

## The project

Green Twinning is an Intelligent Energy Europe project which aims at strengthening the technical and financial capacity of local authorities in the fields of sustainable energy policies and implementation.

The Green Twinning project supports municipalities from Greece, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovenia and Romania to fulfill their commitments in the framework of the Covenant of Mayors initiative through various tools such as training courses, a helpdesk and the conclusion of twinning agreements between “learning” municipalities with little experience in sustainable energy planning and implementation and “experienced” local authorities from Spain.

## Partnership

- Regional Union of Municipalities of Attica (Coordinator) - EL
- EXERGIA Energy and Environment Consultants S.A. - EL
- Sofia Energy Centre - BG
- Association of Rhodope Municipalities - BG
- Polish Network “Energie Cités” - PL
- Municipality of Giurgiu - RO
- Building and Civil Engineering Institute - SI
- Energy Agency of La Ribera - SP
- Municipality of Vrhnika - SI
- Harghita County Council - Energy Management Agency - RO

## National workshops

For the initialization of the Green Twinning project, six national workshops were organized in Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovenia and Spain. The workshops aimed at informing participating municipalities about the project, their project role and the outputs/benefits they could have. In total, representatives of 31 out of 35 “learning” municipalities attended the workshops while representatives of 9 “experienced” municipalities from the province of Granada were informed about the project.

## Training Course on SEAP development



From September 27 to 29, 2012, the 3 days Training course on existing tools and metho -

dologies for SEAP development in CoM context was developed and organized by partner GI ZRMK in M-Hotel in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The training course was well attended, with 44 participants from Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Spain and Slovenia. The speakers were experts from the consortium as well as external experts involved in best practice projects related to SEAP development. The main topics covered were SEAP preparatory steps, data collection, tools and methodologies for SEAP development in the CoM context and SEAP best practice cases. The programme included guided visits to low energy social housing in Ljubljana and to public waste management company Snaga.

## Training course on SEAP implementation



The second Green Twinning training course was organized by EXERGIA and PNEC on May 14-16, 2013 in the International Cultural Center of

Krakow in the presence of all partners and 35 trainees from Greek, Slovenian, Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian municipalities. The training course concerned sustainable energy actions implementation and focused on the process, successful case studies and innovative financing mechanisms. Several round table discussions and hands-on training on the actions implementation process took place during the course. A study tour was also organized in Niepolomice town, which is one of the first Polish cities that joined the Covenant of Mayors initiative and has since implemented many sustainable energy actions (e.g. energy efficient lighting, installation of hybrid solar modules in the Polish Gymnastic Society "Falcon", RES-based heating system in the castle).

The training course was chaired by Panos Coroyannakis of EXERGIA S.A. and Maria Stankiewicz of PNEC.



Green Twinning Helpdesk  
<http://helpdesk.green-twinning.eu/home>

## Twinning Agreements

"A twinning is the coming together of two communities seeking, in this way, to take action with a European perspective and with the aim of facing their problems and developing between themselves closer and closer ties of friendship" Jean Bareth, the first General Secretary of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).

In our project, twinning agreements bring together municipalities in order to develop the administrations' capacities related to the Covenant of Mayors initiative and even to facilitate the adoption by both partners of successful renewable energies (RES) and rational use of energy (RUE) initiatives implemented previously by the other partner.

The twinning partnership is a formal two-way relationship that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility for the achievement of some specified goals. Twinned organizations will work shoulder to shoulder sharing information and transferring know-how in order to assure the success of the partnership. Both partners are expected to gain from the project.

## Memorandum of twinning agreements



The basis of twinning partnership is supported specifically by two documents: the work plan and the memorandum of agreement (MoA).

The twinning work plan shows the particular roadmap that every partnership will follow to achieve the identified expectations, objectives and results. In order to formalize the twinning agreement, partners sign a memorandum of agreement or understanding that officially manifests the complete commitment of twinning counterparts to developing the twinning activities or work plan. The MoA will be signed by municipalities' mayors/ess or deputy mayors/ess.

### Twinnings in action

#### 1. Kardjali-Rubí

After the creation of the twinning steering committee (TSC), formed by members of both municipalities and representatives of the consultants, the municipality of Kardjali (Bulgaria) and Rubí (Spain) defined an initial twinning work plan, using the template provided by AER, that will be finally fine-tuned in the official kick-off (KoM) meeting foreseen in September 2013.

