



Special Session Proposal

Territorial dimensions of green and digital transitions

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Abstract

The European Green Deal (EGD) is a growth strategy aiming at transforming the European Union into a climate-neutral space by 2050. Aware of its major social side-effects, the EU is launching special funds to support the mitigation of expected inequalities generated by the green transition in order to keep it also a just transition. Ongoing and accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the global digital transition is envisaged as an enabler background for the green transition. An effective coordination between green and digital transitions is currently seen as crucial to the European recovery, which must be based on principles such as solidarity, convergence, and cohesion in order to be fair and inclusive. The topicality of the theme is evident in the motto for the current Presidency of the Council of the European Union: “for a fair, green and digital recovery” (2021PORTUGAL.EU, 2021).

Studies on sustainable transitions contribute to a growing interdisciplinary research field which have produced, particularly in the last decade, theoretical and methodological advances, alongside with empirical evidence, on how to understand the rise and development of sustainable transitions in different areas, such as energy, mobility, or agri-food systems. The spatial dimensions of sustainability transitions is the focus of the emergent field of geography of sustainability transitions. However, the design of a macro-level growth eco-strategy, such as the EGD, pulled by a social and political demand for major transformations in the global economy, require a major effort of research from multidisciplinary fields. It is crucial to understand and support in-depth change processes that are or should be undertaken by institutions, firms, and value chains, alongside with the assessment of their effects on people and places.

The aim of this special session is thus to bring together research contributions from different fields, helping to enlighten how these major changes in global systems, such as the energy, mobility and tourism, agri-food, services, and manufacturing industry, will shape the transitions at the micro and meso-levels and affect people and places, namely territorial inequalities and social exclusion phenomena. Consequently, we welcome innovative theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as empirical evidence, focused on responding to those questions, encompassing multiple topics driven by a focus on the territorial specificities – rural

and peripheral regions, sparsely populated areas, small and medium size towns, urban-rural interfaces – , spillovers, exclusions and inequalities raised by eco-smart transitions driven by technological disruptive innovation, consumption trends, citizens' claims, natural resources and ecosystems depletion, public policies, or firms strategies.

2021PORTUGAL.EU. (2021). *Programme for the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union*. Retrieved from <https://www.2021portugal.eu/media/e0rjnvdj/programme-for-the-portuguese-presidency-of-the-council-of-the-european-union-en.pdf>

This special session aims at receiving contributions for a call for papers on the session topic ('Territorial dimensions of green and digital transitions') be briefly launched at the journal *Regional Science: Policy and Practice* (RSPP)