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The Living Lab Approach for Vulnerable Communities

Wednesday, 21 May 2025

10:00 – 12:00

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Housekeeping rules!

The session is recorded

Keep your mic muted when not talking

Raise your hand if you have a question

All interventions are equally valid

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Agenda

10.00	Welcome & Introduction
10.05	Introduction to Living Labs (Alessandra Tricarico, ENoLL)
10.20	Comon Living Lab, Ghent (Jeroen Bourgonjon)
10.35	Social Digital Lab (Suara), Barcelona (Clara G Garcia Blanch)
10.50	Thess-AHALL, Thessaloniki (Despoina Mantziari)
11:05	Panel Discussion
11:40	Q&A
11:50	Summary and Next Steps

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European Network of Living Labs

Introduction to Living Labs

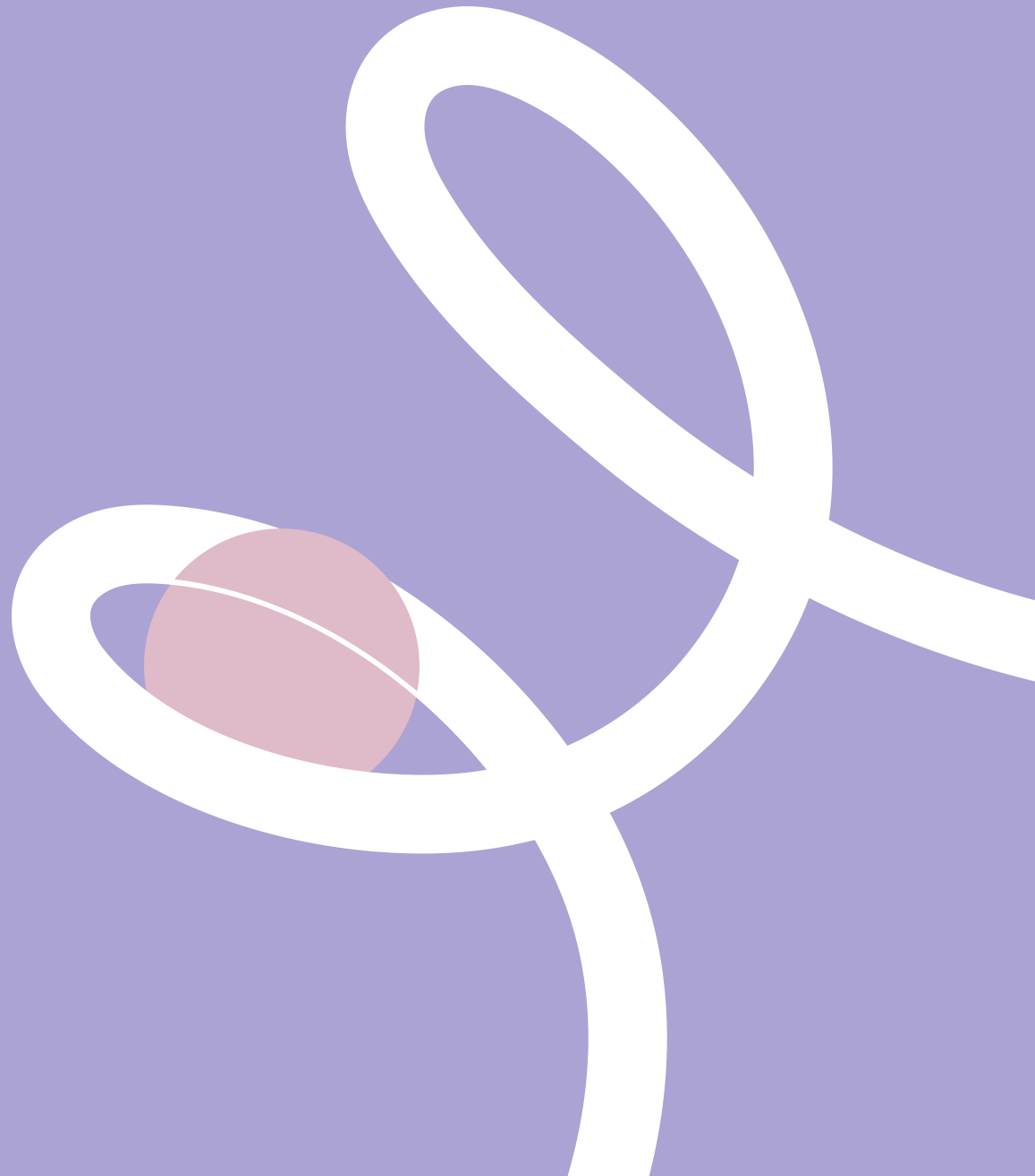
ENoLL – European Network of Living Labs

21 May 2025

www.enoll.org

European Network of Living Labs

ENoLL – European Network of Living Labs



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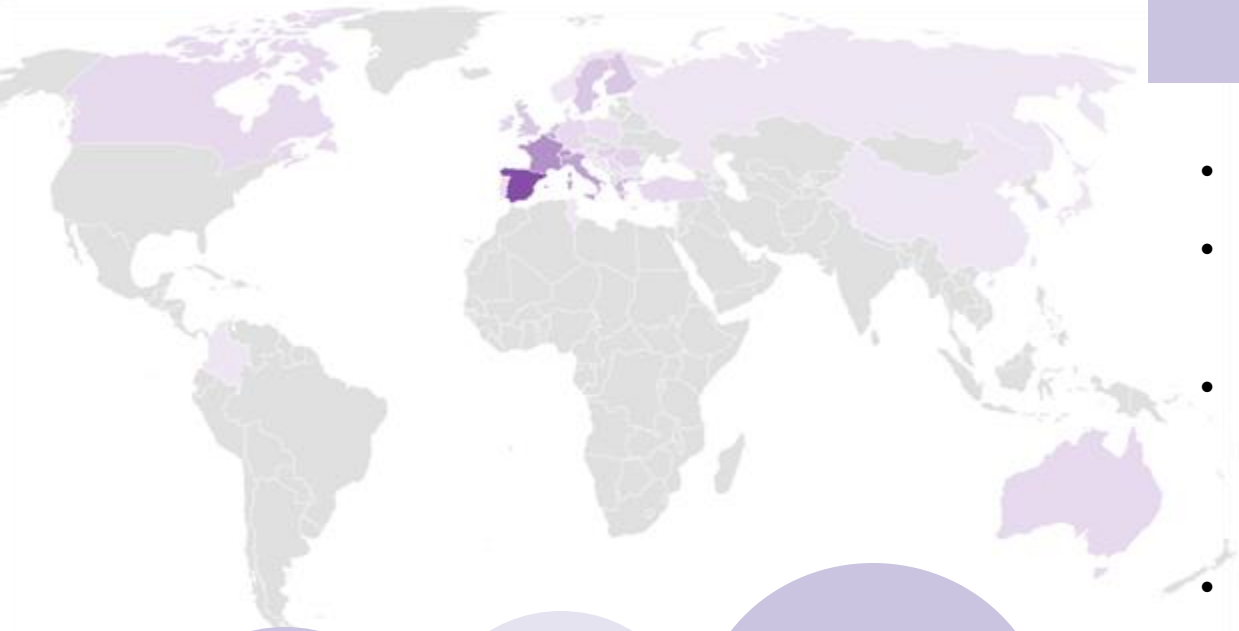

+500 historically certified living labs

5 continents 39 countries

~ 171 active members (89% in Europe)

ENoLL is the international non-profit association of certified Living Labs

- Founded in 2006 under the auspices of the Finnish European Presidency
- ENoLL focuses on facilitating **knowledge exchange, joint actions** and **project partnerships** among its members
- It aims to promote the Living Labs concept, support EU policies, enhance Living Labs and their sustainability and enable their implementation at a global level.
- ENoLL growing community includes members that operate by the main living lab principles such as **multi-stakeholder co-creation,** iterative active user involvement and **real-life intervention.**

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A path to grow

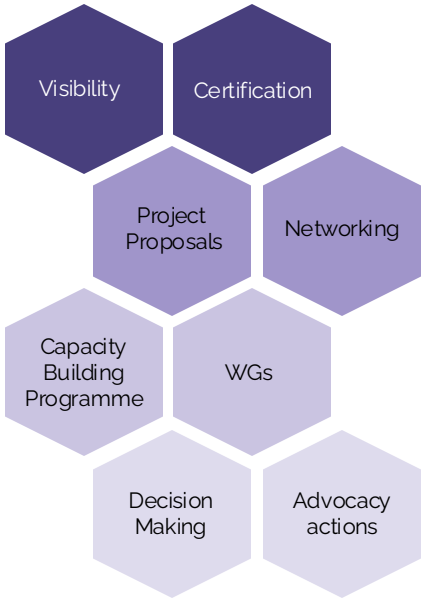
MISSION

ENoLL mission is to be an **Ambassador** of European values of **co-creation** and **open innovation,** to provide value to its **members** and external **stakeholders** by offering them **opportunities** to develop their **capacities & knowledge** in order to strengthen them in **developing and scaling-up** impactful innovative products & services and expanding their own value to their own stakeholders

VISION

ENoLL aims to be the leading organization empowering the **global** development of Living Labs as **enablers** of **impactful** open innovation ecosystems where everyone can co-create and innovate via cross-border & cross-sectoral **collaboration** in an **inclusive** way

MEMBERS VALUE OFFER



Certification & Labelling
Quality evaluation procedure, formal certification

Capacity Building
Learning programmes for LL creation and ENoLL certification

Working Groups
Knowledge exchange & collaboration on hot topics

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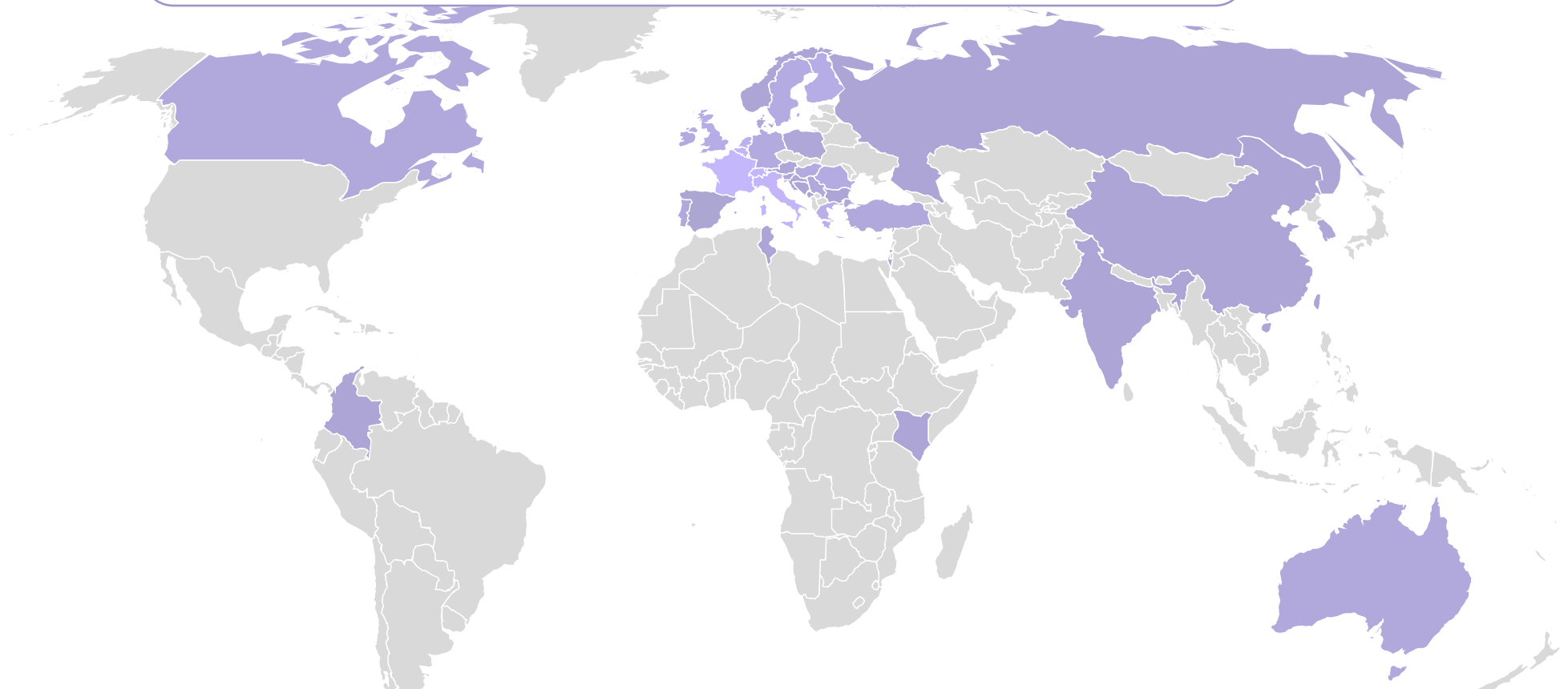
ENoLL Network Composition

Apr 2025

171 Active ENoLL Members



- **25** Effective Members
- **135** Adherent Members
- **7** Accepted to Grow
- **4** Innovation Partners

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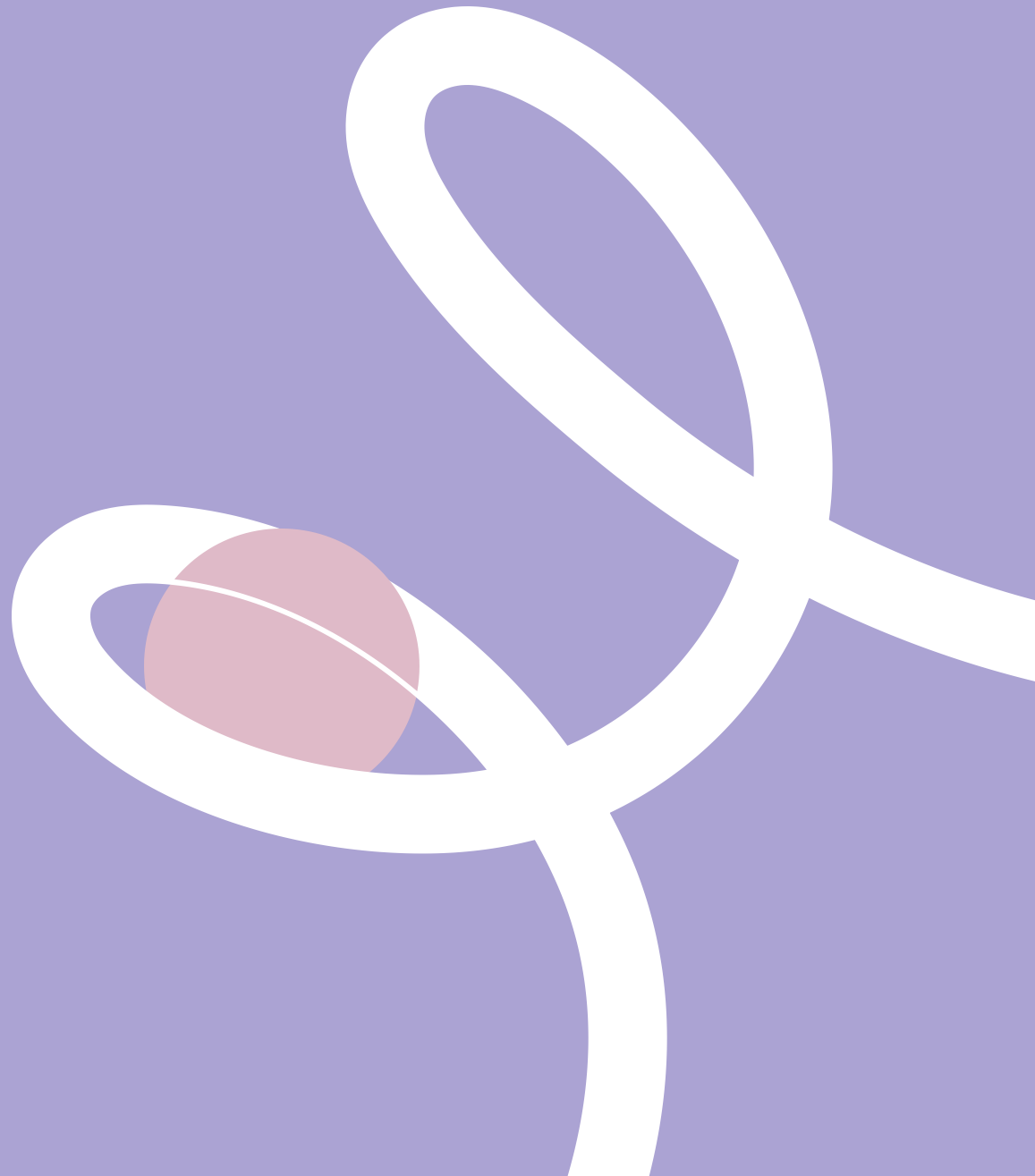
What are Living Labs... and what are NOT?



