



EUROPEAN PROJECT SUSTAIN: TEN DAYS VISIT OF THE EXPERT OF TEDK CHIOS IN CYPRUS

Within the framework of the SUSTAIN project, an expert from TEDK Chios, Mr. Kampouras, visited Cyprus from 9 to 19 of May. The expert visited several Municipalities and met representatives of the majority of Cypriot Municipalities, in order to capture the current situation in each one of them, concerning their participation in European Programmes, especially in the "Europe for Citizens" programme. Where it is feasible and needed, a closer cooperation will be established between the expert and those municipalities who are interested but unable to submit project proposals.

Mr. Kampouras' visit has been co-financed through the "Europe for Citizens" Programme, as part of the SUSTAIN project, which aims to reinforce the cooperation of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities and TEDK Chios, in order for them to jointly support their members' participation in the "Europe for Citizens" Programme. For this purpose, and for practical reasons, five main meetings were organized in Cyprus (one in each province and a separate one for the occupied municipalities of Cyprus).

The meetings gathered representatives from all Cypriot municipalities (except three), including Mayors, Municipal Secretaries and municipal personnel, with a maximum of four representatives from each Municipality. The high participation rate helped Mr. Kampouras, to get a complete picture concerning the participation of Cypriot Municipalities in European Programmes.



In each of these meetings, the twinning coordinator of the Union of Municipalities, Ms. Kalia Martides, presented a summary of the SUSTAIN project and the "Europe for Citizens" Programme, while Mr. Kampouras' presentation focused on the methodology of the project and facilitated

Future major SUSTAIN activities:

July: 5-days long study visit of the Head of the UCM Brussels Office to Chios

September – October: Third training session - Brussels

October - November: 2nd 10-days long study visit of the Greek expert to Cyprus

November: Dissemination Event

December: Evaluation report

For more information: <http://www.ucm.org.cy/Project-SUSTAIN,6,75,English>

the gathering of all the necessary information concerning the participation of Cypriot Municipalities in European Programmes.

The participants were then asked to describe the experience of their Municipality in European Programmes, the process they follow in order to participate in them and the problems encountered at all stages of their participation.

In each of the meetings, Mr. Kampouras clearly stated that the aim of the SUSTAIN project is to help municipalities, both theoretically as well as in practice, in order to acquire all the necessary knowledge and skills for them to be able to participate independently and effectively in European Programmes. Ms. Kalia Martides underlined the fact that the Union of Cyprus Municipalities will always be there to accompany and guide the Municipalities whenever necessary.



Education and Culture DG

'Europe for Citizens' Programme

Despite all difficulties and obstacles faced by municipalities, according to the participants there was a very lively interest from both officers and their Municipalities to participate in European programmes.

Based on the above, it has been made clear that it would be appropriate for the subsequent implementation phases of the SUSTAIN project, to steer the municipalities of Cyprus and Northern Aegean, towards the implementation of a well-structured process of participation and implementation of European projects, which to the extent that it will be followed would ensure success and the maximum benefit for stakeholders.

SUSTAIN PROJECT: First training session in Cyprus

On June 7th, the Union of Cyprus Municipalities organised in the framework of the SUSTAIN project, a training session in Nicosia. The event, which has been organised in cooperation with the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Prefecture Chios (TEDK CHIOS), aimed to inform the Municipalities-members of the two associations, on European Programmes, and give them the opportunity to discuss eventual new processes, exchange ideas and develop their capacities in designing and managing twinning projects.



The meeting was attended by a team of 11 officials from the Municipality of Chios, TEDK Chios, TEDK Samos and TEDK Lesvos, who presented their experience from participating to European Programmes, as well as their internal processes and useful guidelines for the designing of new projects and the submission of project proposals.

The event took place within the wider effort of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities to ensure equal and effective access of all Cypriot Municipalities to European Programmes, through which the SUSTAIN project is also co-financed.

The Committee of the Regions' CIVEX commission meets in Cyprus

The Committee of the Regions' CIVEX commission (Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs) held its ninth meeting and a seminar on "The role of local and regional authorities in fostering European citizenship" on 6 and 7 June 2011 in Nicosia, Cyprus. Luc Van den Brande, president of the Flanders-Europe Liaison Agency and former president of the Committee of the Regions, chaired these events. The meeting and seminar were attended by representatives of local and regional authorities from the 27 EU Member States and of course members of the Cypriot Delegation to the Committee of the Regions (CoR).



