



# ForestAgri **GREENNUDGE**

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## **First ForestAgriGreenNudge Policy Workshop**

### **GREEN NUDGES IN FOREST AND AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS: EVIDENCE, CASE STUDIES AND POLICY PERSPECTIVES**

(SUMMARY REPORT)

**26 March 2026**

9:45 – 13:15 CET (online)

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# Introduction

The first Policy Workshop of the *ForestAgriGreenNudge* project marked an important milestone in establishing a shared understanding among network members and stakeholders across Europe. The online session served as an introduction to the project’s objectives and its overarching approach to fostering sustainable behavioural change in the agricultural and forestry sectors through the use of green nudges.

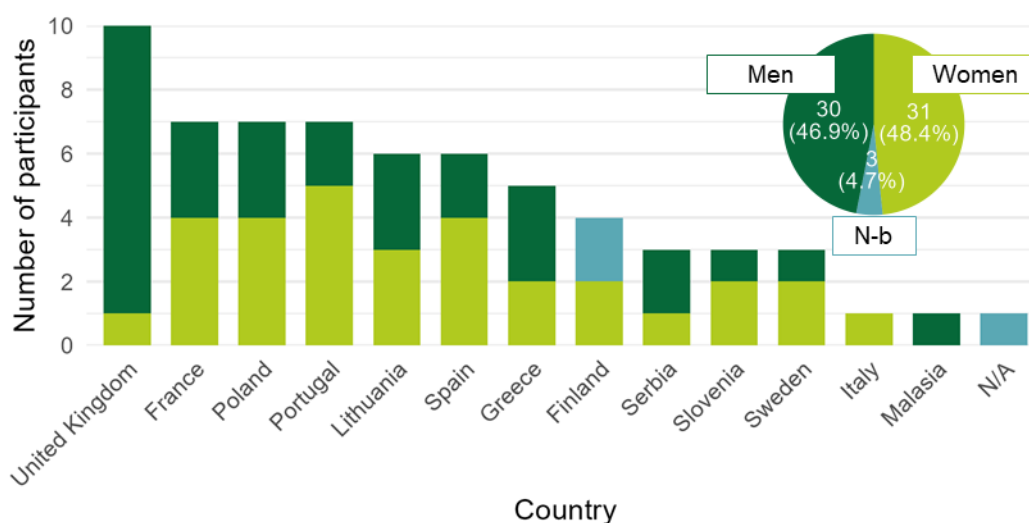
The workshop was designed to familiarise participants—particularly new members of the network—with the concept of green nudges and their relevance in policy-making. It also aimed to showcase practical applications of behavioural approaches and to identify current and emerging policy needs across different national and regional contexts.

This report summarises the discussions, highlights shared challenges, and presents concrete recommendations to support the ForestAgriGreenNudge network in fostering sustainable agricultural and forestry practices across Europe.

## Participation overview

A total of **64 participants** attended the workshop, representing a wide geographical spread including Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Malaysia, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom (**Figures 1, 2**). Of these, 49 participants were based in European Union Member States, covering 10 Member States overall, while additional contributions came from participants outside the EU, reflecting the broader international relevance of the topic. Participation included 27 representatives from project consortium organisations and 37 external participants, including invited speakers and members of the wider ForestAgriGreenNudge network.

