



## PRESS RELEASE

The Launch Event of the project “Implementation of a forecAsting System for urban heat Island effect for the development of urban adaptation strategies – LIFE ASTI” was held on **Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> 2018**, in **Thessaloniki**. The project is co-funded by the **LIFE 2014-2020** Program, has a total budget of **€ 1,265,395**, with a 36-month implementation period.

The Municipality of Thessaloniki, as part of its Operational Planning, the Urban Resilience Strategy it has developed and its participation in the New Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, participates as a partner in this significant project.

The phenomenon of **Urban Heat Island Effect** (UHIE) has an impact on human health, which is becoming more intense as the duration of the heat wave episodes is expected to increase due to climate change. The spread of urban areas has become alarming in recent years: almost 73% of Europe's population lives in cities, a rate which is expected to reach 80% by 2050. Extensive urbanization is triggering significant changes to the composition of the atmosphere and the soil, which result in the modification of the thermal climate and the temperature rise in urban areas, compared to neighboring non-urban ones.

The LIFE ASTI project focuses on addressing the impact of UHIE on human mortality by developing and evaluating a system of numerical models that will lead to the short-term forecasting and future projection of the UHIE phenomenon in two Mediterranean cities: Thessaloniki and Rome.

The model system will produce high-quality forecasting products, such as bioclimatic indicators and heating and cooling degree days, which assess the energy needs of buildings. In addition, the model system will guide the Health Alert System to be implemented in both cities and will aim at informing the competent authorities, the general population and the scientific community.

In the project's launch event, all partner representatives participated and in particular, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Physics, Department of Applied and Environmental Physics (Project Coordinator), Azienda Sanitaria Locale Roma 1, Geospatial Enabling Technologies Ltd., Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate-National Research Council of Italy, Municipality of Thessaloniki and Sympraxis Team.

In conclusion, as revealed by the LIFE ASTI Launch Event processes, the *Urban Heat Island Effect* phenomenon aggravates the living conditions in urban centers during the summer.

This, reinforces the need to inform citizens and competent authorities about health protection measures. LIFE ASTI comes to fill this important gap and to help local residents to improve the quality of the environment and the bioclimatic comfort conditions within cities.

Soon, you will be able to receive direct information about the latest news, through the project's official page and social media.

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