

## A personal take on the REBUS Final Event

*A blog post by Sara Banchi (Resolvo)*

We got dressed and put our makeup on. We arrived early to be sure to find a place. We looked around to recognise the familiar faces of the other attendees (more than 100!). We crossed our fingers and hoped we could do justice to 5 years of exchange and cooperation. It was virtual, but it felt real.

The backstage was hectic, just like what happens behind the curtains of a cosy, little theatre. Unexpected things kept happening – phones were ringing while conference videos were suddenly shut off. Parallel chats were full of messages to help us make decisions and pretend everything was running smoothly in front of our audience. It gave us adrenaline and, after a long time, a sense of purpose.

Chris and Madeline multitasked incessantly. While this may not come as a surprise for Madeline (let's not forget that, according to popular belief, for a man this is a much harder task!)...and yet, he managed to walk us through such diverse content, with comments to each speaker and insights on the energy efficiency topic.

Sergio appeared live and in masked video interviews bringing in his passion for the topic and his commitment to the project. Simona Forzoni, Local Councillor for Environment in Greve in Chianti (IT) and Stefano Maestrelli, Former Energy Manager of "Versilia" Hospital, agreed to share their experience with REBUS and starred in the interviews. The Tuscan Regional Minister for Environment was unfortunately busy with COVID-19 response tasks, but ARRR President Marco Meacci made sure he joined to welcome all of us to Tuscany. We thank them for that.

Olle, who somehow managed to surround himself with the REBUS logo, guided us through the inspirational experiences of the City of Malmö. In the same session, Katalin, with her personal touch, told us the story of the achievements of the B-A-Z County in Hungary and asked a key question: how do we communicate energy data to users in a way that it is meaningful to them?

Maria and Sofia sat far away from each other, as we all know that distancing is the new normal. However, this did not stop them from showing the strong cooperation link developed between the Region of Crete and the Local council of Hersonissos that tested the REBUS Energy Renovation Path. Patrycja kept us interested not just with her presentation, but also with an interactive questionnaire that asked us to reflect on what's key when it comes to energy efficiency improvement.

Valerio Marangolo, on behalf of the Managing Authority in Tuscany, made a point of participating to show how the ERDF call for proposals were improved thanks to REBUS. Luiza and Luminita showed us what is achievable when different levels of government, the Region and the Local Councils, work towards the same objective. Their speech brought our memories back to Romania. We all remember the last time we met in an airport. It was in Bucharest, one year ago. It was memorable not just because it was the last time we met in person. The real thing is that we all managed to smuggle through airport security the big, white, sharp umbrellas, kind present from the Mayor of Buzau. Believe us, not a small achievement and a memory to treasure!

Cllr Clare's microphone might have been muffled, but his message on the climate emergency response reached us loud and clear. Rich and Stephen made sure that the experiences of Durham County Council, from which all partners learned so much throughout the project, were shared with the audience as well.

In the final event, how could we not involve Miriam from Resolvo, who held up the partnership for many years? As partners confessed to me when I took over project coordination, they loved her and at the same time they feared her enough to be motivated and always step up the quality of their performance.

Dr Lily Christoforidou shared interesting food for thought on the European Green Deal opening up future perspectives. Our Interreg Europe project officer, Charo Camacho, closed the event with a heart-warming, inspirational speech that made us feel appreciated not just for our work, but also for our commitment to European cooperation. No better way to say goodbye, for now.

*Sara Banchi - Resolvo*

#### **List of key staff members /stakeholders involved in the project from each partner country:**

##### **Regional Agency for waste & resource management (ARRR) – Italy**

Regional Stakeholders involved in project activities and Pilot action:

Ing. Valerio Marangolo, Tuscany Region; Paolo Sottani, Mayor of Greve in Chianti, Simona Forzoni Local Councillor for Environment in Greve in Chianti, ing. Simone Coccia, Local Council of Greve in Chianti; Ing. Stefano Maestrelli - Asl Nord Ovest; Ing. Daniele Giorni, ing. Gilberto Cristofolletti - Asl Sud Est; Civil servants that took part in the "We Save Energy" capacity building programme.