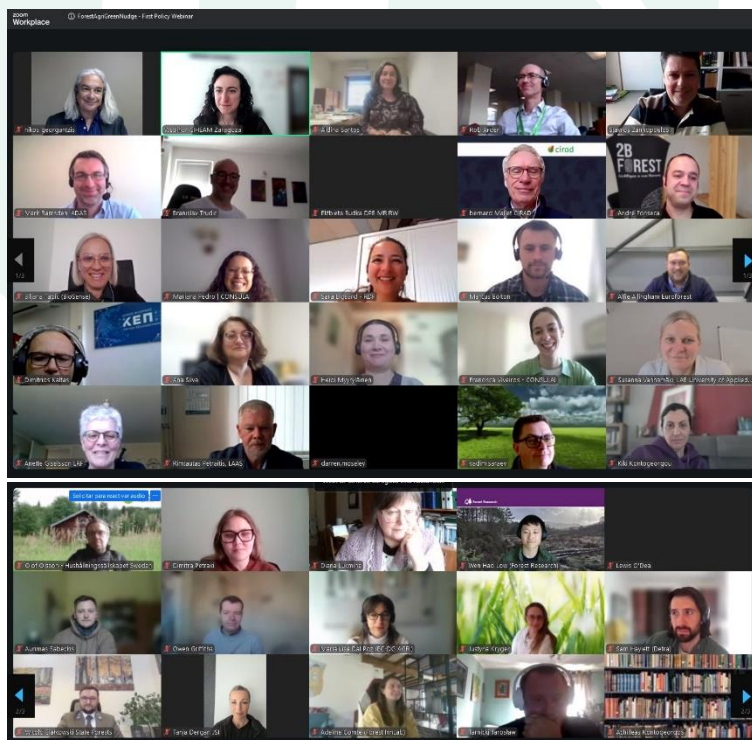
The workshop achieved a balanced gender representation overall, with 31 women, 30 men and 3 participants who preferred not to specify. Participants were affiliated with **41 different institutions across 13 countries**, highlighting the broad institutional and geographical coverage of the workshop.



**Figure 1. Distribution of workshop participants by country and gender.**

Of these, **42 participants** took part in the interactive breakout sessions, which were organised into eight groups:

- **3 groups focused on agriculture** (17 participants)
- **3 groups focused on forestry** (18 participants)
- **2 mixed agri-forestry groups** (7 participants)



**Figure 2.** Screenshots illustrating participant engagement during the online workshop.

Participants represented a wide range of professional backgrounds, reflecting the full spectrum of the ForestAgriGreenNudge European Network. Attendees included farmers, foresters, advisors, policymakers, researchers, and National Focal Point representatives from consortium member organisations (**Figure 3**).



**Figure 3.** Overview of the diversity of participants' professional backgrounds, based on Mentimeter responses collected during the workshop (n = 42).

# Workshop summary

The session was opened by **Nikolaos Georgantzis** (Project Coordinator, BSB), who introduced the ForestAgriGreenNudge project ([link](#)) and outlined its overall objective of promoting the implementation of green nudges in forestry and agriculture across Europe. He presented the project structure and its approach to identifying effective and efficient behavioural interventions without imposing additional regulatory constraints. In this context, he highlighted three key sources of suboptimal decision-making (insufficient information, cognitive biases in decision-making, and social dilemmas) and introduced the concept of co-created and participatory nudges as a central pillar of the project's methodology. The policy lead of the project, **Raquel Álvarez** (CIHEAM Zaragoza), was also introduced as session moderator.

A keynote contribution was delivered by **Jesús Barreiro-Hurle** (Senior Scientist at the European Commission Joint Research Centre), who provided valuable insights into behavioural approaches in agricultural policy, reflecting his involvement in the *PRUDENT* project ([link](#)) and the broader EU policy landscape. His presentation illustrated how behavioural approaches can be integrated into policy design at different levels, ranging from individual behavioural interventions to the analysis of policy mixes and system-wide interactions. Drawing on evidence from European Commission experiments, he discussed applications within CAP eco-schemes and examined the balance between mandatory and voluntary measures. In particular, he presented experimental work exploring how changes in the green architecture of the CAP, such as introducing mandatory requirements and reallocating budgets between direct payments and environmental schemes, can influence farmer behaviour and environmental outcomes. His presentation concluded with recommendations to take a more human-centred approach in agricultural policy design and the need for more real-world testing of behavioural interventions.

## GREEN NUDGES IN ACTION

This segment was introduced by **Mark Ramsden** (ForestAgriGreenNudge WP2 Leader, ADAS), who presented the project's work on applying behavioural insights in real-world contexts. He outlined a process for assessing interventions and highlighted that while clear examples exist, many cases involve combinations of different intervention types. Two case studies illustrated the practical implementation of green nudges: the Climate Nudge Project (forestry case study) and RENOVAE project (agriculture case study).

