

**Interreg
Europe**



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GreenGov

Interreg Europe

GreenGov

Kickoff Meeting

Report of the participatory activity on DNSH principle and Climate proofing of infrastructure



16-17 April 2024

Hannover, Lower Saxony (DE)

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Introduction

GreenGov is a cooperation project of Interreg Europe, an interregional cooperation programme, co-funded by the European Union, created in a perspective of reducing disparities in the levels of development, growth and quality of life in and across Europe's regions. The programme contributes to this objective and runs from 2021 to 2027.

GreenGov's overall objective is to improve the partners' governance and support their swift implementation of EU taxonomy requirements. GreenGov aims at helping the regions to better understand and implement this new European framework in their public action by establishing a guidance with a shared robust process to adapt regional and local strategies to EU taxonomy. This guidance will foster the capacity building and raise awareness on green finance mechanisms among all actors involved. It will also be put into practice the exploration of green budgeting, using the tools of budgetary policymaking to help the partners redirect their investments towards sustainable priorities and achieve environmental goals, and to develop regional green bonds frameworks. Thus, the project will improve all 8 targeted policy instruments: 4 ERDF regional programmes, 1 green finance strategy, 1 economic transition governance strategy, 1 development strategy and 1 climate regional strategy.

The project is divided in two parts, the first spanning for a four-semester period and the second for a two semesters period; the first part focuses on the EU taxonomy, DNSH principle and climate proofing, paying particular attention to two transversal topics: climate change adaptation and mitigation and energy efficiency.

The start of the activities has been marked by the Kick-off Meeting that took place in Hannover (Germany) on 16th and 17th April 2024. Representatives of all 9 Partners (PP) were present, with a total of 24 participants: Ile de France Region (4); Lombardy Region (5); Brussels Capital Region (3); Lisbon Metropolitan Area (1); North West RDA (Romania) (1); South West Oltenia RDA (2); Lower Saxony (3); South Moravia Innovation Agency (2), Poliedra (3).

During the Kick off Meeting, Poliedra (advisory partner, AP) with Lombardy (PP responsible for DNSH principle) and South-West Oltenia (PP responsible for climate proofing) were in charge of launching the interregional thematic activities, focusing attention on DNSH and Climate Proofing of infrastructures.

Objectives of interregional activities and working groups - participatory activity

The objective of the first session on participatory activity was to give a brief overview of the topics that will be addressed in depth throughout the upcoming semesters, and to gather information on the level of knowledge and experience the PPs have on DNSH and CP.

Particular attention was put, at this stage of the project, towards getting to know other partners' experience and background in order to find a common ground on which to build a mutual vocabulary and share knowledge.

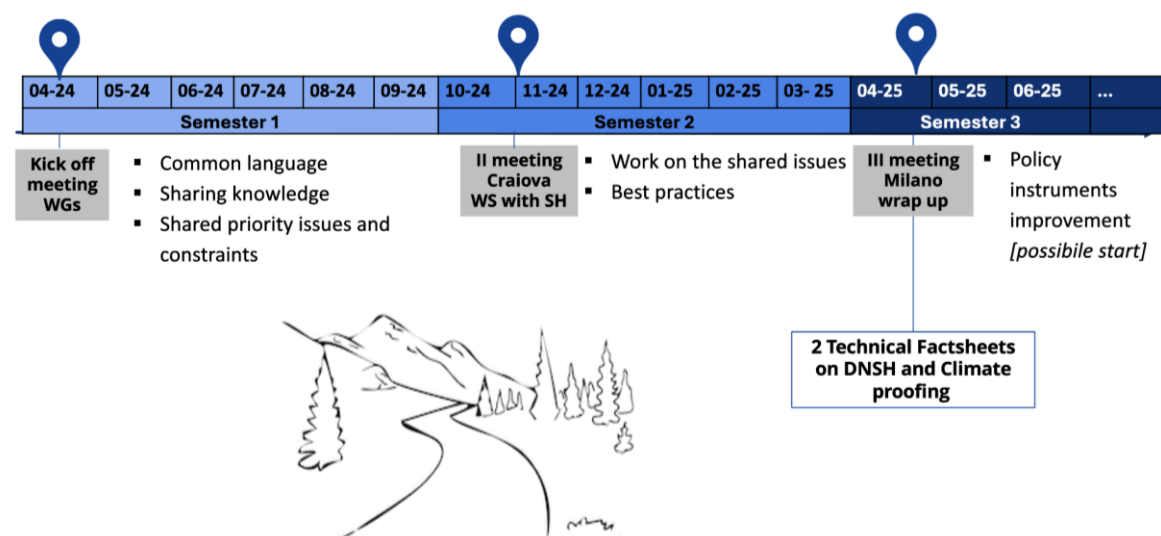
Furthermore, PPs were asked to share, discuss and lay out their expectations and interests, and the topics and issues that were considered to be the most relevant for further investigation, in order to orient the work plan and next steps, and to identify what kind of outputs to deliver for public consumption.

