

The project « ENVIRONMENTAL LOCAL AUTHORITIES INTERBALKAN NETWORK» was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"

Applicable to the Action 1 – Measure 1.2 "Networks of Twinned Towns"

3 international events and 4 Local Activities have been carried out within this project:

Local Activity 1 (Local Working Group Meeting)

Location / Dates: The 1st Local Activities (Local Working Group Meetings) were organized by each City – partner (Novi Sad, Nis, Sofia, Sarajevo, Bijeljina, Rijeka, Tirana and Athens). The 1st Local Activities (1 day) conducted within the period: 15.02.2014 - 15.03.2014

Short description: Local stakeholders that participated in the Local Activities identified and prioritized the environmental problems at local and Balkan scale. Conditions of public access to environmental information and public participation in the decision - making procedure were ensured as well. The 1st Local Activities were covered by City – partner's local media and therefore the conditions of raising environmental awareness among the general public and the dissemination of the project's goals were satisfied.

International Event 1

Participation: The event involved **55** citizens, including **13** participants from the public entity of PESYDAP (**GREECE**), **6** participants from the city of RIJEKA (**CROATIA**), **6** participants from the city of NOVI SAD (**SERBIA**), **6** participants from the city of NIS (**SERBIA**), **6** participants from the city of SOFIA (**BULGARIA**), **6** participants from the city of EAST SARAJEVO (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**), **6** participants from the city of BIEJLJINA (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**) and **6** participants from the city of TIRANA (**ALBANIA**)

Location / Dates: The event took place in **TIRANA (ALBANIA)**, from **31/03/2014 to 02/04/2014**

Short description: The aim of the event was to fulfill the following objectives:

- (a) To identify persistent and emerging common environmental issues from the projects' perspective
- (b) To highlight the best practices of environmental management
- (c) To ensure public access to information
- (d) To ensure the participation of citizens in the decision – making procedure
- (e) To contribute to EU integration

Therefore the **content** of the 1st International Event was structured as follows:

Plenary session

At the 1st International Event (Tirana - AL) each City - Partner presented during the plenary session its environmental policy in the sections that were prioritized in the 1st Local Activities (Local Working Group Meetings). Alongside the conclusions of the Local Activities were introduced to the partners.

Working Group session

From the working group that followed, it was decided by the participants – with the practice of consensus – to adopt an environmental cooperation platform.

Media session

Additionally a media session was scheduled in order to diffuse the project's objectives to the citizens. In this context the heads of the City - partners delegations proceeded to statements regarding to implemented environmental policies, decision - making procedures and the contribution of the project as an environmental policy tool.

Environmental activities session

Activities of field visits at places of environmental interest and at environmental infrastructures and facilities of the host - city were made. Finally, a cycling activity in urban areas of Tirana was implemented.

Local Activity 2 (Local Working Group Meeting)

Location / Dates: The 2nd Local Activities (Local Working Group Meetings) were organized by each City – partner (Novi Sad, Nis, Sofia, Sarajevo, Bijeljina, Rijeka, Tirana and Athens). The 2nd Local Activities (1 day) conducted within the period: 05.07.2014 - 15.10.2014

Short description: Local stakeholders that participated in the Local Activities assessed the results of the 1st International Event. Additionally, opinions were expressed regarding to the direction and the shape of the environmental network and to the index of the next International event's agenda and its objectives. Conditions of public access to environmental information and public participation in the decision - making procedure were ensured as well. The 2nd Local Activities were covered by City –partner's local media and therefore the conditions of raising environmental awareness among the general public and the dissemination of the projects' goals were satisfied.

International Event 2

Participation: The event involved **67** citizens, including **10** participants from the public entity of PESYDAP (**GREECE**), **9** participants from the city of RIJEKA (**CROATIA**), **7** participants from the city of NOVI SAD (**SERBIA**), **13** participants from the city of NIS (**SERBIA**), **9** participants from the city of SOFIA (**BULGARIA**), **10** participants from the city of EAST SARAJEVO (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**) and **9** participants from the city of BIEJLJINA (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**).

Location / Dates: The event took place in BIEJLJINA (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**), from **03/11/2014** to **06/11/2014**

Short description: The aim of the event was to fulfill the following objectives:

- (a) To identify persistent and emerging common environmental issues from the ELAIN project perspective
- (b) To assess the progress that has been made in the adopted environmental cooperation platform
- (c) To highlight the best practices of environmental management
- (d) To ensure public access to information
- (e) To ensure the participation of citizens in the decision – making procedure
- (f) To contribute to EU integration
- (g) To explore new cooperation opportunities

Therefore the **content** of the 2nd International Event was structured as follows:

Plenary session

The 2nd International Event (Bijeljina - BIH) was enriched thematically by including and highlighting the evaluation of civil protection policies. The thematic expansion of the project was based on the ecological disaster that occurred in the Balkans due to heavy rains that occurred in 2014. In this context, the plenary session was focused on:

- (a) The presentation of the partner's mechanisms for prevention and response to flooding phenomena, in response to the environmental disaster that occurred in the Balkans because of heavy rainfalls.
- (b) The presentation of new environmental policies adopted by the City - partners with reference to the group of environmental content, which opted delegations at the 1st International Event as their basis for the environmental cooperation network.
- (c) The presentation of the results of the 2nd Local Activities (Local Working Group Meetings) that took place at all partner's basis.
- (d) The submission of specific proposals for cooperation, taking into consideration the framework agreed at the 1st International Conference.

