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Green Living Areas Mission



Online Thematic Working Groups focusing on policy *Minutes*

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Introduction

The Online Thematic Working Groups focusing on policy, targeted policy-oriented partners and associated partners of the Thematic Projects (i.e. notably municipalities).

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Provide insights into the results of the first Institutional Policy Dialogue;
- Develop collaborative work with Thematic Projects;
- Introduce the EUCLID Policy Hub's Core Group;
- Present the next steps of the Institutional Policy Dialogue Process for 2025-2026;
- Discuss potential policy instruments for the second Institutional Policy Dialogue.

The minutes of the event offer insights into the results of the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue (and corresponding published policy briefs), the roadmap for 2025 and 2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue, as well as conclusions from the parallel discussions from the following Thematic Working Groups:

- Green Energy Systems,
- Green & Resilient Territorial Planning,
- Green Mobility,
- Horizontal discussions on Financing and Community Engagement.





Results from the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue

The event kicked off with the presentation of the main results from the **1st Institutional Policy Dialogue**, held in October 2024 in Brussels, for **each one** of the **four** policy instruments presented.

Policy instrument 1: Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan of Bologna

Following the discussions during the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue, the Green Living Areas Mission partners responsible for the *Green Mobility Thematic Working Group* drafted a policy brief titled **“Sustainable Urban Logistics Plan (SULP) of Bologna as a model for greener freight mobility in the Mediterranean”**. You can access the policy brief [here](#).

Policy instrument 2: Superblocks

Following the discussions during the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue, the Green Living Areas Mission partners responsible for the *Green & Resilient Territorial Planning Working Group* drafted a policy brief titled **“Enhancing the Superblock policy: Recommendations for adaptability through a territorial approach”**. You can access the policy brief [here](#).

Policy instrument 3: GR Eco-Islands Initiative

Following the discussions during the 1st Institutional Policy Dialogue, the Green Living Areas Mission partners responsible for the *Green Energy Systems Working Group* drafted a policy brief titled **“Enhancing the GR-Eco Islands initiative: Recommendations for a clean energy transition”**. You can access the policy brief [here](#).

Policy instrument 4: Public Procurement of Innovative solutions

Challenges & opportunities

- Lack of in-house expertise and resources in Public Authorities,
- Risk of failure (PPI involves procuring innovative solutions that have not yet been fully developed or tested, which can increase the risk),
- Lack of supplier engagement.





Potential adaptation and replication of the policy

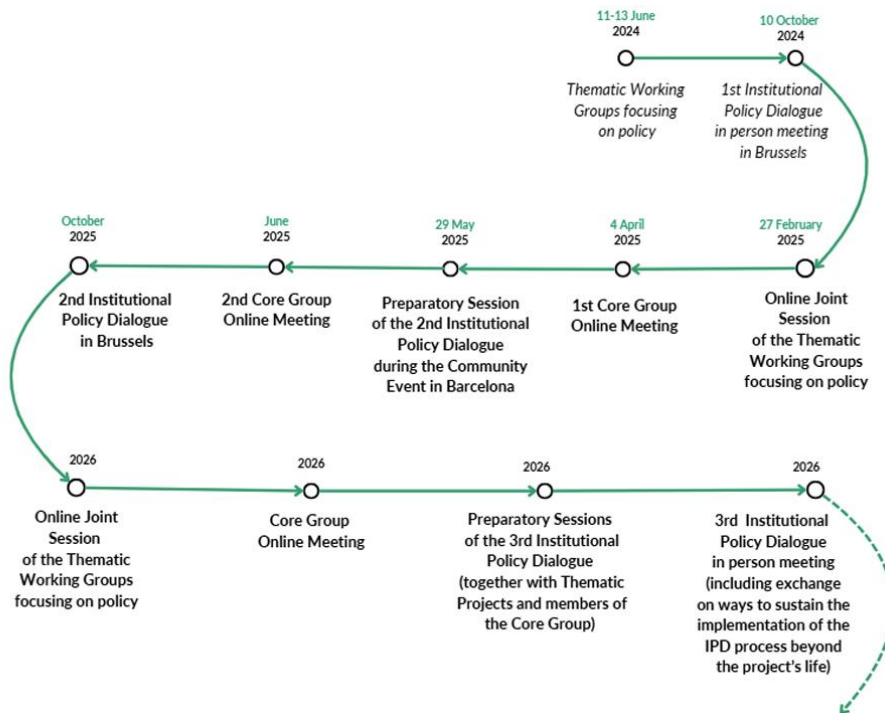
- Introducing more adaptable contract models and expanding the use of Pre-Commercial Procurement
- Fostering Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to facilitate joint innovation
- Setting robust evaluation criteria for innovation, introducing comprehensive metrics that assess long-term value, sustainability and scalability
- Conduct training and capacity-building schemes for public procurers
- Establish digital platforms to simplify PPI, enabling more transparent & data-driven decision-making.

