



CO-EFFICIENT NEWSLETTER NO.1.



1. Editor's note

Dear reader,

As work began on this newsletter, grim data on unemployment in the Mediterranean basin continue to arrive. As a most viable but at the same time most vulnerable section of economy SMEs need to be even more frugal and innovative to survive and prosper in today's world economy. One area that could provide necessary competitive edge for SMEs, energy efficiency (especially in the manufacturing and logistics sector), is often overlooked. The share of energy costs in SMEs production and services is high, directly affecting their international competitiveness. According to estimation, the manufacturing and logistics sector account for more than one third of total energy consumption in the Mediterranean.

In many countries of the region linkages between SMEs, R&D organizations and other stakeholders, especially on regional and local level are rather weak or even non – existing. This leads to lack of innovation and insufficient implementation of existing technologies. On the other hand statistics provides evidence that only innovative companies can grow and that their success is in direct co-relation with the level of resources invested in the development and implementation of innovative solutions.

The project will confront these challenges by assisting SMEs to develop customized energy efficiency solutions. Giving regions the methodological means to move towards new cooperation models – living labs, is a key focus of CO-EFFICIENT project. Acknowledging the need for a collaborative approach, the partners are ready to learn from one another, to exchange experiences, and to share results of their efforts (pilot projects) during the two and a half year project.

Partners on the project CO-EFFICIENT are glad to share with you our experience in the implementation of the project, its results and deliverables but most importantly potential benefits for you and your organization and ways that you can join us in creating sustainable solutions for you. We are convinced that implementing innovative but also already available technologies for energy efficiency will provide Mediterranean SMEs with tools to increase their competitiveness on global market and strengthen their links with research and development institutions. Should you need any further information on the topics and ideas referred to in this issue please contact directly any of the regional partners whose contact details are included at the end of this newsletter.

Nada Kožul

Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja



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3. Looking back to how it all begun

The idea behind the CO-EFFICIENT project first arose during the implementation of several transnational and cross – border projects all aiming at either helping SMEs increase their efficiency (by decreasing their energy costs) or increasing energy efficiency in regions, sectors, companies, etc. Partners, having previous experience in transnational projects connecting business and R&D organizations (Kassetts, Castle, etc.) decided to draw on the network of already partners throughout Mediterranean and to capitalize on the results and deliverables of those projects. Among other things, highlights of these projects were innovative web based software solutions that could help SMEs increase their competitive edge through increasing their energy efficiency. In the beginning of 2012, 10 organizations from 5 countries expressed an interest in creating a partnership that would promote move towards more energy efficient SMEs and their stronger and more permanent collaborative connections with R&D organizations. As both energy efficiency and advancing innovation at SMEs level are priority issues for the region, partners decided to create proposal and submit it to the MED 2012 targeted projects call. The proposal was accepted and project activities started with a kick-off meeting held in Maribor in March 2013.

4. Key aspects

PROGRAMME:

MED (European Territorial Cooperation 2007 - 2013)

BUDGET:

1.900.500 €

LENGTH:

30 Months; Starting date: 01/01/2013

ENDING DATE:

30/06/2015

PARTNERS:

University of Maribor (Slovenia),
Regional Development Agency Mura (Slovenia),
Institute for Transport and Logistics (Italy),
National Confederation of Crafts and Small and Medium Enterprises Modena Province Association (Italy),
SATA Advanced Technology Application (Italy),
Valenciaport Foundation for Research, Promotion and Commercial Studies of the Valencian region (Spain),
Confederation of Employers and Industries of the Region of Valencia (Spain),
AFT Regional Delegation of Rhone Alps (France),
Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja (Croatia),
Centre of Entrepreneurship Osijek (Croatia)



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5. What lies behind - aims outputs

CO-EFFICIENT is a two and a half year project implemented by partnership of 10 organizations from Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Spain and France. Through networking and cooperation, as well as through implementation of pilot projects, the partnership will serve as a model for other regions, promoting a Mediterranean – wide shift to more innovative and energy efficient SMEs.

What are the aims of the CO-EFFICIENT PROJECT?