The following pictures show a line-up of the participatory session and the general workplan.

Agenda

- Introductions (25')
 - General framework and objectives (Poliedra)
 - Getting to know the DNSH principle (Lombardy)
 - Getting to know the Climate proofing of infrastructures (South West – Oltenia)
- Participatory activity on DNSH and Climate proofing (in small groups): sharing knowledge and expectations (50')
- Conclusion and work plan (15')

Thematic activities: general work plan



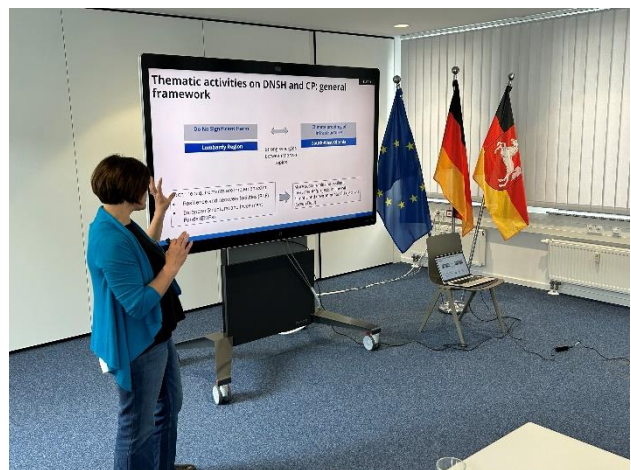
Context and themes addressed

The thematic activity opened with a brief presentation curated by Poliedra that outlined the general framework and the objectives of the working group. It was highlighted how the two main topics, the DNSH principle and Climate Proofing of infrastructure have strong synergies, briefly mentioning the European regulatory framework in which they are recalled. A general workplan was shared, pinpointing the priorities for the first part of the project.

Following Poliedra's presentation, the Regional Environmental Authority of Lombardy Region shared an insight on the DNSH principle, touching on sustainability-policies references, the origin of DNSH, its rationale, its field of application and an overview on its use in Lombardy Region.

The topic of Climate Proofing of infrastructures was introduced by the Regional Development Agency of South-West Romania. The presentation touched on the legal European framework of CP, the guidelines available at European level, and the methodology to assess the contribution of specific infrastructures to climate neutrality and climate resilience, with attention to the procedures to follow.

For further details on the topics addressed, the slides presented are available for consultation.