Next Steps: Roadmap for 2025 and 2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue

The **2nd Institutional Policy** Dialogue will take place in **October 2025 in Brussels**, back-to-back with the European Week of Regions and Cities. Its objectives are:

- To promote policy-oriented results and answer the needs of the Thematic Projects,
- To engage policy-oriented partners and associated partners of the Thematic Projects,
- To develop a Core Group of key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders, playing the role of advisors.

The timeline displayed below takes into account the timeline of the Thematic Projects to enable capitalisation on their policy results.



EUCLID Policy Hub: Core Group



The EUCLID Policy Hub will be a sustainable collaborative space set up to implement exchanges on policy instruments related to Green Living Areas. The Core Group will be formed by key policy-oriented stakeholders, setting the stage for supporting the Institutional Policy Dialogue process.

Green Energy Systems Thematic Working Group

Key takeaways from the discussion

The discussion focused on the status, challenges, and barriers in the development and implementation of policy-related deliverables of the projects part of the Green Energy Systems TWG. The main themes that emerged included technical difficulties due to varying levels of expertise within teams, regulatory barriers across different jurisdictions, funding constraints, and difficulties in engaging stakeholders and



policy-makers. Participants emphasised the need for clearer regulatory frameworks, enhanced financial support, and improved advocacy strategies to ensure successful policy integration.

- a. What is the current status of your policy-related deliverables/outputs?
 - Most projects are in progress, with expected completion timelines ranging from six to twelve months.
 - Participants are working on some policy-related outputs, including policy briefs, recommendations, and strategies.
 - Some projects are mapping policy instruments and identifying opportunities for integration into broader policymaking processes (LOGREENER case).
 - There is a focus on renewable energy and local/regional climate strategies.

- b. What challenges did you face in the development and implementation of your policy-related deliverables/outputs?
 - Technical Difficulties:
 - Teams have diverse expertise levels, making it challenging to align knowledge in technical and policy areas.
 - Difficulty in integrating technical innovations with policy frameworks.
 - Evolving regulatory frameworks make it hard to keep policy outputs up to date.
 - Some projects face financial constraints that limit their ability to conduct thorough research or execute implementation plans.
 - Some projects struggle with effectively engaging all relevant stakeholders, particularly policy-makers.
 - Developing and implementing policy-related deliverables is time-intensive, and delays often occur due to administrative and procedural issues.

- c. What are the main barriers preventing your deliverables/outputs from being published or fully integrated into policies?
 - Policies and regulations vary significantly across different regions, creating difficulties in standardizing and applying policy recommendations.
 - Institutional and Political Commitment:
 - Weak institutional support slows down the adoption and implementation of policy recommendations.
 - Some policy-makers are hesitant to adopt new policies due to political or bureaucratic inertia.
 - Advocacy and Policy Alignment Challenges:





- Lack of clear advocacy strategies and difficulty in aligning policy recommendations with ongoing policy discussions.
- Some projects struggle to effectively communicate their policy recommendations to relevant authorities.

d. Beyond the programme, in which areas does your organisation have relevant experience and expertise?

