Green Living Areas Mission

First Core Group Meeting

4 April 2025

Introduction

The **First Core Group** meeting of the **EUCLID Policy Hub** was a crucial step in engaging with the recently formed group, where details were explained about the **Green Living Areas (GLA) Mission,** the process for the **Institutional Policy Dialogue**, and the achievements so far. Additionally, it included a brief testimony of the Greek Municipality of Chalki - a stakeholder who actively engaged in the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue Process – and an open discussion aimed to understand the expectations of the policy-makers involved.

In addition to partners from the GLA Mission, the meeting counted the participation of around 20 key stakeholders today, including representatives of the European Commission (DG MENA and DG REGIO), the Union for the Mediterranean, EU programmes and EU regional strategies, as well as international, European, national, and local actors (e.g. networks of regions or islands, municipalities, and stakeholders representing the Balkan area and the southern shore of the Mediterranean basin).

What is the Institutional Policy Dialogue & Institutional Policy Dialogue Process

The Green Living Areas Mission is one of the key governance projects of the Interreg Euro-MED programme running from 2023 to 2029. We are coordinating around 25 thematic community projects on Green Living Areas, covering topics such as **mobility, territorial planning, energy, community engagement, and financing for the green transition**. Our mission is to assist them by bringing their results to the policy level while also providing them with existing policy instruments that can assist them.

For this purpose, we have conceptualised and are implementing a loop process through policy exchanges to adapt, replicate, and transfer the main policy instruments that are identified, as well as promote the results and answer the needs of the thematic community projects.
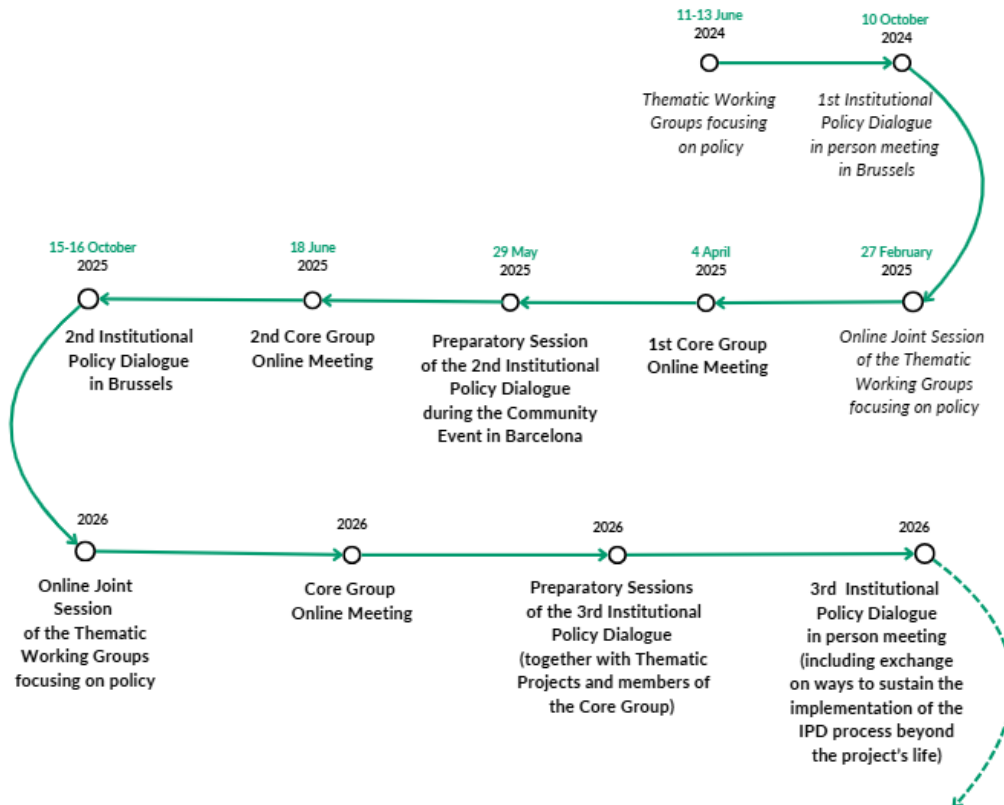
To make the most of this process, we are actively engaging with the policy-oriented partners of the thematic projects and have created the Core Group of key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders, who will serve as advisors to the Institutional Dialogue Process.

By bringing together the policy-oriented partners of the thematic community projects and the members of the Core Group, we intend to create the **EUCLID Policy Hub**. This will be a collaborative space to exchange information about policy instruments, potentially to continue its work beyond the Mission's timeline of implementation, as a self-sustained entity.

In the short run, we have planned the following roadmap of activities:

A **second Core Group** meeting will be held on **18 June 2025** to prepare the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue**, which will be held in Brussels, back-to-back with EU Week of Regions and Cities, on **15 and 16 October 2025.**

In the June meeting, we will focus on the agenda of the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue** and the policies to be discussed there.