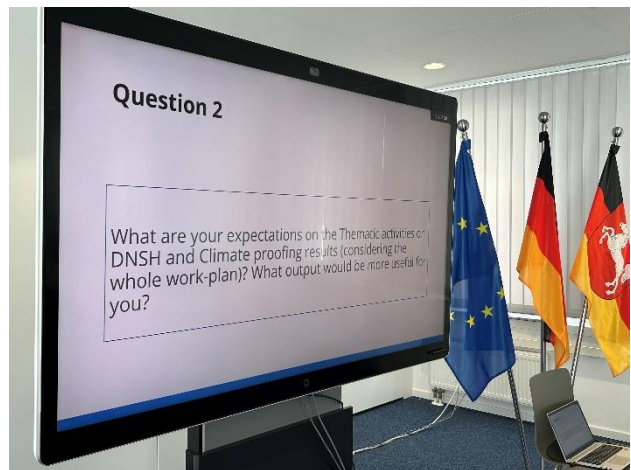
Methodologies and course of work

The participatory activity was divided in three rounds: for the first two rounds, the participants were asked to split into four tables, two questions were posed by the AP and participants were asked to write their individual answer on sticky notes, and to share it with the rest of the group by attaching it on a poster; finally the group was encouraged start a debate using the notes as input, and elaborate a collaborative and critical answer to share later with the whole working group.

Between the first and the second round, participants were asked to mix again and move to another table, apart from the note-keeper, in order to promote the exchange of knowledge among as many participants as possible.

The questions were:

- **Round 1:** What is your level of familiarity with DNSH principle and climate proofing of infrastructures? What kind of direct experience do you have with them?
- **Round 2:** What are your expectations on the Thematic activities on DNSH and Climate proofing results (considering the whole work-plan)? What output would be more useful for you?





Finally, during the **round 3**, all participants were asked to answer some questions on Mentimeter, regarding more specifically Energy Efficiency and Climate Proofing. Mentimeter is a presentation tool that is designed to work digitally, live. It was used to enhance interactivity during the workshop, to have real-time feedback and to obtain an accessible analysis of the answers collected. The questions were:

On DNSH:

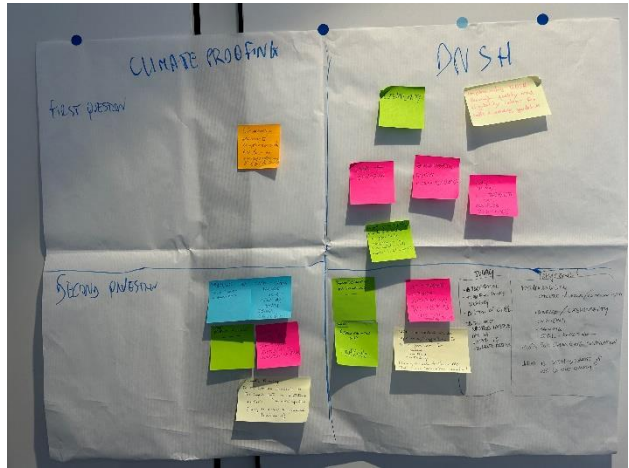
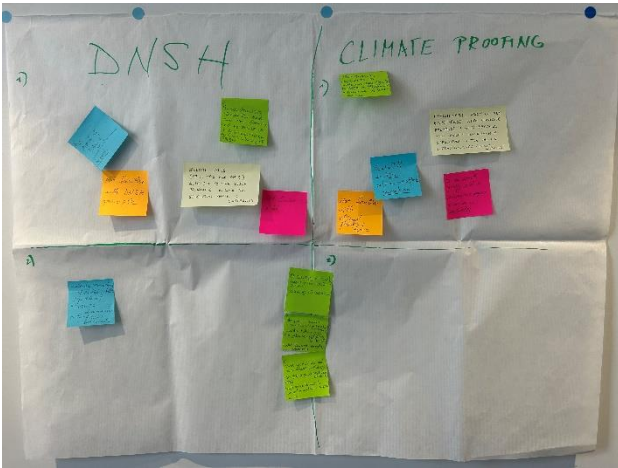
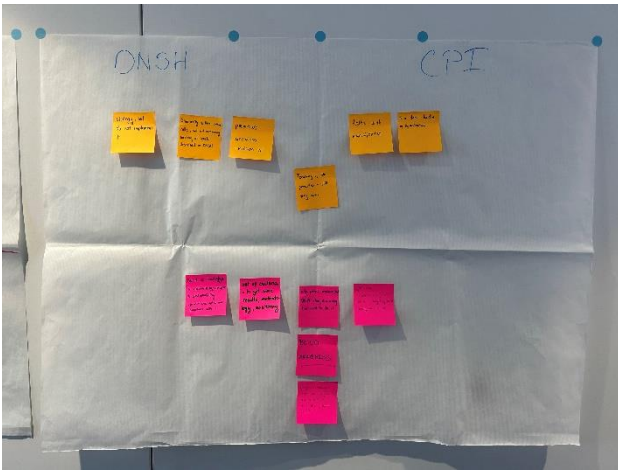
- As Energy efficiency is a sectoral priority of GreenGov, which energy efficiency sector/activities would you be interested in when identifying case studies on DNSH? (e.g. energy efficiency in buildings, enterprises, ...)
- Is there any other sector /economic activity that you consider to be of interest? (For the development of case studies) (e.g. Small Medium Enterprises, ...)