Living Labs are more than just a physical space…

Başakşehir Living Lab (ENoLL member), Başakşehir, Turkey

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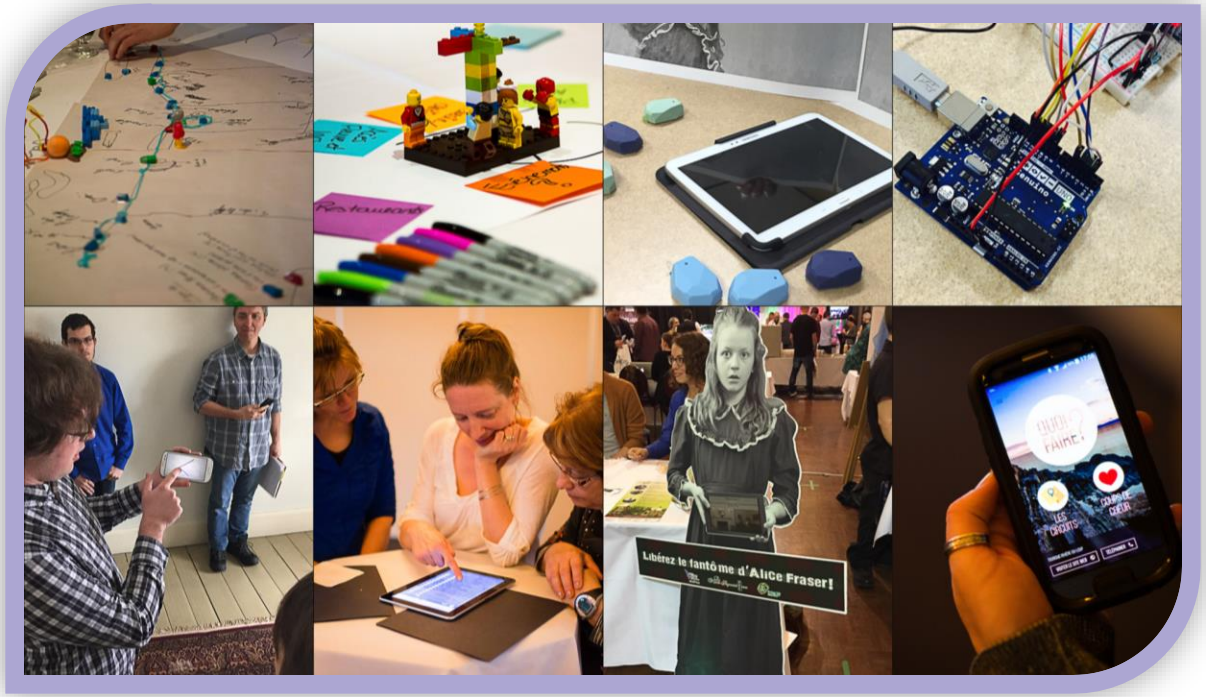
It's about the people and what happens within…

A Living Lab wouldn't exist without the **people** and the **activities** taking place in and around it.

It is all about:

- **Dynamic interactions** between stakeholders
- **Co-creation processes** that involve users from the start
- Developing innovative solutions **with and for the community**



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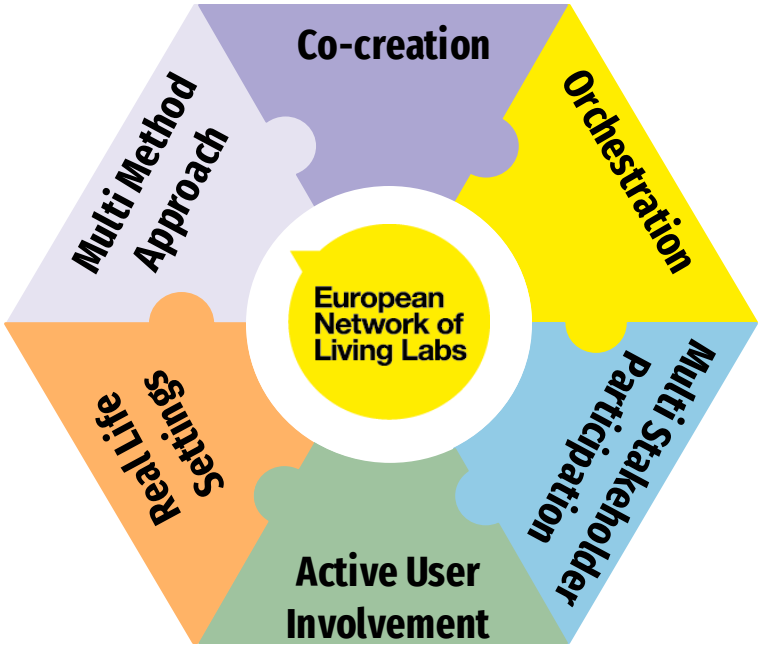
What are Living Labs?

Living Labs are **open innovation ecosystems** in **real-life environments** based on a **systematic user co-creation approach** that integrates research and innovation activities in communities, placing **citizens at the centre of innovation**



Living Labs are a modern tool for research adapted to the needs of today, where citizens can contribute to the co-research.

They are open innovation ecosystems in **real-life** environments using **iterative feedback processes** throughout the lifecycle approach of an innovation.

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LLs are open innovation ecosystems

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Open Innovation: tapping into knowledge that exists *outside your organisation by engaging with others* to co-create solutions in real-life settings.

User-Driven Innovation: placing end-users, such as citizens or clients, at the **center of the innovation process**. They are not just consulted but **actively involved** in the innovation process.

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LLs in real-life environments

Living Labs are **open innovation ecosystems** in **real-life environments** based on a **systematic user co-creation approach** that integrates research and innovation activities in communities, placing **citizens at the centre of innovation**

Living Labs operate in **real-life settings,** not in artificial or controlled environments. This means that innovation is tested and developed **directly in the context where it will be used**.

But real-life setting is not sufficient alone…

It's the people, interactions, systems, and infrastructure within the real-life setting that truly make it a Living Lab

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URBAN LIVING LAB

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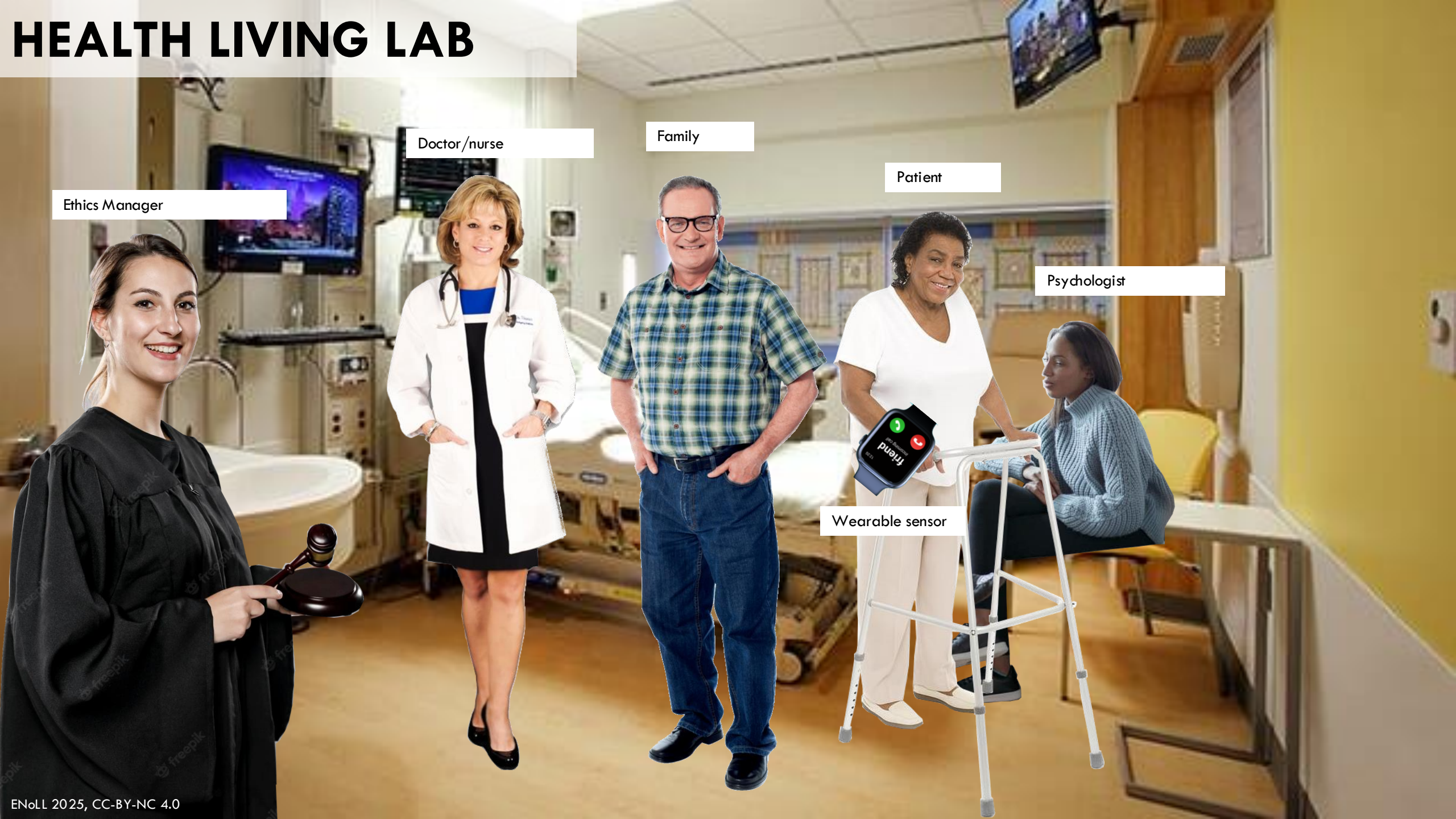
HEALTH LIVING LAB



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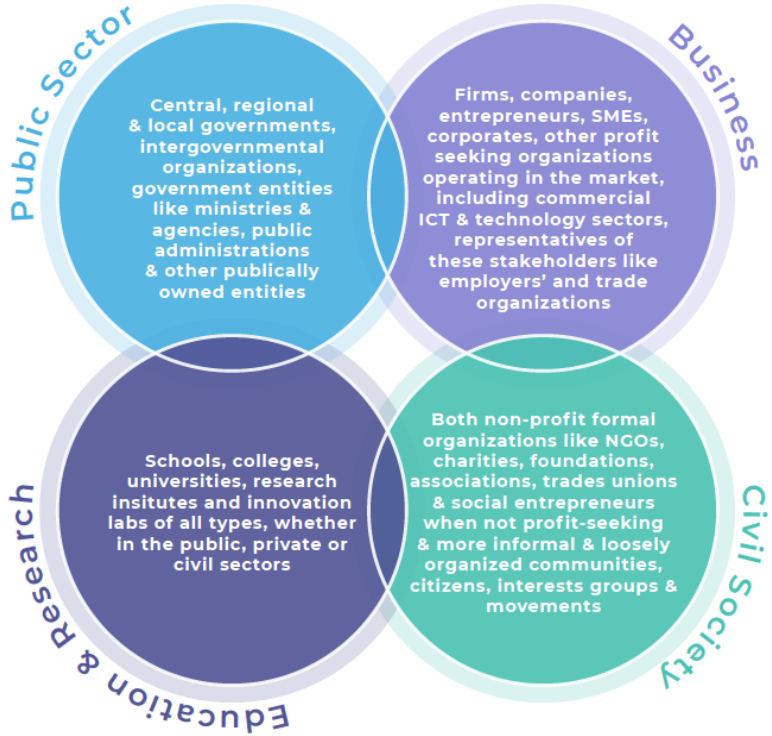
LLs based on a systematic user co-creation approach

Living Labs are **open innovation ecosystems** in **real-life environments** based on a **systematic user co-creation approach** that integrates research and innovation activities in communities, placing **citizens at the centre of innovation**

Living Labs operate as **intermediaries** among **citizens, research organisations, companies and government** agencies or levels for joint-value co-creation, rapid prototyping or to scale up innovation and businesses.

Industry, Academia, Public Authorities and Citizens are part of the so-called **Quadruple Helix model (QHM)**, where users are placed at the heart of the innovation ecosystem.



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And what a Living Lab is not ?

A Test Bed is a “Pre-Living Lab” setting enabling rigorous, transparent, and replicable testing of scientific theories, computational tools and new technologies in a controlled environment (not in real-life), with users often represented mainly by researchers. Compared to Living Labs, they show a smaller scale and level of analysis (e.g. one building compared to a city).

A Fablab: “fabrication laboratory” is a small-scale workshop offering digital fabrication. A fab lab is typically equipped with an array of flexible computer-controlled tools that cover several different length scales and various materials, for developing technology-enabled products to mass production.

A Home Lab (originated at MIT with Prof. Mitchell) they focused on testing and adapting new technologies based on their fit with the daily home environment.

