in.EU working groups, Eurocities' Digital Forum	Q4	Eurocities
Evaluation of 2025 work plans & definition of work plans 2026	Assessment of the activities of 2025 and ideas for the 2026 work plan	Ensures continuous improvement and adaptability in achieving the WG's objectives	All Living-in.EU working groups	Q4	Eurocities

Schedule of meetings or events

Date	Meeting/ event	Who is it for?	Contact person
Q1/Q2	Financial guidelines for cities & regions	Signatories	Ana Georgieva
Q2/Q3	Webinar on the Technical Support Instrument (TSI)	Signatories	Ana Georgieva
Q2/Q3	Webinar on the Digital Europe Programme	Signatories	Ana Georgieva
Q2/Q3	Webinar on EDICs	Signatories	Ana Georgieva/ Gabriela Ruseva
Q4	Open discussion on funding needs and opportunities for cities and regions	Signatories, Eurocities Digital Forum members	Ana Georgieva

Cross-overs activities and partnerships

Activities	Together with other working group/ project/ partnership/...	Who is it for?	Contact person
Financial guidelines for cities & regions	Potentially: the Covenant of Mayors, European Parliamentary Research Centre (TBC)	Signatories	Ana Georgieva
Webinar on the Technical Support Instrument (TSI)	Potentially: Eurocities Digital Forum*	Signatories, Eurocities Digital Forum members*	Ana Georgieva/ Gabriela Ruseva
Webinar on EDICs	Legal Working Group of Living-in.EU; other working groups of Living-in.EU	Signatories	Ana Georgieva/ Gabriela Ruseva
Open discussion on funding needs and opportunities for cities and regions	Potentially: Eurocities Digital Forum*	Signatories, Eurocities Digital Forum members*	Ana Georgieva

Risks and measures

Risk	Measure	Owner
Involving EU funding experts to provide contributions during webinars	Leverage the wide Living-in.eu network by calling for interested experts to contribute on a structural level.	Financial working group, Go Li.EU!
Producing outputs for the activities	Involving cities, regions, and communities (and their experts) for production of the output, ask support from the SB/Go Li.EU! Project.	Financial working group, Go Li.EU!
Limited capacity from signatories for peer review activities	Living-in.eu communication, Digital Public Buyers communication, and individual partner networks to collaborate for wide and timely dissemination of invitations.	Go Li.EU!, Digital Public Buyers Community, Living-in.eu partners.

Support needed to execute the workplan

What does this working group need to achieve results?

Activity	What is needed? (e.g., expertise, resources, comms)	By when?
Financial guidelines for cities & regions	Policy expertise (EC/EP), financial expertise, communications	Q1/Q2
Webinar on the Technical Support Instrument (TSI)	Policy expertise (DG REFORM), communications, contributions from signatories who have applied for the Instrument	Q2/Q3
Webinar on the Digital Europe Programme	Policy expertise (DG CNECT), communications, contributions from signatories who have applied for the Programme	Q2/Q3
Webinar on EDICs	Policy expertise (DG CNECT/LDT CitiVERSE EDIC), communications	Q2/Q3
Open discussion on funding needs and opportunities for cities and regions	Communications, editorial support	Q4