What we have achieved thus far: policy instruments & ranking

The Institutional Dialogue Process is built on three interrelated components - **policy mapping, policy windows, and stakeholder mapping** - that form a solid baseline.

The policy mapping identifies key **policy instruments** from external and internal sources at subnational, national, and international levels, aiming to have a robust set of key cases in Green Living Area (GLA) topics to use as references in other Mediterranean territories. The **stakeholder mapping** identifies those most likely to adapt, transfer, or amplify project results, as well as the policy instruments identified. Meanwhile, the **policy windows** will pinpoint specific opportunities (such as key events, ongoing political processes, potential takers, and supportive frameworks) for policy advocacy using GLA Mission results and the policy instruments previously mapped. All three components will be continually updated to align with programme needs and evolving Mediterranean priorities.

The first stage of policy instrument mapping has already been completed, with 72 policies from across the Mediterranean region mapped and ranked. These policies span a variety of thematic areas relevant to Green Living Areas (GLAs).

The **highest-ranked policies** - as having strong potential for replication, adaptation, or scaling - will be publicly released in a set of fact sheets, accessible through the project website and the Policy Hub platform. As discussed during the meeting, we are **sharing these fact sheets** with the minutes.

Results from 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue

In addition to the fruitful exchanges among the participants, the results from the **1st Institutional Policy Dialogue** were consolidated with the drafting of **3 Policy Briefs.**

The Dialogue was divided **into four policy working group discussions**, which focused on specific policy instruments. These policy briefs contain recommendations to enhance impact and ensure adaptability. Additionally, key take-aways from each policy brief were identified and described.

The Policy Briefs were the following:

1. [Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) of Bologna as a model for greener freight mobility in the Mediterranean](#):
   a. The establishment of cross-sectoral working groups, bringing together all interested stakeholders, involving municipal authorities, private sector, and community representatives.
   b. Engage businesses, SMEs, and citizens in co-creating logistics solutions, ensuring practicality and widespread support.
   c. Consider specific criteria replicating successful SULP models (that is, city typology, cultural background, etc).
   d. Align local strategies, namely SULPs, with EU decarbonisation goals (e.g. revised TEN-T regulation).

2. [Enhancing the Superblock Policy: Recommendations for adaptability through a territorial approach](#) (the key takeaways focused more on the relation between urban centres and this kind of policy with the community and how to better upscale it).
   a. A better integration in the planning framework cannot go alone, must be adapted or implemented together with other territorial frameworks.
   b. Community engagement, co-design directly with locals and surroundings.
   c. Start with pilot areas before expanding to monitor and evaluate how the community is adapting to the changes.

3. [Enhancing the GR-Eco Islands initiative: Recommendations for a clean energy transition](#)
   (The key takeaways are in relation to the specific challenges of the GR-eco Islands initiative.)
   a. Holistic and integrated projects (energy, mobility, waste and water, etc).

b. Promote a clever mix of public and private funding to finance interventions.

c. Community engagement is key for successful implementation.

d. Monitoring and evaluating impact continuously is crucial for tracking progress and goals, as well as for showing evidence of the benefits of the policy.

e. Simplification of legal framework to integrate renewable energy sources.

EUCLL Methodology and Policy Hub Platform

The framework of **the Public Transversal Euro-Mediterranean Living Lab (EUCLL)** follows key Living Lab principles, with a strong focus on stakeholder-centred and co-creative approaches.

This methodology has been adapted into a **policy dialogue tool**, enabling diverse groups to engage in constructive discussions around shared challenges. The adaptation was briefly outlined through four core characteristics: *high-priority focus*, e*vidence-informed*, *participatory*, and *action-oriented*. The five-step **EUCLID methodology** for implementing and assessing Institutional Policy Dialogues under the Green Living Areas Mission is presented as follows:

1. **Connect:** Nearly 300 stakeholders across 27 countries were mapped alongside 19 thematic community projects under the Mission, setting the stage for structured dialogue and linking projects with policy-makers.

2. **Identify:** Policy instruments were assessed using criteria such as impact, improvability, representation, inclusiveness, and readiness to define priorities and identify policy champions.

3. **Implement:** Policy dialogue events aim to adapt, replicate, and scale effective policy tools.

4. **Evaluate:** Dialogue outcomes are assessed based on their influence on policy, participation, and overall effectiveness. It is evaluated whether the dialogue achieved its objectives, the level of participation

and engagement, the overall effectiveness of the process, and its influence on decision-making.

5. **Disseminate:** Results are shared through policy and discussion papers, expanding stakeholder networks.

Further, the GLA Mission is currently developing the **Policy Hub Platform**, which is currently in its testing phase. This platform will serve as a tool for communicating specific policy instruments, facilitating the dialogue process, and documenting the needs and policy gaps identified by stakeholders.