Working Group session

The Working Group session focused on the evaluation of proposals for cooperation, the assessment of the progress that has been made in the adopted environmental cooperation platform and meeting the Event's expected results. Thereby the condition of project's viability was ensured.

Media session

During the media session the heads of the City – partner's delegations proceeded to statements regarding to new implemented environmental policies, civil protection policies and the direction of the project. Representatives of the City – partner's stakeholders also expressed their opinions regarding to the environmental cooperation that the project promotes and analyzed their contribution to the project.

Environmental Activities session

(a) Inspections in the urban environment of the municipality of Bijeljina, where the participants were informed about the actions carried out by stakeholders in response to natural disasters.

(b) Visiting activity in environmentally degraded areas and places of environmental interest. The site visits were combined with actions that were focusing in the participation of the representatives of the civil society.

Local Activity 3 (Local Working Group Meeting)

Location / Dates: The 3rd Local Activities (Local Working Group Meetings) were organized by each City – partner (Novi Sad, Nis, Sofia, Sarajevo, Bijeljina, Rijeka, Tirana and Athens). The 3rd Local Activities (1 day) conducted within the period: 15.02.2015 - 27.03.2015

Short description: Local stakeholders that participated in the Local Activities assessed the results of the 2nd International Event. Additionally, opinions were expressed regarding to the direction and the shape of the environmental network and to the index of the next International Event's agenda and its objectives. Conditions of public access to environmental information and public participation in the decision - making procedure were ensured as well. The 3rd Local Activities were covered by City – partner's local media and therefore the conditions of raising environmental awareness among the general public and the dissemination of the project's goals were satisfied.

International Event 3

Participation: The event involved **121** citizens, including **31** participants from the public entity of PESYDAP (**GREECE**), **15** participants from the city of RIJEKA (**CROATIA**), **15** participants from the city of NOVI SAD (**SERBIA**), **15** participants from the city of NIS (**SERBIA**), **15** participants from the city of SOFIA (**BULGARIA**), **15** participants from the city of EAST SARAJEVO (**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**) and **15** participants from the city of TIRANA (**ALBANIA**)

Location / Dates: The event took place in **ATHENS (GREECE)**, from **06/04/2015 to 08/04/2015**

Short description: The aim of the event was to fulfill the following objectives:

- (a) To identify persistent and emerging common environmental issues from the projects' perspective
- (b) To evaluate the progress that has been made in the adopted environmental cooperation platform
- (c) To highlight the best practices of environmental management
- (d) To ensure public access to information
- (e) To ensure the participation of citizens in the decision – making procedure
- (f) To contribute to EU integration
- (g) To explore new cooperation opportunities
- (h) To ensure ELAIN project viability

Therefore the **content** of the 3rd International Event was structured as follows:

Plenary session

The 3rd International Event's (Athens - GRE) plenary session focused on the evaluation of environmental policies and the possibility of incorporating them in the strategic planning of the partners. In this context, the plenary session was focused on:

- (a) The evaluation of environmental policies that were adopted by the City - partners in the frame of the 1st International Event's adopted environmental cooperation platform.
- (b) The presentation of the results of the 3rd Local Activities

Working Group session

The Working Group session focused on the evaluation of proposals for cooperation, the evaluation of the progress that has been made in the adopted environmental cooperation platform and meeting the Event's expected results.

Media session

During the media session the heads of the City – partner’s delegations proceeded to statements regarding to new implemented environmental policies, the new subnetwork of protected areas and the direction of the project. Additionally they participated on an interview. Representatives of the City – partner’s stakeholders also expressed their opinions regarding to the environmental cooperation that the project promotes and analyzed their contribution to the project.

Environmental Activities session

Finally, environmental activities were implemented such as:

- (a) Tree planting activity at Dionysiou Areopagitou str. (Acropolis region).
- (b) Visiting places of natural and cultural reserve. The intact part of nature in the middle of the city: the Acropolis hill walking tour
- (c) Visiting the eco - friendly and sustainable building of the New Acropolis Museum
- (d) Visiting places of environmental, natural and cultural interest (Attica Region etc.)

Local Activity 4 (Local Working Group Meeting)

Location / Dates: The 4th Local Activity (Local Working Group Meeting) was organized by the partner - leader of the project (Athens - GRE). The 4th Local Activity (1 day) took place in ATHENS (GREECE), from 20/04/2015 to 20/04/2015

Short description: The 4th Local Activity (Local Working Group Meeting) was organized by the partner - leader of the project (Athens - GRE). Local stakeholders that participated in the Local Activity evaluated the results of the 3rd International Event. Additionally, opinions were expressed regarding to the performance of PESYDAP as a partner - leader and to the viability of the environmental network.