

OptiWaMag Interreg Europe kick off meeting 17-18 September in Linköping, Sweden

The official kick off meeting of OptiWaMag Project was held on 17-18 September in Linköping, Sweden.

OptiWaMag - supported by Interreg Europe through the European Regional Development Fund- strives to accelerate the innovation of waste management in urban spaces and in households. The kick off meeting sets the stage for 3,5 years of intense interregional cooperation across Europe, aiming to secure more sustainable ecosystem services and improve wellbeing of citizens.

Solid waste management affects every single person in the European Union, whether individuals are managing their own waste or governments are providing waste management services to their citizens. As nations and cities grow in terms of population, urbanize and develop economically, the estimated waste generation will increase dramatically. The issue being addressed in OptiWaMag Interreg Policy project is the identification of the multi benefits of environment related investment to enable a holistic and integrated approach to the protection and development of the resource-efficient economy.

The meeting brought project partners together who had the chance to meet for the first time and get familiar with each other's activities and county specific reports

All project partners actively participated at the kick off meeting which was organized by the County of Administrative Board of Östergötland, the Lead Partner of OptiWaMag project.

On the first day of the meeting an offsite field visit was organized to Tekniska verken that operates *Gärstad* waste incineration plant and manages all types of waste from households and businesses, through recycling centres and customer-specific solutions.

Johan Böök, Public Affairs Manager led the visit and provided insights into the waste management processes, including recovering energy from waste products in the most resource-efficient way.

The kick off meeting was combined with the Steering Group meeting which took place after the site visit.

The second day started off with an Expert Task Force meeting that was led successfully by the Lead Partner. After the meeting the participants welcomed another expert, Anders Karlsson, the Business Unit manager from Nodra who shared interesting information on waste treatment of households in Norrköping.

Project Partners found the Kick Off Meeting exceptionally effective in mapping out the project's schedule, review the details and align the next steps. OptiWaMag project is made possible by the financial support from the European Union – the Interreg Europe programme and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

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