Beyond the programme, organisations have relevant experience and expertise in renewable energy, energy transition, green mobility, spatial planning, environment and innovation, water management, and financing. Some organisations also focus on waste management and community engagement, though specific details were limited in the discussion.

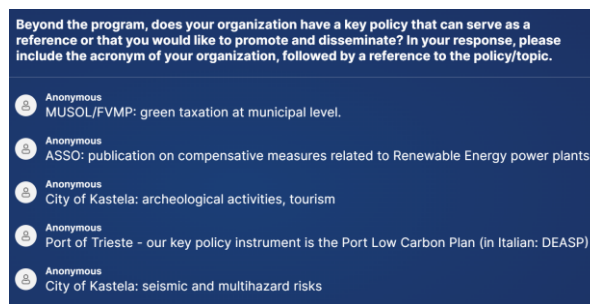
Figure 1: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - general Q4



e. Beyond the programme, does your organisation have a key policy that can serve as a reference or that you would like to promote and disseminate? In your response, please include the acronym of your organisation, followed by a reference to the policy/topic.

We will recover the information suggested on Slido.

Figure 2: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - general Q5



f. What kind of financing have you foreseen in your local/regional strategic planning documents for the realization of your policy targets?



Traditional funding dominates since the majority indicated reliance on municipal funding, EU and national grants as primary financing sources. Limited use of market-based instruments since very few organisations reported using innovative financial mechanisms such as carbon credit markets, public-private partnerships (PPPs), or green bonds. Public-private cooperation models exist but are not widespread. Some organisations have engaged in collaborative financing schemes with private entities, but many remain hesitant due to risk factors, regulatory uncertainty, and administrative burden. Concerns over debt financing: Public authorities are reluctant to take on debt, even if through structured financial instruments, due to strict oversight and potential audit challenges.

Figure 3: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - Financing Q6



g. How should the EU and national governments improve the financing framework for the transition towards climate neutrality?

Most participants highlighted the need to increase subsidies and grants and also the need for greater financial support from EU and national bodies to fund climate action initiatives. Improve regulatory clarity and stability since uncertainty in energy and climate-related regulations makes it difficult to plan long-term investments in clean energy infrastructure. Finally, the need to provide technical and financial assistance for project preparation since many organisations struggle with developing bankable projects due to a lack of expertise in financing mechanisms and administrative hurdles.



Figure 4: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - Financing Q7

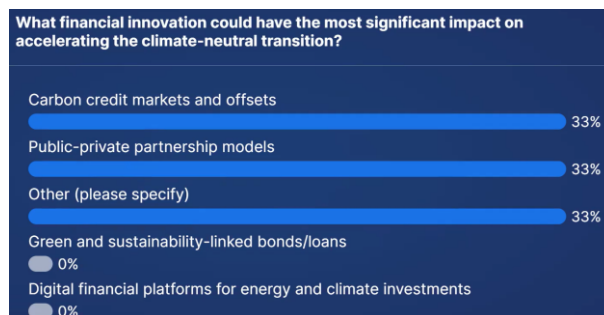


h. What financial innovation could have the most significant impact on accelerating the climate-neutral transition?

Some participants suggested that expanding carbon credit markets could generate new financial streams for climate-positive investments. Public-private partnership models were identified as potentially beneficial but currently underutilized due to institutional hesitancy and complex administrative processes.

European-level financial exemptions for climate investments were highlighted, being proposed that investments in climate-neutrality should not count towards national debt limits, allowing for greater financial flexibility at both the national and regional levels.

Figure 5: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - Financing Q8



i. What challenges have you faced in community engagement?

Multiple participants noted that communities often resist new energy solutions and sustainability policies due to scepticism, lack of awareness, or perceived financial burdens. Diverse needs and expectations make it more difficult to engage stakeholders due to different groups having varying priorities, requiring customised engagement strategies. Lack of time and resources is also highlighted, since many



organisations lack dedicated personnel or funding to sustain long-term community engagement efforts.

