



CITY
OF KRANJ



European data space
for smart communities



Slovenian Business & Research Association
Slovenska podjetniška in raziskovalna zveza



SPIRIT Slovenia
Business Development Agency



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF THE ECONOMY,
TOURISM AND SPORT



UrbanMind

The Future of Cities: EU Initiatives and Smart Solutions

3 February 2026 | 09:30 – 12:30

Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the EU

Rue Joseph II 14, 1000 Brussels

*Discover how cities can transform into **smarter, more sustainable, and connected communities** at this interactive conference on urban innovation. Through presentations, platform demonstrations, and expert discussions, including **upcoming European Commission initiatives**, the event will explore key achievements in **smart city development**, the **role of data and technology in urban transformation**, and the opportunities and challenges cities face in creating intelligent, citizen-centered environments. Participants will gain practical insights, learn from real-world projects such as the **UrbanMind** initiative – a successful example of fostering sustainable and innovative urban practices – and engage in a dynamic discussion on the future of urban communities, providing inspiration and actionable strategies for building the cities of tomorrow.*

Programme

09:00 – 09:30 *Registration of participants*

09:30 – 09:40 **Welcome and Opening remarks**

- *Draško Veselinovič* – Director and Member of the Management Board, Slovenian Business & Research Association (SBRA)
- *Biljana Prinčič* – Project Manager of UrbanMind at Riko d.o.o. – UrbanMind implementation partner

09:40 – 10:00 **Smart City Transformation in Practice: The Experiences of Kranj (Slovenia) and Pula (Croatia)**

- *Matjaž Rakovec* – Mayor of the City Municipality of Kranj
- *Pedja Grbin* – Mayor of the City Municipality of Pula

10:00 – 10:25 **EU Funding Opportunities for Cities and Regions in 2026**

- *Radka Konstantinova* – Policy Officer, European Commission, DG REGIO

10:25 – 10:35 European Cities at the Heart of EU Policy: Priorities, Funding, and the Road Ahead

- *André Sobczak – Secretary General, Eurocities*

10:35 – 11:05 Presentation of the UrbanMind project: Overview of key achievements and contribution to the development of smart communities

- *Tomaž Lanišek – Head of the Smart Communities Department, City Municipality of Kranj*
- *Dražen Stepanov – Head of the Smart Communities Department, City Municipality of Pula*

11:05 – 11:20 Demonstration of the UrbanMind platform: Interactive presentation of the platform's functionality and support for cities in transforming into smart communities

- *Andraž Logar – Director of 3Fs d.o.o. - UrbanMind technological partner*

11:20 – 11:40 Key insights and latest developments in smart and sustainable urban communities from the *Data Space for Sustainable and Smart Cities and Communities (DS4SSCC) consortium*

- *Thimo Thoeye – Tech Lead, Open & Agile Smart Cities & Communities*

11:40 – 12:20 Roundtable “Lessons Learned” – Discussion on challenges and opportunities for the future

- *Moderator:*

- *Draško Veselinovič – Director and Member of the Management Board, Slovenian Business & Research Association (SBRA)*

- *Speakers:*

- *Radka Konstantinova – Policy Officer, European Commission, DG REGIO*
- *André Sobczak – Secretary General, Eurocities*
- *Matjaž Rakovec – Mayor of the City Municipality of Kranj*
- *Peđa Grbin – Mayor of the City Municipality of Pula*
- *Janez Škrabec – Director of Riko d.o.o. - UrbanMind implementation partner*
- *Andraž Logar – Director of 3Fs d.o.o. - UrbanMind technological partner*
- *Thimo Thoeye – Tech Lead, Open & Agile Smart Cities & Communities*
- *Flavio Fuart – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia*

12:20 – 12:30 Concluding remarks

12:30 Networking Luncheon