

## PRESS RELEASE

To be released immediately

24 June 2020

### WINPOL unveils good practices on innovative models for waste generation fees

**On their path to improving their waste management strategies, the WINPOL partners tackled the complex question of cost-coverage. During an online thematic seminar, they investigated how innovation can help setting up schemes that charge waste producers on the basis of the actual amount of waste generated. The examples unveiled at this occasion are closing the project's database of good practices.**

*Brussels, Belgium* – Pay-as-you-throw (PAYT), which comes from the polluter pays principles, has been used for decades as an efficient instrument to motivate people to take responsibility for the waste they produce. Still, innovation is always at work and in practice this model can vary, benefiting from the always improving technologies. Lately, waste collection data and the use of emerging technologies to manage them led to the apparition of other models: know-as-you-throw (KAYT), rewarded-as-you-throw, mixed models...

Having for focus the use of intelligent equipment and related practices as a way to improve waste management policies, it was a logical step for the [Interreg Europe WINPOL](#) project to gear its attention towards those systems based on waste generation fees. Several practices around Europe are already showing that **a correct use of taxation, information, and technology can improve separate collection and prevent waste**. The project explored six of them, building not only on successful cases but also understanding what the barriers and challenges can be.

On 23 June 2020, ACR+ (advisory partner of the project) organised an [online thematic seminar](#) – the third and last of WINPOL – for partners to **hear directly from these practices and exchange on the topic**. The pilot project of **PAYT in large hotels led by the Municipality of Hersonissos** in Crete (GR) showed that despite the willingness of the stakeholders involved and encouraging first results, PAYT schemes might be complicated to set when there is no national legal framework that allows treatment costs to be reduced based on a proper sorting at source. This was echoed by a presentation made by SNAGA to explain how **waste collection prices are set in Slovenia** according to the national law and hindering a system based on modular prices.

In other cases, such as in **Limburg** (BE), a transparent, fair, stable and affordable waste management invoice could be implemented. For this Belgian intermunicipality it means that all real costs should be covered based on **a system of “direct charge” including all fixed costs and the quotum**, a portion of variable costs. A fair tax, coupled with an objective of waste prevention, is also behind the model developed by **Argentona** (ES) since 2010. The **use of prepaid bags**, first for residual and light packaging waste then only for residual waste, has been gradually improved to reach impressive results. The separate collection rate jumped from 52.8% in 2008 to 87.6% in 2018.

Despite these results, PAYT sometimes suffer from a low perception and the idea of “fair tax” might be subject to discussion. To counter this the town of Seveso (IT) moved from PAYT to KAYT, giving users individual, detailed and frequent feedbacks (both positive and negative) on their habits. In other words, **the use of big data for information or nudging is key and may allow to achieve good results together with or as an alternative to PAYT**. EMULSA, waste operator of the city of Gijón (ES), presented a way of collecting these data by installing **electronic locks** on over 1,300 waste containers (mainly for residual waste). If some aspects, such as littering and vandalism, still need to be improved the use of this technology helps **understanding waste deposit patterns** and contributed to **reducing wrong waste percentage**.

The two previous thematic seminars organised by WINPOL included study-visits; unfortunately, not possible in the current context. Instead, this third thematic seminar visited two related projects: [SMART WASTE](#) and [LIFE Rethink WASTE](#). Also supported by Interreg Europe, SMART WASTE aims to **overcome the failures of partners’ policy instruments in supporting innovation in waste management**. The project is still in its inception phase but promises an interesting interregional exchange of good practices. LIFE Rethink WASTE is now closing its preparation phase with the upcoming publication of a **catalogue of experiences of PAYT and KAYT across Europe**. At the end of its three years, the project expects to have endowed public authorities with a **“plug and play” model based on PAYT and KAYT**, testing the latter one in four pilot areas.

This seminar closed the main exchange of experiences of the project which now counts with **30 Good Practices**, available [online](#). Partners now have six months to select the practices that they would like to transfer on their territories in order to improve their waste management policies. After that, the second phase of the project will open, during which partners will bring to life these improvements to increase their waste performances and ultimately reach greater sustainability. Within these six months, the project will also publish a handbook gathering all the practices explored.

The recording and the presentations of the practices are available on the [WINPOL website](#).

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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](http://www.interregeurope.eu/winpol)*