The general objective of the project is to induce behavioural and technological changes in manufacturing and logistics sector SMEs generating positive results for the regional economics and environment, in line with sustainable development principles. The project will enable SMEs to communicate their business problems related to energy efficiency and use of renewable resources in production and operations to partners, R&D organization and stakeholders but also to develop customised solutions according to these needs. The core of the project is innovation in and for SMEs including knowledge management and customization of available technologies in SMEs.

The project builds on the understanding that SMEs innovate in different ways than large enterprises. In comparison to large companies, SMEs are generally slow to adopt energy efficient solutions as there is not enough communication and coordination between the R&D sector and SME systems. This lack of communication evidently prevents technology and know-how transfer.

The main objective of the permanent collaborative framework is to set-up living lab environments active in all partner countries. In Living-labs SMEs, as final users, and R&D organisations, as the main developers, will

collaborate to develop new solutions for better use of energy. The final users of innovations will be put in the centre of the development process, which assures a solution is customised to users' needs. This is what makes Living Labs appropriate for the customisation of solutions to SMEs.

What are the expected outputs and results of the CO-EFFICIENT PROJECT?

The project will promote permanent collaborative framework for energy efficiency and use of renewable resources linking SMEs, the R&D sector, as well as other institutional stakeholder in the Mediterranean area by producing the following major outputs and results:

- Portal & Knowledge database – listing stakeholders for easier access, best practice cases, intended to drive self – learning in SMEs in the MED;
- Permanent framework with 4 key function - portal & database update, transfer of best practices to the MED region and beyond, searching for project ideas and set – up of living labs and pilots in the Med region;
- eServices for energy efficient operation – fine tuning and further development of existing solutions for supply chain and logistic process coordination, customized to MED area manufacturing and logistics SMEs;
- Pilot actions to transfer the “living lab” cooperation model.



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6. Transnational added value

The transnational exchange of experience and expertise in developing regional living labs and implementing innovative ICT solutions for energy efficiency on SMEs level will contribute to the setup of a network of SMEs, R&D organizations and other stakeholders from public and private sector that will ensure widespread and committed participation as well as sustainability of living labs past project implementation time. The partnership involves a mix of academic and research institutions, regional development agencies, industrial/sectorial organizations and logistic companies enabling transfer of project results to different levels of decision making. However the main transnational value of the project lays in the joint development of living labs and pilot projects and their implementation. Additionally, transnational component will be upheld through joint efforts in promoting model of living labs and its benefits for all involved stakeholders.

7. Benefits for companies, how to join us

If you are an SME – why should you be interested in our project?

Our regional partners as well as our transnational consortium can provide you with custom made solutions for your energy efficiency needs especially in the field of transport and operation optimization. We can connect you with R&D institutions and other stakeholders through the “living lab” model in your region but also on national and transnational level increasing the chance of finding right solution for your problem.

All you have to do is contact our regional partners with your enquiry. Our services are free of charge and all that is required from you is to contact us as soon as you can.





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8. Glossary

Living lab - is a research concept. A living lab is a user-centred, open-innovation ecosystem, often operating in a territorial context (e.g. city, agglomeration, region), integrating concurrent research and innovation processes within a public-private-people partnership.

eService - deeds, efforts or performances whose delivery is mediated by information technology. Such e-service includes the service element of e-tailing, customer support, and service delivery.

Distributed planning – whenever a customer order arrives, the network leader company has to assign tasks to the other members of the supply chain by means of distributed planning function.

¹ Rowley, J. (2006) An analysis of the e-service literature: towards a research agenda. *Internet Research*, 16 (3), 339-359



9. Project partners

University of Maribor- lead partner (Slovenia)

With its 17 Faculties the University of Maribor is a broad-based institution committed to excellence in education, the extension of knowledge through basic, advanced and applied world-quality research. The University has broad experience in carrying out research activities as well as with project management and coordination. In order to achieve the best possible outcome of the project experiences three faculties will participate in project; Faculty of Logistics , Faculty of Energy Technology and Faculty of Organizational Sciences.

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Regional Development Agency Mura (Slovenia)

Regional Development Agency Mura is the leading developmental institution in the Slovenian region of Pomurje which offers technical and administrative support to regional economy. Agency is involved in several EU projects and offers several activities in field of Economic development, Social development, Development of regional infrastructure, Environment and urban planning, International cooperation.