### 1. Climate Nudge Project

For the forestry case study, **Paula Horne (PTT)** presented the results of the Climate Nudge Project ([link](#)), using a presentation prepared in collaboration with **Marjo Maidell** and **Antti Norkio**. The **Climate Nudge Project** is a multi-year research initiative that develops and pilots nudges to promote climate-friendly behaviour. The project focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from traffic and enhancing carbon sinks in forests. In this context, nudges are soft steering methods that influence behaviour without restricting freedom of choice, supporting municipalities and the Finnish state in taking climate-positive actions. The project also evaluates the feasibility and effectiveness of these nudges from ethical, economic, and health perspectives. Paula noted that while the nudges came from trusted sources and aligned with social norms, forestry decisions are complex, time-consuming, and infrequent, making them challenging to nudge effectively. She concluded that nudges plus a subsequent boost might be more suitable for long-term forestry management decisions.

### 2. RENOVAE Project

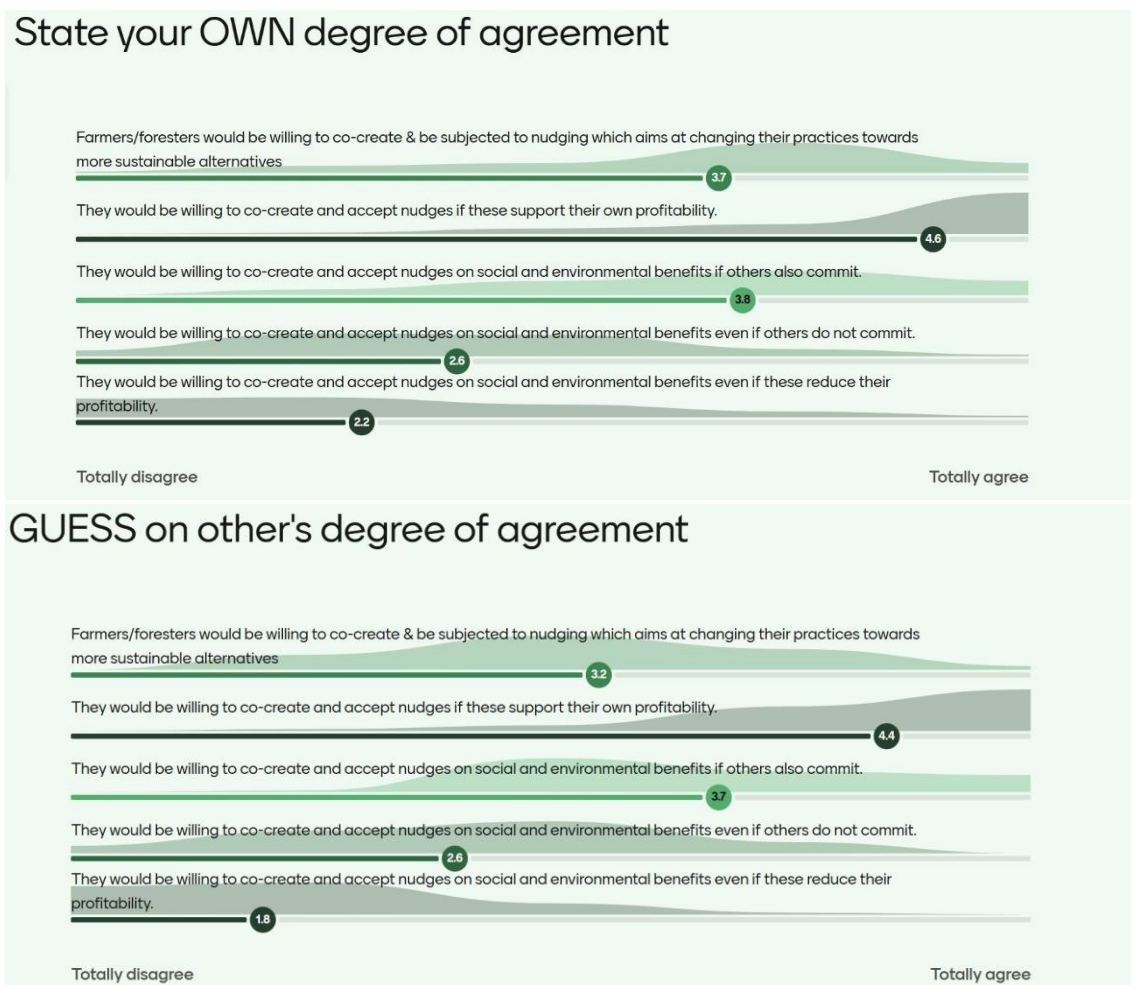
For the agriculture case study, **Emilio Gil (UPC)** presented the RENOVAE project ([link](#)) and its objectives. **RENOVAE** aims to create an innovative, user-friendly platform providing farmers and