Figure 6: Slido results from the TWG on Green Energy Systems - Green Community Engagement Q9



Next steps

- Compile the **policy instruments**, mentioned on the discussion, that organisations are working on or would like to promote. And improve the visualisation tool (Kumu) including thematic areas and subtopics, policy level (local, regional, national, EU), organisations involved, and key stakeholders
- Share this mapping among participants to identify potential synergies.
- Address key challenges (Regulatory Barriers, and Advocacy & Stakeholder Engagement to align policy recommendations with policy-makers' agendas) by training sessions or other activities related to the project.

Green & Resilient Territorial Planning Working Group

The working group was opened by Hrvoje Maras, who welcomed all participants and outlined the agenda for the discussion. The key objective of the meeting was to assess the status of policy-related deliverables and outputs, identify challenges, and explore financing mechanisms for their development and implementation.

Participants: Twenty-eight participants joined the working group, with 52% actively engaging in discussions and contributing responses to the Slido poll.

Results of Slido Poll

Participants provided insights on key questions related to policy-related deliverables, challenges, financing mechanisms, and broader expertise. The Slido questions were divided into four sections:



- Status of Policy-Related Deliverables/Outputs,
- Financing the Local/Regional Strategic Planning,
- Community engagement and
- Other questions.

The following section provides a summary of the Slido poll results.

Status of Policy-Related Deliverables/Outputs

Half of the participants reported that their policy-related deliverables had not yet started, while the other half indicated that they were in progress, with an expected completion within the next 12 months. No deliverables were near completion or finalised, indicating an early-stage development phase for most participants. The participants generally talked about the problems and experiences related to development and implementation of the deliverables and outputs. Participants identified common challenges in the development and implementation of deliverables and outputs. Regulatory and administrative barriers were the most frequently cited obstacles, mentioned by 40% of participants, followed by limited stakeholder engagement, which 30% identified as a key issue. These challenges underscore the need for streamlined regulations and more inclusive stakeholder involvement to ensure effective project execution.

Financing the Local/Regional Strategic Planning

The discussion results highlight that traditional funding sources, such as city and municipal budgets and grants from the EU and national governments, remain the dominant means of financing Local/Regional Strategic Planning, as cited by 92% of participants.

However, the conversation also underscored the potential of innovative financial instruments. Half of the participants (50%) identified fiscal policies as the most impactful tool for accelerating the climate-neutral transition of cities and municipalities. Additionally, 30% recognised green bonds and loans as key drivers of climate action.

Moreover, 79% of participants stressed the importance of enhancing regulatory clarity and stability at the EU and national levels to strengthen the financing framework for the transition towards climate neutrality.





Community Engagement

According to the discussion with participants, the key obstacles to engaging local communities included a lack of time and resources, as identified by 42% of participants. Additionally, they emphasised the critical importance of clear communication strategies and the need for inclusive stakeholder participation to overcome these challenges and ensure successful community engagement.

Organisational Expertise Beyond Spatial Planning

Beyond spatial planning participants reported expertise in areas such as energy efficiency (56%), area of renewable energy (44%) and area of green mobility (44%). These diverse skill sets present opportunities for cross-sector collaboration in achieving policy goals.

Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Hrvoje Maras thanked all participants for their contributions and emphasised the importance of continued engagement and collaboration. He invited all the participants to follow the GLA social media and newsletter.

Green Mobility Thematic Working Group

This group was animated by Marina Kouta (University of Patras) - D4LA and Michela Fossa (IRE Liguria) – D4LA, with the support from Claudia Ribeiro (POLIS) - D4LA, with the participation of C4LA partners.

Outputs of the Interactive Discussion:

The goal was to identify high-priority policy issues derived from the Thematic Projects' work to be discussed in the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue in Brussels (October 2025)**. A poll was conducted to identify participants' project affiliations, focusing on the mobility working group and identifying their needs and policy priorities.





