

SESSION 4

Changing energy habits: how behaviour makes the difference

NUDGES Project

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NUDGES

Novel Support tools to Mediterranean Governments Exploiting Behavioural Incentives

Goal

- Demonstrate how MED countries can use behavioural strategies (“nudging”) to improve urban climate policies □ 6 proofs of concept to compare nudging and cultural interventions using the senses.

Partners

- **Eight MED partners** – ANETEL (lead, Cyprus), MUSOL (Spain), eZAVOD (Slovenia), Ud'A (Italy), AUTH (Greece), Knowledge Network (Croatia), PREDA (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Museum of Humour and Satire (Bulgaria)

Activities

- Conduct a feasibility study based on the pilots; Build a Community of Interest; Publish a NUDGES Manifesto; Develop a transferability plan for replicating successful nudges.



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Novel Support tools to Mediterranean Governments Exploiting Behavioural Incentives

- Combines **behavioural nudges with cultural interventions** to **foster climate-friendly habits** across the Euro-Mediterranean region.
- **Six experimental pilots** engage all five senses — sight, sound, smell, touch and taste — to **motivate people** to act for the climate.
- **Nudge4Green database**: PREDA's online platform hosts a dynamic catalogue of green nudges; you can browse

Our Pilots

- Multi-sense workshops (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
- Sound cues for walking (Spain)
- Herbal scents & gardens (Slovenia)
- Tactile theatre & crafts (Italy)
- Mediterranean taste labs (Greece)
- Visual art & satire (Bulgaria)

What is a Nudge?

A nudge is a subtle change in the environment that steers people towards better decisions without restricting their freedom of choice.

Key techniques:



Default Option

Choose energy-saving settings automatically.



Simplification

Make eco-choices easy to understand.



Social Norms

Show what others are doing.



Feedback

Provide realtime performance data.



Salience

Highlight efficient products.



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Climate Nudges: Guiding Sustainable Actions

- Climate nudges target behaviours that directly reduce emissions and are motivated by environmental concerns.
- They alter choice architecture without limiting options.

Why climate nudges?

- Encourage sustainable transport and energy
- Promote recycling and waste
- Build habits that benefit both people and planet



Energy Defaults

Preset thermostats to eco-friendly settings.



Recycling Cues

Clear bins to make sorting effortless.



Green Mobility

Create fun walking/ cycling zones.



Nature Reminders

Use labels to link products to climate impact.



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Culture & Emotions: Driving Behaviour Change

- Cultural participation shapes identity, reinforces community ties and builds social capital.
- People engaged in the arts are more sensitive to environmental issues and more likely to act sustainably.
- **Emotions matter: connecting climate action to local culture and the senses fosters deeper, long-lasting change.**



Ud'A

Insights

Research from University “G. d’Annunzio” of Chieti and Pescara shows that **linking climate action to local culture** (such as senses – touch, taste, sight, smell & sound) **makes it easier to adopt sustainable habits**. Their methodology uses experimental and control groups to capture emotional engagement and long-term impacts.



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Culture & Emotions: Driving Behaviour Change

Nudges	Cultural Interventions
Steer choices via subtle cues (e.g. defaults, feedback)	Engage emotions & identity (e.g. arts, storytelling)
Focus on individual decisions	Focus on collective meaning
Short-term behaviour change	Long-lasting cultural shifts

SOUND INSPIRATION

- Spain: MUSOL & Madridejos Municipality
- Focus: Sounds of the city to raise climate awareness
- **Goal: reduce car use → encourage children & parents to walk**
- Approach: cultural nudges through local, familiar sounds:
 - listening to sounds,
 - dancing with local and modern music, and
 - experimenting with sound instruments



NEW GENERATION CITIZENS

- Bosnia & Herzegovina - PREDA
- 23 children from Prijedor became **eco-heroes**
- Series of **interactive workshops**, not lectures
- Used the nudge approach: **emotions, senses & environment**
- Cinema workshops to pop popcorn boxes



Eco map: step-by-step journey to Eco League

Policy and Instruments for Energy Transition

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NEW GENERATION CITIZENS

- **Eco-rules:** children adopted simple habits (*switching off lights, saving water, recycling, and walking instead of using the car*)
- **Nudgy the robot story:** children created their own eco-characters
- Children's eco-book **published** with their drawings & stories
- **Recycling Wizard:** turning plastic bottles into 3D toys
- **Eco Gardener:** planted gardens + herbs to take home



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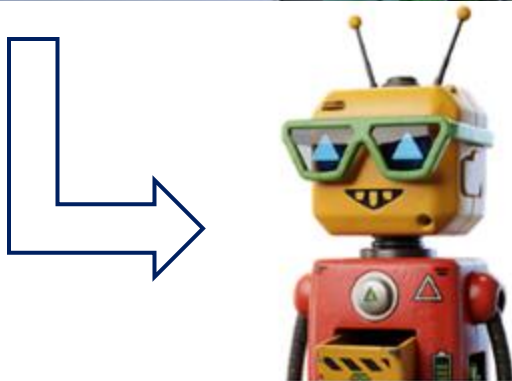
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Childrens' designs turned into digital characters by an AI tool



Photos from the book



Diploma ceremony



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Conclusion

- Nudges can serve as a **supportive policy tool** when embedded in local governance and climate strategies.
- **Emotions and culture** are powerful **drivers of behaviour change** and must be integrated into long-term climate policies.
- Experiments with senses show that **everyday habits can shift** when people connect climate action to **things they value**.
- **Children-to-parent learning** and **community participation** strengthen the impact and ensure changes last.
- Institutionalising nudges **builds local capacity**, allowing cities to **adapt and validate interventions** across diverse contexts.



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