Ballon, Pieter & Schuurman, Dimitri. (2015). Living labs: concepts, tools and cases. info. 17. 10.1108/info-04-2015-0024

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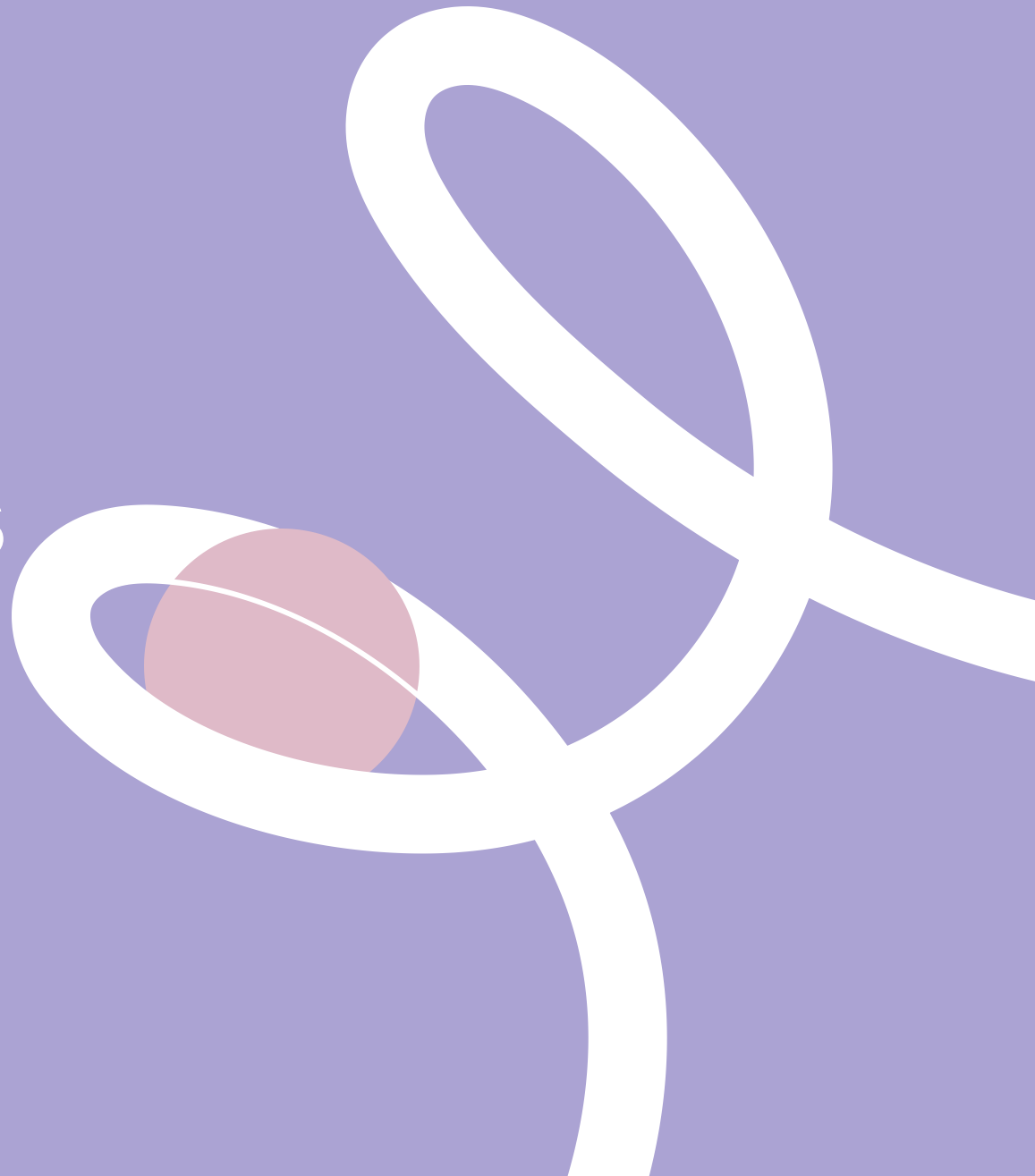
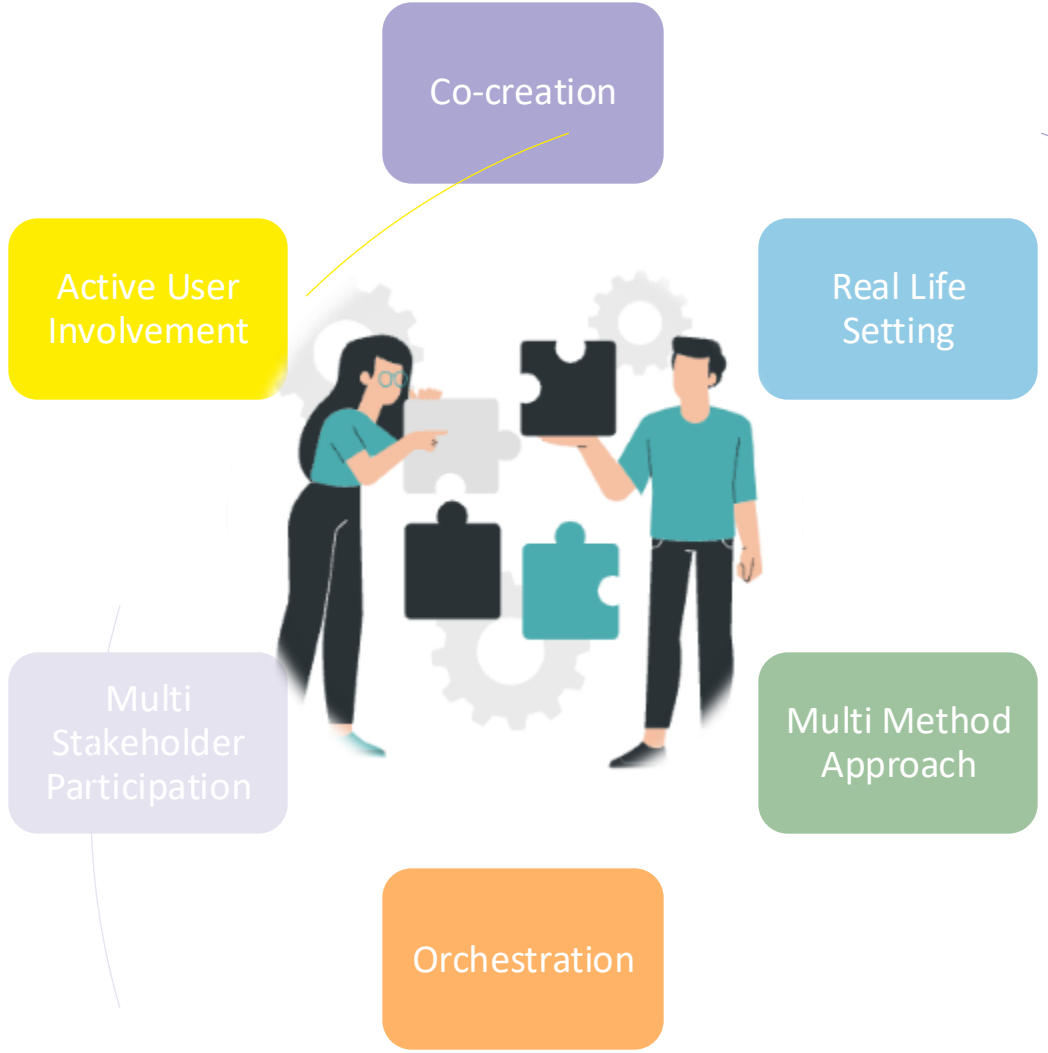
Main building blocks of Living Labs



Living Labs: main Building Blocks

Living Labs can vary in terms of focus, areas of work, context, or scale.

But, they all share a **common foundation** made up of key characteristics (building blocks).



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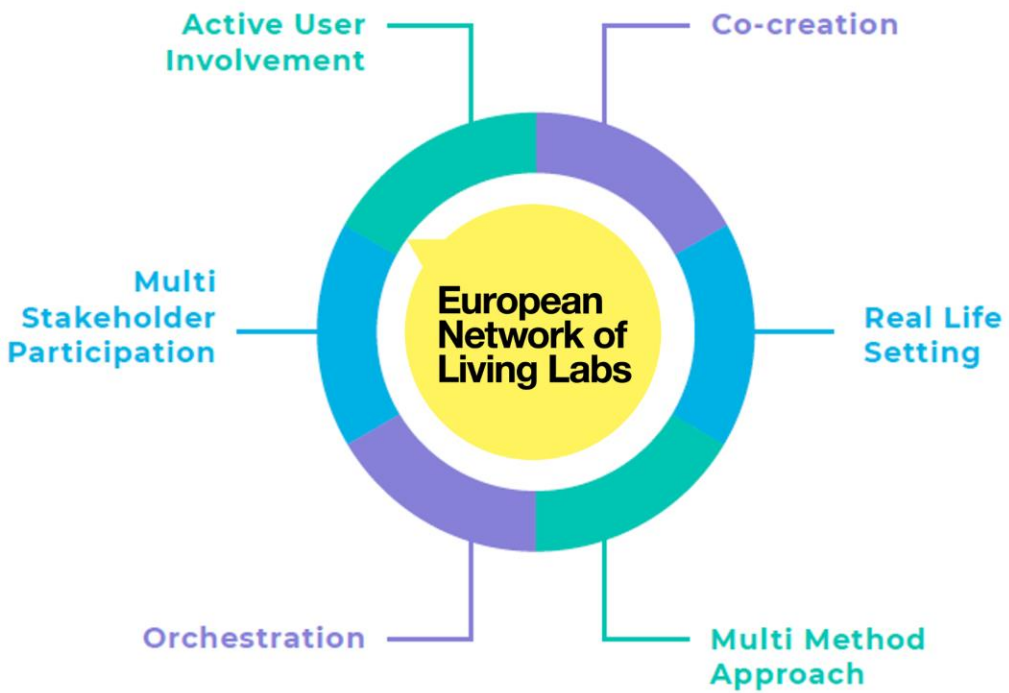

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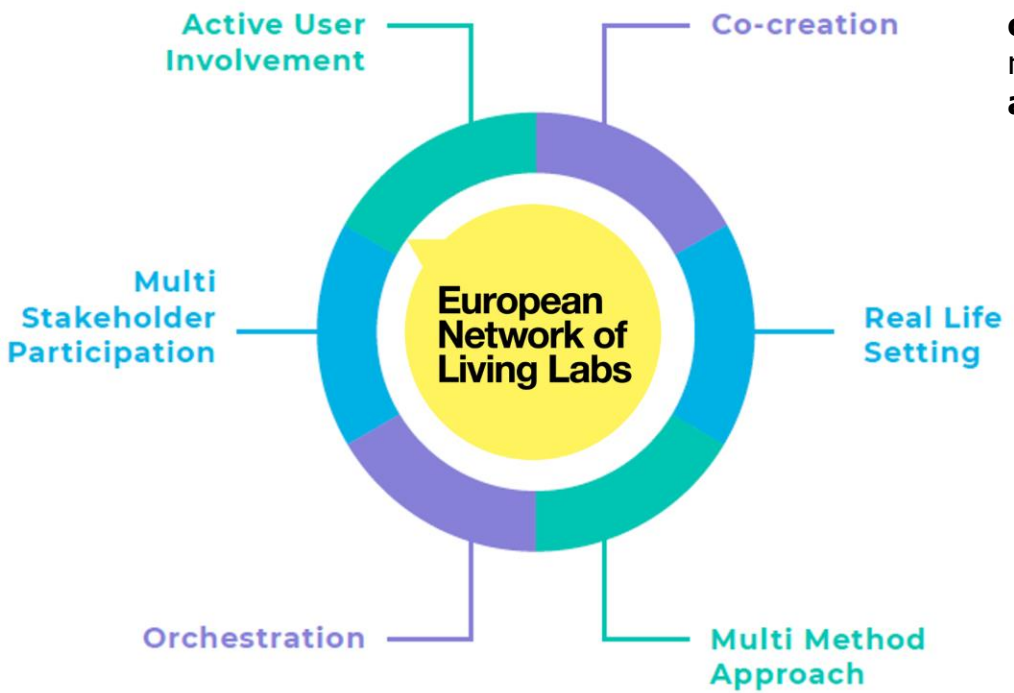

In a Living Lab values are **bottom-up co-created** not only for but also by all relevant stakeholders, ensuring a **higher adoption** at the end.

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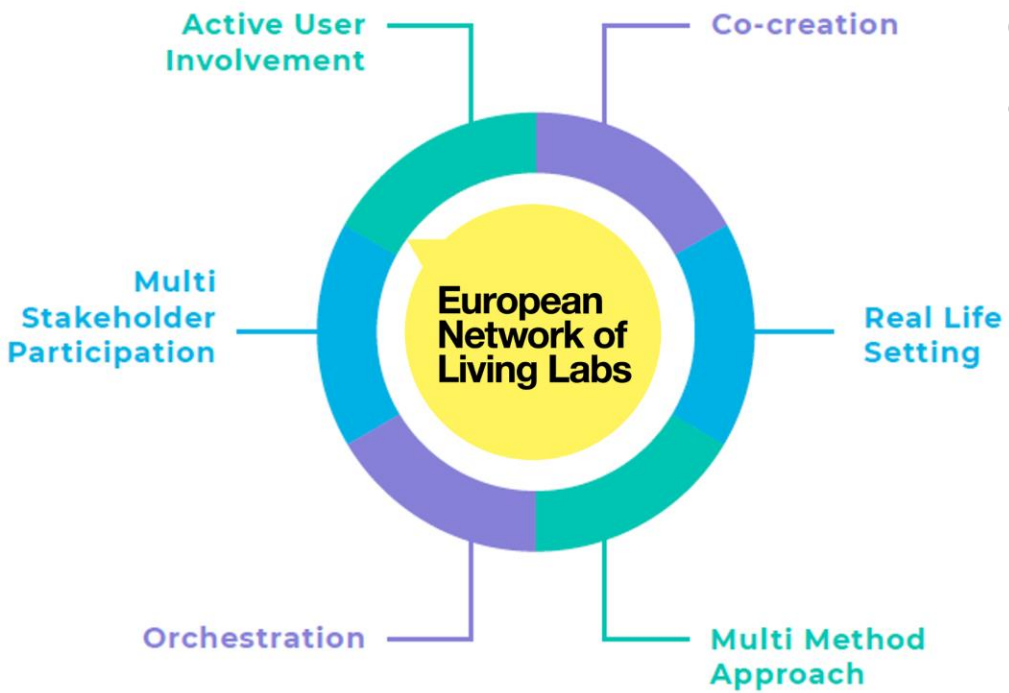

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A Living Lab operates in the **real-life setting of the end users**, infusing innovations into their real life instead of moving the user to test sites to explore the innovations.

