



Newsletter #5 **January 2022**

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



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Project at a glance
- 6th Interregional Meeting – Latvia
- New Pilot Action TESLA LAB
- Contact details

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.

6th Interregional Meeting

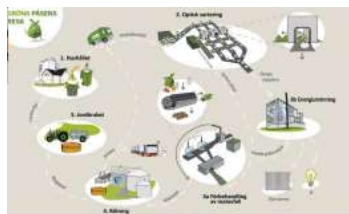
**Host: Riga Technical
University**

On the first day of the meeting the project partners from Sweden, Portugal, Hungary, Italy and Greece got acquainted with Latvia's experience in waste management, which also included virtual presentations.

During the first part of the meeting Natālija Cudečka-Puriņa, Head of the Environmental Quality and Waste Management Division of the Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, introduced the audience to the tasks set for waste management in Latvia as an EU member state and solutions included in the National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028, as well as the challenges that need to be overcome to achieve the goal



set. To ensure a continuous increase in the recycling of municipal waste, the state must ensure separate collection of glass, plastic and paper. As early as February 2022, the collection of packaging for soft drinks through the deposit system must begin. And in 2023 the collection of sorted biological waste must start throughout the country. In this case it is important not only to collect bio-waste, but also to recycle it properly. The topicality of the collection of hazardous waste, such as medicines, in local governments was also emphasized.



RTU experts had compiled practical examples of what has already been done in Latvia in several video stories. RTU introduced the project partners with the first video presentation on the latest municipal waste management methods and environmental education activities in Latvia (see video below). The video presentation at RTU was specially designed for the OptiWaMag Latvia meeting and included interviews with waste management experts. The video presentation showed the new bio-waste processing plant in Riga region “Getliņi”, deep containers used for separate waste collection in Cēsis, as well as the operation of Daibe – one of the largest municipal waste landfills in the North Vidzeme region. An example of the operation of the training center “Urda” in North Vidzeme seemed interesting and engaging to project partners. During the meeting RTU

introduced other project partners with the new pilot project TESLA LAB which is being implemented by two partners of the OptiWaMag project – RTU (Latvia) and Municipality of Casalgrande (Italy). This Pilot Action TESLA LAB is dedicated to testing new innovative approaches for introducing circular economy principle 3R principle (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle) in the waste management practices of Latvia. One of the first Reuse centers in Latvia has been established in the landfill “Kīvītes” in the South Kurzeme region, where residents can bring and leave things that are no longer usable, as well as choose and pick up other things that are useful to them. Similar centers have already been set up in several of the partner regions. There is a similar Reuse center in the Italian municipality of Casalgrande and project experts plan to explore it.

To get the residents of Liepaja acquainted with the principle of reuse applied in such centers this year on October 9th RTU experts organized a public information and involvement activity in Liepaja as TESLA LAB “Repair Cafe” (a video about this activity was presented during the meeting).



The partners' meeting continued with an active exchange of experiences and discussions on regional Action Plans. Each partner presented their draft Action Plan or ideas for the activities planned under the Action Plan, the benefits of

adopting good practices, etc. The partners thus exchanged information and ideas that could be useful for the further improvement and refinement of the individual Action Plans, with a view to submitting them to the Technical Secretariat of the Interreg Europe Program in March 2022. In the end, the project partners shared their future plans and activities to be carried out within the project.



On the second day of the meeting, on November 10th, a discussion took place between the project partners' expert working group on the implications of the first day of the OptiWaMag meeting (09.11.2021), the practical activities included in the Action Plans and the

different approaches. Also, negotiations were held on the further course of the project implementation and the possibilities for organizing a face-to-face visit to one of the partner regions during the project implementation. The partners agreed on the next tasks to be performed within the project.



Action (draft): "nudo&crudo", reduce packaging waste 1/3

Objective: to 100% Reduce packaging waste
 Responsible consumers are invited to carry their own reusable bag for water bottles, coffee cups... 2 litres removed after the possibility to buy some products or make reusable containers available (such as without deposit refund). The items involved are identified on a good practices application and highlighted through the proposed ways to reduce the production of packaging waste.



Inspirational Good Practices



New Pilot Action TESLA LAB

On September 2019, the project "Optimization of waste management in urban spaces and in households" (OptiWaMag) was launched with the support of the Interreg Europe programme. Since September 2021 the OptiWaMag project has a new activity – Pilot Action "Circular economy approaches testing reuse laboratories – TESLA LAB". This Pilot Action is being implemented by the two partners of the OptiWaMag project – Riga Technical university (Latvia) and Municipality of Casalgrande (Italy).



This Pilot Action TESLA LAB is dedicated to testing new innovative approaches for introducing circular economy principle 3R principle (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle) in the waste management practices of Latvia within the first Reuse Centre of Latvia located in the landfill Kivites in Liepaja Region following

practices and methods applied by the Casalgrande Municipality of Italy (Good Practice "Change the Ending!"), which will contribute to the policy instrument of Latvia – National Waste Management Plan 2021-2028. Thus, exploring experience and testing innovative reuse methods applied by the Casalgrande

Municipality will help Latvian stakeholders to learn how to organize the reuse process for different goods in the right way, as well as promote the involvement of society in the reuse process.



All planned activities of the TESLA LAB will be implemented during September 2021 – January 2022.



The testing will take place in a new Reuse Centre started in the landfill Kivites in Liepaja Region. This centre is supported by the Liepaja Regional Waste Management centre Liepajas RAS (provided premises and staff for the Reuse Centre), as well as by the Latvian Environmental Protection Foundation (planning the elaboration of the virtual platform for the Reuse Centre in 2022).



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 7th Interregional Meeting will be in Portugal. The event will cover a review of the 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>

<http://www.facebook.com/Optiwamag>

