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Save the date!

Networking event in Brussels, Belgium 13th September 2017

The EMPOWERING Consortium and municipal representatives of the six participating regions are heading for Brussels in the beginning of autumn. On the 13th of September the team organizes a networking event for relevant organisations, networks and similar projects. Apart from getting to know each other's activities, parti-

cipants will share experiences and discover collaboration opportunities.

The event focuses on the following topics: how to facilitate and support energy planning and implementation of energy actions of local authorities (practices, examples); effective supporting tools to build capacity and financing opportunities

for the implementation of sustainable energy actions.

If you are working in the field of the above-mentioned topics and you are interested in participating such a networking event, please contact: Mrs Orsolya Tisza, project manager (e-mail: Tisza.orsolya@mfu.hu).

We look forward to meeting you!



14th September 2017, Study Visit in Ghent

The study visits aim at giving more consistency to the vision of the members of the Local Energy Boards by visiting good practices in different set-ups, but also to connect them with people that share the same responsibilities in making neutral cities a reality as soon as possible.

The study visit will comprise 3 sections:

- Presentation of the Ghent Climate Neutral City, de-

livered by Jorn Verbeeck, the director of the Environment and Climate Agency - City of Ghent. The presentation will include details about its objectives, goals, challenges and trend-setters.

- Two learning formats: presentations in the seminar room and site visits, about successful initiatives under the topic of Integrated Energy in Ghent, such as: cost free renovation ad-

vice; energy grants; energy loans; district projects (Sluizeken - Tolhuis - Ham district); check your house; Ghent solar map.

- Debriefing in a round table talk within the project consortium and the City of Ghent experts. The guest-stakeholders will be encouraged to share their work and to mingle with their peers from Belgium.



EMPOWERING Transnational Meeting, 3rd - 4th October 2017

During the first week of October the North-East Regional Development Agency will host the 4th EMPOWERING transnational meeting that will include:

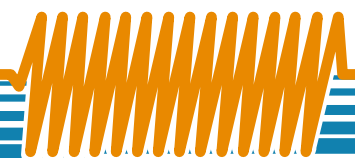
- the 2nd Peer-to-Peer seminar on innovative financial

instruments.

- the 2nd Transnational Seminar on land use planning.
- the 3rd Study Visit hosted by Roman Municipality.

The event is expected to gather stakeholders from

the EMPOWERING partner regions that will have the opportunity to exchange opinions and solutions to facilitate the implementation of effective measures for sustainable energy.



North-East LEB agrees on the next steps

After establishing the LEB of North-East Region (Romania) at the beginning of 2017, in May the Board was enlarged gather now a total of 12 municipalities: the first 8 towns of Bacau, Botosani, Iasi, Moinești, Piatra Neamt, Roman, Suceava and Vaslui and 4 of the communes in Iasi Metropolitan Area: Holboca, Miroslava, Tomesti and Victoria. The first official meeting was organized on the 26th of July 2017 and it created the stage for in-depth discussions regarding:

- the new context of Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy: several municipalities should re-commit to the New CoM and present members suggested that a meeting for raising the awareness of the mayors would be required;
- the stakeholders analysis to be further integrated in the LEB: relevant NGOs, academia and national authorities should be invited to join the North-East LEB;
- the findings of the Capacity Building Needs Assessment: EMPOWERING intervention should address training for human resources (mainly decision making level) for integrated energy, mobility and innovative financial instruments;
- the Transnational Exchange Program: the North-East LEB is proud to host the EMPOWERING LEBs on the 4th of October for a study visit in Roman, a municipality whose vision is to become an innovative and green city;
- the objectives and contents of the training program:

members requested that the training program would include an awareness seminar for the political decision-making level, a technical workshop during which they should be trained to establish a functional multidisciplinary team for SECAP elaboration, implementation and monitoring and a third workshop dedicated to the financing of

SECAP measures, both from existing and newly created self-financing instruments.