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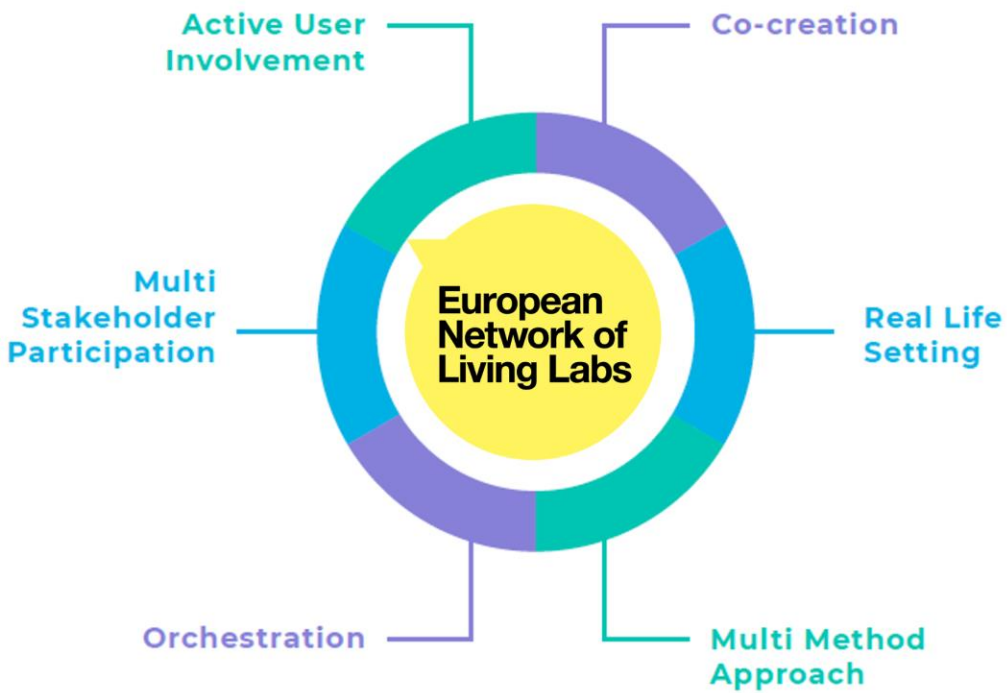

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Each Living Lab activity is **problem driven**. Therefore, the methodological approach towards every individual activity will be **selected based on the expected outcomes** of the activity **and the stakeholders** who needs to be involved.

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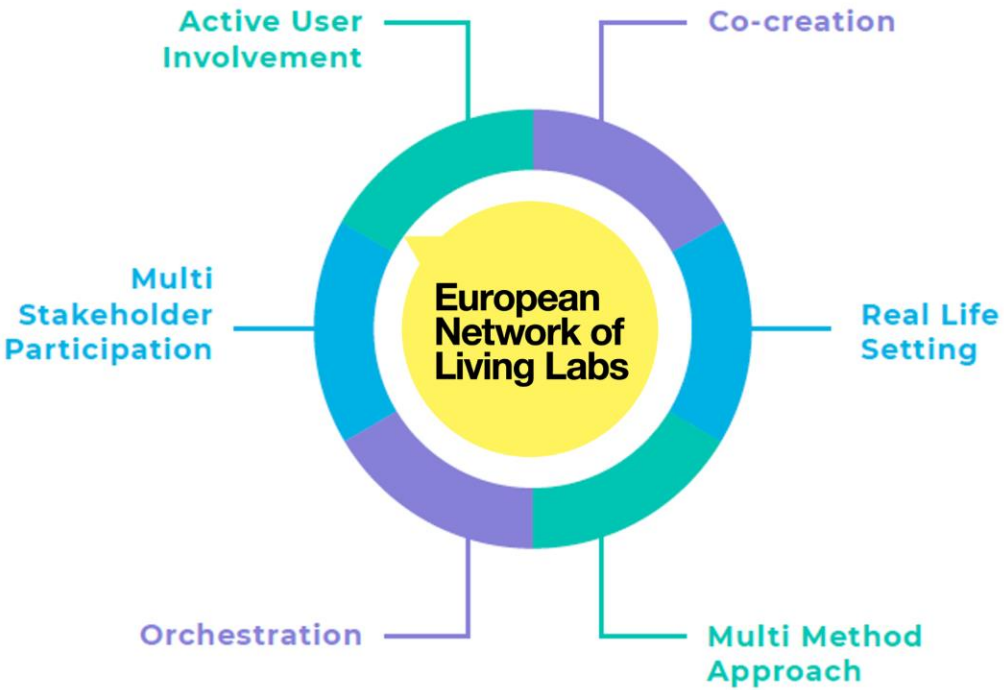
Taking **a holistic view on society**, involving stakeholders from the **quadruple helix model** (government, academia, private sector and citizens)/



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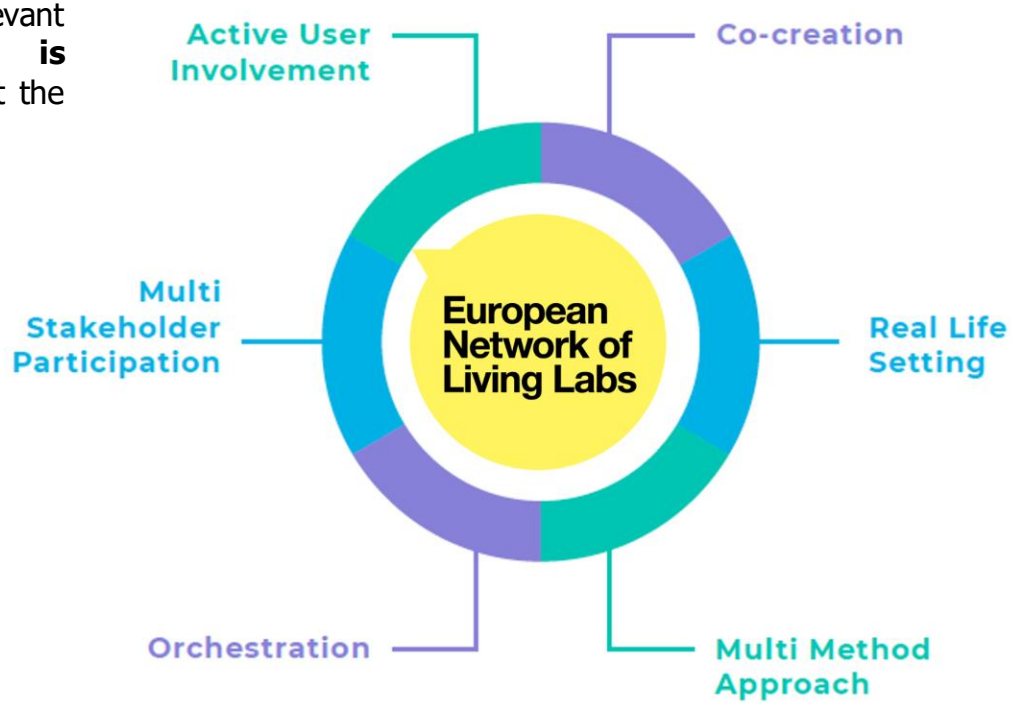

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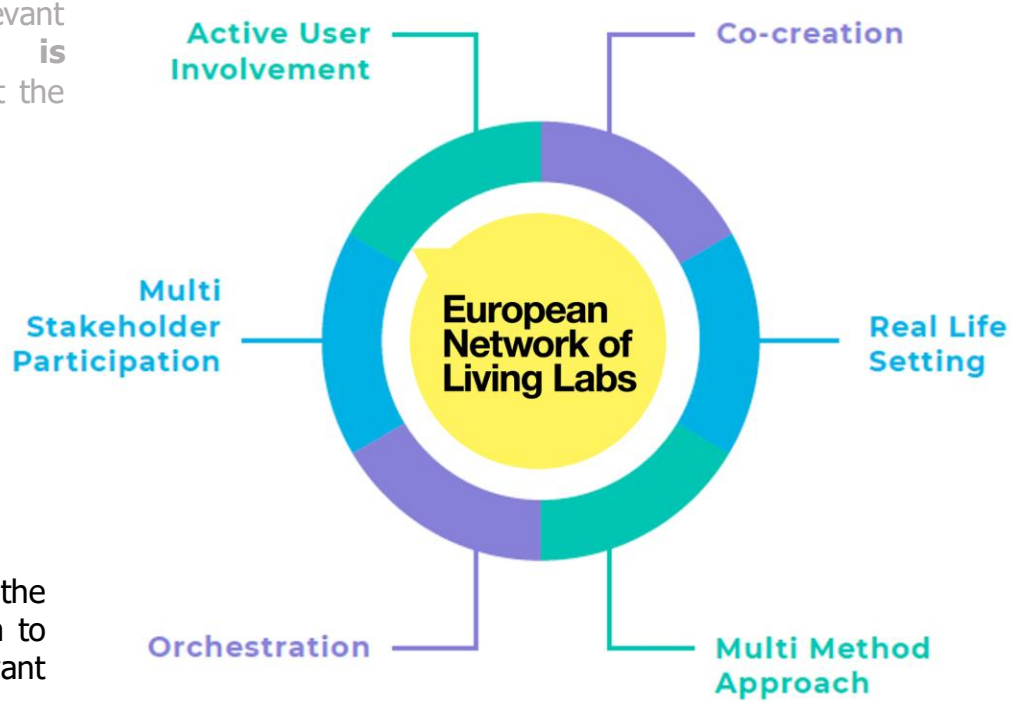
The Living Lab operates as the **orchestrator within the ecosystem** to connect and **partner up** with relevant stakeholders



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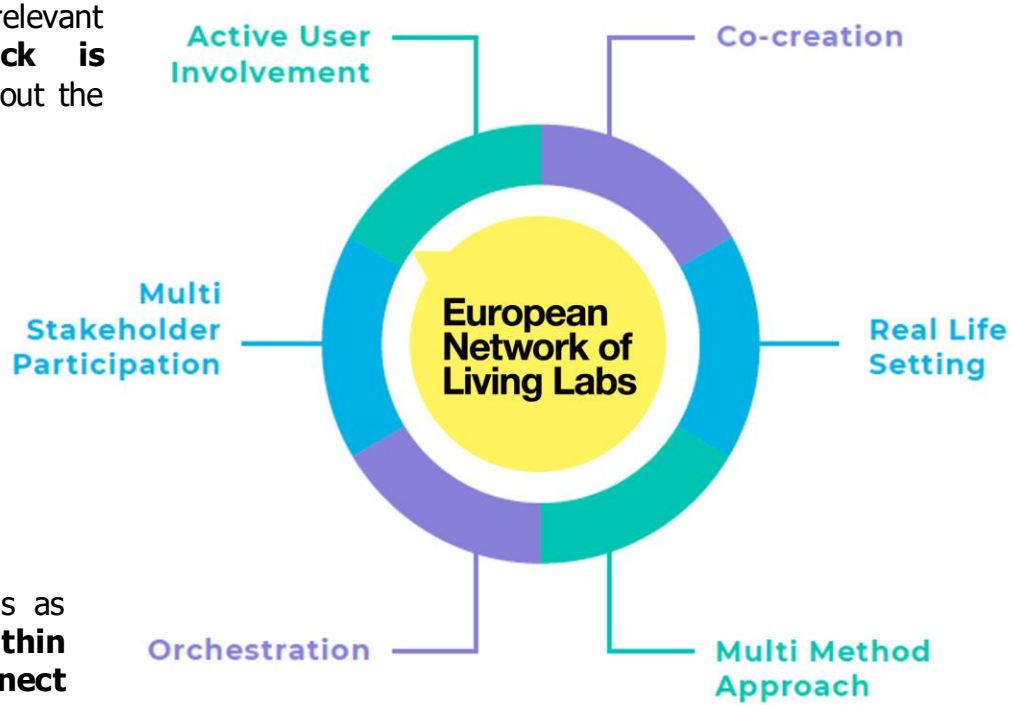

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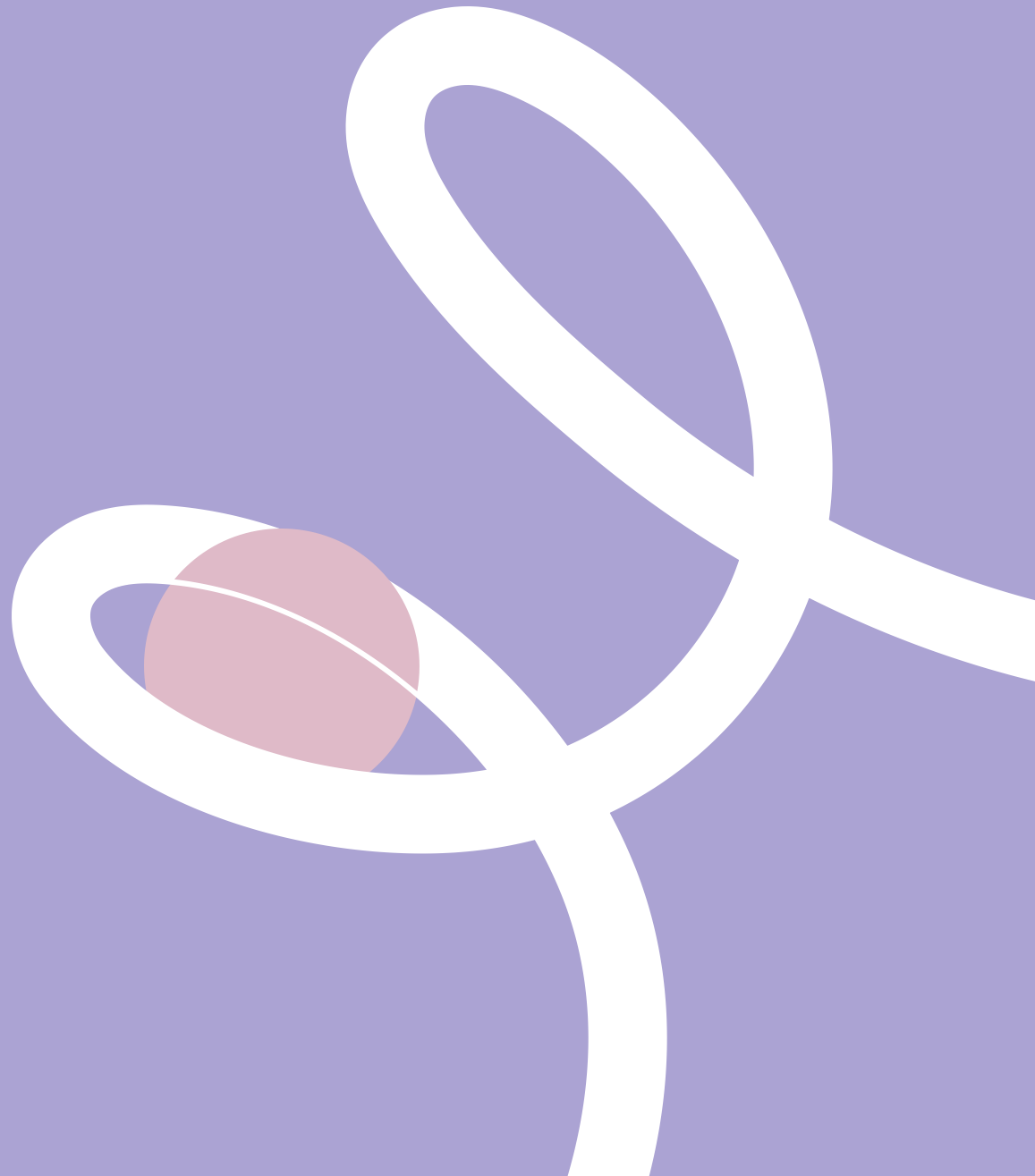
The three-layered model



