



## **STEP project, three years working in the dissemination of good practices in energy efficiency**

### **The European project finishes its lifetime by the end of 2014 having fulfilled its aim of enabling the exchange and dissemination of best practices in energy efficiency and renewable energies among EU countries**

The European project Interreg IV C STEP finishes after three years of lifetime with its aims fulfilled, that is, to organize mutual learning actions and exchange of experiences in energy efficiency among the eleven partners of the project.

The following countries have been represented in the project: Hungary (Regional Innovation Agency of the South Trans-Danubian and Local Government of Mohács), Finland (Kainuun Etu Ltd, Development Agency), Germany (Saxon Energy Agency), Ireland (Centre Regional Authority and Mid-West Regional Authority) and Poland (ARLEG- Regional Development). Spain has been represented in the STEP project by SARGA -a public company that belongs to the Government of Aragon- and INFO -the Development Agency of the region of Murcia-.

The results of the STEP project consist in the decrease of energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and the increase of the rate of renewable energies in partner regions. That was possible thanks to the efforts made by the project in fostering the implementation of policies that contribute to the achievement of the EU objectives included in the Energy and Climate Plan 20/20/20; and the promotion of regional energy self-sufficiency and energy diversification. The project also aimed at supporting territorial cohesion among partner regions in accordance to the energy and climate change EU policies.

### **The exchange of regional experiences and best practices for the promotion of renewable energies and energy efficiency**

As a result of the above and after the assessment of their suitability, results and replicability, documented good practices of each participant country in the project were exchanged. Those documented good practices focused in the three following thematic areas:

1. Management of Energy Plans, mainly developed through Sustainable Energy Action Plans.
2. Management of Energy Systems, through successful experiences in implementing energy efficiency actions and renewable energies in partner regions.
3. Innovative Funding Tools, to carry out the planned actions, in most cases through Energy Services Companies.

The above, served as basis for the elaboration of an **Inter-regional Political Guide on Sustainable Energy** and energy management systems at local level, both aiming to fostering the principle of subsidiarity and cooperation among different levels of decision-making (local,



regional and national), which are key to achieve the main aims of the STEP project. In addition, several **Transference Plans** were elaborated. In the case of Aragon, the Transference Plan started its implementation in 2014.

## **Participation, dissemination, benchmarking and social networks, as other strong aspects of the STEP project**

The exchange of information was complemented by innovative communication and dissemination actions, whose aim was to create a Community capable of finding stakeholders instead of waiting for them to find the STEP project. To that end, different levels of participation were created at:

1. Local and regional levels, by means of thematic workshops, dissemination of written press, regional forums and conferences within diverse events. In the case of Aragon, thematic workshops were held in Jaca, Zaragoza and Alcañiz.
2. National and international levels, through meetings held in all partner regions (Pécs, Zaragoza, Kajaani, Murcia, Limerick and Dresden) with the participation of experts in energy efficiency and renewable energies.
3. European level, by the project partners' participation at the 2013 EUSEW (EU Sustainable Energy Week), the Interreg IV Projects Capitalization Days focused on Renewable Energies, the Project's Final Conference held in the fringe of the 2014 Open Days and the edition of dissemination articles in international magazines, among other.
4. Additionally, the STEP project had along its lifetime great presence in the Internet ([www.stepproject.es](http://www.stepproject.es)) and in social networks. Biannual newsletters were disseminated in Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube, Flickr, Issuu and Slideshare.

Last, it must be highlighted that the aim of the STEP project partners is to give continuity to the efforts developed to date. That will be done by the development of monitoring actions and the prolongation of efforts within a new project capable of achieving further progress towards the Energy and Climate Plan 20/20/20.