Most policy-related deliverables had not yet started (61%), whereas the rest were "in progress" (39%). Participants noted challenges such as limited stakeholder engagement, administrative barriers, and time constraints in the development/implementation of policy-related deliverables/outputs. Bernardo Pereira (MED COLOURS) reported a pilot site relocation due to a municipal decision

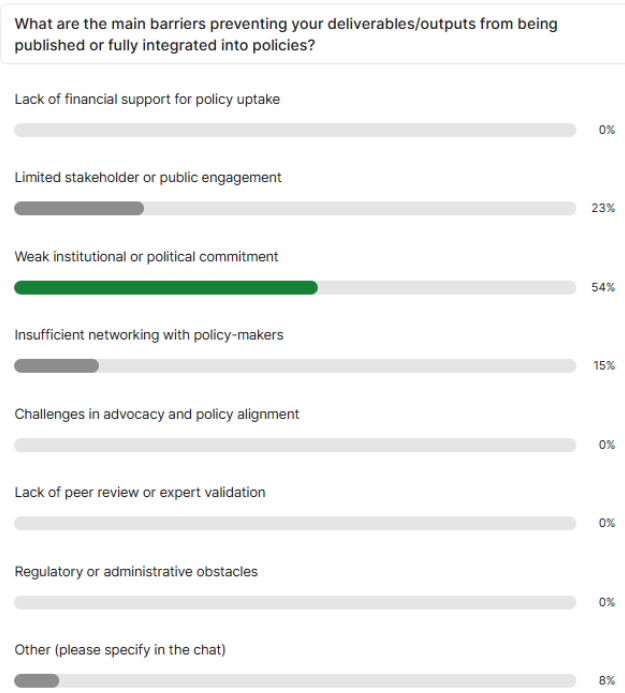


Figure 1 Mobility TWG: What are the main barriers preventing your deliverables/outputs from being published or fully integrated into policies?

requiring alignment with city plans, resulting in delays to the pilot's progress. Hugo Juillard (GARDEN) raised concerns about potential conflicts from private companies in the Montpellier pilot but noted that mitigation efforts are in place. Andrea Lorenzini (MED COLOURS) highlighted that technical difficulties might arise due to funding and policy constraints and expressed concerns about municipal capacity to develop Sustainable Urban Logistics Plans (SULPs). MED COLOURS ensured the timely delivery of SULPs guidelines by mid-2026, and Marina Kouta invited him to review the [policy brief on Bologna's Sulp](#), as it aligns with their project work plan.

She then highlighted that barriers like weak institutional commitment and limited networking were identified by nearly half of the participants. Thus, a key step to address these challenges is strengthening institutional engagement and enhancing policy networking. The remaining barriers are presented in Figure 1, which illustrates the responses provided by the participants. Gabriele Grea (E-MED) raised the challenges in integrating circular procurement into public transport planning.

In response to the question about the areas of interest of participants' organisations, 56% reported specialisation in Green Mobility and 17% in Renewable Energy, while 11% each focused on Environment and Innovation, and Community Engagement. A slightly lower percentage (6%) indicated a focus on Spatial Planning.



In response to the question about key policies from participant organisations that can serve as a reference for the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue**, the following answers were provided:

- OPEN ENLoCC - Regional Collaborative Logistics.
- Oltrepo Mantovano: COM Strategic Development Plan 2021-2027 and the Oltrepo Mantovano Regional Inner Area Strategy (in finalisation phase).

One comment from Province of Mantua noted that the main policy guides and strategies of interest are primarily derived from EU projects rather than being focused on local-level policies.

Before the end of the meeting, Marina Kouta mentioned that a tool for sharing and discussing policy instruments is currently being developed at the University of Patras and will soon be available to support Thematic Projects with their policy-oriented results.

Discussion on Financing the Green Transition

Given the time constraints (only 15 minutes available for the two horizontal topics – financing and community engagement), the discussion had to be cut short to allow for the last horizontal question on community engagement to be posed before being redirected to the plenary.

Regarding question 1) inquiring about the most used financing methods, most participants (93%) responded that they use traditional financing mechanisms in budgeting their territorial plans and strategies (EU, national and local funding); 13% said they use some form of public private cooperation model, and none responded to have experienced loans/bonds, citizen financing or fiscal models.