Three-layered model

LAYER	DEFINITION	RESEARCH PARADIGM	LEVEL
MACRO	Living Lab constellation consisting of organised stakeholders	Open Innovation: Knowledge transfers between organizations	PPPP
MESO	Living Lab innovation project using Living Lab methodologies	Open & User innovation: Real life experimentation, active user involvement, multi-method and multi-stakeholder	PROJECT
MICRO	Individual Living Lab research steps and activities linked to the stakeholders' assets and capabilities	User innovation: User involvement & contribution for innovation	ACTIVITIES

Living Labs focus on:

- a well structured **organisation** on the **macro** level
- With living lab **projects** in the **meso** level
- Consisting of **co-created activities** in the **micro** level

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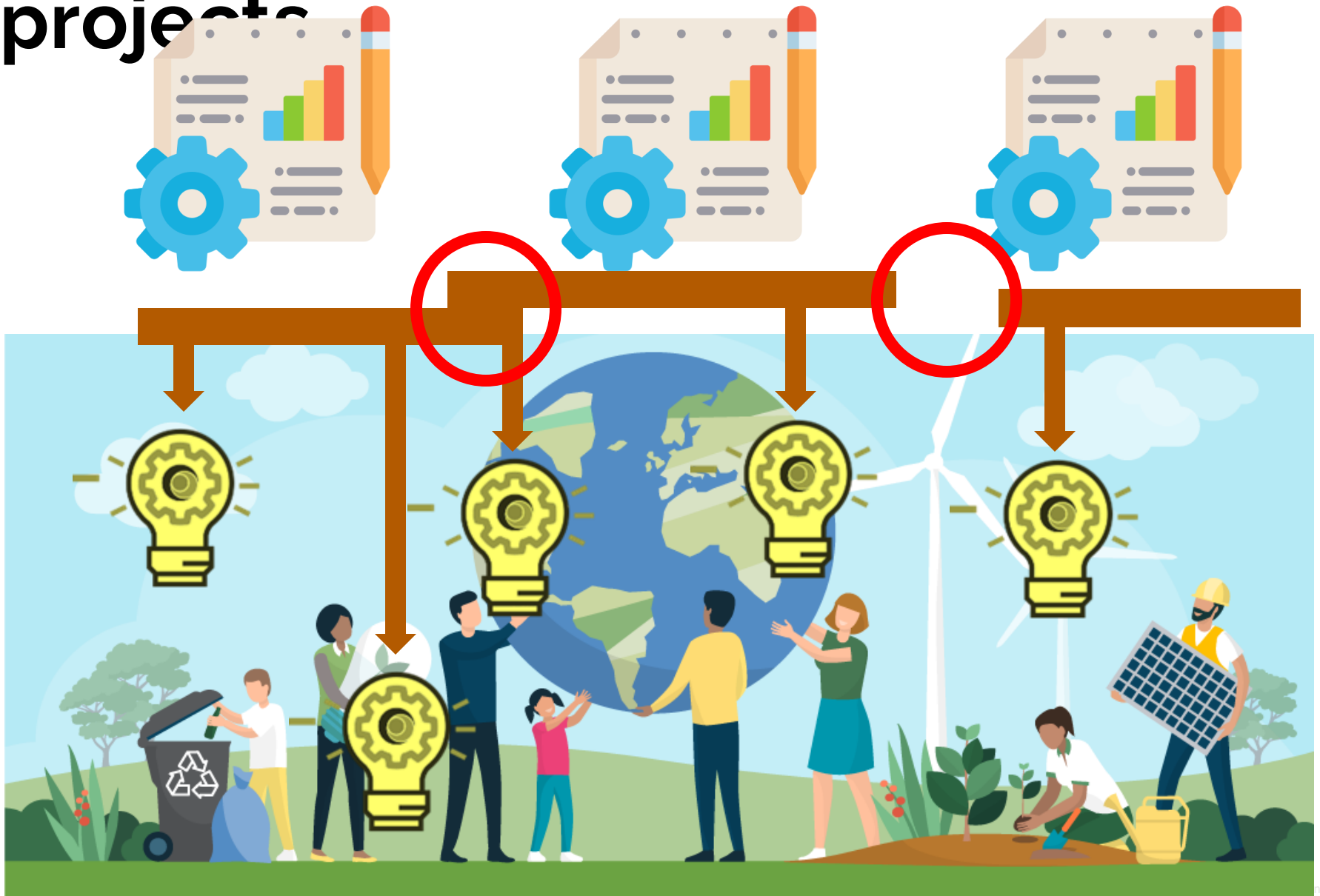
Living Labs ≠ projects



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Living Labs vs Traditional Approach

Unlike traditional project management, Living Labs focus on collaboration, adaptability, and real user involvement throughout the process.

	TRADITIONAL PROJECT	LIVING LAB
OBJECTIVE	Targeted to a preliminary defined project goal	Emphasizes co-creation and continuous improvement; final objectives change based on the needs of users
ROLE OF PROJECT MANAGER	Central role in planning, organizing, and directing project activities, and resources; centralized decision0making	Facilitator and enabler of collaboration between users, stakeholders,; Decisions are often made collaboratively.
CONTROL POINT	Adherence to predefined project plan; rigidly defined milestones as control points	Control points for fluid and adaptive; Continuous feedback loops and iterative development; flexibility and responsiveness
ROLE OF USERS AND USER COMMUNITIES	Users are an object of study; limited involvement beyond initial requirements gathering and acceptance testing	Actively and equally involved throughout the project lifecycle
RESOURCES AND CAPACILITIES	Resources and capabilities are often allocated based on predefined project requirements and objectives	Resources and capabilities are more dynamic, with an emphasis on building collaborative networks and leveraging the diverse expertise of users, stakeholders, and partners.
TOOLS	Utilizes traditional project management tools	Combination of traditional project management tools along with facilitative methods and group work tools

Leminen & Westerlund, 2009: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228591969_From_innovation_networks_to_open_innovation_communities_Co-creating_value_with_customers_and_users

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When and why using Living Labs

When to Use Living Labs?

1. Living labs are particularly effective for **innovation, co-creation, and evaluation in real-world contexts.** They provide valuable insights into how people interact with new ideas, products, and services, informing further development.

2. Living labs are well-suited for **addressing wicked problems,** which are complex and difficult to solve. They offer a **participatory and holistic approach to problem-solving,** involving stakeholders and users in the design and evaluation process.

3. Living labs can be applied to a wide range of wicked problems, such **as climate change, social justice, health and well-being, and education and learning.**

Living Labs provide a flexible and adaptable innovation approach that can help create positive change in society by addressing wicked problems through collaborative and participatory processes.

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Why to use Living Labs?

Derisk innovation

Transforming clients into developers, LLs support the creation of products and services that are more suitable for the market

Real-life environment

LL provide a real-life environment for **testing and validating innovations**

Bridge the research/market gap

LL help bridge the gap between research and market uptake, leading to **more impactful innovations**

Address complex societal challenges

LL are powerful tools for co-creating solutions that address complex societal challenges and **wicked problems** that are complex, dynamic, and often involve multiple stakeholders

Insights into the adoption

LL provide valuable insights into the adoption and **sustainability of innovations** in the long run

Involve end-users in the innovation process

LL involve end-users in the innovation process, ensuring solutions are **tailored to their needs**

Faster innovation cycle

LL facilitate **rapid iteration and prototyping of solutions**, leading to faster innovation cycles

Quadruple helix

LL enable collaboration between different stakeholders, including researchers, industry partners, and communities

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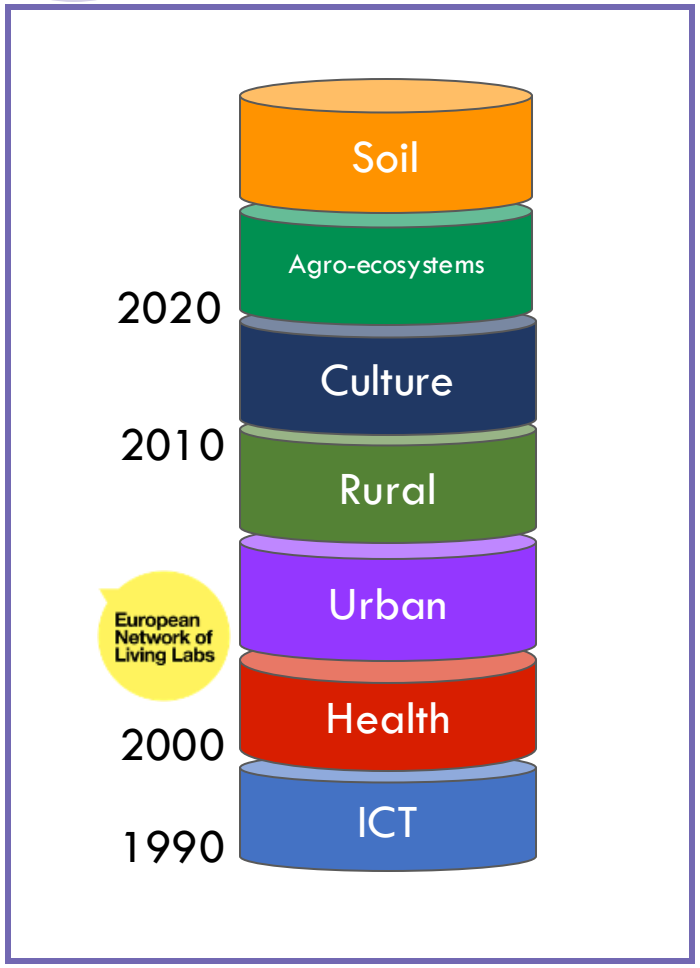
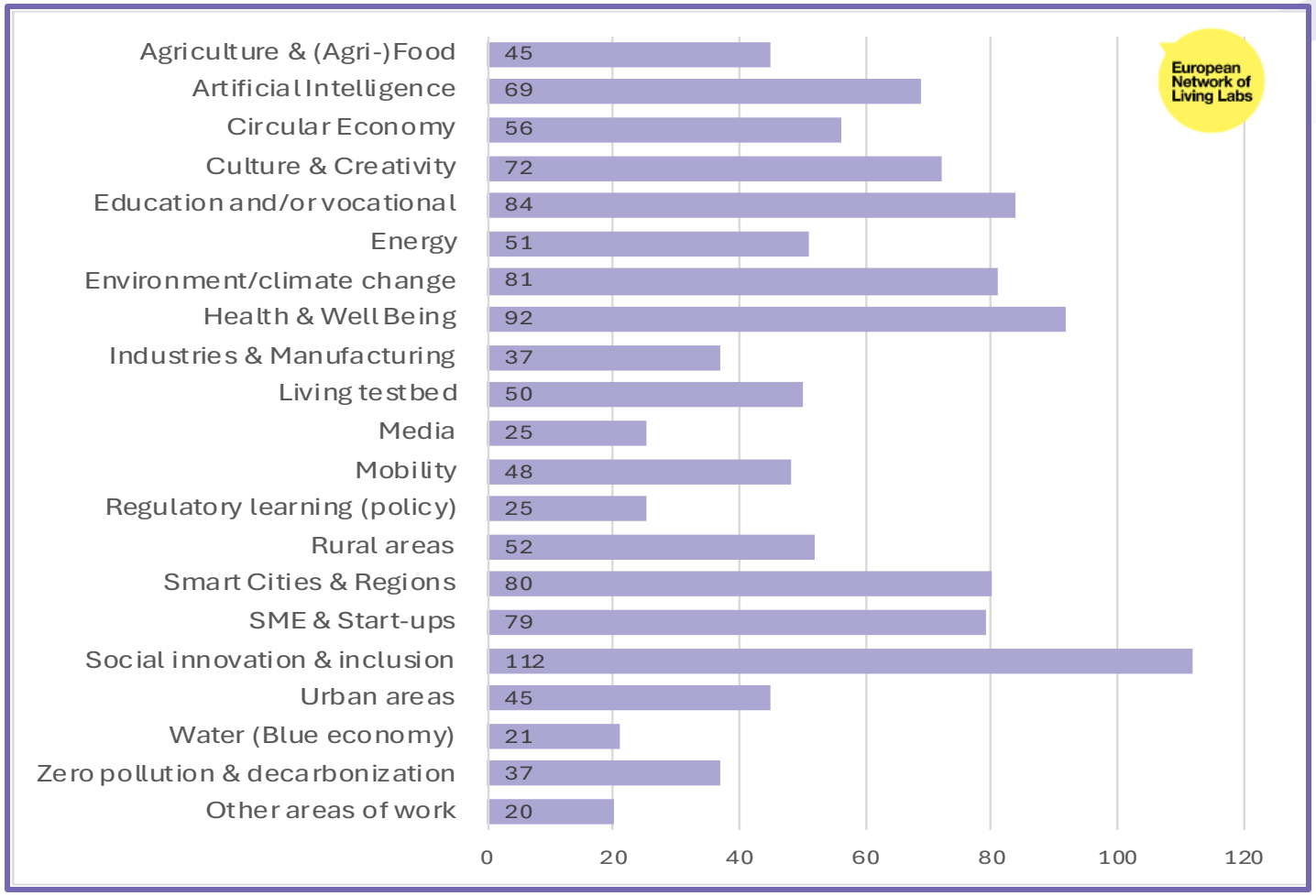
Types of Living Labs
Topics and focus domains

