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To get further information,
please visit the project website at:
www.recommendproject.eu



RECOMMEND is an INTERREG IVC project running from 1st January 2012 until 31st December 2014. RECOMMEND provides enterprises and public authorities information on instruments and funding schemes for new ecological measures in the business sector.

Dear readers,

A new year has just started and we wish you a fruitful and successful 2014. We are very happy to offer you our latest RECOMMEND newsletter containing current RECOMMEND highlights.

Do you know CROWDFUNDING? Crowdfunding is an alternative form of financing that is becoming increasingly popular in Europe. This form of financing offers a great opportunity, specifically to sustainability-oriented companies. Do you have new business ideas, but still lack relevant financing? Don't give up; perhaps crowdfunding is your big chance.

After an intense phase of research about what requirements the individual RECOMMEND project regions have in the environmental and climate protection area, things are now becoming concrete. Aside from developing 8 regional strategy plans for each project region, 3 pilot campaigns will be implemented with immediate effect. RECOMMEND - a project that aspires to set in motion and drive change.

Do you know our Polish project region Kujawsko-Pomorskie? It is not only the birthplace of astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, but is also known for its rich salt deposits. Aside from reputed universities and research organisations, it is also a mecca for health tourism.

We wish you an exciting read as well as an exciting working year!

Your Ingrid Rozhon

RECOMMEND Projekt-Manager

Crowdfunding – from buzzword to big chance



Dan Marom at the 4th RECOMMEND Working Summit in Poland 23-25 October 2013

In the context of the 4th RECOMMEND Working Summit in Poland during 23-25 October 2013, the renowned crowdfunding expert [Dan Marom](#) provided the RECOMMEND team with detailed information about crowdfunding as an alternative financing model. Marom presented the strengths and weaknesses of this system in an objective manner, illustrating his presentation with numerous successful projects from around the world funded with crowdfunding.

Even though crowdfunding is a relatively new phenomenon, the idea behind this form of financing is by no means new: in 1885, work on the base of the New York Statue of Liberty was going to be suspended due to lack of money.

In his newspaper, "New York World", Joseph Pulitzer launched a financing campaign to raise the missing 102,000 US dollars. The amount was successfully raised within five months, with most contributors paying approximately 1 dollar each.

This financing model has experienced a revival in the last 10 years. But the central hub for crowdfunding today is the internet. Start-ups and project initiators publish their business idea on the appropriate internet platforms to find interested investors. The financial power of many (= crowd) allows new investments and facilitates start-up breakthroughs.

One example of successful crowdfunding is the "BürgerInnen Solarkraftwerk" project in Austria. In 2012, the city of Vienna launched the first citizen's solar power plant in Vienna. Interested Viennese citizens were permitted to participate in the construction of a solar power plant from the outset. They were given the opportunity to purchase half a panel for only EUR 475. The purchase of a whole panel for EUR 950 corresponds to a secure annual allowance of 3.1% and thus an annual profit of EUR 29.45. ALL solar panels of the first citizen's solar power plant in Vienna were sold within 26 hours! As a result of this success, additional citizen's solar power plants were quickly built, inviting the participation of private individuals. With the help of "crowd" participation, more and more households can be supplied with clean energy.¹

There are currently more than 750 crowdfunding platforms. Visit our [homepage](#) to read more about these platforms and the dos and don'ts of crowdfunding.

¹ Source: www.buergersolarkraeftwerk.at

From Theory into Practice: RECOMMEND launches 3 Pilot Campaigns

3 pilot campaigns will be carried out in the context of RECOMMEND by May 2014. Their aim is to test new measures in the area of eco-management and eco-innovation, thereby contributing to a more environmentally-friendly Europe. See at a glance what objectives these 3 campaigns pursue, who is responsible for implementation and what framework conditions they aim to improve.