advisors with specialised training and knowledge for sustainable crop protection. The project focuses on innovation, digitalisation, and the effective implementation of **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**, ensuring full alignment with EU legislation. The platform targets farmers—particularly young farmers, women, and family-run operations—advisors for knowledge transfer, and manufacturers involved in pesticide applications. Its focus is on **speciality crops**, including orchard fruits, vineyards, almonds, citrus, and olive trees, supporting sustainable practices and informed decision-making across these agricultural sectors. Emilio explained that farmers prefer simple, integrated solutions in their native languages, and the platform will include features like a credential system and various training materials, with results and games expected to be ready by June.

These examples provided valuable evidence on the benefits, challenges, and limitations of applying behavioural approaches in agri-forestry systems.

## POLICY ROUNDTABLE

The policy-focused part of the workshop was initiated through a participant survey designed to capture both individual attitudes towards green nudges and perceptions of others' views. The comparison between actual and perceived views was presented during the session, revealing a notable perception gap, with participants expressing more scepticism about others' attitudes than their own (**Figure 4**). Further statistical analysis is currently being conducted by the project's scientific team.



**Figure 4. Distribution of survey responses comparing participants' own reported level of agreement with their perceptions of others' degree of agreement (n = 42).**

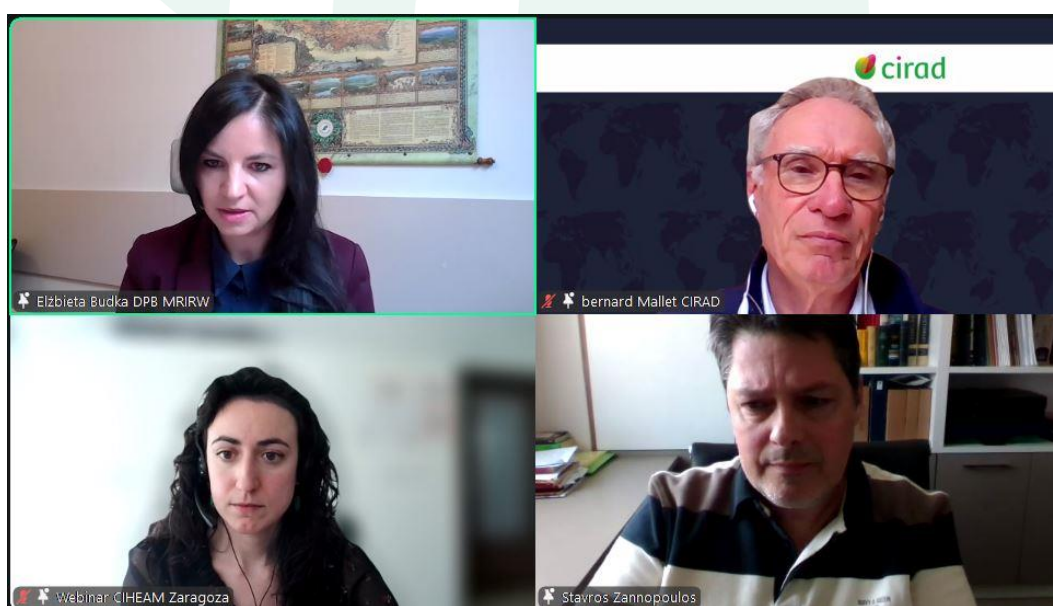
Building on these findings, the **policy roundtable** brought together key policymakers and “policy shapers” to explore how behavioural approaches can be operationalised to support more effective policy implementation in agriculture and forestry (**Figure 5**).

The discussion featured contributions from:

- **Elżbieta Budka** (Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Poland).
- **Stavros Zannopoulos** (Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Greece).
- **Bernard Mallet** (*Association des Forestiers Tropicaux*, France).

The discussion generated several cross-cutting policy insights. Key messages included:

- The importance of **co-creation with farmers and foresters**.
- The need to move beyond **purely top-down policy approaches**.
- The relevance of considering **regional, socio-economic, and demographic diversity** across Europe.