The event took place at the invitation of Mrs Eleni Loucaïdes, Municipal Councillor of Nicosia and member of the Cypriot delegation to the CoR. Mrs Loucaïdes noted that 2011 was the Lisbon Treaty's second year in force. One of its aims was to establish the area of freedom, security and justice and to revive external relations. Decentralised cooperation and city diplomacy were tools that could help to secure peace and understanding between peoples, and local and regional authorities were by their nature best placed to underpin initiatives for coexistence and reconciliation between states and peoples.

At the CIVEX meeting, members discussed four opinions, covering "smart regulation", reducing bureaucracy for citizens and the strategy for effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as well as the CoR's own-initiative opinion on the broader issue of developing a European culture of multilevel governance, whose rapporteur was the commission's chair, Mr. Van den Brande. The meeting closed with a study visit to Nicosia's Multipurpose Centre organised by the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, and a walk through Nicosia's historic city centre, including a fact-finding visit to Ledra Street, which was once divided by the Green Line. The CoR's main reception and exhibition space at its Brussels headquarters was named after this place at an event on 3 April 2008 when a street sign with the words "Open Ledra Street" was erected to remind to the thousands of visitors who regularly pass by the spot, that local and regional authorities succeed when they have the support of local communities.

Seminar: "The role of LRAs in fostering European citizenship"

The Union of Cyprus Municipalities and the Committee of the Regions co-organised on June 7 in Nicosia, a seminar on "The role of local and regional authorities in fostering European citizenship". The seminar was attended by representatives of local and regional authorities from the 27 EU Member States.

In his opening speech, Mr. Neoklis Sylikiotis, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus, underlined that the rights of European citizens will be one of the main priorities of the Cypriot presidency in the second half of 2012. "European integration cannot succeed without active citizens, and local government must be an equal partner in the exercise of public functions", he stated.

On his behalf, Mr. Luc Van den Brande stressed that the concept of European citizenship was evolving and was especially important in the process of founding "European municipalities". The meaning of citizenship was no longer one-dimensional: national and European citizenship were flanked by regional, local and cultural notions of identity. Active participation in political dialogue started above all at grassroots level.



In her video message, European Commissioner Viviane Reding noted that Europe could not be built on legislation and rules alone, but relied on active citizens. She affirmed the European Commission's commitment to close cooperation with the CoR and local and regional authorities.

In his speech at the seminar, the Secretary General of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, Mr. Yiannis Antoniadis said that "one of the objectives of the Union of Municipalities is to bring the municipalities and the citizens of Cyprus closer to the European Union. We try to achieve this by informing our member municipalities on the actions of the European Union, by facilitating their participation in European activities or by organizing events like this, which are addressed both to Municipalities and citizens of Cyprus."

After a detailed presentation of the work of the Union in the field of European Citizenship (including the European projects DECISIVE, SKILLS and SUSTAIN),

Mr. Antoniadis said: "What I would like you to know is that for us, the effort to promote Town Twinning among the Municipalities and citizens of Cyprus does not end with the SUSTAIN project. On June 1st we submitted a proposal in cooperation with the Assembly of European Regions (AER), in the framework of Support Measures of the "Europe for Citizens" programme. This proposal is the logical continuation of the DECISIVE and SUSTAIN projects. As I said, DECISIVE brought volunteers-citizens closer to their Municipalities and taught them to work together to promote European Citizenship. SUSTAIN provides the tools and knowledge to exploit the relationship created through the first project. The new project, which we hope to be financed, will give the last two missing pieces to complete this effort: a) detailed information on what and how can be financed by the EU and b) access to hundreds of potential partners through the network of the Assembly of European Regions. As you can see, for the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, the promotion of European citizenship is not just an elusive goal. For years, we have been working intensively and methodically, always in collaboration with both the European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) - and we would like to thank them for their help and valuable presence here- as well as with the strongest partners in Europe on the issue of European citizenship, such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Assembly of European Regions (AER)".

The seminar also focused on various measures taken by official bodies and local authorities in the EU and explored practices used by local and regional authorities to bring citizens closer to the European Union. More specifically, there was a presentation of the Nicosia Master Plan by its authors, Mr. Lelos Dimitriadis and Mr. Mustafa Akinci. Events also included a visit to the Famagusta Museum, in Dherynia, near the Green Line.

