



DECISIVE PROJECT: DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES AND THE FIRST TRAINING SEMINAR IN CYPRUS

Within the framework of the DECISIVE project -for the training of volunteers and municipal personnel of Cypriot Municipalities for the development of twinnings with municipalities from other EU countries- and on the occasion of the 9th of May (Day of Europe), the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, in cooperation with the European Commission Representation in Cyprus undertook dissemination actions for the project.

More precisely, informational material was distributed and information on the project was given to the public, during two events that were organized for the Day of Europe.

The first one was organised on the occasion of the "European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion", by the European Institute of Cyprus, the European Parliament Office in Cyprus, the European Commission Representation in Cyprus, the Press and Information Office (PIO) and the Municipality of Limassol and consisted of a series of events in the framework of the celebrations of the Week of Europe, which took place from 3 until 9 May in Limassol and Nicosia.

The festivities culminated with a big concert at the Grigoris Afxentiou Square in Limassol District (Independence Avenue) on Saturday 8th May, with jazz, rock and Greek music. Along with the concert, entertaining activities for children were held and, at special stands, the organizers along with Member States' embassies of the European Union, provided information on Europe to the public. Information material on the DECISIVE project was also distributed from the stands.



On Sunday, May 9, an event was also organized by the European Commission Representation in Cyprus, for the Day of Europe in the gardens of the Presidential Palace, in cooperation with the European Parliament Office in Cyprus, the European Institute of Cyprus and the Press and

Future major DECISIVE activities:

September: Study trip and training sessions in Belgium

October: Dissemination event in Cyprus

November: Final training session in Cyprus

November: Dissemination event: Annual General Assembly of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities

December: Quantitative Evaluation

For more information: http://www.ucm.org.cy/ENG/Promo/Promo_004.htm

Information Office. The event was held under the auspices of the Presidential couple of Cyprus.

During the event, information material was distributed from the organizers, speeches were given by the President of the Republic and other officials, and a concert was held by the band of the Police. During this event, informational material on the DECISIVE project was also distributed, always in cooperation with the European Commission Representation in Cyprus.

A few days later, the first training seminar of the DECISIVE project was organized in Cyprus. 250 volunteers that the municipalities of Cyprus had designated, participated in the seminar and were trained in drafting proposals for funding through the "Europe for Citizens" and other European programmes. The seminar was held on May 18th at the Mediterranean Beach Hotel in Limassol.



The seminar started with a general introduction to European programs and a presentation of the "Europe for Citizens" programme and the DECISIVE project.

There was also a presentation on the organization of town twinning in Flanders (Belgium), where the best practices of the City Malle (Belgium) were shown. Among others, presentations were held on: the story of the twinings of Malle, the active involvement of volunteers through the

twinning committee of Malle, and the success of the «Golden Bridge» project.



For this purpose, three trainers went from Flanders to Cyprus:

1. Anne Geens, an officer of the Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten (VVSG). She explained the general framework of how municipalities in Flanders work with twinning committees and gave tips and hints as advice to Cypriot municipalities that wish to follow the same methodology.
2. Staf Verhoeven, president of the twinning committee of the municipality of Malle. As participants had the chance to see, Mr. Verhoeven is a very motivated volunteer who is running a project called "The Golden Bridge" with partner municipalities from France, Germany, Poland and the UK. As he explained, this project was also funded by the Europe for Citizens programme. Mr. Verhoeven explained how the municipality of Malle managed to establish an impressive series of activities with a high involvement of citizens.
3. Roger Rottiers, member and treasurer of the twinning committee of Malle. Mr. Rottiers is also a volunteer with a lot of experience, which he shared with the Cypriot volunteers.

At the event, speeches were also held by Mr. Yannis Antoniadis, Secretary General

of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities and Mr. Fanourios Pantelogiannis, Head of the Brussels Office of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities.

The participants were trained in applying for funding through the Europe for Citizens programme, as well as completing the eForm and the budget form.



Positive impressions were aroused by the interest of the participants, as demonstrated by the number of the questions posed, which were impossible to be answered due to lack of time.

After this first training seminar, a group of 39 Cypriot volunteers / citizens and municipal personnel, will be selected and participate in a study visit to Belgium, at the end of September 2010, for a series of seminars.

Twinning Officers Meet in Nicosia

On the initiative of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, a meeting was held at its premises on May 26, gathering twinning officers from Cypriot Municipalities.