#### 2. Koscierzyna-Padul

On 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 with the purpose of formally launching the twinning partnership, the kick-off meeting took place in the province of Granada. The idea is to bring together all members and stakeholders, to notify them that the twinning partnership has begun and to make sure that both municipalities have a common understanding of the project, their roles and objectives.



#### 3. Ilioupoli-Maracena

On 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2013 the kick-off meeting for Ilioupoli and Maracena was held through a teleconference in which representatives of both municipalities and the Green Twinning project consultants participated. As Ilioupoli has already submitted its SEAP for approval to the CoM, the KoM was mainly focused on the SEAP actions where Ilioupoli is interested in being supported by Maracena. In particular, Ilioupoli is aiming to learn about the “public awareness campaign” experience of Maracena, innovative mechanisms for financing of SEAP actions, Energy efficiency in municipal buildings and Building Energy Management Systems.

### Twinnings in action

#### 4. l'Alcúdia-Giurgiu

In l'Alcúdia, on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2013, the kick-off meeting of the twinning partnership



between this Spanish municipality and Giurgiu (Romania) in the framework of the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) Green Twinning project took place. During this meeting PoE (l'Alcúdia) and PoL (Giurgiu) discussed the collaboration work plan and reached an agreement and, as a result, signed the formal work plan, in order to formalize the twinning agreement and approve a work plan that will drive the partnership to accomplish the identified expectations

#### 5. Piaseczno-Guadix

During the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July, representatives from Piaseczno and Guadix met in Spain for the KoM. During this meeting they



discussed the collaboration activities and reached an agreement about the specific work plan that will drive the partnership to accomplish the identified expectations. The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed by the adviser of the Piaseczno Mayor, Mr. Arkadiusz Strzyżewski and the deputy mayor of Guadix, Ms. M<sup>a</sup> Carmen Alcalá.

### Twinnings in action



#### 6. Kocevje-Huétor Tájar

In the Huétor Tájar Town Hall Mr. Vladimir Prebilib, mayor of Kocevje and

the mayor of Huétor Tájar, Mr. Fernando Delgado signed the Memorandum of Agreement between both municipalities to officially initiate the twinning activities in the framework of the Green Twinning project. Regarding Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) actions, the representatives of Kocevje expressed their interest in learning about biomass, energy efficiency refurbishment of buildings and awareness raising campaigns.



#### 7. Vrhnika-Cúllar Vega

On 12<sup>th</sup> of July, at Cúllar Vega Town Hall, the mayor of Vrhnika, Mr. Stojan Jakin and the mayor of Cúllar Vega, Mr. Juan de Dios Moreno, signed the Memorandum of Agreement. Initially Vrhnika wishes to learn about Cúllar

Vega's experience of energy efficiency public building refurbishment. The mayor of Vrhnika also mentioned the necessity for Vrhnika to invest in a sewage system and a water treatment plant and therefore it is interested in gaining knowledge about those issues.

### Twinnings in action

#### 8. Smoljan-Motril

On 9<sup>th</sup> July, at Motril Town Hall, Mr. Marin Zahariev, vice-mayor of the Municipality of Smolyan, and Ms. Luisa García Chamorro,



mayor of the Municipality of Motril, signed the Memorandum of Agreement. During the meeting in Spain (9-10 July 2013), Bulgarian representatives visited several facilities such as Churriana de la Vega waste water treatment plant with biogas cogeneration, Motril public street lighting system, solar thermal plants in the municipal building, Pinos Puente biomass company, municipal electricity vehicle station and a green roof build up by Otero's company.

#### 9. Ilion-Armilla

During the training course organized in the framework of the project, the representative of Ilion (Greece) discussed the formulated work plan for the twinning between Ilion and Armilla with the Green Twinning partners and Gonzalo Esteban (APEGR). In order to discuss how Ilion will to be technically supported by Armilla in implementing a number of SEAP actions, it was agreed that that the official kick-off meeting will be held through a teleconference in October 2013 while a study visit to Armilla will be organized during the coming months.



#### 10. La Zubia-Miercurea Ciuc

In La Zubia Town Hall, the vice mayor of Miercurea Ciuc, Mr. Szöke Domokos and the mayor of La

Zubia, Mr. Antonio Iglesias signed the Memorandum of Agreement between both municipalities to reaffirm their commitment to work together to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in their territories.