SUSTAIN Project: 2nd training session in Chios, Greece

Within the framework of the SUSTAIN project, the Local Union of Municipalities and Communities of Prefecture Chios (TEDK CHIOS) organized on June 28, in Chios, a training session under the title: "Europe for Citizens 2007-2013, financial tools, actions and implementation practices from public and private stakeholders of local and regional level". In parallel with that event, ten representatives from Cypriot Municipalities, along with the Cypriot twinning coordinator, participated in a three-day visit to Chios.



The main aim of the training session was to present to the audience, good practices and experiences of the representatives of Cypriot and Greek Municipalities and officials. As concerns the three-day visit of the Cypriot group to Chios, the purpose was for the representatives of Cypriot Municipalities to visit areas of Chios, which have experienced the positive impact of the implementation of European projects, as well as to better understand the local culture and public processes of North Aegean.

Twinning Ceremony of Kyrenia Municipality and Municipality of Ermionida

A gathering of the citizens of Kyrenia

recently took place in the gardens of the temporary City Hall of Kyrenia, on the occasion of the second phase of a twinning ceremony of Kyrenia Municipality and the Municipality of Ermionida Peloponnese, which has jurisdiction over the Municipal District of Kranidi. The twinning ceremony was held in honour of the memorable Yiannos Kranidiotis, with events that began last September in Kranidi and were continued in Cyprus by the occupied Municipality of Kyrenia.

The event was attended by many relatives of the memorable Yiannos Kranidiotis and by His Excellency the Ambassador of Greece Mr. Vassilis Papaioannou, the honorary citizen of Kyrenia and MP of Nicosia, Mr. Andreas Angelides, the MP of Kyrenia Mr. Claudius Mavrochannas and candidates MPs of Kyrenia. The program consisted of greetings between the two municipalities and Cypriot dances from the Kyrenia Municipality Folk Dance Group.

Mr. Savvas Vergas, New Vice President of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities

The Executive Committee of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities proceeded to the filling of the post of the Vice President, which remained vacant after the proclamation of Mr. Christos Messis as MP in the recent parliamentary elections in Cyprus.

According to the statute of the Union of Cyprus Municipalities, Mr. Savvas Vergas, Mayor of Paphos, who has held up to now the position of member of the Executive Committee, has been elected as the new Vice President of the Union. Moreover, the Executive Committee decided to propose Mr. Charalambos Pittas, Mayor of Morphou, for the position of member of the Delegation of Cyprus to the Committee of the Regions and Mr. Andreas Hadjiloizou, Mayor of Ayios Dhometios, as alternate member of the Delegation.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS FOR CYPRUS

- **Union of Cyprus Municipalities**

Tel: +357 22 445170
Fax: +357 22 677230
e-mail: endekey@cytanet.com.cy
<http://www.ucm.org.cy/>

Brussels Office

Tel: +32 2 213 8110
Fax: +32 2 213 8111
e-mail: brussels@ucm.org.cy

- **Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus**

Tel: +357 22 804122
Fax: +357 22 665990
e-mail: nicosia.dao@nicda.moi.gov.cy
<http://moi.gov.cy/>

- **Cyprus Government web portal**

<http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/>

- **Planning Bureau of the Republic of Cyprus**

Tel: +357 22 602900
Fax: +357 22 666810
e-mail: planningbureau@planning.gov.cy
<http://www.planning.gov.cy/>

- **Permanent Representation of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union**

Tel: +32 2 735 9015 / 2 741 6745
Fax: +32 2 735 7948
e-mail: be.cydelegation.eu@mfa.gov.cy

- **Representation of the European Commission in Cyprus**

Tel: +357 22817770
Fax: +357 22768926
e-mail: comm-rep-cy@ec.europa.eu
http://ec.europa.eu/cyprus/index_en.htm

- **European Parliament Cyprus Offices**

Tel: +357 22 46 06 94
Fax: +357 22 76 77 33
e-mail: epnicosia@europarl.europa.eu
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/nicosia/>

- **Press and Information Office of the Republic of Cyprus**

Tel: +357 22 80 11 17
Fax: +357 22 66 61 23
e-mail: communications@pio.moi.gov.cy
<http://www.moi.gov.cy/pio>

- **Cyprus Tourism Organisation**

Tel: +357 22 69 11 00
Fax: +357 22 33 16 44
e-mail: cytour@cto.org.cy
<http://www.visitcyprus.com>

Brussels office

Tel: +32 2 735.06.21
Fax: +32 2 735.66.07
e-mail: cyprus@skynet.be

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

P.O.Box 22033, Cy 1516 Nicosia, Cyprus



<http://www.ucm.org.cy>

Visit our website for more information