Pilot Campaign I	Pilot Campaign II	Pilot Campaign III
OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE
Introduction of a new Innovation Voucher in South Bohemia	Development of a clear expert database for funded consultation in Lower Austria (NÖ).	Information campaign for "eco-management & eco-innovation" activity in Estonia.
Responsible	Responsible	Responsible
Ekoport (Czech Republic)	Lower Austrian Regional Government, Office Department of Environmental and Energy Economics (Lead Partner, Austria)	TREA (Estonia)
Initial Situation in South Bohemia	Initial Situation in Lower Austria	Initial Situation in Tartu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Bohemia is one of the last regions in the Czech Republic to introduce eco-innovation vouchers; • Great F&E potential in the region; (Note: What is F &E?) • Low cooperation between industry / economy / research; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of public institutions in Lower Austria that offer environmental consulting and environmental support. • Poor coordination of offers between the individual public institutions • Time necessary for applicants to assess the wide range of services offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness in Estonia about current environmentally-relevant challenges • Little information about possible eco-friendly solutions to improve the environment and economy. • Interest for more information about best-practice examples
Output	Output	Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cooperation between R&D institutions, industry, and economy • Improved communication between economy, politics, science, and industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a database for the presentation of services and consulting companies • Improved cooperation between relevant public institutions • More transparency in service offers for consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional ideas for future regional & national environmental protection strategies (e.g. in areas like green procurement, green label)

For the latest information about the 3 pilot campaigns, please visit:
http://www.recommendproject.eu/rip_pilotactions.htm

Green Europe: 8 implementation plans for the partner regions

One of the main objectives of RECOMMEND is for every project region to develop its own regional implementation plan (RIP). A RIP sets out 1-3 environmental support measures the partner discovered during the project and would recommend for their own region. A RIP contains information about who can/should implement as well as the conditions, time and budget.

During the first half of the project, the project team directed its attention towards developing themes for the RIP that could be of interest to the various regions. At the 4th Working Summit in Poland (October 2013) all partners presented their first ideas for measure proposals to the project team. The aim of these presentations was to explain WHY a special good practice or new idea was chosen and who and how it will be implemented within the partner region. Please find the first ideas for possible measures / partner / region below:

Project partner	Potential measures for RIP
Austria (LP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common search tool for eco experts of all consultancy programmes in the region.
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing new innovation voucher scheme & • Establishing instruments of support for clusters development
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing pilot (eco) innovation vouchers scheme
Slovenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing Eco Bionics Cluster
Estonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information campaign to raise awareness for eco management and eco innovation
Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing system for the evaluation of environmental sustainability of buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption • Implementing funding scheme to develop and implement environmental and climate friendly measures among private and public organisations
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMS Cluster Club • Improved networking, advice, support and training for key sectors and Fengate geographical cluster
Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Energy Efficiency Voucher scheme in Varna

All final drafts of the RIPs will be reviewed in spring 2014 by external experts before they are handed over to the relevant stakeholder of each region who is responsible for implementing the recommendations.

The project team is totally aware of the fact that successful RIP implementation does not just depend on how well such a RIP is prepared by each partner. On the contrary, external circumstances such as economic, financial, and political circumstances which cannot be influenced by individuals have a great and sustainable impact, on RIP implementation after the project ends in 2015.

For further information please consult our project homepage:

<http://www.recommendproject.eu/rip.htm>

Hot spot not only for astronomers: the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region

The partner region Kujawsko-Pomorskie is the 10th largest region in the north of Central Poland. It has about 2.1 million residents. The region links two distinctive historical and geographical areas, located on both banks of the Vistula - the longest Polish river. Therefore everything is double. Starting from the name of the province itself through its capital cities to monuments of culture and attractions of nature.

Bydgoszcz and Toruń are the most important cities in the region. Located close to one another, they are excellently connected by fast roads, railways and waterways. Together they create a double capital city for the province. Bydgoszcz is the seat of the 'Governor' (Wojewoda). The distinctive element is its numerous parks and green areas. Picturesque bridges lead to Mill Island (Wyspa Młyńska) and to the area of the so-called Venice of Bydgoszcz.

Toruń is the seat of the regional government. The city is a prestigious university centre and a centre of Gothic architecture. Owing to its monuments, the Old Town, with its Town Hall from the 14th century, town houses and the remaining sections of its walls, it was put on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus was born in Toruń. Toruń is also famous for the production of delicious gingerbread.

Kujawsko-Pomorskie has an excellent strategic location in the heart of Europe and is surrounded by a well-developed road and railway network. The region has 4 industrial parks, 2 industrial technology parks and also the Technology Park with the Technology Transfer Centre. Two academic centres operate in the region: the Nicolaus Copernicus University (the largest in Northern Poland, Toruń) as well as the University of Environment and Technology (Casimir the Great University) & the Academy of Music and Medical College of the Nicolaus Copernicus University (Bydgoszcz). The universities undertake R&D and implementation activities in parallel with teaching.

