

# The Smart City Paradigm: Voices from the Cities and Regions



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European Committee  
of the Regions

# COR Context

- ▶ A Formal European Institution
- ▶ An Opinion Body – Holistic Thinking
- ▶ Offers key perspectives on the European Project
- ▶ Citizen led vision, bottom up process
- ▶ A post crisis Europe
- ▶ Digital SMART, part of wider wheel of innovation
- ▶ COR SMART = simmering, motivated, ambitious, realistic, tracking



# The COR SMART Paradigm...



- ▶ Sharing of best practice & knowledge
- ▶ Frontiers of ideas
- ▶ Inclusiveness & connections
- ▶ Partnership & opportunity
- ▶ Dialogue & synergy driven
- ▶ Diversity and unity
- ▶ Cross-border and interoperability



**Plugging these thoughts into cities and regions across the EU or the SMART acupuncture treatment of cities and regions....**

# The SMART or acupuncture treatment....Re-Imagining Cities and Regions as...

- ▶ C & R as the Future of Europe
- ▶ C & R as flexible networks of growth
- ▶ C & R as nodes of place-based thinking
- ▶ C & R as laboratories
- ▶ C & R as citizen innovation promoters

- C & R as learning platforms
- C & R as test beds
- C & R as resilient spaces
- C & R as champions of beyond GDP indicators & thinking
- C & R as innovators

# COR innovation campaigns of recent interest

## - the current priority list....?

- ▶ Defending Cohesion Policy
- ▶ Narrowing regional disparities/ innovation divide
- ▶ Championing the Future of Work
- ▶ Discussing new technologies in DSM
- ▶ Constructing Q Helixes + 1
- ▶ Incubating and processing
- ▶ Unveiling Innovation 5.0
  - data, AI, Computing
- ▶ Creating Smart Cities & Regions
- ▶ Horizon 2020/ Europe
- ▶ E-government
- ▶ Citizen & Social Innovation (youth & age friendly)



# COR Innovation Flagship Programmes:



- ▶ Knowledge Exchange Platforms
- ▶ Science Meets Regions with JRC
- ▶ I-Capital award
- ▶ EER Award
- ▶ European Broadband Award
- ▶ Digital Cities Challenge
- ▶ Interreg and EGTCs
- ▶ Urban Agenda (12 partnerships)
- ▶ Urbact
- ▶ EWCR
- ▶ Communicating Europe Project
- ▶ SDG & globalisation

## More specific exchanges - COR Opinions as toolkits

- ▶ Digital
- ▶ Bioeconomy
- ▶ Environment,
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Transport
- ▶ Circular economy
- ▶ Broadband
- ▶ Advanced manufacturing
- ▶ Waste





## Speak v briefly about digital challenges:



- ▶ General challenge ahead/ 500m
- ▶ Competitiveness v Disparity
- ▶ Need for Synergy
- ▶ ICT Infrastructure Discussions
- ▶ Financial investment
- ▶ eGovernment & eCommerce
- ▶ Education and Skills

A nighttime photograph of a city street, likely in a European city, showing a row of buildings with lights, a street with cars, and a church spire in the distance. The scene is illuminated by streetlights and building lights, creating a warm, glowing atmosphere.

# **Creating a SMART society of Digital change & innovation**

## **The challenge ahead:**

- ▶ **High dependence (WFS+1)**
- ▶ **500 million consumers**
- ▶ **New generations of digital technologies**
- ▶ **Added EUR 110 billion of revenue**
- ▶ **New jobs & globalisation**

# The Competitive Challenge:



- ▶ **Highly competitive European digital industry**
- ▶ **Speed of readiness of the private versus public sectors to adapt**
- ▶ **Digital industrial platforms**
- ▶ **Convergence of a number of additional technologies**

