



GRANULAR

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

University of Vigo

Universidade de Vigo

Author: Doval Ruiz, Maria Isabel (University of Vigo); Martins Rodal, Breixo (University of Vigo)

Editor: Iglesias, Maite (AEIDL); Ntabuhashe, Merveille (AEIDL)



Funded by
the European Union



UK Research
and Innovation

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them. UK participants in the GRANULAR project are supported by UKRI- Grant numbers 10039965 (James Hutton Institute) and 10041831 (University of Southampton).

The **Living Lab in Spain** aims to collect and analyse new **data related to hyper longevity, e-governance, and fires**. Through interviews and collaborations with local companies, the **needs of elderly people** in the province will be analysed.

Located in the only landlocked province in Galicia, northwest Spain, and bordering Portugal, the Ourense Living Lab operates in a region characterised by **diverse industries**. These include **poultry processing, chemical manufacturing, dairy production, wine and olive oil production, water bottling, and clothing manufacturing**. While tourism is not a significant economic driver, **thermal tourism** provides some economic benefit. The province also boasts a rich, though under-recognised, **cultural and literary heritage**. In recent years, industries related to **aerogeneration and aeronautics** have experienced growth.

Ourense faces many of the classic challenges of rural European areas: **depopulation, ageing, a weak business sector, and limited economic innovation**. With the lowest birth rate of any Spanish province and a **rapidly declining population**, the province is predominantly rural, characterised by mountainous terrain and isolation. These factors have historically contributed to economic stagnation and significant emigration to other parts of Spain, Europe, and the Americas.

Despite these challenges, Ourense has one of the **highest life expectancies in Europe and Spain**, a demographic trait with profound social and economic implications. Ageing limits economic innovation but presents untapped business opportunities. Environmentally, a sparse population struggles to manage a vast and complex territory. Moreover, a third of the population resides in the capital city, leaving much of the province under-managed and facing extensive social and environmental challenges.

This inland province, along with northern Portugal, has **historically been overlooked in development initiatives**. The Living Lab aims to address these issues by leveraging **local strengths, promoting innovation, and fostering sustainable development**.

OURENSE LIVING LAB| Galicia, Spain

Contact person:

Maria Isabel Doval Ruiz

granular@uvigo.es

Thematic Priority:

- Demographic change
- Public services
- Climate change

More info:

https://www.ruralgranular.eu/living_lab/living-lab-spain-oruense/



Spanish Living Lab Workshop.

ABOUT THE LIVING LAB

The Ourense Living Lab is a collaborative initiative between the provincial administration and the [University of Vigo](#), aimed at fostering innovative processes and development initiatives for the province of Ourense. Established during the 2019 Ourense Rural Summit, this effort brought together over 130 participants, including university representatives, businesses, and associations, to co-design projects supporting the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) from a rural perspective.

OBJECTIVES

- **Demographic Change:** The end goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to the ageing population in the province. The objective is to collect and analyse data focusing on the most elderly demographic, examining how the location of services aligns with the needs of this population within a rural-urban context. The Lab will collaborate with public administrations, senior citizens' associations, and businesses that possess relevant data. A key partner in this effort will be a film production company with a large, untapped database of interviews with older individuals, which will be analysed for insights. The approach includes studying the geographic distribution of services and the links between them, as well as reviewing the interview data.
- **Public Services:** The goal is to assess the effectiveness of e-governance processes in the province, particularly those aimed at supporting the elderly. Partners will include local and provincial governments, medical services, and various associations. The focus will be on evaluating digital platforms and examining the data from the province's telecare program, which is the most extensive digital service for seniors in the region.
- **Climate Change:** The Lab's goal is to explore the connections between forest fires, education, culture, and ageing. It will engage with schools, local mayors, older residents, and fire-related institutions. Interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders from the education, forestry, and ageing sectors to better understand these relationships and inform future strategies for mitigation and adaptation.

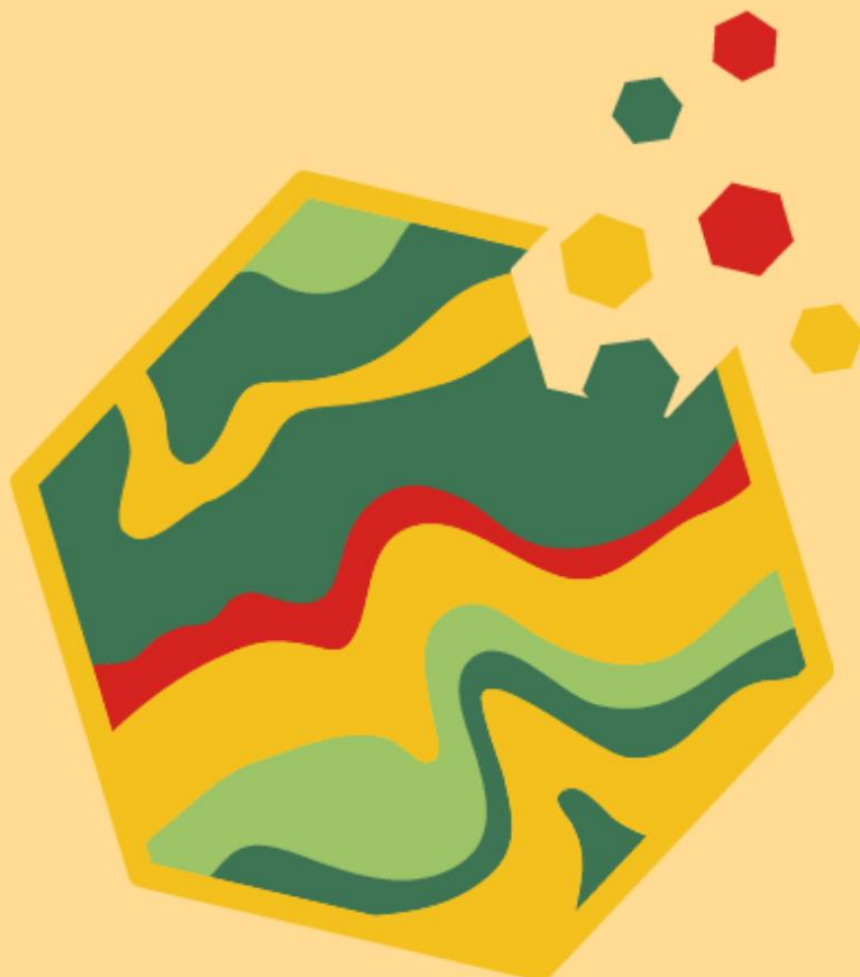
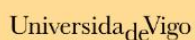
DATA TO BE COLLECTED

The Living Lab will collect both **qualitative and quantitative data** on various topics to understand the situation and its causes. The chosen themes are interconnected. For example, the **ageing population contributes to rural depopulation and increased fire risks**, while the province's e-governance focuses on services for older citizens, linking hyper-longevity with digital governance.

In the ageing analysis, the Lab will combine **statistical data on the province's socio-economic and territorial aspects with the location of elderly populations**, complemented by interviews with those over 85 and 100 years old. Data from e-governance systems will be incorporated to **map the mental and physical landscape**. Qualitative fire research will be conducted through interviews with both older and younger residents.



GRANULAR



www.ruralgranular.eu