ENoLL Living Lab evolution & current area of work





Multiple areas of work & transversal approach

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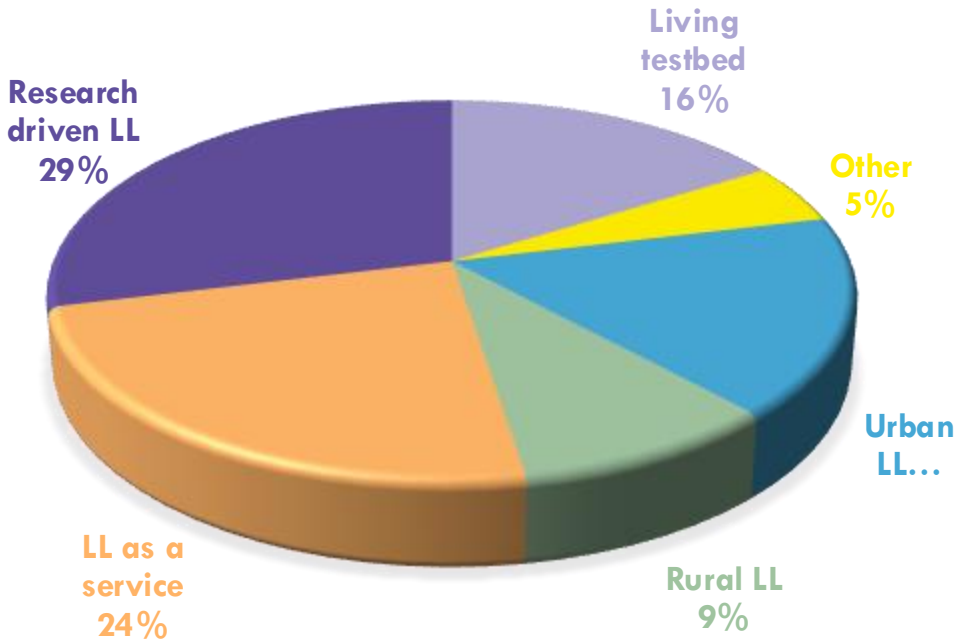
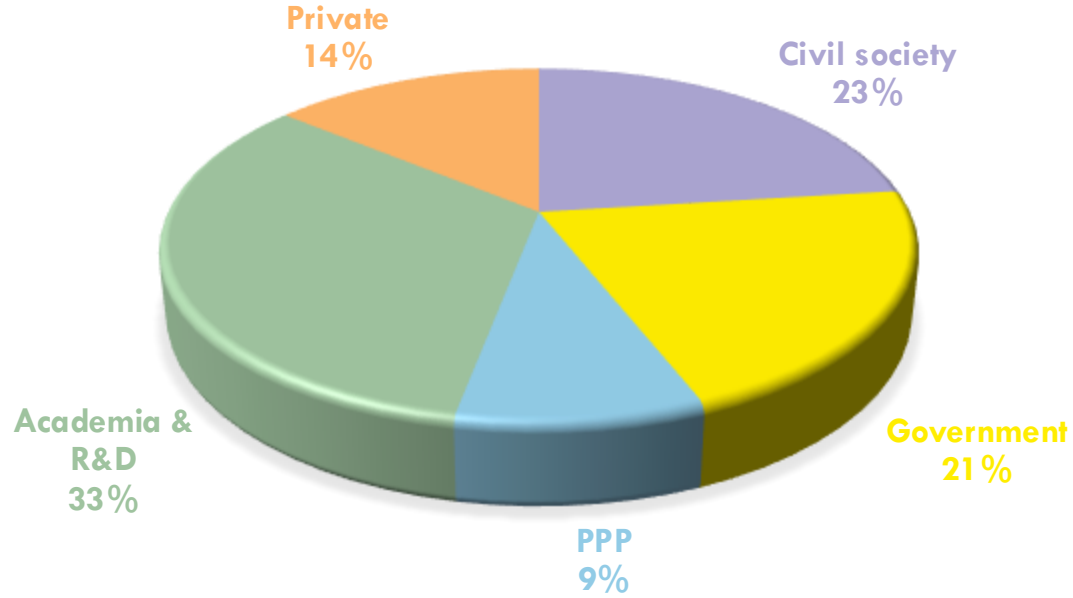
ENoLL Living Labs types & host organizations

The mapping of ENoLL members shows a distribution of 5 main types of LL considering the nature & service of each organization.
The same LL can belong to more than one type, depending on their work.





- **Academia & research centres:** Universities, other higher education institutions, and fully research oriented organisations
- **Civil Society:** non-profit organisations whose main activity is not research oriented
- **Government:** Specialised agencies, municipalities and other local authorities, regional authorities
- **Private:** Organisations with a direct for-profit objective, mainly SMEs
- **Public & private partnership** (PPP): Projects or institutions of mixed management and responsibility

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Living Lab classification
based on their objectives and ambitions:

Living Labs for Grand Societal Challenges

Living Labs for Inclusive Soci(et)al Engagement

Living Labs for Policies, Governance, Collaboration, and Innovation Ecosystems

Living Labs for Business and Emerging Technologies

Campus / University Living Labs

- This framework highlights the **versatility** and **impact** of Living Labs.
- It demonstrates their **capacity to tackle complex challenges,** drive innovation, and create value across various sectors and communities
- Categories are not mutually exclusive, as overlaps and crossovers between them are common.

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European Network of Living Labs

Discover ENoLL Living Labs

Search | All Countries | All Types | Field of Experti... | Areas of Work | RESET | VIEW ALL

Visit our Website at:
https://enoll.org/our-members/

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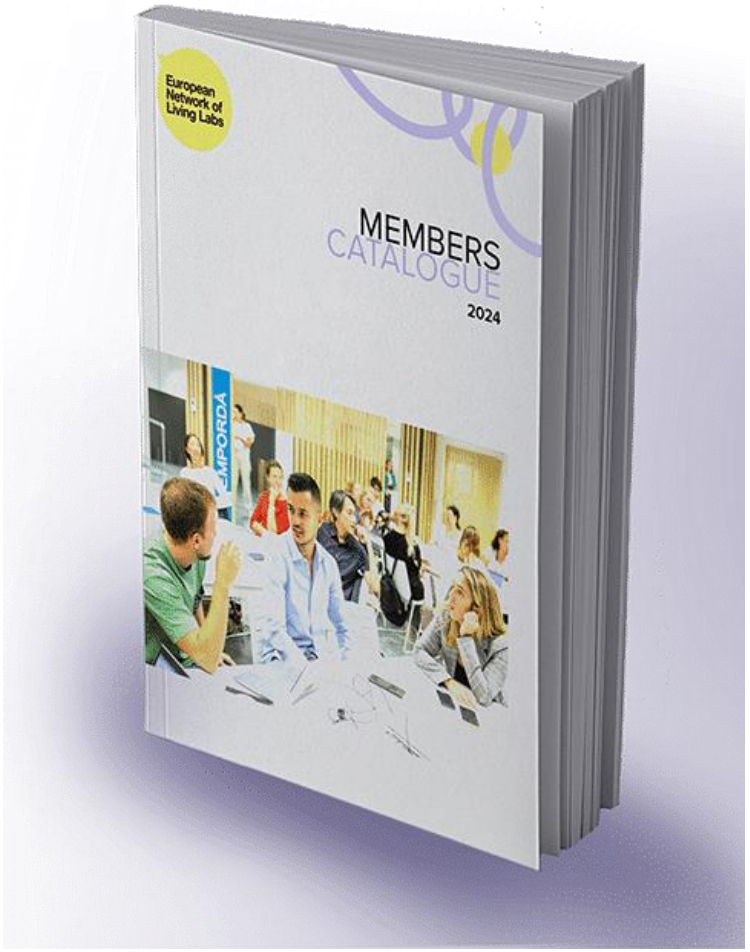
ENoLL Members catalogue

Explore our Members Catalogue and connect with our global community of changemakers. With members from multiple regions and backgrounds, our Network is continually expanding, motivated by a shared passion for user-driven open innovation. Take a look inside!



https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14180612

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OpenLivingLab Days 2025

Have a look at our website

SAVE THE DATE

OPEN LIVING LAB DAYS

📅 **30 September – 3 October 2025**

📍 **Andorra la Vella, Andorra**

🏔️ **Co-organised with:** ENoLL Member **Andorra Living Lab / Andorra Research & Innovation**

📢 **Theme:** *Living Labs for Regenerative Futures: Connecting Local and Global Innovation Ecosystems*

ANDORRA LIVING LAB

ANDORRA RESEARCH + INNOVATION

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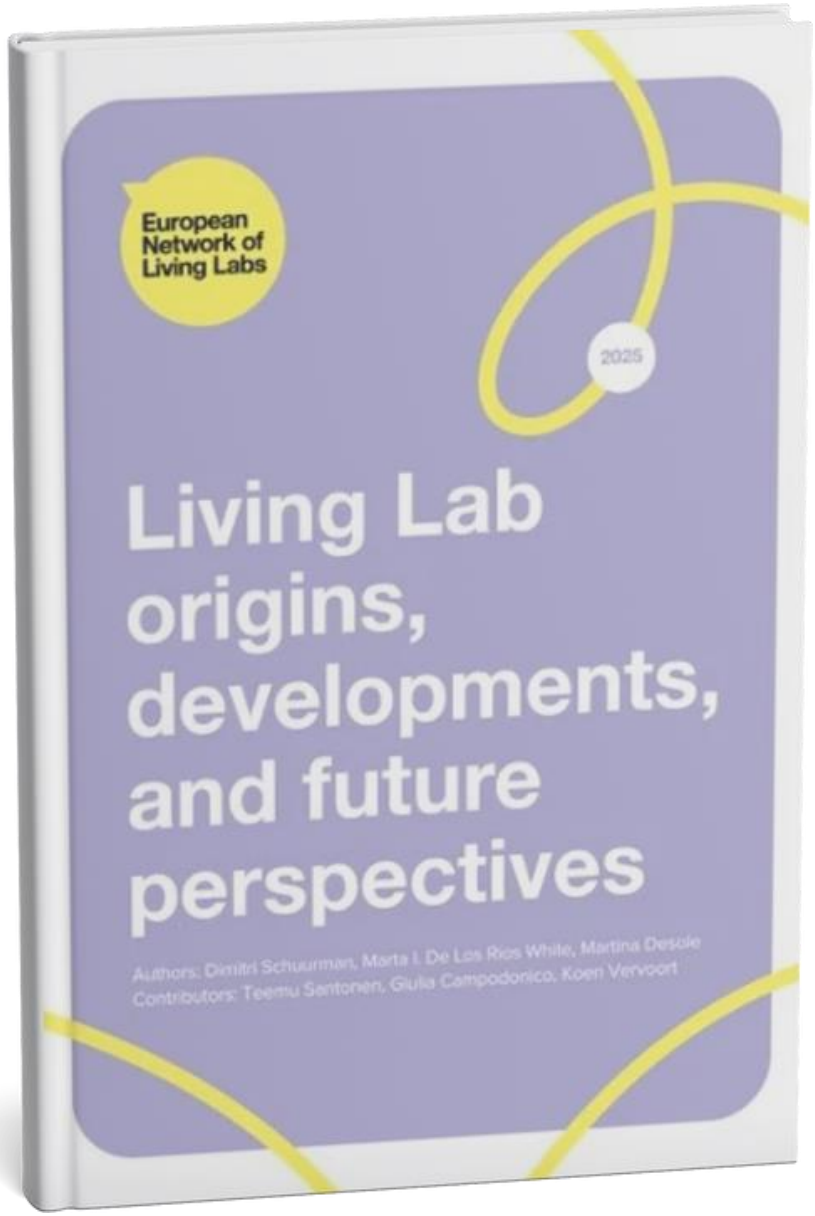
ENoLL Booklet

This booklet provides a comprehensive introduction to the origins, evolution, and future outlook of the Living Lab movement. It has been created to guide readers through the development of Living Labs over the years and highlight the path ahead.



https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14764597

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Alessandra Tricarico

Deputy Head of Network

alessandra.tricarico@enoll.org

Thank you!

Funded by
the European Union

Join the movement as a **signatory** (national/regional/local administrations) or **supporter** (companies, academia, NGOs, etc)

living-in.eu

Living in EU

LIVING-IN.EU | GO-LI.EU

EUROCITIES

ERRIN European Regions Research and Innovation Network

OPEN & AGILE SMART CITIES & COMMUNITIES

European Network of Living Labs

CCRE CEMR Local & Regional Europe

European Commission

European Committee of the Regions

Funded by the European Union

Living-in.EU Working Groups

Living-in.EU working groups are aligned with the Join, Boost, Sustain commitments, and cover financial, technical, legal, education, and monitoring aspects. Open to **representatives from cities, regions, and member states**, they provide a **collaborative space for discussing challenges, sharing experiences, and working together to upscale digital solutions**.

Education & Capacity Building

Legal

Financial

Monitoring & Measuring

Technical

Join the Working Groups!

LIVING-IN.EU | GO-LI.EU CommuniCity CommuniLab

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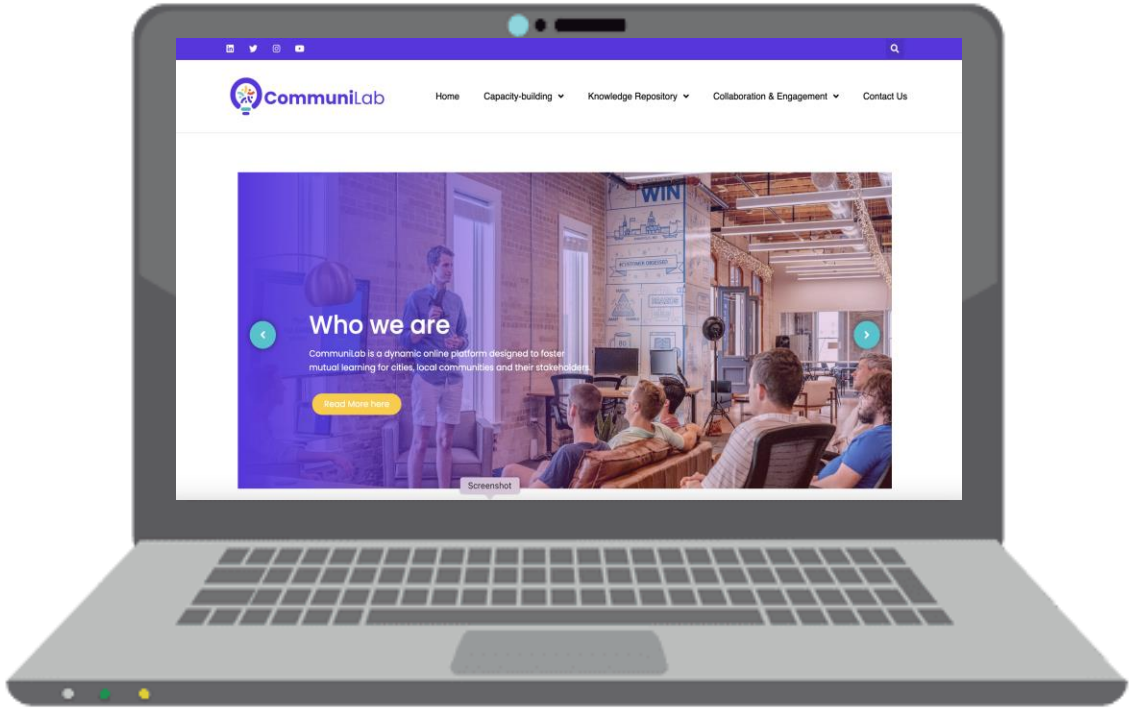
the European Union



Check out CommuniLab here:

https://communicity-project.eu/communi-lab/

LIVING-IN.EU | GO-LI.EU CommuniCity CommuniLab

Funded by
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THANK YOU FOR JOINING!

LIVING-IN.EU | GO-LI.EU CommuniCity CommuniLab

COMON

LL approach for vulnerable communities

gent:
imec embracing a better life
UNIVERSITEIT GENT
BIBLIOTHEEK DE KROOK
avansa regio Gent samen naar beter
URGENT.FM 105.3

primesight
146301
Maak
de toekomst
mee.
comon.gent
COMON

Vision

What do we stand for?