Kujawsko-Pomorskie is one of the largest producers of food in Poland (2nd largest producer of sugar beet, oilseed rape and pork), ranks 2nd in cow's milk production and is responsible for over 20% of Poland's production of cellulose and paper. The region also presents convenient conditions for the development of renewable energy (wind, hydro and geothermal energies).

The Kujawsko-Pomorskie region is also a mecca for those seeking [healthy regeneration, physical purification and biological balance](#).



Attraction: Brine graduation tower in Kujawsko-Pomorskie



The brine graduation tower is a timber and brushwood construction. In past ages it was used for salt production but now is used for saltwater inhalation. The concept for operation of the graduation tower is simple: saltwater is pumped upwards to the top of the structure and then runs freely down the towers on brushwood twigs, evaporating along the way. The surrounding air is saturated with iodine and microelements generated through the dripping saline solution and the movement of the air. The aerosol which forms in this way prevents disease and supports treatment of upper respiratory tract conditions, thyroid diseases, allergic skin conditions, and also helps lower blood pressure.

Health benefits of the saltwater graduation towers can be enjoyed for free.

It is recommended not to stay closer than the minimum distance from the brine graduation tower (approx. 30 meters) for more than 15-30 minutes at a time – in order to experience the beneficial health effects of the facility around the brine graduation tower, visitors should expose themselves to this kind of inhalation at least twice a day.

The comfortable paths and benches around the graduation tower allow patients and visitors to take a walk or have a seat and listen to the sound of falling water.



In Kujawsko-Pomorskiego region there are two health resorts: Ciechocinek and Inowrocław, which provide excellent entertainment and make the stay for health resort visitors more pleasurable.

Ciechocinek has the largest brine graduation towers in Europe. The complex of three graduation towers set up in the shape of a horse shoe was created in the years between 1824 and 1859. The graduation towers are 15.8 meters high and span a total length of 1741.5 meters.

The first brine graduation towers in Inowrocław, designed for obtaining salt from saltwater, were built as early as in the 2nd century BC (and they were the first in Europe!). From 1993 to 2001, the saltwater graduation tower was built and then opened. The graduation tower is the shape of two connected polygons.

It is 9 meters high and 320 meters long. This design guarantees the most effective production of saltwater aerosol and prevents excessive dispersion.

The brine graduation towers are surrounded by the Saltwater Parks with beautiful flower carpets, picturesque ponds and fountains as well as charming cafes which attract both tourists and health resort visitors

More information about brine graduation tower & Kujawsko-Pomorskiego region:

<http://www.visitkujawsko-pomorskie.pl> (Biuro Kujawsko-Pomorskiej Organizacji Turystycznej)

Medical Tourism & Wellness Cluster in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region

The idea of wellness as well as medical tourism is well known to people who travel to other countries to get specific medical treatment. The main goal of such travels is to take advantage of the easy access to usually much cheaper and high-quality medical treatment and care. The most popular ones are: dental health care, eye treatment and surgery, and all sorts of plastic surgery. Current medical and health resort tourism combine elements of treatment, rest and rehabilitation. Poland ranks seventh in Europe in terms of number of health resorts.

Four areas in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region have been declared health resorts: Inowrocław, Ciechocinek, Wieniec, and Aleksandrów Kujawski. Its health resorts have brines which are used to treat cardiovascular diseases, respiratory illnesses, rheumatism, neuroses, and gynecological diseases. Private clinics and hospitals offer modern equipment cooperating with highly qualified specialists.

IA Medical Tourism & Wellness Cluster was founded on the 1st of July 2013 by "Lewiatan", the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Organization of Employers to maximise the potential of this key cluster.. The cluster is based on voluntary agreement between companies, research organisations, business institutions, public and private universities, and other stakeholders operating in accordance with the cluster objectives. "Lewiatan", the Kuyavia and Pomerania Organization of Employers, is the cluster leader and is responsible for the organisational, administrative and financing services related to the cluster activities.

The aim of the cluster is to promote "medical tourism and health resorts in Poland" and to create conditions conducive to the development of medical companies and other companies in related sectors in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region and other regions. Other tasks of the cluster include: seeking both public and private investment/investors for cluster members; organizing conferences and courses associated with the medical and wellness industry; co-participating in national and international exhibitions / fairs, creating mutual offers for cluster members (combination of hospital services and treatments with wellness services and treatments) as well as conducting economic and market analyses, etc..

For more information on the Medical Tourism and Wellness Cluster please visit the website at:
<http://www.kpolewiatan.pl/>

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