

# Summer School 2019

## Smart City - The Future Role of the Housing Sector

### Summer School for Young Professionals



#### **Report** - Laurence Donaghy, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

I have found the Summer School to be a fantastic experience, where I have had the opportunity to make new connections with European colleagues, discover new fresh perspectives and approaches which I can utilise and apply within my organisation, and also have a bit of fun.

The summer school delivers a mixture of informative talks along with opportunities to take part in field trips as well as participate in a series of well-designed and thought provoking challenges. I really enjoyed having the opportunity to work with a fantastic group of young professionals, to work in a collaborative effort, by drawing upon the experiences from my international colleagues to find some creative and innovative solutions.

The summer school programme is well structured and delivered, and the lecturers, staff and their colleagues are approachable and friendly; lectures are given by engaging experts who demonstrate a clear passion and enthusiasm in their area of expertise. The field trips help to reinforce theory covered by the lectures by providing worked examples and the challenges set and allow you to apply the knowledge gained in both the lectures and field trips. I found the challenges set to be interesting and exciting which helped to build great relationships with your colleagues, it is really rewarding and surprising to see the solutions provided at each workshop session.

Of course not all of the summer school is purely work; the meals, social events and free time also provides a great opportunity to network and broaden your knowledge or just allow for private reflection. I found it to be an energising and rewarding experience to spend time with international colleagues and with the lecturers, moderators and staff at the school, discussing solutions and approaches to similar issues I have encountered, and finding out more about their organisations and their perspectives whilst in a relaxed, friendly environment.

I would highly recommend that if you are interested in taking part in the Summer School to do so as I have found it to be a very rewarding and enjoyable experience, in which you may arrive not knowing those attending the course but leave with a lot of new friends, contacts and ideas.