

PRESS RELEASE

To be released immediately

7 September 2018

Fostering smart technologies and related policies in waste management: the WINPOL project kicks off

In recent years, technology and innovation have reached the field of waste. They offer an excellent opportunity to improve policies aiming to minimise waste generation and reach resource efficiency. However, the degree of introduction of innovative equipment and practices varies significantly from one territory to another. This is why WINPOL, a new Interreg Europe project, has just been launched. It gathers European cities and regions committed to mainstream the use of intelligent equipment and related waste management policies on their territories and beyond.

Gijón, Spain – The **kick-off meeting of the project WINPOL** – Waste Management Intelligent Systems and Policies – took place in Gijón on 5-6 September 2018, **hosted by EMULSA**, the municipal company of urban environment services of Gijón and **lead partner** of WINPOL. The project consortium of this **Interreg Europe funded project** also includes **Mehedinti County Council** and **Drobeta Turnu Severin City Hall** (Romania), **SNAGA** – the company for waste management and other utility services of Maribor (Slovenia), the **Municipality of Heraklion** and the **Region of Crete** (Greece), **ERA** – the Environment Resources Authority of Malta, the **City of Antwerp** (Belgium), as well as **ACR+** – the Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource Management as advisory partner.

These 9 partners will join forces during 54 months to **improve regional and local waste management policies by promoting intelligent equipment and innovative planning derived from it**. They will do so in two different phases. During the phase of “**Interregional Learning**” they will **identify good practices, exchange experiences and elaborate action plans** on the transfer of good practices and experiences on their territories. All good practices identified will be compiled in a **handbook**, available to all. Several **study-visits** are foreseen during this first phase to understand the situation on the partner territories and to discover good practices from other cities, namely Bergen (Norway) and Ghent (Belgium). The second phase, “**Monitoring of the Action Plan Implementation**”, will focus on the implementation of the action plans produced with the aim of **improving partners’ policy instruments**.

The study visits started already during the kick-off meeting in Gijón as project partners discovered the programme and equipment used by EMULSA to support waste management in the city. Among others, partners saw how the itineraries for collection vehicles are planned and how the system to open and collect containers for organic waste is operated through an individual card for citizens. Another study visit was organised by COGERSA, the company for solid waste management in the province of Asturias. After a visit of the highly interactive and visual educational centre, partners got acquainted with the installations of the central landfill for Asturias, learning about its evolution and foreseen projects, focusing in particular on the anaerobic digestion plant.

In the coming months the partners will organise **Information Days** on their territories to inform local audiences on the project start. These events will be held in the Mehedinti County (Romania), Maribor (Slovenia), the Region of Crete (Greece), Malta, Antwerp (Belgium) and Gijón (Spain). The next meeting of the project partners is foreseen in February in Brussels (Belgium). Until then, you can **follow the project on its [website](#) and [Twitter](#)**.

ACR+ role in the partnership

ACR+ as the **advisory partner** of the project will **share experiences** on the topic collected within its network of international members and its other projects, such as [H2020 COLLECTORS](#), [Interreg Europe Intherwaste](#) or [H2020 URBAN-WASTE](#). In the first phase of the project, ACR+ will organise a **capacity building event** to introduce to the WINPOL partners different waste management tools developed within past and current ACR+ projects. It will further **coordinate the communication activities** of the project in its quality of communications manager.

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*The WINPOL project - Waste Management Intelligent Systems and Policies - aims to **foster and promote the use of intelligent equipment and planning derived from it**, through **improved waste management policies**, thus contributing to **waste minimisation** in European cities and regions. Find out more information about the project on www.interregeurope.eu/winpol*