Ghent(ians)

Citizen participation

Vision

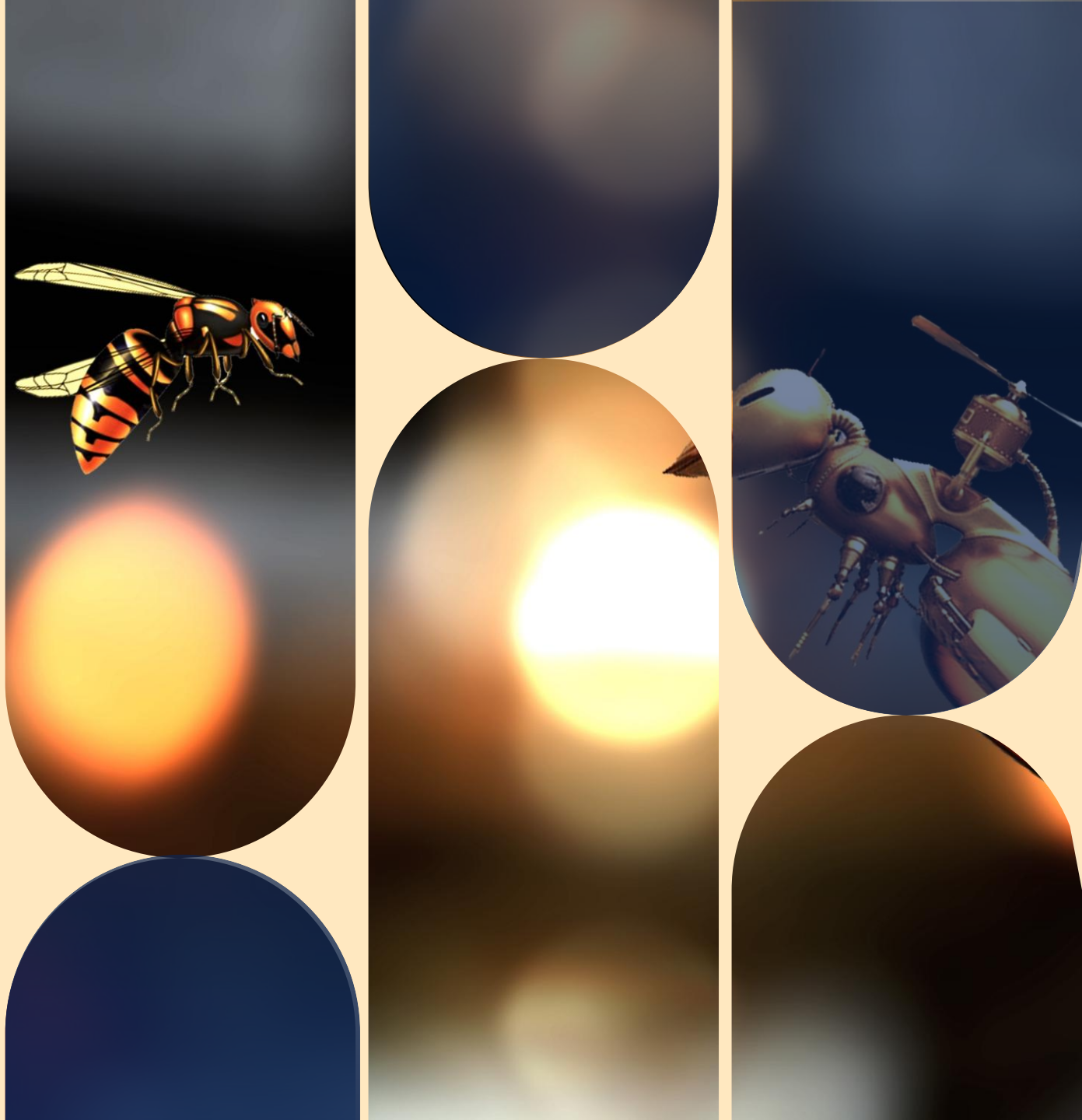
What do we stand for?

Ghent(ians)

Citizen participation

Technology

Belief in the potential



Vision

What do we stand for?

Ghent(ians)
Citizen participation

Technology
Belief in the potential

Prototyping
Think, but mainly act

COMON

- Core 3,5 FTE
- Extra people

COMON

- Core 3,5 FTE
- Extra people
- Budget

Theme

Thematic approach

Theme

Thematic approach

- One central theme
  Chosen based on broad support

Theme

Thematic approach

- One central theme
  Chosen based on broad support

Theme

Thematic approach

- **One central theme**
  Chosen based on broad support

Theme

Thematic approach

One central theme

Chosen based on broad support

Timing

One and a half year

Theme

Thematic approach

One central theme

Chosen based on broad support

Timing

One and a half year

Collaboration

Searching for win-win

Approach

Design thinking

SOCIAL

DEBATE

imec-mict-ugent

Process in four phases

Phase 1

challenge

Phase 2

problem

Phase 3

solution

Phase 4

experiment

1. Challenge

1.1 Define priority

1.2 Internal pre-phase

1.3 Select challenge

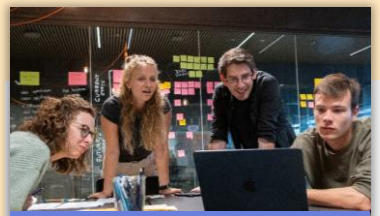
1.4 Launch event

2. Problem

2.1 Matchmaking

2.2 Stakeholder work

2.3 Desk research



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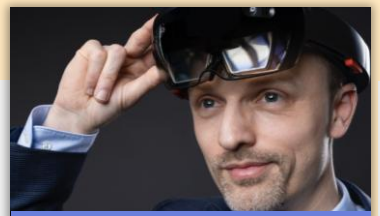

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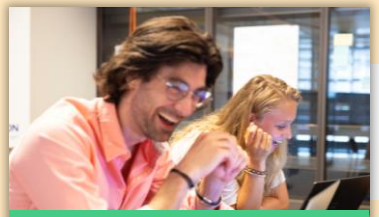
3.4 Duo-interviews

3.5 Micro financing

4. Experiment

4.1 Talent scouting



4.2 Microlabs x3

4.3 Experimentcafé

4.4 Anchoring

Doorlopend

1. Expo

2. Public events

3. Thesis atelier

4. Publications

Thema 2024

- Dak- en thuisloosheid
- Detentie
- Dienstverlening
- Financiën en schulden
- Gezondheid
- Integratie, taal en tolken
- Inclusieve maatschappij
- Kinderopvang
- Leefbare omgeving
- Mobiliteit
- Onderwijs, leren en ontplooiing
- Sociale media
- Vrije tijd
- Werk
- Wonen

Zoeken

2024 signalen

1

Tekort aan laagdrempelige ontmoetingsplekken voor jongeren en jongvolwassenen

De behoefte aan een overdekte ontmoetingsplek leeft in veel wijken. Jongeren en jongvolwassenen vinden niet altijd een plek waar ze elkaar kunnen ontmoeten en bijvoorbeeld goedkoop een koffie kunnen drinken (zeker wanneer het buiten koud is). Hoewel er verschillende ontmoetingsplekken in Gent zijn, hebben deze vaak een vast publiek; waardoor andere doelgroepen zoals onder meer mensen met een migratieachtergrond, een handicap, maar evenzeer LGBTQ, ... zich niet direct welkom voelen of geneigd zijn deze plekken te gebruiken. Er is een gebrek aan brugfiguren die drempels kunnen verlagen. Het is belangrijk dat jongeren een eigen geschikte plek (overdekt en geluiddempend) kunnen creëren in de openbare ruimte. Daarnaast is het cruciaal dat deze plekken goed vindbaar zijn en dat er inspanningen worden geleverd om de drempels te verlagen. Ook het hebben van buitenruimtes is belangrijk, omdat veel jongeren in de stad geen tuin hebben om in te hangen. Daarnaast is er veel stigmatisering van de buurtbewoners naar hangjongeren.

Het project “Samen op Straat” kan als een goed voorbeeld dienen van hoe dergelijke initiatieven

Ghent stinks!
Ideeënmuur
Samen maken we Gent nog beter
COMON
men maken
e Gent nog beter.

GEPLAATST OP DO, 21.09.2023

"Hoe kunnen we de beschikbare ruimte om te bewegen en te sporten slim benutten?"

Piet, Bert en Dieter

1. Challenge

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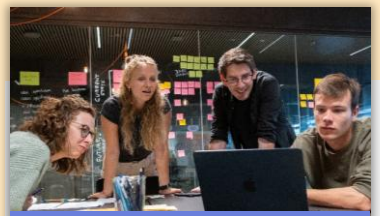

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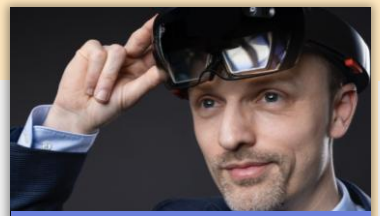

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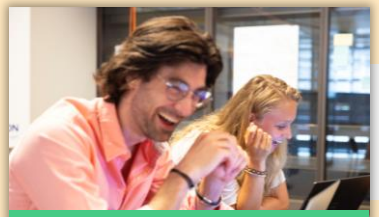

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4.3 Experimentcafé

4.4 Anchoring

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2. Public events

3. Thesis atelier

4. Publications

"Hoe kunnen we wandelvoetbal populair maken in Gent en een hechte gemeenschap opbouwen?"

Katrien

"Hoe kunnen we patiënten motiveren om te blijven bewegen, ook wanneer ze niet langer ongezond zijn? "

Servaas

"Hoe kunnen we kwetsbare thuiswonende ouderen aan het bewegen krijgen?"

Emma

"Hoe kunnen we mensen tussen 30 en 50 jaar elkaar eenvoudiger laten ontmoeten om samen te bewegen?"

David

"Hoe kunnen we mensen met een neurologische aandoening meer aan het bewegen krijgen?"

Kristl

"Hoe kunnen we beweging tijdens verplaatsingen plezieriger, toegankelijker en veiliger maken in de stad?"

Joyca en Delfien

"Hoe kunnen we mensen die langdurig ziek zijn de moed en de energie geven om te sporten?"

Eline

"Hoe kan dans gebruikt worden als stimulans om mensen te laten bewegen?"

Evelien

1. Challenge

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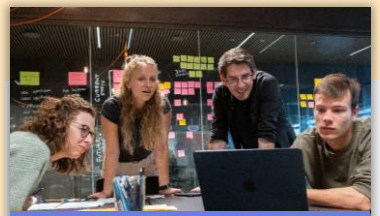

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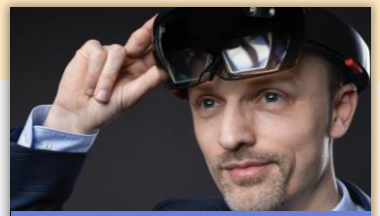

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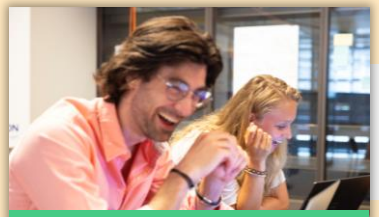

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4.4 Anchoring

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"Hoe kunnen we gezondheidszorg verstaanbaar maken voor iedereen in onze superdiverse stad?"

Leyla Yüksel

(Gentse gynaecoloog)

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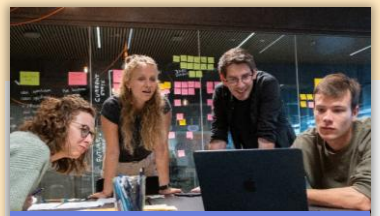

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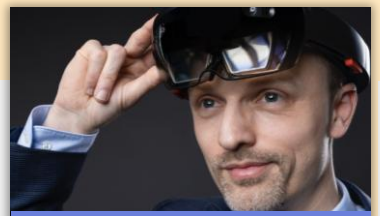

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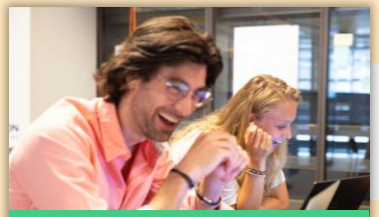

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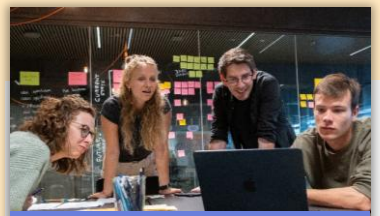

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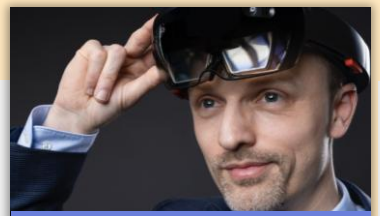

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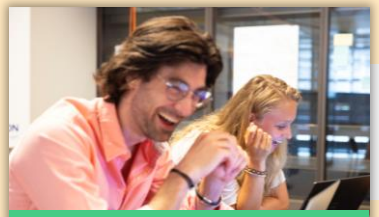

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GANTOISE
COMON
COMO
SPA
COMON

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Mint To Be Tea

Jong Gent in Actie vzw

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About

In deze podcast gaan trajectbegeleidster Isabelle en outreacher Amaury van JGiA vzw in gesprek met jongeren, ervaringsdeskundigen, experts of simpelweg mensen met passie over een thema waar jongeren mee bezig zijn.

No rating ☆ • Culture Society

COMON
Samen
maken we
Gent nog
beter
COMON
COMON

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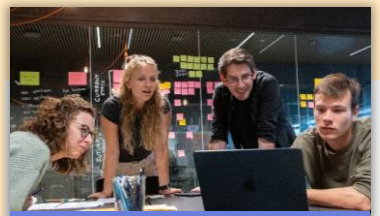

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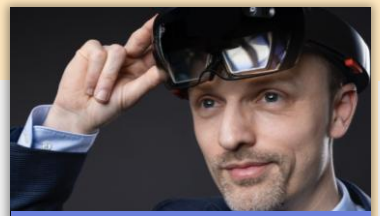

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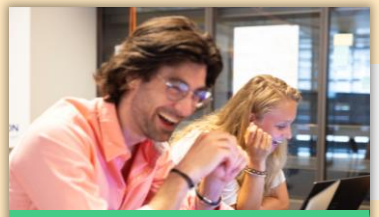

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DREMEL

Lara
COMON
LARA
Anais
COMON
ANAIS
COMON
JULE

1STE GRAAD
KOM IN BEWEGING
MET ONZE DANS- ROBOT!
Een dansfeest in een doosje!
Wat doet onze dansrobot?
KOM DANSEN!
Helm vol leven
Zet 'm op... en zet jezelf in beweging!

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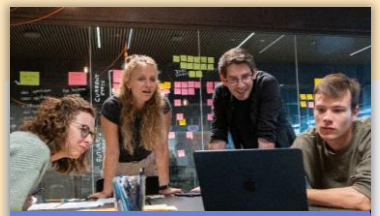

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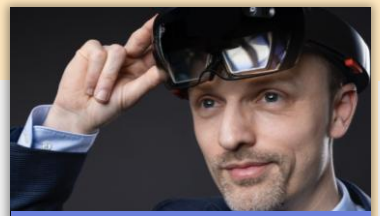

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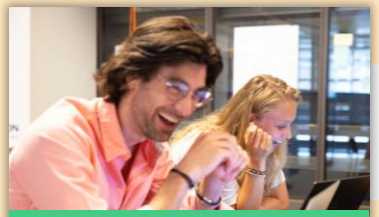

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Nieuw
Van uitdaging naar oplossing
COMON

COMON
Proficiat aan de winnaars!