<http://web.rra-mura.com/default.aspx>

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Institute for Transport and Logistics (Italy)

ITL is a non for profit body set up by the Government of Emilia-Romagna Region and Local Public Authorities to develop research and project proposals and monitor public policies for transport and mobility. ITL has been active for several years in regional, national and European projects, followings are the many thematic it is working to: supply chain management, transport planning, sustainable mobility and public transport, territorial marketing, logistics training, city Logistics, statistics analysis and freight transport observatory, ICT for logistics and co-modality, logistics nodes and services development.

Within the framework of CO-EFFICIENT project ITL will take part to all the project activities and in particular to the implementation of the e-services and related activities for SMEs to bring them existing knowledge, solutions and to improve energy efficiency. ITL will use experience from successful closed project KASSETTS and as member of ENoLL provide knowledge of the living lab approach for co-creation.

www.fondazioneitl.org

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National Confederation of Crafts and Small and Medium Enterprises Modena Province Association (Italy)

CNA (National Confederation of Craft and Small-Medium Enterprises) is the main Italian SME association with 14.000 members in the province of Modena and more than 500.000 members in the other Italian provinces. CNA involves the SME's and offers them new knowledge and services.

CNA Modena has been the Lead partner of project eBEST which was developing innovative IT services for individual and networked SMEs of regional and sectorial

ecosystems. CNA also participated as partner in FP6 IST PROVE-SME, SOSS, BIDMED and EPOS projects.

www.mo.cna.it

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SATA Advanced Technology Application (Italy)

SATA studies, design, prototype and realize innovative web application and service development based on open-source technology. Main domains of activities are: (i) Collaboration ICT platform for service company, to facilitate single and networked SMEs interaction with their customers and partners with distributed network planning and internal scheduling, ii) Transport and logistics, to support SMEs in reducing their transport costs by taking advantage from demand aggregation, optimal route computation and selection of the most convenient transport solution, interoperability and dematerialization, to increase the capability of existing ERP systems, to exchange information (also in different languages) with other systems and to join invoicing platforms.

www.satanel.it

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Valenciaport Foundation for Research, Promotion and Commercial Studies of the Valencian region (Spain)

The Valenciaport Foundation for Research, Promotion and Commercial Studies of the Valencian region (Valenciaport Foundation) is a non-profit private entity. It has been conceived to further expand the reach of the logistics-ports community by serving as a research, training and cooperation centre of excellence. The Valenciaport



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Foundation is presently active in numerous cooperation and internationalisation projects in well over twenty countries, principally located in Europe, the Far East and Latin America.

www.fundacion.valenciaport.com

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Confederation of Employers and Industries of the Region of Valencia (Spain)

The Confederation of Employers and Industries of the Region of Valencia (CIERVAL) is the business organisation that represents the interests of businesses and industries established in this Spanish region. It consists of the territorial and sectorial business associations of Castellón, Valencia and Alicante and seeks to promote and defend private initiative and free market economy, strengthening the industry network of the Region of Valencia.

www.cierval.es

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AFT Regional Delegation of Rhone Alps (France)

The AFT is part of the AFT-IFTIM which is the leading organisation for training in transport, logistics and tourism in France. AFT represents 32 professional bodies and has 24 000 company members. Within the Research and Institutional Affairs Directorate (DRIE), the Rhône-Alpes (RA) delegation is in charge of relations with Institutional and Professional stakeholders (Professional Organisations, Social Partners and Public Authorities).

www.aft-iftim.com

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Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja (Croatia)

Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja is a non-profit ltd founded by local and regional authorities – City of Osijek and Osijek-Baranja County. Its mission is to coordinate the regional development through available EU funds as well as other international funds, according to the priorities defined by County's development strategy, linking public, private and civil sectors in partnerships for implementation of projects that will contribute to the development goals of the region of Slavonia and Baranja.

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Centre of Entrepreneurship Osijek (Croatia)

Centre of Entrepreneurship Osijek is non-for-profit association offering business support to SME sector and entrepreneurs. Centre offers different type of services to SME's such as promotion of entrepreneurship, counselling and informing, education, connecting and networking. Centre has experience in implementation of EU projects and organizing of different events such as fairs, conferences and other visibility events.

www.czposijek.hr

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