

ENHANCERIA	Work package	WP2 Exploration, identification and mapping of different practices and approaches
	Deliverable	D2.7 Report on interconnections of the defined focus areas based on the study cases explored
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D2.7 REPORT ON INTERCONNECTIONS OF THE DEFINED FOCUS AREAS BASED ON THE STUDY CASES EXPLORED

The mapped practices, methods, strategies and infrastructures that have been described in the deliverables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5, have been analyzed in a first attempt to establish connections between the four different focus areas. A better knowledge of possible transversal interrelations could yield to a more efficient use of synergies in the transformation of the ENHANCE universities towards a more sustainable development.

During a joint meeting on June 8th 2022 possible connections based in the work done in the different focus areas were discussed. The individual interviews with contact persons from different institutions while performing the surveys for good practice examples provided valuable insight in how different participants estimate possible impacts of other initiatives or structures in their area of work.

In the following, we outline some possible interconnections detected during the mapping process that will be used for further analysis and discussion in subsequent activities of ENHANCERIA and for stimulating synergies towards the transformation agenda:

- Working on increasing the access of researchers to the different research infrastructures (RI) across ENHANCE partners would be seen as a significant contribution to the career development of researchers. This could be especially relevant in early stages of the career, giving the opportunity of:
 - strengthening specific cross-sectoral competence within the own institutions
 - widening the specific access to specific research facilities beyond the own institution,
 - building networks and increasing the capability for further cooperation and large research proposals
 ([connection HR and RI](#))
- While researchers trained in different RI across Europe would gather unique know-how and expertise, the RI ecosystem itself would benefit from an extended scope of highly qualified users and an increased international projection of their institutional facilities ([connection HR and RI](#))
- Innovation ecosystems for sustainable development require most of the times transdisciplinary approaches and knowledge exchange between science and society. Empowering researchers to be involved in transdisciplinary settings in early stages of their career, or even as part of their education, will not only contribute to mainstream transdisciplinary and integrative practices, but will also contribute to the required entrepreneurial mindset ([connection TD, SEI, HR](#))
- A multi-perspective problem framing and the integration of different stakeholders in a challenge-based research process offer the tools required to foster entrepreneurial approaches ([connection TD, SEI](#))
- A reciprocal exchange of methods and objectives between research infrastructures and industrial stakeholders contributes to better focus on societal needs and an increased social impact ([connection RI, TD, SEI](#))

- Impact assessment methodologies used in transdisciplinary research and innovation ecosystems could be useful for discussing on the impact of Research Infrastructures, as a tool to evaluate the return on investment against the large initial investments occurred for the building of the infrastructures ([connection RI, TD, SEI](#))
- Empowering researchers to address challenges in process of co-design and co-productive with different societal actors sets the fundamentals of a sustainable participative research ([connection TD, HR](#))
- To ensure sustainable participative research, researchers must be able to communicate with other researchers from different disciplines and with all kind of societal actors. The development of communication skills (among others), and certain expertise in dealing with different societal agents has to reinforced as part of the career development measures ([connection TD, HR](#))
- Getting familiar with different access policies, research regulations and data management systems will increase the understanding of the European Research Area among the partners and show ways to extract value from the existing diversity ([connection RI, HR](#))
- In order to improve communication, access and exchange with external stakeholders, an increased transparency and visibility of university infrastructures, projects and transfer potential are required ([connection RI, TD](#))
- Mainstreaming transdisciplinarity in its different dimensions would facilitate a training for researchers that are able and used to co-design, co-produce, and/or co-create with different societal actors and that can better align research and innovation outputs to societal and economic needs ([connection HR, TD, SEI](#))
- The profession of scientific or research managers to ensure that research takes place in optimal framework conditions and to facilitate communication between institutional entities, gains relevance when examining different transdisciplinary approaches. In some partner universities, an increased transdisciplinary strategy implied the introduction of new professional “integration experts” that facilitate the interactions with different societal actors. These bridging job positions at universities bring a new dimension in human resources strategies ([connection HR, TD, SEI](#))
- The variety of conceptions in the different focus areas, and of institutional frameworks and policies across the alliance, makes difficult to gain a structured overview, but at the same time underline the richness and potential of the diversity among ENHANCE partners ([connection TD, SEI, HR, RI](#))

The exploration activity has shown different dimensions connecting ENHANCERIA focus areas and reveals that enhancing one focus area often translates in a benefit for the others.

ENHANCERIA was conceived as a fundamental way for the ENHANCE alliance to contribute to the transformation agenda in the renewed European Research Area (ERA)¹. This first step of exploring the partner universities with more detail within the different focus areas (TD, SEI, HR, RI) shows promising opportunities in the different transformation modules (TMs):

- Developing a common research and innovation agenda and action plan (**TM1**): takes place across all 4 focus areas
- Strengthening human capital, enabling balanced brain circulation and gender balance (**TM2**): takes place mainly within HR, but profiting clearly for advancement in TD, SEI
- Sharing research infrastructures and other resources (**TM3**): it happens mainly in focus area RI, implying a clear benefit for HR, among others
- Reinforcing cooperation with non-academic actors, esp. academia-business cooperation (**TM4**), which is the core of TD and SEI

¹ EC press release: A new European Research Area:
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_1749

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- Mainstreaming of comprehensive Open Science practices (TM5), as a common practice for TD and a requirement of growing relevance in RI activities
 - Involvement of citizens, civil society and public/cities authorities in research and innovation (TM6): one of the fundamentals of TD focus area, but also essential in the required mindset in SEI context
 - Exploring joint structures across the European Universities on technical activities common to all 'European Universities' (TM7), which should be achieved within RI with a clear benefit for HR

The identification of successful models for institutional transformation at research and innovation level across all different areas of interest in ENHANCERIA, and the outlined intercorrelations, will be further explored and discussed later in the project. But this preliminary results support our vision to develop a sustainable agenda for an alliance that empowers people to develop and use science and technology for the benefit of society and turn global challenges into opportunities