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EU COST Action, MARGISTAR, launched to further sustainability in mountainous regions

Turku, Finland - MARGISTAR, an EU-funded COST Action aimed at furthering inclusive, competitive, and green mountainous regions, was launched in collaboration with 27 countries and more than 100 participants this April. The project supports international collaboration that invites scholars, inhabitants, civil society, entrepreneurs, local government, and policymakers to work together to bring about transformative change towards more connected and resilient mountainous communities.

Europe's mountainous areas cover almost 40% of the continent and are home to 17% of its human population. However, they are often showplaces of disparity, poorer territorial cohesion, unbalanced use and conservation of ecosystem services, and marginalisation.

MARGISTAR, a collaborative COST Action forum, aims to foster transformation strategies and innovation processes towards the revitalisation of these areas and the co-creation of alternative and effective pathways to sustainability.

Chaired by Research Professor Juha Hiedanpää of the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), MARGISTAR involves participants from 27 countries. The network includes more than 100 researchers and stakeholders representing a wide cross-section of society and interests in mountainous regions, including agriculturists, geographers, environmental scientists, economists, political and social scientists, amongst others. The main objective of the Action is to foster transformation strategies and innovation processes for the revitalisation of marginalised mountain areas, specifically, to synthesise and co-create alternative and effective pathways to sustainability. The four-year EU-funded MARGISTAR project will further develop the online FAIRWAY platform enabling transdisciplinary exchange between researchers and stakeholders. This will create networking opportunities amongst scholars, establish training for young academics, and support the exchange of intersectional evidence surrounding potential transformation pathways in marginalised mountainous regions.

MARGISTAR has established three interacting transdisciplinary Working Groups focused on coordination and networking (WG1), co-creation and synthesis of research and best practice on periphery traps, visions of post-marginalised futures, and transformation pathways (WG2), and capacity building and outreach (WG3).

Research Prof. Juha Hiedanpää of the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) and MARGISTAR Action Chair, said:

“The goal of MARGISTAR is to explore problematic development conditions and bring about innovative solutions that help transform marginalised mountainous areas into green, digital, and healthy places of living. We aim high. By connecting our COST Action networking activities with ongoing inter- and transdisciplinary academic research on specific key locations, we will contribute positively to the needed transition.”

The MARGISTAR COST Action commenced in September 2022 and will continue until September 2026.

For more information, visit MARGISTAR online at <https://margistar.eu/> or contact Research Professor Juha Hiedanpää, [Action Chair](#).

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career, and innovation.

Contact

Juha Hiedanpää
Research Professor
Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)
+358503638109
juha.hiedanpaa@luke.fi
www.luke.fi