



Territorial Transitions: Exploring the Scene of Participatory Actions and Commons

Organisers:

Leila Kebir, leila.kebir@unil.ch , University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Artur Ochojski, artur.ochojski@uekat.pl, University of Economics in Katowice, Poland

Adam Polko, polko@ue.katowice.pl, University of Economics in Katowice, Poland

Frederic Wallet, frederic.wallet@inrae.fr , INRAE Occitanie-Toulouse, France

Abstract

To address the pressing challenges of sustainability, territories are increasingly engaged in transitioning their economic and social development models. These transformative processes manifest in diverse forms, impacting multiple sectors of business and administrative activity while reshaping the lifestyles of communities. Evidence highlights a proliferation of innovative experiments, including territorial and sector-specific transition projects.

While these initiatives seek to enhance production and consumption practices for greater sustainability, they are not without challenges or criticisms. First, they face significant organizational, technological, social, and economic barriers that impede their adoption and swift implementation across territories. Second, they raise critical questions about balancing diverse ambitions with principles of justice, emphasizing issues like equitable economic and cognitive access to transitions and the broader social and economic impacts of such transformations. Third, these initiatives present governance challenges, particularly in structuring debates and decision-making processes, thereby underscoring the necessity of fostering a "transitional democracy."

At the territorial scale, transition-oriented initiatives display a wide range of characteristics, differing in their levels of innovation, inclusivity, and ambition in challenging dominant paradigms. These efforts are supported by varying coordination mechanisms, organizational frameworks, and funding approaches. While some initiatives are closely integrated within market economies, a growing number adopt alternative logics, questioning the ability of neoliberal capitalism to lead transitions and

exploring new pathways. Within this context, the role of commoning practices and multi-level governance emerges as particularly significant.

This special session seeks to explore the collective actions underpinning these transition initiatives.

We invite contributions that address the following key aspects:

- Conditions of emergence, governance, and economic models
- Relationships with resources, particularly the role of commons
- Interactions with public policy and actions
- Conceptualizations of transition associated with these initiatives
- Impacts and methods of territorial anchoring

Submissions may include case studies, typologies, comparative analyses, or quantitative research. They may focus on urban or rural territories, as well as citizen-led or sector-specific initiatives driving these transitions.