SEiSMiC is an EC-funded project that tackles Europe’s biggest urban challenges by improving research and helping citizens to shape new urban policies. SEiSMiC brings a social dimension to the table by enabling people to shape research for new urban policies, SEiSMiC brings a social dimension to the table by enabling people to shape urban Europe’s research agenda, and helping researchers deliver their results to society.

Urban Europe, a collaborative effort between 14 countries to improve urban sustainability and provide a mutual learning action plan – with city residents on one side, urban researchers on the other, and a shared goal of healthy, vibrant and inclusive cities at its heart. SEiSMiC supports the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) on urban challenges to get more out of it.

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**Engage citizens in urban research**

To enable a fruitful exchange of ideas, SEISMIC sets up 10 national networks, each with a wide range of participants — urban planners, NGOs, social entrepreneurs, academics, local leaders and more. Each network will identify common concerns linked to EU 2020 goals for employment, education, climate change, research and innovation, and social inclusion.

Through the SEISMIC networks, participants can influence Europe’s research agenda and the activities of JPI Urban Europe and other institutions. In turn, European research institutes will have a chance to connect with their constituents, ensuring that research priorities align with social needs.

**Smash the info silos**

In each country, project partners will determine the best way to build national networks that serve and inspire a wide range of participants. Organisers will build on existing networks, while continually enriching the mix to ensure interaction between people who do not normally meet. This exercise will define a SEISMIC model that will determine:

- the stakeholder mix at local level
- the mix of disciplines on the basis of the experts involved
- the mix of generations (teens, adults, elderly people) and genders
- the expected outcomes of each network’s activities

With input from 10 countries, the SEISMIC model will offer a broad-based guide on how to manage multi-disciplinary networks. Cultural factors will require different approaches from country to country, but the project hopes to identify universal tips to help other countries implement similar groups.
seismic activity

Sketch exercises
To ensure the involvement of a broad spectrum of people, SEiSMiC includes interactive “Sketch” events in all project countries and at the project’s international launch event in Brussels in the fall of 2014. A lively mix of performance, art and play, Sketch engages project participants and people on the street in brainstorming sessions about the pros and cons of their cities and solicits their visions of an ideal city. Artists sketch participants’ ideas onto paper and then display the drawings for everyone to see and discuss. The drawings are also scanned and posted at seismicproject.eu.

Gender action plan
SEiSMiC will create a gender action plan and toolkit to guide the project’s national networks on how to ensure that women’s needs are heard.

Teachers’ guide
As a key legacy of the project, SEiSMiC will create a teachers’ guide for primary school urban studies. The aim is that the curriculum will effectively identify and address key challenges facing European cities.

Policy watch
SEiSMiC monitors urban policy developments at EU, national and local levels in order to establish some common ground for all project activities. A scoping paper explains the institutions, initiatives and policies on urban affairs. The paper will be updated with biannual trend reports to ensure close alignment between SEiSMiC activities and current policy.
Today’s greatest urban challenges cannot be separated from the societies they afflict. Current complex problems stem from a few profound trends, including climate change, economic threats and demographic shifts. From extreme weather to youth unemployment and rising ethnic tensions — the challenges can’t be solved by technology alone. Cities need to find solutions that involve people within the process, not just in the results. This means social innovation.
Joint programming is an instrument that the European Commission established in 2008 to strengthen research and innovation by having European countries voluntarily work together and pool national research programmes and efforts. JPI Urban Europe began in 2010 to strengthen European research and innovation in urban development. Its activities include:

- setting up a joint research and innovation strategy with several stakeholders (the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda);
- financing European research projects;
- looking into long-term urban trends and challenges in Europe;
- creating a governance structure so that a variety of urban stakeholders are involved in the strategic development and implementation of the initiative (Urban Europe Forum, Scientific Advisory Board, Urban Europe Research Alliance);
- supporting the alignment of urban research programmes in individual European countries with each other and with JPI Urban Europe; and
- promoting interactions and creating networks between researchers, policy makers, businesses and practitioners and civil society.

Based on voluntary cooperation, JPI Urban Europe now has 14 committed members: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Portugal and Spain are currently observers.
SEiSMiC is an EC-funded project that tackles Europe’s biggest urban challenges by improving research and helping researchers deliver their results to society. SEiSMiC supports the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Urban Europe, a collaborative effort between 14 countries to improve urban sustainability and provide a shared urban dimension to the table by enabling people to shape research for new urban policies. SEiSMiC brings a social dimension to the table by enabling people to shape Europe’s research agenda and helping researchers deliver their results to society.

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shake up your city

seismic partner countries

united kingdom
belgium
the netherlands
germany
sweden
czech republic
austria
hungary
Italy
turkey