Sergio Gatteschi, Annamaria Telino, Marta Giulia Baldi, Pietro Novelli, Claudio Gherardini;

Resolvo Srl staff

...and staff members from the Florentine Energy Agency (AFE) and ARRR.

##### **City of Malmö – Sweden**

Key staff for Malmö: Carola Lund, Jenny Groothuis, Viktoria Sjöström, Gustav Lindblad and Olle Strandberg

##### **BORA 94 Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Development Agency Nonprofit LLC – Hungary**

Tibor Kovács – BORA 94 Nonprofit LLC, key staff member;

József Vasas/Ákos Molnár – Ministry of Finance, Managing Authority of TSDOP;

Erzsébet Telegdi Vinczéné– Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Government;

Erika Üveges Ádámné/Nóra Durányik/Judit Barczy Bernáthné – City of Miskolc;

Orsolya Fülöp/Zsuzsanna Király/Zsuzsanna Koritár – ENERGIACLUB/Hungarian Energy Efficiency Institute;

Zsuzsanna F. Nagy – Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development;

Róbert Fazekas – Ferenc Földes Gymnasium;

Balázs Nagy – Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Faculty of Civil Engineering;

Örs Szokolay – City of Budapest, XIV. District Zugló Municipality;

Lajos Vass – ÉMI Non-Profit LLC for Quality Control and Innovation in Building;

Zsuzsanna Váradi – Innocity LLC;

László Zvolenszki – Mesterterv LLC;

József Vasas, from the MA, who was very helpful for the project...special thanks to him!

...and staff members from BORA 94 Nonprofit LLC.

#### **Association of Municipalities Polish Network "Energie Cités" (PNEC) - Poland**

Staff members from PNEC

#### **SOUTH-EAST REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY - Romania**

Luminita Mihailov – SE RDA General Director;

Nina Irimia, Luiza Tiganus, Luana Zaharia - SE RDA

Constantin Toma – Mayor of Buzau Municipality/project stakeholder;

Luminita Colteanu - Head of Projects Development and Implementation Office - Buzau Municipality/project stakeholder

#### **European Institute for Innovation – Germany**

Chris Ashe, Ben Daumiller, Madeline Langlois, Debbie Glen

#### **Durham County Council – United Kingdom**

Durham County Council:

Cllr John Clare – Climate Change Champion; Rich Hurst – REBUS Manager; Dorothy Gibson – Transnational Funding Officer; Paul Franks – Carbon and Energy Technical Officer; Maggie Bosanquet – Low Carbon Team

Leader; Stephen McDonald – Principal Climate Change Officer; Helen Grayshan – Low Carbon Officer; Ian Bloomfield – Retired REBUS Manager

Durham Partners:

Colin Hillary (community sector energy activist); Kate Burrows (Durham Community Action); Steven Bowyer (The Auckland Project), Jon Hall and Emma Bridge (Community Energy England); Jonathan Mullard (BEIS); Jeremy Crooks (The Coal Authority); Jacki Bell (Durham Energy Institute); Mark Joslyn (MHCLG – Managing Authority); Lawry Cook (Environment Agency); Keith Owen (Northern Gas), Andrew Clark (NE-LEP), Corinne Walton (DCC Area Action Partnership Coordinator); Carol Botten (Voluntary Organisations Network North East).

### **Region of Crete – Greece**

Sofia Yfanti, Municipality of Hersonissos;

Pr Ioannis Vourdoumpas, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania;

Spyros Sofianos, Technical Chamber of Greece, Branch of Western Crete;

Pr Emmanuel Karapidakis, Hellenic Mediterranean University of Crete;

Pr Theocharis Tsoutsos, Technical University of Crete;

Efprepios Baradakis, Technical University of Crete;

Irini Sfakianaki, Municipality of Malevizi;

Stathis Gryparis, Venizelion Hospital of Heraklion, Department of Technical Services;

Artemis Spanaki, 7th Health Unit of Crete, Department of Technical Services;

Vaggelis Grigorakis, Architect, A2G Company;

Ioannis Aspirtakis, Mechanical engineer, Ergoprolipsis Company;

...and staff members from the Region of Crete.