

REALITIES Master Curriculum Validation Workshop

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1. The REALITIES Master Programme – An EMDM Project

The design of the REALITIES Master Programme project is funded by the Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) to develop a new, innovative and integrated master programme. The REALITIES programme will be an innovative, high-level, integrated transnational Joint Master's Degree that will provide future leaders in public administration with sustainable competencies, including digital services, digital technology, and disruptive technologies for the management and administration of resilient Smart Cities. The project enables the consortium to design and develop a world class, state-of-the-art curriculum for a two-year Joint Master's programme, attracting students to join an intensive and comprehensive study period, preparing them for careers in governmental and non-governmental organisations, public administrations, and also qualify students for an academic career.

2. Workshop Topic: Validating our interdisciplinary Curriculum

Local governments seek to address complex societal challenges, and the concept of smart sustainable cities has become a key aspect of how digital technologies can be applied to support public service delivery, sustainable development and organizational development[1]. To achieve inclusive and climate-resilient cities, coordination efforts across multiple sectors are needed. Policymakers, researchers, practitioners and citizens need to collaborate. Technology is not a solution on its own, but provides a solid foundation for innovation in urban governance. Nevertheless, real progress depends on designing data governance strategies that allow for effective use of urban data to support evidence-based policymaking. However, as Mora et al. [2] argue, institutional reform is needed to embed scientific knowledge into smart city strategies and governance practices. Moreover, a citizen-centric approach is also essential to ensure inclusive participation for equitable urban change. The REALITIES Curriculum Validation Workshop is proposed as a key milestone in the development of the REALITIES Master Programme.

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The workshop aims to assess the interdisciplinary curriculum, it is designed as a space for participation and exchange among academia and practitioners. The goal is to welcome input for refining the curriculum to ensure the programme is academically rigorous and relevant while at the same time remaining aligned with the demands of digital governance, city resilience in an interdisciplinary learning experience.

3. Workshop Program

- **Welcome and Introduction:** Overview of the EMDM programme, goal of the workshop, objective of developing a new revolutionary Master Programme, target students, programme goals, and the methodology used to design the curriculum.
- **External Benchmarking and Draft Curriculum:** present the market analysis of existing programmes in the field of resilience and smart sustainable cities, and presentation of the REALITIES Master, including modules, courses, learning outcomes and teaching methods.
- **Interactive Activity:** Participants are divided into small groups and invited to take on the role of academic program evaluators. Each group is assigned a specific thematic area of the curriculum, and asked to discuss how well the proposed curriculum addresses academic coherence, innovation, and relevance. Using a set of guiding questions, each group identifies strengths, highlights gaps, and proposes concrete improvement. The results are then briefly shared in the plenary promoting **discussion**.
- **Panel discussion:** The workshop concludes with a panel discussion featuring the REALITIES university partners, focused on capacity building for smart cities and urban resilience through digital transformation. The discussion will be centered around the competencies and institutional structures needed to support innovation in the public sector.

The workshop aims to generate insights into the key competencies and systemic capacities required to advance digital transformation and resilience in the public sector. The discussion will serve as a platform to reflect on interdisciplinary needs and inform the development of academic programmes that equip future professionals for leadership in digital governance and urban innovation.

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Declaration on Generative AI

The authors have not employed any Generative AI tools.

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