

The LIFE REWEEE Project - Development and Demonstration of Waste of Electrical and Electronic Equipment Prevention and Reuse Paradigms

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Waste of Electrical and Electronic equipment (WEEE) is considered one of the fastest growing waste streams worldwide. In 2005 the Member – States of European Union disposed 8.3 to 9.1 million tonnes of WEEE, while it is estimated that by 2020, this amount could be as high as 12.3 million tonnes, corresponding to an annual increase of 2.5% to 2.7%. In order to tackle the growing WEEE generation, policies providing robust guidelines on reuse (prevention) and preparation for reuse, are considered a necessity.

Against this background, this paper presents the co-funded by the European Commission LIFE programme “LIFE-REWEEE” (full title: “Development and Demonstration of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment Prevention and Reuse Paradigms”), which has been elaborated in order to reduce WEEE through the implementation of prevention and preparation for reuse actions. The Project facilitates the development and demonstration of efficient sorting and preparation for reuse processes for a variety of WEEE, leading to the increase of acceptance of Used Electrical and Electronic Equipment (UEEE) by the consumer.

The “LIFE-REWEEE” project will promote and facilitate the implementation of the relevant legislation, the reliable and socially sensitive preparation for reuse in Greece, and the development of the implementation of models and assessment tools of EU-wide applicability, especially for those member-States that do not yet have well-established systems in place.

The main objectives of the Project are:

- The set-up and the integration of preparation for reuse activities;
- The development of specifications and technical requirements based on Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the entire “preparation for reuse” cycle, to be adopted by the relevant regulatory body in Greece, to facilitate permitting and assure quality of UEEE and prepare recommendations for policy measures, at all relevant levels – retailer management, local authority, national and EU legislation;
- The development of reliable tools, at the EU level, for the accurate measurement of WEEE reuse and preparation for reuse that would facilitate the relevant discussion for target setting;
- The assessment of the level of WEEE reuse in Greece, before and after the project intervention, using the abovementioned tools;
- The investigation and improvement of public attitudes towards EEE prevention and reuse;
- The promotion of WEEE prevention culture in Greece; and
- The monitoring the link of environmental, economic and social benefits associated with WEEE reuse and preparation for reuse.

The main expected results of the project are the following:

- The development and operation of two WEEE sorting facilities, the first of their kind in Greece, one in the Greater Athens Area and one in Thessaloniki, to sort 1,000 tn and 500 tn of WEEE per year, respectively (categories 5 and 6 of the new WEEE directive).
- The pilot operation of the abovementioned sorting facilities with category 4 WEEE.
- The development of an EU-wide applicable methodology and tools for measuring WEEE reuse and preparation for reuse, that could assist Member States in national reporting and the EU in setting relevant compulsory standards, in future legislation.
- The accurate mapping of the baseline situation on WEEE reuse and preparation for reuse in Greece;
- A set of specifications, protocols, technical requirements and Guides based on Best Available Techniques(BAT) for the entire “preparation for reuse” cycle.