During the meeting the following issues were discussed:

- The "Europe for Citizens" programme.
- DECISIVE Project: debriefing on the first seminar and forward planning for the activities of the project.
- Information on the implementation of the SKILLS project.

1st meeting between Cypriot Municipalities and the Region of Lazio

The Union of Cyprus Municipalities is involved in a European project aimed at promoting Town-twinning to the municipalities of Cyprus. The project is titled SKILLS and its lead partner is the region of Lazio (Rome) through the organization ANCI Lazio.

In the framework of this project, the first meeting between Italian and Cypriot Municipalities was held on April 16th, at the offices of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities in Nicosia.

The participants at the meeting were a seven-member delegation from the region of Lazio (Rome), representatives of the Union of Municipalities and nine officers from the following Cypriot municipalities: Aglantzia, Larnaca, Nicosia, Polis Chrysochous, Engomi and Strovolos.



The meeting consisted of two parts. The first part was the kick-off meeting of the project, in which both partners planned the project and took decisions on a number of administrative issues. In the second part of the day, the municipalities of Cyprus who attended the meeting, met with their Italian partners and explored possibilities of cooperation with municipalities in the region of Lazio. A similar event will be held soon in Italy.

DECISIVE: Creation of a partner search website for European projects

Most Cypriot Municipalities have a website, from which citizens or other municipalities can take all the necessary information on issues that concern or interest them.

What happens, though, when a foreign municipality is looking for a municipality in Cyprus in order to be twinned with or create a partnership for another project?

Up to now there are 2 options: Exclusively for twinnings, the solution can be provided by the website of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions <http://www.twinning.org/>. Cypriot Municipalities can upload their profile and partner search, in order for other municipalities in Europe and the world to be able to contact them. The twinning.org website is, however, addressed to all municipalities in Europe, which means that information relating to the municipalities of Cyprus can be 'lost' in the abundance of information.

For both Twinnings, and other European projects, there is also the possibility, for any municipality in Europe to contact the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, which will then transmit that information to all of its member municipalities, hoping that one of them will respond positively to the request.

As one can see, what was missing until now was a website that would focus exclusively on the municipalities of Cyprus and present their characteristics in an identical, coherent and understandable manner, so that anyone could quickly select among 33 municipalities in Cyprus, those who interest them the most in order to create a partnership or twinning link.

The possibility to create this website was given to the Union of Cyprus Municipalities through the [Europe for Citizens Programme](#). This website, has now been created, is available online at: http://www.ucm.org.cy/Account_List.aspx and is being enriched with more information every day.

CoR ENVE Commission meeting in Limassol

On June 28th and 29th, the fourth meeting of the ENVE Commission (Environment, Climate Change and Energy) of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), was held in Limassol, Cyprus along with a seminar on the "Promotion of Sustainable Water Management".

These two events took place following an invitation of the Head of the National Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus to the Committee of the Regions, Mr. George Georgiou, Mayor of Kato Polemidia. The meeting and seminar were also attended by full and alternate members of the National Delegation of Cyprus.



On Monday, June 28, the Union of Cyprus Municipalities organized a study visit to the Sewerage Board of Limassol-Amathus and an official dinner, in honor of the members of the ENVE Commission, in the courtyard of the Technological University of Cyprus.

The seminar was held on Tuesday, June 29, with the participation of key European speakers and experts in the field of water management. The seminar focused on recent developments in the EU policy framework and highlighted successful examples of sustainable water management in municipalities and regions of the European Union.

The seminar participants were also informed through brochures for the Union of Cyprus Municipalities and its activities, including the DECISIVE project.

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THE UNION OF CYPRUS MUNICIPALITIES

The Union of Cyprus Municipalities was established in 1981. Even though membership is voluntary, all municipalities (33), accounting for 65 per cent of the population of Cyprus, are represented.

The main objective of the Union is to contribute to the development of local government autonomy, as well as to act as spokesman of local government interests vis-à-vis the central government and other national organisations and institutions.

The Union's decision-making power is vested in the General Assembly, which may look into and decide for all issues. The Executive Committee implements decisions taken by the General Assembly. The President of the Union represents the Union before any authority, while the Secretary is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Union.

The Union follows closely and participates in international activities related to Local Authorities and in recent years, especially after the accession of the Republic to the EU, it takes an active stand and develops relations with organisations, institutions and departments of the European Union that concern Local Authorities. In this regard, the Union has, since July 2005, opened an Office in Brussels.

UNION OF CYPRUS MUNICIPALITIES

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