

PRESS RELEASE

The Municipality of Thessaloniki, in cooperation with organizations from Greece, Italy and Cyprus, implements the project "A System for Integrated EnviRonalmental Information in Urban areaS - **LIFE SIRIUS**". The project is co-funded by the European **LIFE Programme 2021 - 2027 and the project beneficiaries**, with a total budget of 1,192,729 €, an implementation duration of 36 months and a start date of 1 August 2022.

The project aims to improve environmental governance in urban air quality planning and management, considering a holistic environmental approach through advancing knowledge, skills and competences of the responsible authorities.

In addition to the Municipality of Thessaloniki (MoT), the project partnership includes:

- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (as Lead Partner) and AXON ENVIRO-GROUP Ltd. (AXON) from Greece, supported by "Lever - Development Consultants SA", member of the "Samaras & Partners Group of Companies", Technical Consultant of the Municipality of Thessaloniki.
- The Regional Environmental Protection Agency of Lazio Region (ARPA Lazio) and the National Research Council of Italy, Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate (CNR-ISAC) from Italy.
- the Department of Labour Inspection (DLI) of Cyprus and The Cyprus Institute (Cyl)-Climate and Atmosphere research Centre (CARE-C) from Cyprus.

In the framework of the project implementation, on Wednesday 31 May 2023, the Local Working Table meeting took place successfully at the "Manolis Anagnostakis" hall of the Thessaloniki City Hall, on the topic: "Air Quality Planning in cities: The local experience". The event was welcomed by the Deputy Mayor for Environment, Mr. Erotokritos Theotokatos, who, among other things, stressed how important such partnerships are for the Municipality and how the LIFE SIRIUS project will help the Municipality to better manage air quality in the city of Thessaloniki. The Deputy Mayor of E-Governance, Chief Resilience Officer of the Municipality of Thessaloniki, Mr. Michael Koupkas, who referred to the importance of the European Project LIFE SIRIUS for the city of Thessaloniki, as well as for the city's climate, the network of stations for measuring air pollution and meteorological parameters, the existence of smart IoT sensors, and the two European Missions that the Municipality of Thessaloniki participates in, "Adaptation to Climate Change" and "100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities".

The Local Working Table was coordinated by the Deputy Head of the Department of Operational Planning & Development Programmes Monitoring (Resilience Office) of the Municipality of Thessaloniki, Dr. Georgios Papastergios, and was attended by more than 25 participants, including the participants from the Project Team (Department of Environment and Climate Change Adaptation and the Department of Operational Planning & Development Programmes Monitoring (Resilience Office) of the Municipality of Thessaloniki). The speeches started with a presentation by Professor Dimitrios Melas of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Project Manager of LIFE SIRIUS, entitled "The LIFE SIRIUS project: description,

goals and expected results and activities". Then Mrs. Christiana Polyzou, Environmental Engineer PhD, of the Department of European Projects of "Lever - Development Consultants SA", member of the "Samaras & Partners Group of Companies", referred to the "Review of the legislation regarding air quality and decision making in Thessaloniki" and, with data provided by the Municipality's project team, to the "Tools used for air quality monitoring in Thessaloniki". Dr. Athena Progiou of AXON (project partner) presented "Planning air quality in Cities: The case of the Thessaloniki". The discussion of the meeting led to the identification of the needs of regional and local authorities for better air quality management.

As typically mentioned by Mr. Melas at the Local Working Table: "The synergy of heat load and increased air pollution lead to combined negative impacts on public health. Such problems are the kind of problems we are called upon to solve in the LIFE SIRIUS project through which the EMS (Environmental Management System) Platform for air quality management will be developed, which will be available not only to scientific teams but also to the general public."

For continuous and direct information on air quality issues in the city of Thessaloniki, as well as on the actions of the LIFE SIRIUS project, please visit the project's official website (<https://lifesirius.eu/>) and contact directly the project manager of LIFE SIRIUS, Dr. Dimitrios Melas, Professor, of the Department of Applied and Environmental Physics School of Physics, Faculty of Sciences (melas@auth.gr).