# The Disparity Challenge:

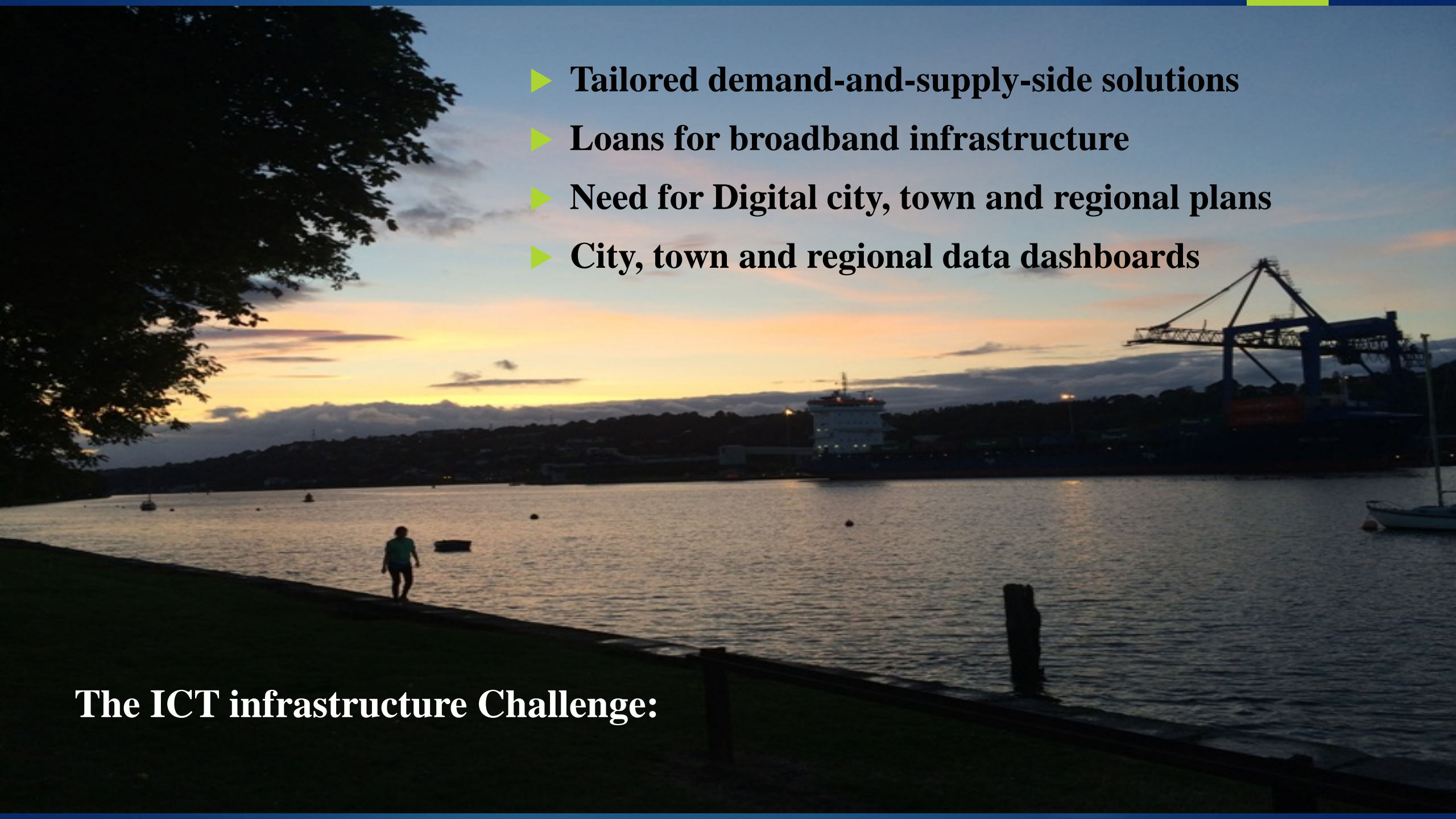
- ▶ Lagging behind between regions
- ▶ Modernisation of the current regulatory framework
- ▶ Coordination of the large but fragmented European research
- ▶ Broader understanding of interoperability
- ▶ Standardisation efforts
- ▶ Traditional cycle of development, testing and standardisation is no longer adequate



## The Synergy Challenge:

- ▶ Strong focussed partnerships
- ▶ Cooperation between national and regional innovation policy-makers
- ▶ Wider contribution from business and institutional players



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- ▶ **Tailored demand-and-supply-side solutions**
  - ▶ **Loans for broadband infrastructure**
  - ▶ **Need for Digital city, town and regional plans**
  - ▶ **City, town and regional data dashboards**

**The ICT infrastructure Challenge:**

# The e-Government and e-Commerce challenge:



- ▶ Digital Rise demands new entrepreneurial skills
- ▶ eCommerce remains a missed opportunity
- ▶ Impediments to e-commerce
- ▶ European Commission's e-Government Action Plan on modernising public services through digitisation



## The Finance Challenge:

- ▶ Due to the handicap of **lingering infrastructural deficits** – particularly in rural contexts considered unprofitable by private operators – many LRAs remain currently unable to take full advantage of these developments.
- ▶ Technological barriers to digital development projects in rural and sparsely-populated areas should be seen as services of general economic interest.



# The Education and Skills Challenge:

- ▶ addressing digital literacy and skills shortfalls
- ▶ 800 000 unfilled vacancies in this sector by 2020
- ▶ reconcile the imbalance of these skills shortages and ICT-related job vacancies by means of offering appropriate training,
- ▶ Future jobs will require an appropriate mix of basic, soft and technical skills
- ▶ *New Skills Agenda for Europe*
- ▶ digital literacy and skills necessary for citizens, workers, students and jobseekers
- ▶ fundamental human skills such as literacy and person-to-person interaction.
- ▶ Digital for All Challenge



# Some Concluding Remarks on SMART Challenges:



- ▶ **Vast Chessboard of challenges**
- ▶ **SMART within Holistic View of Innovation**
- ▶ **Strong role for LRAs**
- ▶ **Local Ecosystems NB**
- ▶ **Recognition of disparities**
- ▶ **Recognition of opportunities**
- ▶ **Not business as usual**
- ▶ **People centered**
- ▶ **More work required**