## The experience of L'Alcúdia municipality



L'Alcúdia local government is strongly committed to making the community itself grow on the sustainable development pillars. One of those pillars is environmental sustainability, currently focusing on the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>

emissions in order to contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change. The struggle against climate change is undertaken mainly by adopting energy efficiency programmes in sectors such transport, municipal sector and residential buildings. The promotion of renewable energies is another target of L'Alcúdia. Following this path, L'Alcúdia adopted EU targets and by signing up to the Covenant of Mayors on February 2011, made a commitment to reduce local emissions by 30% by 2020. To date some of the measures which address these objectives are:

- 1) Installing photovoltaic systems on municipal roofs. More than 300 kWp have been installed so far on public buildings. Principally using a roof-rental scheme.
- 2) Installation of solar thermal panels on public facilities. The largest installation is around 200 m<sup>2</sup> of panels installed on the indoor public swimming pool.
- 3) Formation of a Public-Private Partnership to manage Municipal street lighting energy efficiency improvement.
- 4) Development of the Local Agenda 21.
- 5) Sustainable Mobility Plan. Actions already implemented are: a primary school walking bus, creation of a downtown pedestrian area, limitation of speed to 30 km/h, cycle lanes, campaigns for cycling promotion (funds for bike purchase, bike borrowing system, organization of cycling excursions).

## Green Twinning achievements

In the framework of Green Twinning project 7 municipalities joined the Covenant of Mayors, committing to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by at least 20% by 2020 while 5 local authorities developed and submitted their SEAPs to the CoM.

### Covenant of Mayors signatories:

- Vrhnika /Slovenia, May 9, 2012
- Pałecznicza / Poland, January 31, 2013
- Idrija / Slovenia, January 31, 2013
- Miercurea Ciuc / Romania, February 22, 2013
- Śrem / Poland, April 24, 2013
- Kranj / Slovenia, May 24, 2013
- Borsec /Romania, May 28, 2013

### SEAPs submitted to the Covenant of Mayors:

- Ilion / Greece, June 7, 2012
- Agioi Anargyroi-Kamatero / Greece, September 11, 2012
- Koscierzyna / Poland, August 29, 2012
- Ilioupoli / Greece, October 30, 2012
- Nea Smyrni / Greece, December 28, 2012

### Synergies

Green Twinning tries to create synergies with EU projects that share the same values and objectives. During the first year of the project, Green Twinning cooperated and exchanged ideas with several projects and initiatives such as ENERGY FOR MAYORS, NET-COM, MESHARTILITY, SEAP PLUS, Energy Neighbourhoods, Buy Smart+, ManagEnergy, TOPTEN MAX, YAECI, Ennereg and ESOLI.

### Helpdesk public area

The Green Twinning Helpdesk is an online service tool accessed through the Green-Twinning project website. It is hosted at <http://helpdesk.green-twinning.eu/home> and is operated in the English language with the support of EXERGIA, SEC, PNEC, ZRMK and AER who provide day-to-day technical assistance and guidance on the development of successful Sustainable Energy Action Plans and the implementation of specific Energy Efficiency (EE)/Renewable Energy (RE) actions in the context of the Covenant of Mayors. Signing up to the Helpdesk is free for all EU municipalities.

### Upcoming Activities

EXERGIA, SEC, PNEC, ZRMK and AER are assisting municipalities in implementing sustainable energy actions. As part of the project, 16 municipalities from Greece, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovenia and Romania will develop technical and socio-economic studies, bankability assessments and other such documents towards implementing actions identified in their Sustainable Energy Action Plans (e.g. street lighting, public awareness, biomass CHP, EE refurbishments, wood gasification power plants, etc.). For more information, please contact Maria Athanasopoulou at [m.athanasopoulou@exergia.gr](mailto:m.athanasopoulou@exergia.gr)

### Find your partner for sustainability

The Green Twinning project also seeks to promote the establishment of voluntary twinning agreements between European municipalities with the purpose of sharing experiences and facing/solving common problems related to energy efficiency and renewable energy development. Obviously the scope of the twinning process may be widened to include the whole range of issues as well as the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction challenge.

If you/your city/region are interested in getting a counterpart and setting up a long-term partnership, there are a few steps to follow:

- 1) Provide us with contact details about you, such a contact person, and your local authority. Use the general e-mail address appearing on the Green Twinning project official website.
- 2) Once this is done, you will receive an e-mail with a form to be completed with general information about your municipality, main interests and some other information that will be useful in finding you a suitable counterpart.

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