

**The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Place-based Innovation Strategies for  
Sustainability**  
**Higher Education for Smart Specialisation (HESS IV) project advisory group**  
**1<sup>st</sup> meeting 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Participants:**

*Members:*

Alessio Cavicchi, Professor, Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment, University of Pisa

Adina Fodor, Head of the Office for International Cooperation, Babes-Bolyai University

John Goddard, Emeritus Professor of Regional Development Studies

Ellen Hazelkorn, Emeritus Professor TU Dublin

Henning Kroll, Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research

Mikkel Trym, Director of the Copenhagen Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab,  
Entrepreneurship Lead EIT Climate-KIC

Elvira Uyerra, Professor of Innovation Studies at Alliance Manchester Business School

*Observers:*

John Edwards, Secretary General of EURASHE

Andrea-Rosalinde Hofer, OECD

*DG EAC*

Maria Palladino

Paul Tzimas

*JRC HESS Team*

Eskarne Arregui

Andreia Inamorato

Karel Haegeman

Jayne Woolford

*JRC contracted experts*

**WP1**

Patricia Canto, Orkestra

James Wilson, Orkestra

**WP3**

Ricard Esparza Masana, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

**WP4**

Julia Bachtrogler-Unger, WIFO, the Austrian Institute of Economic Research

Anna Burton, WIFO, the Austrian Institute of Economic Research

Krzysztof Gulda

## Minutes

Welcome and quick introduction to the group and to the Higher Education for Smart Specialisation (HESS) project.

**Tour de table** Brief introduction of all participants

### 10:20 DG EAC- HESS in the broader policy context:

*Maria Palladino* from DG EAC presented the broader EU policy context and latest developments and events. The EC has launched a Communication on a [‘European Strategy for Universities’](#) and a [‘Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Building Bridges for Effective European Higher Education Cooperation’](#) alongside a related staff working document. A webinar will be held on HEInnovate on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and the next University-Business Forum will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022.

### 10:30: DG JRC work overview

*Karel Haegeman* gave an overview of the HESS project and the wider work of unit B7 Knowledge for Finance, Innovation and Growth in the JRC. He introduced *Jayne Woolford* as the project leader and *Andreia Inamorato*, and thanked *Eskarne Arregui* for her work and contribution to the HESS project during her time at the JRC.

*Eskarne Arregui* presented work on the HESS projects I, II and III.

*Jayne Woolford* presented HESS IV and the role of the advisory group.

*Andreia Inamorato* gave a presentation on lessons from JRC B4 Human Capital and Employment unit.

### Work Package 1 – Overview of work and developments

The work undertaken so far under WP 1 was presented by *Eskarni Aguirre*, JRC; *Patricia Canto*, external expert; *James R. Wilson*, external expert, both from Orkestra.

Experts raised the following points in discussion:

- The extent to which institutional leadership capacity and capability has or can be analysed under the HESS project, the barriers and how they can be overcome.
- HESS activity should be broadened to ensure relevance to European Partnerships under Horizon Europe.
- The extent to which intra-regional university collaboration had been or could be explored, since many different types of universities may coexist in a region which may be working together or in conflict with each other in relation to RIS3
- Need to categorise the different types /levels of challenges and gaps to inform S4 and ensure it drives place-based integration
- The evaluation of the first round of KICS in terms of place-based integration was referenced and offered for internal distribution.
- Gap between theory and practice - how to integrate different projects and have a common vision on how they can contribute to the region: there is certain disconnection and so impact is not really felt at European level.

- An interesting exercise would involve an investigation of HE's study programme to see if there has been an impact from S3 in terms of new programmes/ offers.

The report from Orkestra will be made available to advisory group participants for their information and comment, once it is finalised.

### **Work Package 3 – Overview of work and developments**

*Jayne Woolford*, JRC and *Ricard Esparza Masana*, external expert presented the ongoing work under WP3.

Experts raised the following points in discussion:

- Synergies between initiatives needs to be further developed, particularly in relation to HE contribution to their territories and how this can be strengthened by the different programmes and ensure co-creation between the universities and regional authorities.

### **Work Package 4– Overview of work and developments**

WP4 and work and developments to date was presented by *Jayne Woolford*, JRC with *Julia Bachtrögler-Unger*, external expert and *Krzysztof Gulda*, external expert.

The work undertaken under WP1 will be mapped / feed into the work being undertaken under WP4.

There may be the possibility, under HESS, to consider investments in skills and human capital not only under ESIF but also the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). Some initial and broader work has been undertaken by the JRC in relation to Portugal, but a skills focus could be of particular relevance to HESS.

Experts raised the following points in discussion:

- Difficulties and challenges for universities to navigate through the different EU-level, regional and national programmes and to implement ESI funds, with many universities preferring national funding programmes in countries such as DE, AT, FR
- Project bid writers need to take terminology into consideration when writing a proposal and ensure they use the usual key words, but the analysis we should look beyond that, both incorporating less jargonistic terms and also analyzing 'how' these keywords represent what is being delivered on the ground.

**Close.** Thanks from DG EAC (Maria Palladino) and DG JRC (Karel Haegeman). There will be two more meetings of the advisory group, provisionally, one before the summer and another in late autumn.

*All presentations and documentation related to the meeting are available in the Hess Advisory Group folder on Teams.*