Angers, the plant capital (Végépolys competitiveness cluster, France’s leading green city, at the heart of the Val de Loire wine-producing region) and a territory of innovations (electronics, smartworld, FrenchTech, 42,000 students), offers the highest quality of life (wines and gastronomy, vibrant culture and heritage, proximity, etc.).

A historic electronics centre, for a number of years now, Angers and its surrounding area have been cultivating expertise in the field of new technologies. It has a foundation conducive to the networking of players with a view to developing a Smart Territory.

ANGERS, GET CONNECTED.

KEY FIGURES FOR THE TERRITORY

• 300,000 inhabitants
• 31 municipalities
• France’s leading green city
• The best French city to live in
• 7,000 jobs, 900 companies, €1.3 billion turnover generated in the electronics and digital sectors

A COMPREHENSIVE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM TO CONTRIBUTE TO TERRITORIAL INFLUENCE

Angers and its territory already boast numerous strengths to support this ambitious transformation. At the heart of this comprehensive ecosystem are numerous businesses and higher education and research establishments specialising in electronics.

The “Angers French Tech” label awarded on 24 June 2015 has provided a platform for establishing and developing Angers’ digital and IoT ecosystem, drawing on its long-standing electronics and IoT expertise. Electronics Manufacturing Service companies contribute to the vitality of this ecosystem.

In 2017, the city hosted the 22th World Electronics Forum (WEF), confirming the region’s position as the European electronics capital. The event brought together federations and executives from all over the world to discuss the current and future challenges facing the electronics sector.

Based in Angers, the WE Network (West Electronic & Applications Network) regional cluster also contributes to this territorial momentum, uniting industrial players in the electronics and smart systems sectors in Western France. Today, the cluster brings together 200 players from the fields of Industry, Research and Training in the Pays de la Loire and Brittany regions.

By enabling companies to test their products and services before rolling them out on a national and international scale, the “Cité de l’Objet Connecté” [an IoT support centre for businesses of all sizes] acts as an innovation accelerator. Now a “panel” territory, Angers has become a major centre for hosting experimental technological projects.

The recent integration of the “Cité de l’Objet Connecté” into the WE Network reinforces the organisational structure of the Technology Campus for the Electronics Industry of the Future in the Pays de la Loire in Angers.
FROM EXPERIMENTATION THROUGH TO LARGE-SCALE "LIVING LAB"

The maturity of innovative projects that have emerged in Angers and its territory in recent years already has an impact on many public policies: management of buildings, green spaces, water and sewage, waste, parking, public transport, road signs and safety.

Elected officials from Angers Loire Metropolis unanimously launched the "smart territory" initiative in December 2018 to go further still. It is hinged around three objectives:

• To save resources in order to accelerate the territory's ecological transition.
• To improve and offer new services for residents via more effective public action more in line with expectations.
• To optimise public service management and operating costs, by modernising methods and implementing more economical processes.

A UNIQUE 12-YEAR CONTRACT

The implementation of the Smart Territory is a long-term project for which Angers Loire Metropolis and the City of Angers launched a 12-year contract, representing an estimated budget of between €120 and €150 million.

The competitive dialogue procedure has been used to award the contract. With this procedure, several applications can be selected, with their project leaders then invited to take part in question and answer sessions and meetings to fine-tune proposals, prior to the definitive choice. When it awards the contract in November 2019, Angers aims to be the first of a new generation of smart territories.

NEW DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES SUPPORTING DIGITAL USAGES

This smart territory project also extends to the development of digital usages. Angers Loire Metropolis and the City of Angers will soon have a new strategy focusing on digital relations with residents. Currently in the process of being drawn up, this future framework document sets four priorities: guaranteeing a digital relationship that is connected, personalised, inclusive and participative. Angers aims to address the new expectations of citizens regarding their relationship with digital public services.

This ambition draws on recent advances in terms of usages. The city of Angers is already one of the French-speaking users of the "Decidim" open-source digital citizen participation platform, created by the city of Barcelona. In Angers, this civic tech tool provides a platform for a growing number of participatory initiatives, sometimes mobilising several thousand residents. While these participatory initiatives concern the design of public policies, Angers is also developing the personalisation of information enabling individuals to access public services. This year, it launched an app containing a wealth of information enabling users to combine and personalise content.

Finally, the urban community, the municipality and its Municipal Centre for Social Action are defining a vast portfolio of projects specifically targeting digital inclusion. It is aimed at structuring public intervention to make it easier to complete online procedures, help public policy beneficiaries gain access to what they are entitled to and guide them towards digital culture and literacy.