

# **PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPING A LIVING LAB IN IAȘI, ROMANIA. COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES AND GOVERNANCE MODELS**

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Living Labs (LLs) are proposed as catalysts for urban innovation, to create a space where multiple stakeholders can collaborate, experiment, and develop solutions to pressing urban challenges. While such initiatives hold great potential, many struggle to remain active beyond their initial phase, raising important questions about the governance models that support their long-term sustainability. Here, we present the development of a Living Lab in Iași, Romania, by applying the Quadruple Helix framework, for collaborative urban governance and to address challenges through co-creation and stakeholder-driven innovation.

A multi-method approach combining policy analysis, resident surveys, and stakeholder consultations was utilised. Reviewing urban policies, council decisions, and strategic plans provided insights into existing governance structures and institutional priorities. Concomitant surveys with residents highlighted everyday urban challenges and expectations, ensuring that local needs are reflected in the co-creation process. Importantly, stakeholder consultations brought together representatives from the local government, academia, businesses, and the civil society, to explore strategies for effective cooperation, resource-sharing, and citizen engagement in the innovation process. By integrating these perspectives, a governance framework was developed, to sustain transparency, inclusivity, and long-term LL adaptability.

Our findings support the Quadruple Helix model as a key factor for LLs sustainability, highlighting the role of strong partnerships and citizen participation in LLs success. A governance framework is put forward, based on institutional flexibility, cross-sector collaboration, and long-term civic engagement, to ensure lasting LLs development. These results are of interest to the broader discussions on participatory governance, as well as they provide guidance for policymakers, urban planners, and researchers working to integrate LLs into sustainable urban development strategies.

**Keywords:** Living Lab (LL), Quadruple Helix, urban governance, innovation, co-creation, citizen engagement.