Following actions require investigating the individual situations of North-East LEB related to the New CoM and defining the common approach for supporting their adhesion that is the pre-requisite for the preparation and submission of SECAPs. ☀



Empowering presence at the 3rd European Climate Change Adaptation Conference

Representatives of the Istrian Development Agency-IDA, together with Local Energy Board representatives, Istrian County and municipalities of Pula, Rovinj, Porec, Pazin and Labin, participated at the 3rd European Climate Change Adaptation Conference – ECCA, that was held in Glasgow from 5th -9th of June 2017.

In Scotland, we've begun a journey that puts adaptation and climate resilience at the very heart of our decisions shaping investment and transforming communities.

Over 850 people were welcomed to the City of Glasgow to attend ECCA 2017, 'Our Climate Ready Future', in June 2017. The vision was that this conference would inspire and enable people to work together to discover and deliver positive climate adaptation solutions that can strengthen society, revitalize lo-

cal economies and enhance the environment. There was a great response outside the academic community, and the conference was able to bring together the people who will deliver action on the ground – from business, industry, NGOs, local government and communities – to share knowledge, ideas and experience with leading researchers and policymakers.

Cities are hotspots for measures to mitigate global warming and adapt to the consequences of it. Not only do cities contribute for a large part to the emission of greenhouse gasses (GHG), they are also vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. 74% of the European population lives in urban areas. It is important that cities implement low-carbon policies and adaptation strategies in close collaboration with citizens and local stakeholders. ☀

Lessons Learnt Workshops in Andalusia

On 28th of June took place the second Andalusian LEB meeting, at the Andalusian Agency for Environment and Water headquarters. After the welcome of the Director Manager, Antonio Galán, the main progresses and next activities of the project were presented. The project is already in the equator, ending the visits of knowledge exchange and preparing for the most practical stage of the project, where the collaborating municipalities will elaborate their Action Plans for Climate and Sustainable Energy.

The most interesting part of the meeting was dedicated to the lessons learnt in the project activities in Athens and Malmö. In "Neutral-Climates and Energy Efficient Cities" workshop the municipalities that participated in Athens Seminar exposed briefly the information about the projects exposed, and also commented the good ideas that

each of them are implementing in their territories inspired in the seminar.

At the workshop "Proactive work on climate change: cities experiences", the energy efficiency planning and measures of the new areas of the city of Malmö such as Hyllie Smart City and the sustainable urban planning of the old Western Harbour were commented with pictures and videos of the visit. Also the SWOT matrix realised at the sum up session was explained highlighting the common points to all regions represented. ☀



Study visits in Malmö

An Empowering study visit was hosted by the city of Malmö, Sweden, on 20-21st of June, 2017. Malmö has worked for many years to become a low-carbon city. Thus, the project group and municipal representatives had the opportunity to get some inspiration from a best practice city.

During the first day, the participants went to the development area Hyllie. It is the largest development area of Malmö, and will have more than 26 000 inhabitants after its completion. We visited one of the multi-family houses where tenants have moved in, in this case already in 2013. The house is connected to the smart heat grid that the energy company provides, meaning that the building uses less energy for heating than a building with a standard connec-

tion. The owner of the house showed the solar panel system, the district heating devices and the smart grid components.

Next stop was a knowledge centre dedicated to teach visitors about waste and water treatment. The film about smart grids, the 3D-model over Malmö and the other parts of the knowledge centre are all meant to give inspiration for a more sustainable lifestyle, and a better insight into the necessary systems in the city that are often taken for granted.

The second day started in the Western Harbour area. In order to get there, some of the participants used the short-time bike-renting system that is put in place by the city of Malmö. A guide told us about Western Harbour: it has been transformed from a shipyard and harbour area

into a sustainable neighbourhood for living and working.

As a complement to the guided parts of the study visit, there were also two presentations. One of them described the targets and work of Malmö in

the sustainable energy-related field. The other one described a highly ambitious building planned for by the Lund municipality housing corporation, as a concrete example of an action that every municipality could take.



The 1st Empowering Transnational Seminar in Athens

The 1st Transnational Seminar of the EMPOWERING project was held in Athens on the 4th April 2017. The core theme of the Seminar was the land use-planning and the detailed descriptions of the experience gained by the promoters of 4 best practices identified at European level. The participants were the delegates of the Local Energy Boards [LEB] established in each participating

region as well as the project partners.