Moving on to question 2) about how to improve the financing framework, the answer was more varied with all options selected by participants. The majority (62%) voted that Governments need to increase subsidies and grants - an answer that seemed in line with the previous question about traditional financing mechanisms - followed by de-risking private investments with public guarantees (54%), improve regulatory clarity and stability (46%) and provide technical and financial assistance for the preparation of projects (38%).

Finally, in question 3) about the financial innovation that could have the most impact, most participants voted for public-private partnership models (77%),



followed by green and sustainability-linked bonds/loans (54%) and digital financial platforms and carbon credit offset (15%). No one voted for citizen financing model as a potentially impactful financial innovation.

During the discussion, the moderators prompted participants to elaborate on the answers, especially on the first question since we all know that this type of funding (own, national and EU) is known to be insufficient for reaching the 2030/2050 climate targets. The main question posed was the following: Why are traditional financial mechanisms still predominant, and what are the main barriers preventing innovative schemes from spreading?

Gabriele Grea (E-MED) argued that it is mainly a matter of trust: we all rely on traditional local funding and public funding because this is the state of the art, the obvious way of doing things. However, innovative finance is also important, especially public-private partnerships, as they bring in the needed private capital/resources. ESG policies and ESG-based funding should also be included in the discourse since they are a way of spreading trust and broadening the area of commitment with the citizens and private sector. He explained the case of his territory, where they have investments in the decarbonisation of public transport infrastructures and vehicles, which could be boosted or at least strongly supported by PPPs when including and engaging energy utilities. Additionally, he argued how investing in green mobility and circularity (and decarbonisation in general) is still not perceived as something that can also bring long-term or medium-term economic gain.

The moderator reminded participants of the training session on innovative financing that will take place in Barcelona, inviting them to join and/or send their good practices if they have any.

Discussion on Community Engagement

Concerning the question on Community Engagement, the most voted response when asked about the challenges faced in community engagement was lack of time and resources (62%), followed by resistance to change (15%), trust issues, diverse needs and expectations, and technical language barriers (all 8%). Lack of Interest and conflicts received no vote and do not seem to be relevant for participants.

Marina Kouta argued about the challenge of bringing different professionals from the same organisations around the same table as required by holistic and integrated planning/projects such as those dealing with climate and sustainability.





Ilaria Leonardi (GREENMO) argued about the difficulty of having stakeholders trust their new proposed initiatives and projects, bringing the example of the workshops they did with local associations, in which stakeholders were far too aware of the limitations of their local mobility infrastructures and services to believe these could be improved.

Lorenzo Cello (MED COLOURS) pointed out how stakeholders have needs and interests that are very diverse, if not conflicting, and the main challenge is often how to bring them all to the same table, providing solutions that cater to all of them.

Next Steps:

- Monitor deliverable progress and offer guidance to projects still in development,
- Review policy instruments and inputs from Thematic Projects for potential integration into the **2nd Institutional Policy Dialogue**,
- Review the content of the GREENMO Governance Structures for Mobility Hubs and the GREENMO Mobility Hub concept and assess the integration of successful mobility hub cases implemented by POLIS members in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Conclusion and next steps

The Green Living Areas Missions aims to answer the needs of the Thematic Projects, assisting them with reaching the policy level. Further, we strive to encourage and foster continuous exchanges between a wide range of policy-oriented stakeholders by engaging policy-oriented partners and associated partners of the Thematic Projects.

This session was the first step in preparing the **Second Institutional Policy Dialogue**, which will be held in **October 2025 in Brussels (exact date to be confirmed shortly)**, back-to-back with the European Week of Regions and Cities.

To strengthen these exchanges, we intend to mobilise, alongside the policy-oriented partners and associated partners of the Thematic Projects, some key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders to form a Core Group.





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This Core Group will be able to, on the one hand, bring its expertise to policy discussions and to benefit from the results of the Thematic Projects. The first Core Group meeting is scheduled for April 2025.