On climate proofing:

- As climate proofing involves both the mitigation of CC and the adaptation which of the two pillars would you like to focus on most?
- In identifying case studies, what sectors do you consider of greatest interest? (e.g. refurbishment of buildings, transport infrastructures, data centres, electricity networks, wastewater plants, etc.) (max two answers)
- Climate proofing supports the resilience of infrastructure to climate change and facilitates adaptation. What topics would you like to explore in depth? E.g. climate change scenarios and indicators, methods to assess the vulnerability of infrastructure, adaptation measures for different types of infrastructure with a special focus on NBS, governance, etc.?

Results

All answers given during the participatory activity were collected and are listed in this chapter.



Round 1 - Level of familiarity and direct experiences

1) CLIMATE PROOFING

- Not familiar
- CP seems a preview of compliance with EU law on energy performance / energy efficiency for building
- No experience, only regulations
- No prior knowledge or experience
- Teaching of principles, still very new
- Talks with municipalities
- No direct building of infrastructure

2) DNSH

- Exemplarity
- Implementing DNSH through quality and eligibility criteria for calls and funding guidelines
- Lack of control
- Environmental auditor: support designer
- Very formal and theoretical knowledge
- Few / research
- Not familiar with the principle
- Cohesion policy regulation – preparation of Interreg new programme including DNSH principle
- Preparation of Greengov project
- Question about evaluation of DNSH principle
- More familiarity with DNSH because Reg IDF has further developed the assessment grid for the projects it green finances
- Understanding about the topic and issue addressed but no experience in implementation and monitoring of DNSH
- Basic knowledge introduced in regional regulation in 2023 – no practical experience
- Several calls (P1 Op2 OP5) aligned to DNSH principle as far as the selection phase is concerned
- Not familiar a lot
- Since 2022 it is familiar in terms of event presentations, first it looked abstract to me, in 2023 we started a correspondence with Silvia (Poliedra) about DNSH
- Strategy but do not implement it
- Similarity within other calls but not necessarily meeting all levels described in DNSH
- Previous activities, medium level
- Better financing / help towards business who can prove to be exemplary on the environmental aspects and / or social aspects

Round 2 – Expectations and most useful output

1) CLIMATE PROOFING

- Training for authorities and applicants:
- DNSH + CP scope like an exam degree ranking
- Assessment of impact
- Common points for framework legislation and regulation on risk
- CP: to set common standards for the input data -> adaptation analysis and related algorithms (easy to access for potential beneficiaries)
- Change of behaviour: instead of “why do I have to do it” “How do I do it?”
- Agriculture: why is this field used in a way they would normally not do?