The TNS included a short workshop prior to the best practices presentation in which the delegates identified the major challenges and opportunities by the strategic process of the Covenant of Mayors and the commitments to reduce emissions. The LEB representatives concluded that the challenges and the opportunities are common for all the participating regions. The best practices on European level identified by the LEB members were:

- Bolzano pilot city (SINFONIA FP7 project), Daniele Vettorato, EURAC, Bolzano;
- Ghent climate-neutral city, Jorn Verbeeck, Director of Environment and Climate Agency, City of Ghent
- Växjö, the Greenest City in

Advice from the promoters

- Set a clear vision.
- Extensive Planning: the key success factor.
- Start with a tangible, visible project.
- Common ground: local attractiveness and employment enhancement.
- Training of the end users so that the innovation generates the expected results.
- Always something is “doable” even in small cities!

Europe, Henrik Johansson, City of Växjö;

- Energy Performance Contract (EPC) for energy efficiency plan of public buildings. Experiences from Auvergne - Rhône - Alpes region and the Interreg MED STEPPING project, Laurent Chanussot, Policy Officer, Rhônalpénergie Environnement.

The LEB delegates had the opportunity to ask questions directly to the persons in charge

of the projects presented about the mechanisms developed, the support tools used, the success factors and the lessons learned. During the last session of the seminar, the promoters were encouraged to give their advice on launching sustainable energy actions in local level, in order to facilitate the transferability of the Best Practices.

The presentations of the 1st EMPOWERING Transnational Seminar in Athens are available on project's website.




Overall agreed challenges

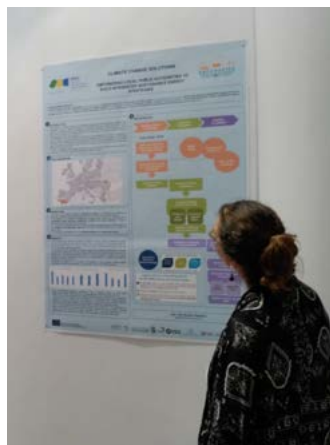
- Legislation disconnected from funding.
- Reduced financial capacity of local planning authorities to co-finance EU projects.
- Lack of specialized human resources and expertise in implementation and monitoring.

Empowering in the International Congress on Climate Change in Huelva

Empowering project was represented in the International Congress on Climate Change -SOCC2017- in the poster's area of the congress where almost 30 projects of scientific research and communication tools have been exposed. During 3 days -from 10th to 12th of May- more than 50 international speakers and 30 exhibitors have showed their works and experiences on environmental activities. Specially interesting was the final conference guided by Leyla Acaroglu, named Champion of the Earth in 2016 by United Nations for her pioneering work in science and innovation for sustainability and social change.

Empowering contributes to reduce the climate change across a bottom-up strategy where citi-


zens and local governments have an important role because major international commitments need their support, addressing all efforts in the same direction. This approach is consistent with the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy known as the world's biggest urban climate and energy initiative. 



The call for the twinning programme of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy is now open!

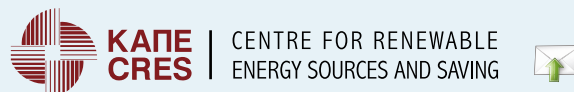
The programme offers cities, regions and provinces across Europe the opportunity to take part in twinning exchanges that aim to increase local authorities' capacity and knowledge to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is open to all Covenant of Mayors signatories and Territorial Coordinators, as well as municipalities, provinces and regions that are not yet part of the Covenant of Mayors Community, under the condition that they join the

initiative before their first twinning visit. The call enables local authorities to participate in two types of exchanges: mentoring and peer-to-peer exchanges.

Local and regional authorities interested in taking part should apply before 15 September 2017, 17:00 CEST. For more information, please contact Pier Paolo Saraceno: pier.saraceno@eumayors.eu 



Partners



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www.empowering-project.eu