**Figure 5. Policy roundtable at the workshop, showing the panellists alongside the session moderator.**

## Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry Practices

Speakers highlighted practical applications of behavioural tools across agriculture and forestry. Policy options discussed included shifting from opt-out to opt-in mechanisms within CAP eco-schemes, fostering peer-learning through farmer groups, and prioritising incentives over regulatory measures to encourage pesticide reduction. Evidence from Poland demonstrated strong uptake of eco-schemes under voluntary incentive-based schemes, while forestry perspectives emphasised preventive approaches to pest management, including species selection and environmental adaptation, rather than reliance on chemical treatments.

## Forest Environmental Services and Incentives

The discussion also underscored the multifunctional role of forests and the challenges associated with appropriately rewarding environmental services beyond timber production. A key policy challenge identified was the design of incentive mechanisms suitable for small-scale forest owners. Recommendations included simplifying administrative procedures, piloting advisory tools, involving stakeholders in programme design, and ensuring transparent and low-friction participation mechanisms. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to better integrate socio-economic drivers into forest policy design, in order to improve uptake and effectiveness.

## Advisory Services and Policy Support

The importance of advisory services in supporting the transition towards more sustainable and resilient practices emerged as a central policy lever. Participants highlighted that advisory systems, when well-designed, can act as a critical bridge between policy instruments and on-the-ground implementation. Clear guidance, accessible support systems, and well-integrated behavioural instruments were identified as key enablers. The discussion further highlighted the potential for behavioural insights to inform the design and architecture of the European Common Agricultural Policy, particularly in relation to improving uptake and effectiveness of sustainability-oriented measures.

## INTERACTIVE SESSION

An interactive session was held with 42 participants to foster knowledge exchange and collaboration within the ForestAgriGreenNudge network ([link](#)). The participants were divided into eight breakout groups to facilitate in-depth discussions: three groups focused on agriculture (17 participants), three on forestry (18 participants), and two mixed agri-forestry groups (7 participants). The sessions provided a structured space for participants to share experiences, discuss national contexts, and collectively identify challenges and opportunities in promoting sustainable practices through nudges. Discussions revolved around six key topics: expectations, actions to achieve network objectives, current needs of farmers, foresters, and policymakers, suggestions for effective nudging, examples of existing policies, and actions required to improve policy and practice. Each breakout room was moderated by National Focal Points (NFPs) from different consortium members, who guided the discussions and supported the completion of a collaborative policy dashboard prepared in advance of the workshop (**Figure 6**).



Figure 6. Collaborative policy dashboard enriched with annotations from participants across the breakout sessions, facilitated by National Focal Points (NFPs) ([link](#)).

## 1. Expectations

Participants expressed a strong interest in learning from best practices across Europe, understanding how sustainability approaches differ between countries, and sharing practical examples of nudging. Common themes included:

- Comparing practices among countries and identifying transferable lessons.
- Understanding differences in climate, culture, and local conditions affecting agricultural and forestry practices.
- Exchanging experiences regarding advisory networks, communication strategies, and feasibility of environmental incentives.
- Learning which green nudges can be realistically applied, particularly in small-scale, family-run farms or fragmented forestry systems.
- Improving dissemination of information to relevant stakeholders and ensuring nudges complement financial incentives without creating additional burden.
- Exploring ways to embed successful nudges from EU projects into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and national interventions.
- Building a network for knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and critical evaluation of sustainable practices.

## 2. Actions to Achieve Network Objectives (“To Do”)

Participants suggested a range of practical steps to achieve the network’s goals:

- Strengthening engagement with farmers, foresters, and land managers through field demonstrations, study visits, workshops, and webinars.
- Sharing evidence-based results and practical examples from different European contexts.
- Promoting long-term field trials to support the adoption of new technologies and sustainable practices.
- Facilitating data sharing on successful nudges and simplifying communications to ensure accessibility for practitioners.
- Using creative media, advisory services, and demonstrations to translate complex sustainability concepts into actionable practices.
- Developing simple, actionable recommendations that advisory services can implement in practice.

