

Shaping the future of Europe's mountain regions: High-Level experts gather in Brussels



BRUSSELS, BELGIUM – On January 11, over 50 high-level European experts on mountains convened in Brussels, Belgium, to discuss the future of mountain regions and enabling post-2027 EU policies for these regions. The discussion was part of the [European Foresight Workshop for resilient mountain areas](#), organised by the EU-funded [MOVING project](#) (MOUNTAIN VALORISATION THROUGH INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND GREEN GROWTH).

Hosted collaboratively by the representation offices of Region Tuscany and Pays de la Loire, the event kicked off with a warm welcome from **Roberto Scalacci**, Director of Agricultural and Rural Development at Tuscany Region.

Hence, **Mar Delgado**, Professor at the University of Cordoba and MOVING Coordinator, set the stage by reflecting on the progress made in integrating research, policy, and society in our value chain efforts.

The workshop, enriched by participatory sessions based on recent foresight studies, aimed at setting out strategic pathways for mountain regions up to 2030. Focusing on four key archetypes – **Economy, Nature, Knowledge and Innovation, and Niche and Diversification** –, high-level experts from across Europe worked towards developing scalable strategic options for these vital areas.

Isabel Carvalhais, Member of the European Parliament and part of the RUMRA & Smart Villages Intergroup, delved into the future prospects of mountain areas. As a key advocate for rural areas





and rapporteur on Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas and EU farms' generational renewal, she expressed a need for a paradigm shift in policymaking, stating, "for three decades, we've been reinventing the wheel. We need real empowerment for local communities in shaping policies. The in-depth, granular evidence from MOVING is set to drive effective policymaking for mountain areas."

Arianna Pasa, from European Commission's DG Agriculture and Rural Development, highlighted the EU's commitment to mountain regions. Despite the absence of a specific EU Agenda for Mountain Areas, she pointed out that support to mountain regions is stated in Article 174 and Article 175 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Dominique Barjolle, President of the Origin, Diversity and Territories Forum, presented groundbreaking 2050 foresight scenarios outlined across the [23 MOVING mountain regions](#). These ambitious scenarios, offering visionary pathways for mountain areas, challenge the prevailing pessimism and set a course for positive change. "Local communities are key to transforming their future. MOVING is pivotal in changing perceptions and empowering them to be the architects of their own destiny through empowerment, collective action, and improved governance", Ms. Barjolle emphasised.

The afternoon discussions delved into policies to scale up Strategic Options for mountain value chains, with a focus on global perspectives and specific insights from France and Catalonia, Spain.

Rosalaura Romeo, Coordinator of the UN FAO's Mountain Partnership Secretariat, emphasised the necessity of collaborative efforts for sustainable mountain development, highlighting initiatives such as the Business Incubator and Accelerator and a certification scheme for eco-friendly mountain products, impacting over 140 producer organisations.

Thomas Bunel, from the French National Agency for Territorial Cohesion (ANCT) delved into the nuances of the French Mountain Policies. He identified three core elements – Empowerment, Collective Action, and Governance – as the pillars of France's approach to mountain policy.

Bernat Claramunt, from the Ecological and Forestry Applications Research Centre (CREAF), shed light on the recent updates to the Catalan High Mountain Law. This law aims to balance the wellbeing of mountain residents with a renewed focus on People and Governance.

In a final round table moderated by Professor **Gianluca Brunori** from the University of Pisa, the Euromontana's Director **Guillaume Corradino** - underscored the importance of in-depth analyses provided by projects like MOVING, which offer detailed insights on the added value of mountain value chains beyond their economic value.

The event, organised by the [Forum Origin, Diversity and Territories](#), the [European Association for Innovation in Local Development](#) and the [Association of European Regions for Products of Origin](#), [marked a significant step towards empowering mountain regions and shaping their future](#).



About the MOVING Project:

The [MOVING project](#) is an EU-funded H2020 project focused on building capacities and co-developing policy frameworks to establish new or upscaled value chains, contributing to the resilience and sustainability of mountainous areas in Europe.

Press Contact:

Miranda García Lera

Communication and Project Officer, European Association for Innovation in Local Development

Email: mga@aeidl.eu