2) DNSH

- Sharing best practices and methodologies
- Common evaluation grid and ranking

- Set effective criteria identified by the group as most effective
- To collect viable experiences/ suggestion to set procedures for reporting, monitoring, controlling – timely enough for the calls that have been already launched (what if we don't comply)
- Build of knowledge in vocabulary, concept of sustainability: people are often not familiar with it
- Set of criteria: to get some results, methodology, monitoring
- Help people understand why they are doing it or need it
- Some ways to assess DNSH is both not harming economic activities and helping the transition
- Some practical guidelines to companies (not too general) to comply with DNSH philosophy

3) DNSH and Climate Proofing

- We expect to know better and the different approaches
- Sharing experience and guidelines
- Exchange of best practices then clear and simple explanation to understand what it is.
- Set some case studies which could be effectively communicated (advantage of CP DNSH compliance)
- Very clear guidelines to apply
- Capacity building for politicians

Round 3 – case studies on energy efficiency and climate proofing

Which energy efficiency sector/ activities would you be interested in when identifying case studies on DNSH? (Energy efficiency=sectorial priority)

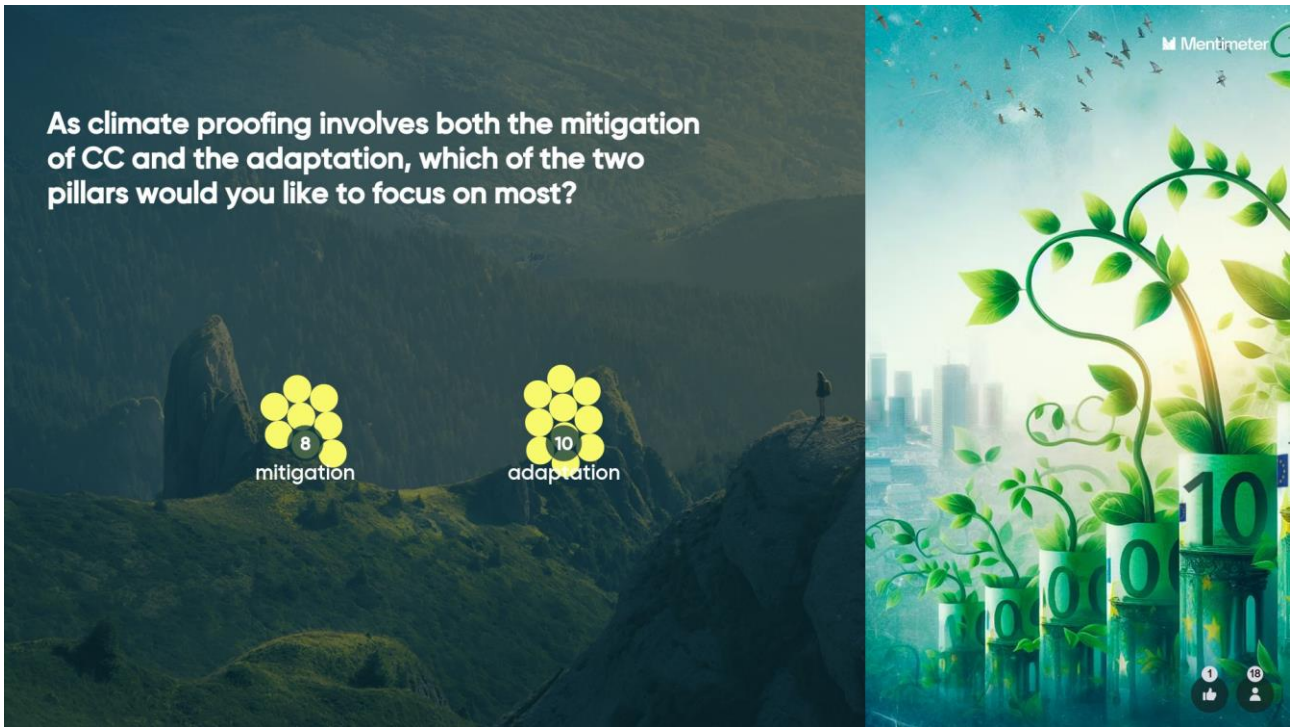
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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings (2) • Public buildings (3) • Building renovation • Residential buildings • Social housing, education • Historical Buildings • Industrial processes • SMEs (3) • Public infrastructures • Road infrastructure • Public Transports • Mobility/transport • Mandatory implementation of minimum Environmental Criteria in construction and roadworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport issue • Road and public mobility infrastructures construction • Service sector • Public services • Tourism • Mass tourism • Urbanism • Construction works and development projects in inner cities • Bauhaus • Circular impact • Production of local food and products • Geothermic |
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Is there any other sector/economic activity that you consider to be of interest? (For the development of case studies)