## 3. Current Needs

Key needs identified by participants focused on simplicity, trust, and context-specific relevance:

- Clear, simple, and transparent communication, avoiding bureaucratic complexity.
- Stability and consistency in policies and messaging, with less frequent administrative changes.
- Understanding the motivations of farmers and foresters beyond financial incentives, respecting local traditions and practices.
- Improving advisory services and relationships between practitioners and scientists.
- Adapting nudges to specific contexts, such as forest size, biodiversity objectives, carbon sequestration, and climate adaptation.
- Enhancing awareness of green nudges and ensuring they preserve freedom of choice while encouraging sustainable behaviours.
- Addressing sector-specific challenges, including invasive species, drought, and competing land uses.

## 4. Suggestions for Effective Nudging

Participants recommended strategies to increase the adoption of sustainable practices:

- Provide simple, practical, and locally relevant examples of sustainable practices.
- Involve farmers and foresters in defining the behaviours that need to be changed.
- Link sustainability messages to economic and business outcomes, such as soil health and food production.
- Use creative and accessible communication methods, including short films, social media campaigns, and demonstration farms.
- Promote transparency and build trust in advisory services.
- Complement nudges with economic incentives where appropriate, while simplifying bureaucratic processes.

## 5. Examples of Existing Policies

Several participants shared country-specific policies that promote sustainability or incorporate nudging elements:

- **UK:** Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) and forestry standards encourage sustainable practices; some nudges are implicit, rather than explicitly framed.
- **Slovenia:** CAP Strategic Plan 2023–2027 eco-schemes and agri-environment-climate measures encourage sustainable practices, supported by advisory services.
- **Portugal:** Interventions to promote sustainability in farming and forestry, including organic farming, fire prevention campaigns, and forest certification programmes.
- **Sweden & Lithuania:** Subsidies for precision farming, nutrient management programmes, and eco-schemes support environmentally friendly practices.
- **France:** Regulations and plans promoting sustainable forestry management, including forest stewardship schemes.
- **Serbia:** Limited policies explicitly targeting nudges, but interest exists in integrating sustainability principles into EU-aligned systems.

## 6. Actions for Change

Participants proposed actions to improve policy and practice at national and European levels:

- Establish living labs and demonstration farms to test and share practical solutions.
- Simplify rules, legislation, and monitoring systems to reduce administrative burden.
- Combine financial support with behavioural approaches to make sustainable choices easier to understand and implement.
- Improve communication and dissemination of successful nudges, including creating platforms to share examples and contacts.
- Emphasise continual development of sustainable practices, adapting to current evidence rather than defaulting to legacy practices.
- Encourage sector-specific rewards, education, and engagement to complement regulatory measures.

## 7. Additional Notes

Input from the Spanish Network highlighted the potential involvement of agricultural and forestry vocational schools as key stakeholders.

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## Conclusions and Next Steps

The workshop successfully achieved its objectives of introducing the ForestAgriGreenNudge project, fostering a shared understanding of green nudges, and identifying key policy challenges and opportunities across diverse European agricultural and forestry contexts.

Across the different sessions, several cross-cutting messages emerged. These include the importance of co-creation with farmers and foresters, the need to move towards more participatory and less top-down policy design, and the value of tailoring interventions to regional, socio-economic, and sector-specific contexts. The discussions also consistently highlighted the role of trust, simplicity, and well-designed advisory systems as critical enablers of behavioural change.

More specifically, participants emphasised that behavioural approaches could play a meaningful complementary role to existing policy instruments—particularly when combined with financial incentives and embedded within the design of CAP eco-schemes and national support programmes. The need to reduce administrative complexity, strengthen peer learning, and improve the accessibility of advisory services was repeatedly underlined across both agricultural and forestry systems.

Overall, the workshop reinforced the potential of behavioural insights to support more effective, context-sensitive, and user-centred policy implementation in the agri-forestry sector.

### LOOKING AHEAD:

- The **Second Pan-European Green Nudges Conference** will take place on **21 May in Brussels**, organised in collaboration with the *PRUDENT* project. Pre-registrations are open and accessible through the project website: [link](#).
- The **Policy Dashboard** summarising network expectations, identified needs, existing policies, and proposed actions will be updated in following policy sessions: [link](#).
- A **second online Policy Workshop** is planned for **autumn 2026** (date to be confirmed), providing further opportunities to deepen stakeholder engagement and refine policy recommendations.