

Press Release

GREENMOVE FINAL MEETING IN VALONGO CELEBRATES INCLUSION, INNOVATION, AND EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

VALONGO, PORTUGAL – [07.05.2026] – The GreenMove consortium successfully concluded its 6th and final transnational meeting in Valongo, Portugal, from [3–6 May 2026], bringing together 17 partners from 16 countries to advance sustainable, inclusive, and gender-equitable mobility across Europe. The meeting marked the culmination of a two-year journey that transformed the network into a permanent European movement for climate democracy.

DAY 1: IMMERSION IN VALONGO'S CALM AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEM

Participants arrived in Valongo – a serene, well-organised municipality just minutes from bustling Porto, yet remarkably free from noise pollution and urban stress. The first day focused on getting to know the local ecosystem through a cultural tour of the region's heritage sites, green landscapes, and community spaces. Delegates experienced firsthand how Valongo has cultivated a calm, clean, and efficient urban environment that prioritises quality of life while remaining strongly connected to European networks. The day also coincided with Portugal's Mother's Day celebrations, adding a warm, family-centred atmosphere to the gathering.

DAY 2: EMPOWERING WOMEN, BRIDGING GENERATIONS, AND CITIZEN SCIENCE IN ACTION

The second day opened with a powerful and authentic speech by the **Mayor of Valongo, Mr. Paulo Esteves Ferreira**, who reaffirmed the municipality's commitment to social innovation, resilience, and participatory governance.

The core theme of the meeting – "**Empowering Women in Mountainous Regions through Mobility and Gender Equality**" – was addressed through a series of impactful presentations. Special focus was given to Valongo's **Social Innovation Department**, which presented a model that left all 17 partners convinced of its replicability across Europe.

Key elements of Valongo's best practice include:

- **Empowering vulnerable groups**, including the Roma community, through mobility and social inclusion programmes.

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- **Bridging the generation gap** with innovative digital tools – notably the "YouTubeTrainers" initiative, where young people teach digital skills to the elderly, vulnerable groups, and minorities.
- A unique combination of programmes targeting both **youngsters and the third age**, creating intergenerational solidarity and shared learning.

This citizen-science-driven approach, rooted in sustainability and resilience, demonstrated how local ecosystems can generate scalable solutions for Europe's most pressing mobility challenges.

DAY 3: UNIVERSAL DESIGN ADOPTED AS A GREENMOVE LEGACY

The final day delivered a historic outcome. The **Municipality of Fano**, presented a visionary proposal on **Universal Design – or "Design for All"** – a planning approach that guarantees inclusion beyond physical barriers.

The core principles presented and adopted include:

- **Planning investments to benefit those with special needs** – families with strollers, women with children, groups of children needing safe outdoor play areas.
- **Recognising that different users have different needs** – for example, a mother with a stroller experiences paths and roads differently than the general public. Therefore, **dialogue with users is decisive**.
- **Investing in training and co-design sessions** that bring together those who live with accessibility challenges and those who design public and private spaces. Only through this dialogue can barrier removal become a concrete goal.

Fano also highlighted the importance of **collaboration and synergies between EU-funded projects**. The **consortium unanimously agreed to adopt Universal Design as one of the main outcomes of GreenMove** – a lasting legacy that will shape inclusive, human-centred mobility planning across Europe.

CULTURAL CELEBRATION: HISTORY, DANCE, AND BAKERY TRADITIONS

Between sessions, participants enjoyed a cultural immersion that showcased the best of Valongo and the Porto region:

- **Visit to Quinta das Arcas** – one of the region's finest wineries – followed by **traditional dances** performed by the **Senior Dance Academy of Valongo**, demonstrating that age is no barrier to passion and cultural pride.
- **Oficina da Regueifa e do Biscoito** – the Bakery Museum of Valongo – where partners from 16 countries engaged in an **interactive baking experience**, making their own traditional cookies and connecting with local heritage in a hands-on, joyful atmosphere.

A LASTING LEGACY

With the conclusion of the Valongo meeting, the GreenMove consortium has:

- Finalised the **sixth chapter of the Interactive Sustainable Living Guidebook (GISLG)**, focused on gender equality, social inclusion, and mountainous regions.
- Formalised the **GreenMove Digital Toolbox** as a permanent open-access resource.
- Adopted **Universal Design** as a core planning principle for inclusive mobility.
- Launching the European Day of Sustainable Mobility the 9th of May! not just a date on the calendar – but as a call to action for every citizen, every municipality, and every nation. From the mountains of Valongo to the shores of Corfu, declaring that mobility is a fundamental right, and that green, inclusive transport is the backbone of a united, resilient, and democratic Europe. May 9th will forever remind us: together, we move forward."

As stated by the consortium coordinator: **"What we built in GreenMove is not just a set of tools – it is a movement. From the shores of Corfu to the mountains of Valongo, we have shown that citizens, municipalities, and EU values can together forge a more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic Europe."**

ABOUT GREENMOVE

Funded by the European Commission under the **CERV-2024-Network of Towns** initiative, GreenMove is a groundbreaking project dedicated to protecting, promoting, and raising awareness of rural and island areas through sustainable mobility. The consortium of 17 partners from 16 countries has worked for two years to institutionalise citizen participation, embed fundamental rights into transport planning, and create a permanent European network for climate democracy.

Project Website: <https://greenmove.site>

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NORTH CORFU MUNICIPALITY



**#GreenMove #Valongo #UniversalDesign #DesignForAll #InclusiveMobility #GenderEquality
#CitizenScience #DemosKratos #CERV #EUFunded #SustainableMobility #Portugal**
