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PROMOTING GREEN LIVING AREAS



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NUDGES policy brief

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Version	3

1. Introducing Nudges

"Climate nudges" offer a promising possibility for influencing individual behaviour towards more sustainable practices. By taking insights from behavioural economics and psychology, climate nudges aim to subtly shift people's choices towards pro-environmental actions.

A nudge is defined by Thaler & Sunstein (2008, p. 6) as "any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behaviour in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives". Therefore, **climate nudges** are behavioural stimuli that motivate people to make climate-friendly choices, instead of others.

Why climate nudges in public policies?

Behavioural change

Immediate feedback has been shown to positively influence energy-saving behaviours, encouraging more efficient use of resources.

In European countries, smart meters were installed, providing real-time consumption data, which had a positive impact on energy savings. An example of **environmental nudge** based on the provision of immediate feedback.

Social commitment

Improving transparency in energy contracts through informative and social climate nudges can enhance public awareness and drive compliance.

In the Netherlands, it was proposed to improve transparency in energy contracts for markets and consumers through informative and **social climate nudges**. A greater perception of this need was achieved, with data of non-compliant companies.

No regulations

Climate nudges are novel tool in public policy, which does **not imply sanctions, economic incentives**, or new **regulations**.

The Euro-Mediterranean region is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, while the region may benefit greatly from climate nudges to mitigate these impacts.



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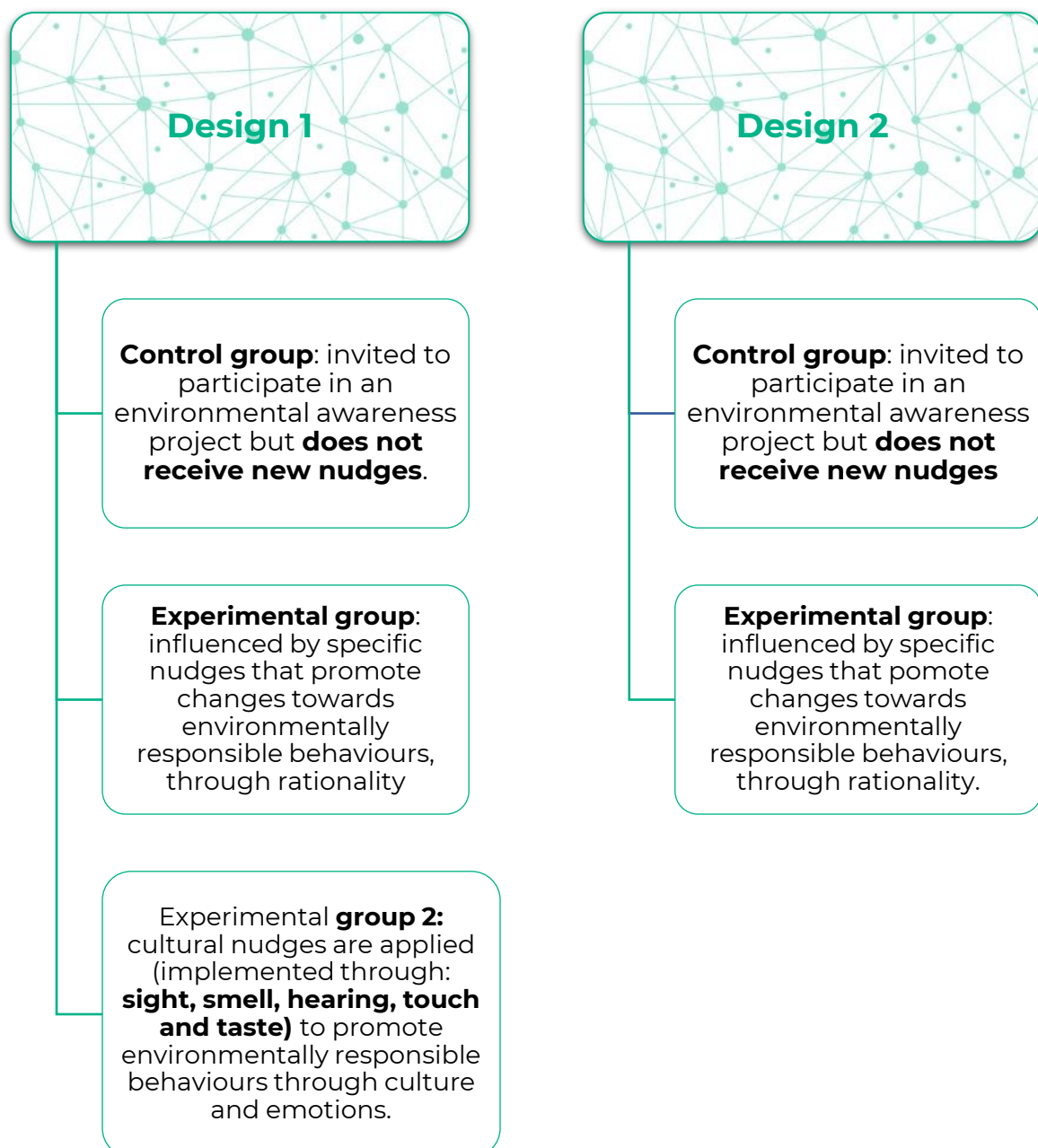
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2. The proposal

It aims to explore the efficacy of climate nudges in promoting climate-friendly actions within the context of public policies in the Euro-MED territory. This is carried out by delivering the results of 6 experimental pilots, each one located in a different country of the programme area, where the active engagement of local public administration alongside citizens is ensured. In this regard the project seeks to assess the effectiveness of sensory-based nudges in influencing behaviour. With an experimental design, two or three groups will be formed in each country, with the following structures:



Expected Deliveries:

It is expected to find environmentally responsible choices and consequently engaged citizens with eco-friendly long-term behaviours. Additionally, the project aims to fill in the gap between climate-responsible attitudes and behaviours within the MED population; the lack of knowledge at the policy level on the potential of climate nudges as alternative tools to regulatory changes; and the lack of evidence on the intertwining of cultural and behavioural aspects as relevant for the effectiveness of nudging strategies. Furthermore, a new and innovative, MED-wide community of interest will be created, paving the way to additional research action in this domain, in the framework of a dedicated Transferability Plan.

Value and potentials of the ongoing and upcoming activities.

This project holds significant value and potential for advancing environmental sustainability through innovative behavioural interventions. Integrating of climate nudges into public policies offers a cost-effective approach to addressing climate change, complementing traditional measures.

By demonstrating the effectiveness of sensory-based interventions, this project contributes to a growing body of knowledge on behavioural science and environmental policy. The insights gained from the experimental pilots and proofs of

concept can inform the design of future interventions across various domains, ranging from urban planning to corporate sustainability initiatives.

For some local governments the project represents a pioneering effort to bridge the gap between behavioural science and environmental policy, paving the way for more effective strategies to mitigate climate change and promote a sustainable future.

Recommendations for actions:

The project highlights the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration between behavioural scientists, policymakers, and environmental practitioners. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, we can develop more contextually relevant strategies for promoting sustainable behaviour at scale.

Policymakers should consider incorporating sensory-based interventions into existing environmental policies and initiatives. By collecting and analyzing data on the effectiveness of climate nudges, policymakers can refine strategies and allocate resources more efficiently.

In addition to allowing citizens to choose freely, cultural nudges link the environment, art, and culture, promoting the connection of environmental incentives to cultural aspects of the territory and energizing collaboration with the creative industry. It's a cross-cutting political option that benefits different areas of public policy.



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