



Newsletter #3

January 2021

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the third edition of Newsletter series of the OptiWaMag!

The Interreg Europe programme, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), is designed to support policy-learning among the relevant policy organizations with a view to improving the performance of regional development policies and programmes. Interreg Europe programme has approved the OptiWaMag interregional cooperation project for supporting to protect the environment and promote the resource efficiency.

In the following pages, you will find an editorial describing the overall context and objectives of the project as well as information on the latest developments and upcoming events.

The OptiWaMag Newsletters are published in every six months. Through our project website and this periodic newsletter, we will keep you informed about our progress and key outcomes.

The OptiWaMag project team



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PROJECT AT A GLANCE

OptiWaMag involves 6 EU regions with a shared ambition to accelerate the scaling up of waste management innovation that can support active and innovative environment and resource efficiency and secure the triple win of economic growth, more sustainable ecosystem services and improved well-being of Europe's citizens.

3rd Interregional Meeting

Host: Municipality of Lousada

Due to the outbreak of the Corona virus disease (COVID-19) in Europe, the meeting was held online. **Project OptiWaMag concludes diagnosis of waste management systems and starts a new phase of work.**

The OptiWaMag project seeks innovation in urban waste management policies. Six European entities from Portugal, Sweden, Latvia, Greece, Hungary and Italy constitute an interregional and inter-institutional collaborative partnership for the exchange of experiences and good practices, co-learning and knowledge transfer. The purpose of this partnership is to develop regional action plans that can improve the efficiency of the waste sector.

The work plan now begins its third semester, with slight constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The second

Underground recycling containers.



and third international partner meetings, scheduled respectively for Budapest and Lousada, were developed in a virtual setting. **Similarly, meetings with stakeholders and other regional stakeholders have been conducted in a digital manner.**

During the first year of work, the partners, in collaboration with their local groups of experts and consultants, developed an in-depth diagnosis of the domestic and urban waste management system of their region. A statistical tool was also developed to standardize the codification of responses and contributions, and to visually present the main conclusions of each region.

At the international meeting on October 13 and 14, **the partners presented and discussed the final**

results of their diagnosis, listing the strengths and constraints of each system.

The next steps of the project will focus on the development of an action plan with concrete proposals to improve the waste management systems and to enhance strategic regulations and policy documents.

Inter-regional co-learning processes will also be strengthened by research and mapping of replicable good practices in waste management and valorization.

Waste Flow - Lousada

GENERAL WASTE



- Domestic general waste goes directly to landfill, in Lousada.
- Landfill occupation taxes updated yearly.
- No waste sorting is applied.
- Biogas is exploited.
- Residual waters are treated.

Waste Flow - Lousada

SORTED WASTE



- Sorted waste goes to proper facility, in Lousada: Final sorting by waste type Compacting and shipping
- Recyclable waste is sent to final treatment, transformation and valorization.

4th Interregional Meeting

Host: Municipality of
Casalgrande



On the 19th and 20th of January 2021 the fourth Interregional meeting of the partners of the project Optiwamag - Optimization of Waste Management in urban areas and in households was held in Casalgrande (RE), but it was held, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in virtual mode.

During the first year of the project the partners have focused on the analysis of the strengths and possible areas of intervention of their respective waste management tools, now, according to the work plan, the partners are preparing to enter the decisive phase of the project: in fact, already by the end of this third semester that will end in January 2021, the partners have begun to lay the foundations of

their regional action plans.

In fact, during the meeting of January 19 and 20, 2021, the partners shared their proposals for a Framework Strategy (FWS), understood here as a flexible tool, drafted by the task force of experts, which takes into account the evidence, best practices, success factors, lessons and recommendations derived from the analysis of interregional meetings and self-evaluation reports.

The process of elaboration of the FWS is still in progress: however, among the proposals submitted, the one identified as most convincing by the partnership is the one presented by the Municipality of

Casalgrande (Italy). In fact, it will be the Italian draft, supplemented by the Greek draft, that will shape the final version of the Optiwamag FWS.

This will form the backbone of the action plan that will guide partners and stakeholders in the drafting of the same plan in the months to come. It is from the FWS that the Optiwamag partners perceived the need to start reflecting also on the good practices to be exchanged within the partnership, which will be the focus of the next semester's work.

Interview with Riga Technical University

We have decided to make an interview series in order to introduce the partners of the project OptiWaMag.



The interviewee is Riga Technical University (RTU)

1) Please introduce your organization and your region

RTU: Riga Technical University (RTU) is an accredited higher education establishment and research institution of the Republic of Latvia. RTU is an internationally recognized European university, striving towards high quality study process, excellence in research and sustainable valorisation.

The RTU Institute of Civil Engineering and Real Estate Economics (Institute) has a profound experience in interdisciplinary scientific research, and takes an active part in Interreg Central Baltic, Interreg Europe and other projects.

2) What is the main challenge in your region related to waste management that you want to address through the OptiWaMag project?

RTU: Gradually the awareness of people about issues of sustainable living conditions, climate change prevention, environmental improvement and municipal waste management is increasing. According to the statistics, Latvia has a high rate of polarization – stratification of the population. Local municipalities are responsible for the organization of municipal waste management in their territory, therefore, there is a difference in the attitude and quality of waste management in municipal areas.

The OptiWaMag project will help us to identify the causes of waste

management problems, such as lack of public awareness, education and cooperation and will help us to define solutions

3) What is your expectation for the output of the project?

RTU: Separate collection, recycling and re-use of waste play an important role in ensuring the availability and sufficiency of resources in the circular economy, which is a priority for the European Union in the coming years. To this end, a number of crucial long-term choices now need to be made in the field of waste management and recycling in Latvia.

Latvia has initiated the deposit system and is in the process of starting it. The results of the OptiWaMag project will be a great addition and a source for new ideas for the development of efficient municipal waste management systems.

[Read more](#)

Project Partners

Six partners from Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Portugal and Sweden are working on the OptiWaMag project

The partnership is led by the County Administrative Board of Östergötland from Sweden.

1) County Administrative Board of Östergötland



2) Development Organization



3) Municipality of Lousada



4) Riga Technical University



5) Municipality of Casalgrande



6) Region of Thessaly



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Next OptiWaMag event: The 5th Interregional Meeting will be in Greece. The event will cover a review of the Greek waste management system and a progress assessment.

For more information about the waste management project, visit our website:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/optiwamag>

Find us on social media

<https://twitter.com/OptiWaMag>

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