Services of the EUCLID Policy Hub

Members of the **EUCLID Policy Hub** can actively benefit from their involvement in this group.

As mentioned, the Mission will launch the **Policy Hub Platform** during our next meeting in June. This platform will allow the organisation of exchanges among peers and with key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders. It will also give Core Group members the opportunity to access useful information, whether they work at European or national levels on directives, regulations, or frameworks, or whether they work at regional and local levels in implementing or adapting policies.

The Institutional Policy Dialogue and the Policy Hub Platform will be tailored to accommodate the needs of the Core Group and thematic community projects.

Testimony from the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue

Mr. Roussakis, Deputy Mayor of Chalki, began his speech by conveying the greetings of Mr. Fragkakis, the Mayor of Chalki, before expressing his honour in sharing the island's inspiring journey. He highlighted Chalki as a small Aegean Island renowned for its innovative approach to sustainability. He highlighted Chalki's transformation into a model of green energy and eco-mobility, starting with the electrification of transportation and the establishment of a photovoltaic (PV) plant. This initiative, aimed at reducing

dependence on fossil fuels and cutting emissions, has positioned Chalki as the first "GR-eco" island in Greece. He emphasised the significant financial savings thanks to the shift to renewable energy.

Mr. Roussakis also mentioned that Chalki's success inspired the local government to look ahead and ask, "What's next for our Municipality?" This led to Chalki's participation as a **policy champion** in **the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue**, where they gained valuable insights from other public authorities and stakeholders. Through this dialogue, Chalki explored new opportunities for renewable energy use and economic development, such as attracting sustainable investments and entrepreneurship. Mr. Roussakis praised the practical impact of the project, which provided concrete policy recommendations that could benefit other islands seeking clean energy transitions. Concluding his speech, Mr. Roussakis reaffirmed Chalki's commitment to a greener, smarter, and more resilient future while expressing eagerness to continue sharing experiences and leading by example.

Exchanges on the Core Group members' areas of interest

The purpose of the exchange was to gather feedback on the expectations regarding the Policy Hub, identify thematic interests, and explore ways in which stakeholders can contribute to upcoming policy dialogues and platform activities.

Before engaging with participants using Slido, a short exchange was held with participants, who inquired further about the process the Mission is following, as well as shared some thoughts on how to get the most out of it, namely:

- Enquired about how the policy mapping process works and whether it will be continuous
- Mentioned the importance of Interreg Euro-MED regions for the Union for the Mediterranean's work and cross-Mediterranean work;
- Highlighted events in which we have and can continue cooperating, i.e. Mediterranean Green Week, MEDtalks;

- Asked for clarification on what we perceive as policy instruments and specifically what kind of outputs from Thematic Projects we are looking to capitalise.
- EUSAIR suggested that it would be relevant to consider macro-regional policies and sea basin strategies, as well as involving different ministries from Member States in the process.

The Slido discussion followed, asking questions and collecting answers from all participants. These aimed to capture expectations, needs, and areas of interest concerning the Institutional Policy Dialogue.

The **expectations** that emerged from the discussion with the Core Group were the following:

- Exchanging experiences and policy solutions
- Understanding and improving policy landscapes
- Building synergies with the broader Euro-MED missions
- Exploring replicability and scalability of successful initiatives

The session also identified several **needs** to be addressed, including:

- Barriers and enablers in policy implementation
- Delay reduction in policy development and deployment
- Sector-specific interest in areas like water and waste management

Linked to these needs, relevant **services** were suggested and ranked as:

- Peer exchange across Euro-MED stakeholders
- Access to best practices and policy-oriented insights
- Access to the **Policy Hub Platform** together with lobbying and advocacy.

Participants were asked to indicate which topics they could contribute to. These included all the topics addressed in the corresponding GLA Mission Thematic Working Groups, namely **energy systems, green and resilient territorial planning, mobility, financing the green transition and community engagement**

A final open-response poll invited participants to share the most critical areas of focus for achieving real impact. Key themes included fostering advocacy, knowledge sharing and policy exchange, and actionable collaboration.

Conclusion and next steps

The meeting was a useful first step to explain the EUCLID Policy Hub and the Institutional Dialogue Policy Dialogue Process to the Core Group members while allowing you to share your expectations and needs.

A second Core Group meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 18 June 2025, at 10.30 am (CET time).** During this meeting, we will present and exchange information about the agenda of the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue** event and the policy instruments to be discussed.

Here is the link for the meeting:

Join the meeting here

Meeting ID: 396 586 268 64

Password: CG2wM28P

The **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue will be held in Brussels**, back-to-back with the EU Week of Regions and Cities, on **Wednesday 15 (afternoon) and Thursday 16 (all day), 2025** (venue to be determined).

We look forward to continuing our exchanges with you!