



*The transition towards regional sustainable futures:
a position paper on exploring a transdisciplinary view on
the INVEST Living Lab approach*

Led by the idea of strengthening the link between teaching, research, innovation and knowledge transfer, encouraging mobility and enhancing the high quality and excellence in education and research, the EU-Erasmus+ INVEST ([*INnoVations of REgional Sustainability: European UniversiTy Alliance*](#)) partners united their efforts to achieve their common goal for developing joint and innovative education and research study programs and curricula, as well as for the transformation of their research and innovation systems, capacity building and long-term solutions for integrated, systematic, structural and sustainable impact at the various levels and areas of their activities.

Invest for Excellence in Regional Sustainability (INVEST4EXCELLENCE) project aims at developing an integrated and long-term joint strategy on research and innovation in line with the education strategies from the INVEST European University. The thematic focus of the INVEST is on regional sustainable development

as one of the most important global challenges. The project will facilitate the development of a common approach and exchange knowledge across languages and borders, disciplines and sectors, of researchers, students, regional stakeholders, entrepreneurs and community organizations.

The INVEST Alliance envisions sustainable futures and aims at an open and end-user-oriented process with a Living Lab approach in regional innovative platforms. Quadruple helix partnerships of knowledge institutes, private companies, citizens, NGOs and governmental organizations in the Living Labs configuration presents a new form of transdisciplinary collaboration, as Living Labs provide a learning environment in combination with an action-oriented vision on regional transitions. With the launching of a number of Living Labs as arenas for action research and sustainable development, INVEST Alliance searches for generic design principles and operational conditions of these Living Labs. The development of this common approach departs from previous studies at the INVEST partner universities.

In the INVEST Alliance Living Labs transition pathways are designed and requiring a transdisciplinary positioning and sharing of experiences in an open and collegial manner by involved knowledge institutions. Furthermore, insights on the Living Lab approach in the context of regional sustainable development and the role of Higher Education are employed. This positioning is addressed in **a position paper** considering the importance of the challenge to research the performance and implications of the Living Labs' methodology and enhance a transdisciplinary view on research and education.

The paper (Deliverable 3.1.) considers the ambitions and experiences of participating INVEST universities and capitalizes on obtained insights and expertise to articulate implications for each institution and for the INVEST European university. In the years to come, this position paper will inspire the INVEST project partners and other interested parties to further explore how our shared ambitions for sustainable futures can be optimized in an even more European vision on strong,

transdisciplinary and relevant education, research programmes and the societal configurations we search for with the Living Lab approach.



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