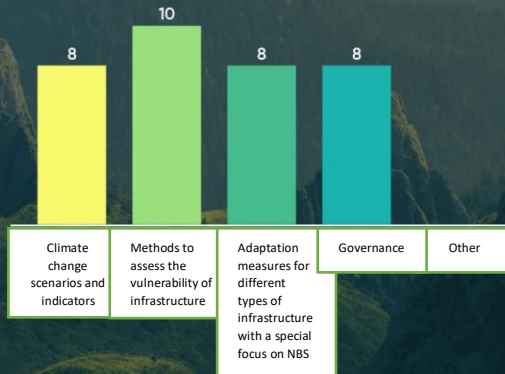
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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial sector • SMEs • Creative & cultural industries • Very small businesses • Agriculture • Urban agriculture • Construction works • Waste management • Recycling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics • Education / New generation • Horeca • Urbanism • Mobility (2) • Green infrastructure • Urban planning • Big Events |
|---|---|

- Mandatory implementation of GPP laws in constructions, roadworks etc.
- Link with the circular transition
- Projects in inner cities
- Space planning in cities
- Bauhaus

Furthermore, three questions were asked using Mentimeter on the topic of climate proofing. Answers are demonstrated in the following pictures.



Climate proofing supports the resilience of infrastructure to climate change and facilitates adaptation. What topics would you like to explore most?



Conclusion and next steps

The answers collected in the previous chapter draw an overall clear image of what is the current level of knowledge and experience on the topics that will be addressed in the upcoming semesters, the main issues and topics to be discussed and the kind of outputs that the thematic activities on DNSH and climate proofing would like to produce.

Referencing the first question asked, the group shows a basic level of knowledge on Climate Proofing, and a slightly higher level of knowledge for the DNSH principle, generally at a theoretical level, with some Partners that show a more in-depth knowledge and first-hand experience, gained while working on ERDF Regional Programs.

On the second question, where participants were asked about their expectations and the most useful outputs, the group answered that they expected to gain knowledge by learning from other participants and among others, the group aims at producing:

- clear and practical guidelines for the implementation of DNSH principle and Climate proofing;
- a shared and effective set of criteria for the evaluation of projects;
- tools for assessing DNSH during the Programme lifecycle, including monitoring, reporting and audit;
- tools for capacity building for politicians and public authorities;
- clear, simple and practical guidelines for companies, together with a system to assess that the implementation of the DNSH principle is both not harming economic activities and helping the transition.

Regarding the third question, the energy efficiency sectors or activities that were identified as most interesting for having case studies to analyse for the implementation of DNSH principle were primarily: buildings (public, residential, historical), transportation (road infrastructure, public transports, mobility etc) and SMEs.

Finally, on Climate Proofing, the working group was slightly more interested in adaptation (55,6%) rather than mitigation (44,4%), the case studies on which the group would like to focus more are once again buildings and essential network infrastructures, and as for the topics to address when talking about resilience and adaptation, the most voted was “Methods to assess the vulnerability of infrastructures” (10 votes), followed by “climate change scenarios and indicators”, “adaptation measures for different kinds of infrastructure, with a special focus on NBS”, “governance” (8 votes each).

Taking into account the results of this first meeting, GreenGov’s agenda for the upcoming semesters will be revised and practical operative proposals together with further information on the modes of operation will be communicated in the following days.