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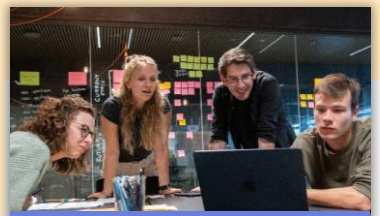

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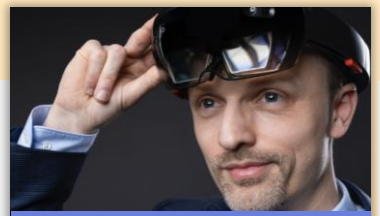


2.6 Interviews future

3. Solution

3.1 Cocreation Krook

3.2 School program

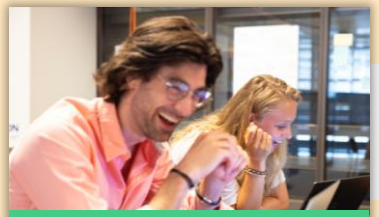
3.3 Make-a-thon

3.4 Duo-interviews

3.5 Micro financing

4. Experiment

4.1 Talent scouting



4.2 Microlabs x3

4.3 Experimentcafé

4.4 Anchoring

Doorlopend

1. Expo

2. Public events

3. Thesis atelier

4. Publications

Computer
says no...

1. Challenge

1.1 Define priority

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1.3 Select challenge

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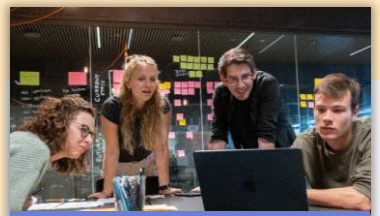

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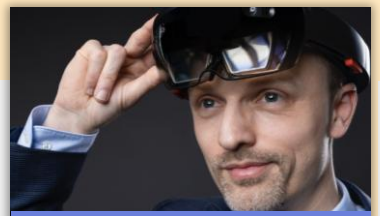

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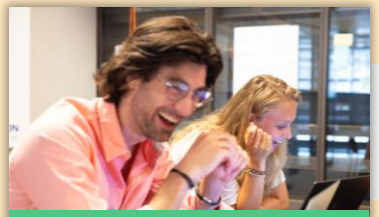

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Dolox
Welke pijn?
Stekend
Brandend
Zeurend

RevOnc

ExplainMed
samenvatting
moeilijke woorden
MR LUMBALE WERVELZUIL
MRI van de lumbale wervelzuil:
Klinische inlichtingen: lumbo-ischialgie links
Lumbo-ischialgie
Pijn in de onderrug/benen/billen
Door verdrukking van een zenuw die naar de voeten loopt
lees meer
Normaal aspect van het laagthoracale ruggenmerg en van de conus medullaris.
Degeneratieve discusveranderingen op het niveau L4-L5 met dehydrat
nucleus pul
lumbo-ischialgie

MIA

RingMe

UrbanCubby
Mystery Box
?
geologic

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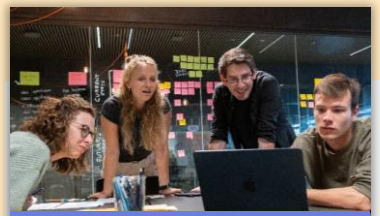

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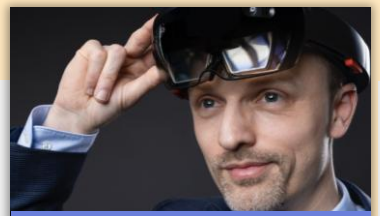

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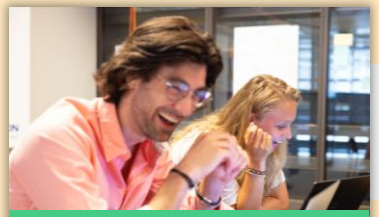

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MOET
WEG
KAST
COMON
MAGAZINES
bliotheek

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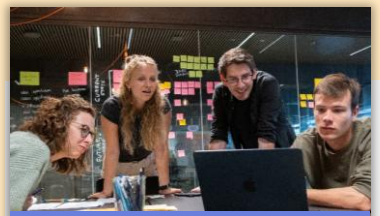

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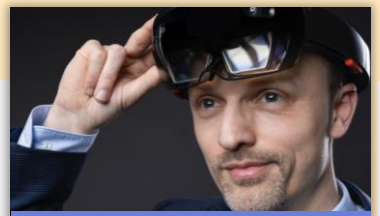

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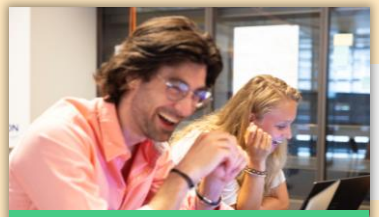

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suara
COOPERATIVA

SUARA COOPERATIVA

2025

#PersonesQueDecideixen

KEY FIGURES

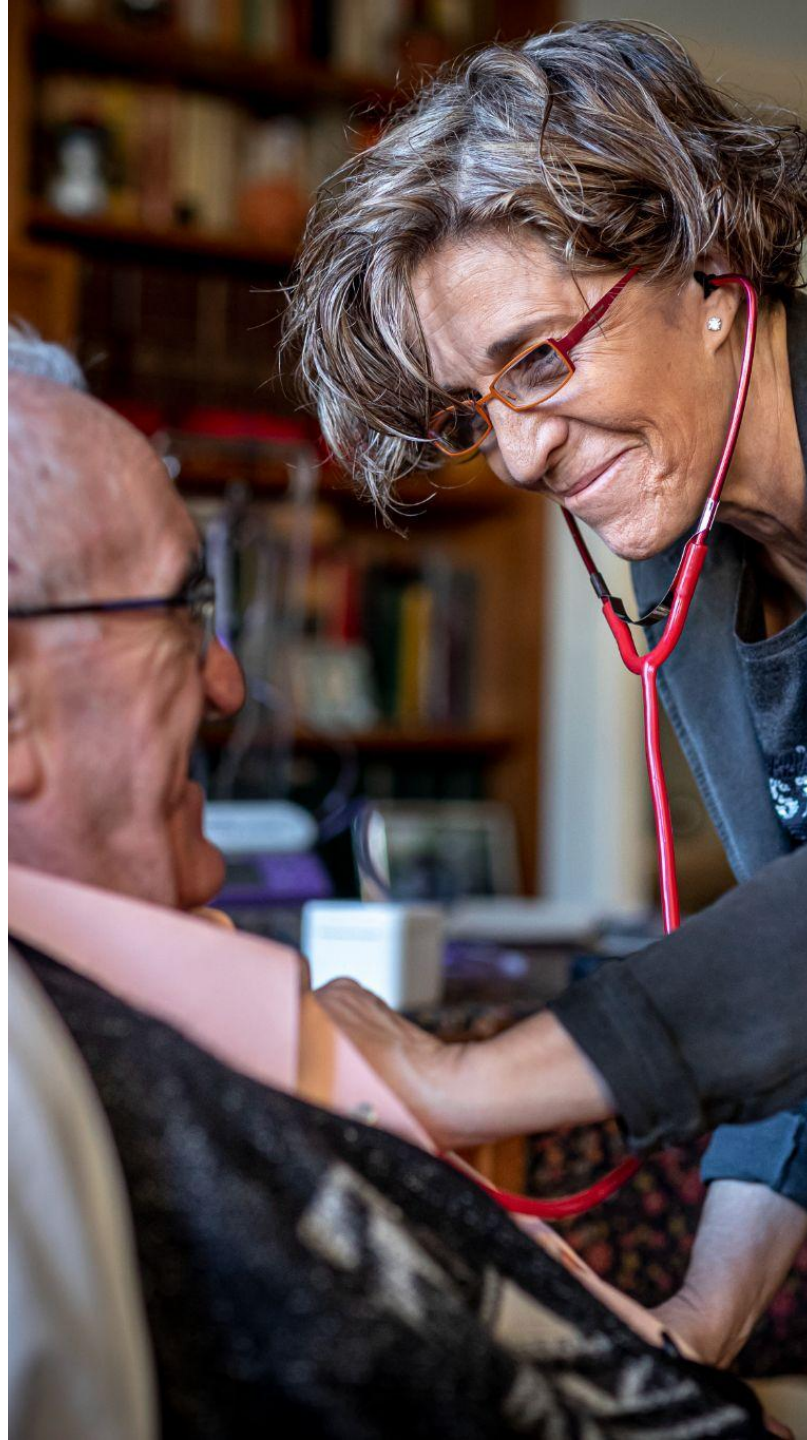
284
Managed Services

38.918
People assisted

4.749
Job positions

Data as of December 31, 2022:

1.603 associate members
88% female workforce
66,001 hours of training
118,010,946 € operating income
27,211,974 € own funds
244,087,533 € integrated social value



WHAT WE DO?

OUR SERVICES

We offer a wide range of options to meet the needs of individuals throughout their life cycle, and we tailor our services to the requirements of each client and individual served.

Home Care

Functional Diversity

Facilities for the Elderly

Childhood, Adolescence, and Youth

Early Childhood

Supporting Education

Adult Education

Women and Family

Social Inclusion

Justice

MISSION AND VALUES

WE TRANSFORM THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

INNOVATIVE

We incorporate technology into our activities to ensure maximum efficiency.

APPROACHABLE

The cooperative's activity revolves around people: professionals, individuals served, clients, and collaborators.

PARTICIPATORY

We democratically manage the cooperative, collaborate in networks with external partners, and empower our stakeholders.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

Commitment to the environment, territorial development, job creation, and reinvestment of corporate surpluses..

suara
COOPERATIVA

Social Digital Lab

PEOPLE | TECH | CARE 2025

#PersonesQueDecideixen

LABORATORY OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Welcomes startup ecosystem, entrepreneurship,

new projects and digital services.

Facilitates distributed innovation

and agile work methodologies in the organization

Social Digital Living Lab

Support lever for the digital transformation of social economy organizations and creation of services with social impact.

Transformation towards a more innovative, digital, co-creative organization, interconnected with the ecosystem, open to universities, companies and prepared for change, experimentation and the promotion of participation.

Innovation ecosystem

PÚBLICS ACTORS

CITIZENSHIP

Living Lab

PRIVATE SECTOR

KNOWLEDGE

Open and collaborative.

Space for experimentation open to the public:

Cool thinker agents

Pilot test

- Home automation
- Monitoring System and Telemedicine.
- Sensorization of the homes
- Assistive and social robotics

suara
COOPERATIVA
HOME CARE
TRANSFORMATION

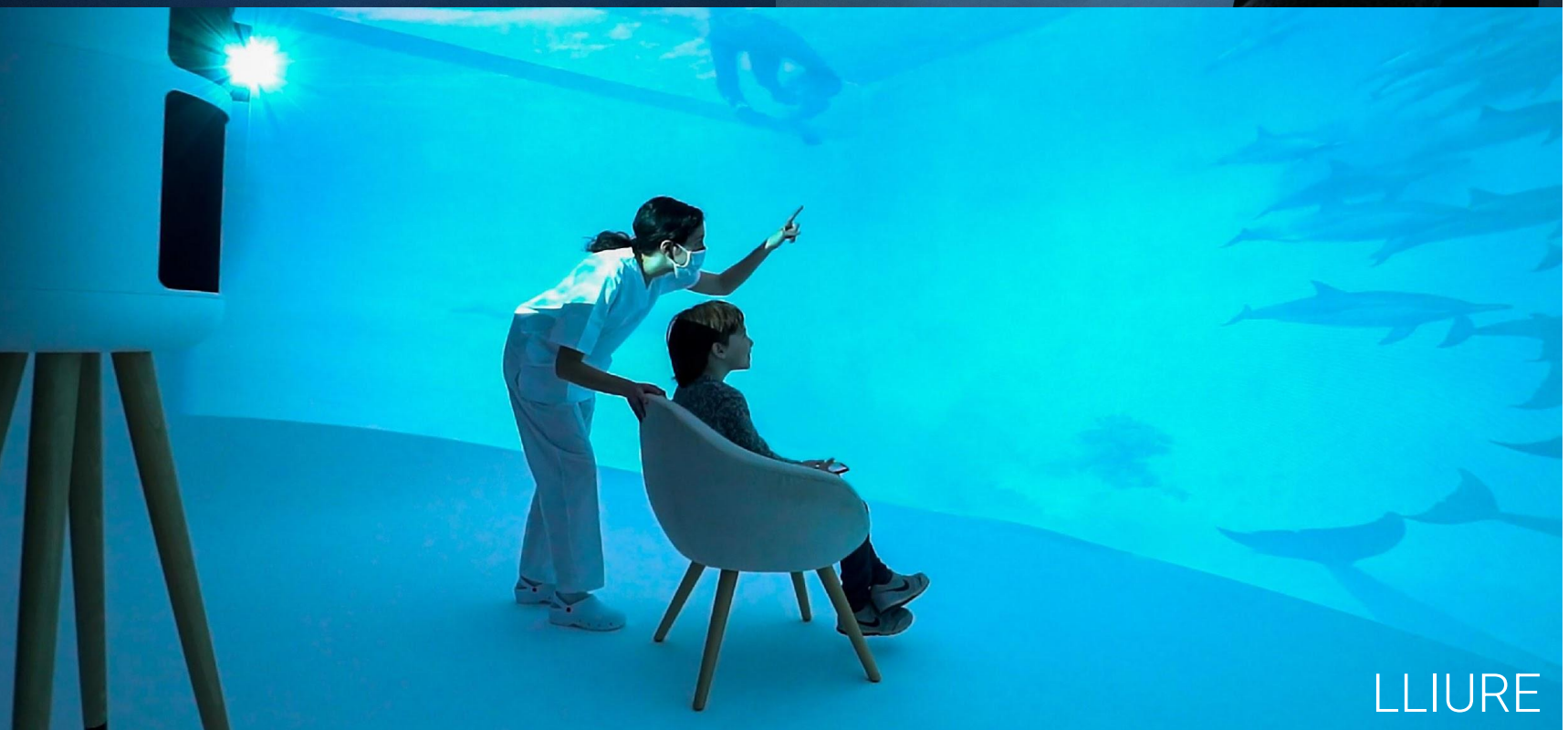
Social and assistive robotics

Project driven by:Social Digital Lab in collaboration with UPC (IRI) i Salto group.

suara COOPERATIVA

Institut de Robòtica i Informàtica Industrial

25 years GROUP SALTO intelligent technology



IMMERSIVE REALITY TO SUPPORT EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

RURAL AREAS IN SOUTHERN CATALONIA

TRAINING SESSIONS

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

OUTCOMES

CHALLENGES

ACCOMPANY

Building trust and human connections is essential

NETWORK

The professionals
Community the neighbors

Neighborhood support.
Collaboration agreements with neighborhood entities

HANDLE/TAKE CARE

The professionals

Teams of professionals who work in the territories/neighborhoods with presence and increase the frequency of contracts.
New professional skills.

PERSON CENTERED APPROACH

Vulnerable communities are not passive recipients. but key actors in designing solutions that affect their lives

Thank you

Contact: claragarciab@suara.coop

#PersonesQueDecideixen