



WE@EU:

WATER EFFICIENCY IN EUROPEAN URBAN AREAS

Newsletter 1 - What's new in WE@EU?

January - March 2014

WE@EU - Water efficiency in European Urban Areas is a FP7 - Regions of Knowledge project, based on the ambition to create an open European platform for EU excellence in water efficiency in urban water management through cooperation among research driven clusters from five regions of Europe. More info available [online](#)

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Partners



IAAA
Advanced Information
Systems Laboratory
Universidad Zaragoza



Clúster urbano para uso eficiente del agua.



Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough



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"REALISING EXCELLENCE"



Newsletter

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1. WE@EU in a nutshell

WE@EU is a FP7 - Regions of Knowledge project based on the ambition to create a open European platform for excellence in R&D&I in urban water management through transnational cooperation among clusters from five regions in Europe.

What pretends?

To create a European Platform for innovation in the area of water efficiency in urban areas.

How?

Boosting transnational cooperation among research driven clusters.

Who?

Five European Regions highly specialised in water efficiency and innovation: Aragon (Spain), East of England (UK), Eastern Galilee (Israel), Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (France) and Malta.

Why?

To increase competitiveness of European business entities, generate new skills and reduce pressures on the environment.

More information available: <http://www.weateu.eu> #weateu

Analysis and integration of research agendas in regional clusters



Definition of a RTD Strategy for water efficiency in urban areas of partner regions



Trans-Regional activities to support triple helix collaborations for water efficiency



International networking to boost competitiveness of regional research-driven clusters



Mentoring of region to support the development of research-driven clusters





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2. What now in WE@EU?

WE@EU clusters aim to bring together knowledge and innovation potential through collaboration and mutual learning. From January till March 2014 WE@EU partners have been collecting **regional innovation data** that will support the “Regional Research Agendas” of participating regions: Aragon (Spain), East of England (UK), Eastern Galilee (Israel), Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur (France) and Malta.

WE@EU specific objective is to develop and **implement joint action plan to increase regional R&D&I performance** and thus regional economic competitiveness. Hence, WE@EU work package 2 is devoted to analyze and integrate research agendas in regional clusters. We are collecting data from our regions and cluster members that will contribute to define regional research agendas in water efficiency in urban areas. This will also contribute to increase the knowledge valorization in our regions. After this exercise we will develop a Joint Action Plan.

[Do not miss WE@EU project dossier in three languages.](#)





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3. WE@EU Regions of knowledge in depth: Aragon (I)

ARAGON

Aragón represents one of Spain's seventeen existing administrative divisions. Located in the north-east of the Iberian Peninsula, Aragón has a strategic geographical location and excellent communication network both with some of the main cities in Spain (Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia and Bilbao) and Pau and Toulouse in France.

Many water-related stakeholders in Aragón are represented in the “**Urban Cluster for the Efficient Use of Water ZINNAE**”. Officially created in 2010, it aims to unite and coordinate regional efforts to improve efficiency and boost R&D&I in water. ZINNAE is comprised of 25 members, of which 56% are business entities (36% are SMEs), together with dedicated research and higher education institutions, local and regional and supra-regional public authorities as well as other relevant stakeholders.





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3. WE@EU Regions of knowledge in depth: Aragon (II)

ZINNAE, Aragonese Water Cluster

As a whole, the cluster involves most of actors in the region that operate in the sector of water management and efficiency. This fact makes ZINNAE a cluster with multiple possibilities for boosting multi-disciplinary collaborative projects among its members. Our business entities provide solutions through products and services in four areas of work:

- ✓Hydrological planning and analysis
- ✓Design, management and exploitation of the integral water cycle
- ✓Governance services
- ✓Technology and services for water and energy efficiency

Find more information of ZINNAE's activities and members in the cluster's [Catalogue](#).



Contact data:

ZINNAE <http://www.zinnae.org> @InfoZINNAE info@zinnae.org





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3. WE@EU Regions of knowledge in depth (III)

ARAGON R&D Excellence

The University of Zaragoza

The University of Zaragoza is the main research center in the Aragon. Its research institutes, laboratories and research groups are interdisciplinary in nature, which enables them to acquire the infrastructure and technology that may have been difficult by an individual center or group to be achieved. Some of the research groups in the university are devoted to water quality and treatment, Advanced information systems (IAAA), water law and environment (AGUDEMA) or catalysis, molecular separations and reactor engineering (CREG).

UNIZAR Technological capacity

In its research structure, the University of Saragossa has seven University Research Institutes (URI) plus an associated Institute. The essential goals of these centers are the research in basic fields of knowledge and its application to the civil society through the promotion of technology transfer between university and industry.

1. Aragon Engineering URI (I3A)
2. Biocomputing and Complex Systems Physics URI (BIFI)
3. Homogeneous Catalysis URI (IUCH)
4. Aragon Nanoscience URI (INA)
5. Mathematics and Applications URI (IUMA)
6. Aragon Environmental Sciences URI (IUCA)
7. Mixed Resource Research Centre and Energy Consumption (CIRCE)
8. Saragossa Logistic Center (ZLC)

Contact Data:

<http://www.unizar.es>

arinfra@unizar.es

iaaa@unizar.es





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3. WE@EU Regions of knowledge in depth (IV)

ARAGON R&D Excellence

The University of Zaragoza Water related Research Groups

Water efficiency related research groups of University of Zaragoza are the following:

A. [The AGUDEMA Group \(Water, Law and Environment\)](#), integrates a total of 11 researchers. The group aims at studying the water, the public properties and the environment from a legal multidisciplinary perspective. These general objectives also include the various uses of water. In particular, the energy, the expropriations in the energetic sector and transport of the electricity produced.

B. The focus of the research work carried out by the [Calidad y Tratamiento de Aguas \(Water Quality and Treatment\) Group](#), is protection against water pollution. This research work aims to minimize and reduce water pollution. The group activity is divided in two sectors. First, natural water quality control and industrial discharge control and secondly, non-conventional treatment techniques applied to the removal of hazardous pollutants from water..

C. [The Advanced Information Systems group \(IAAA\)](#) is a multidisciplinary R&D group, with a computer science profile, assigned to the Institute of Research in Engineering of Aragon (I3A), which belongs to the University of Zaragoza. The group's research activity is focused in open, distributed and interoperable software technologies, mainly through web services and geospatial information systems. Also including areas such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Remote Sensing, Services based on Location (SBL) and, with a special emphasis on Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs). In the area of water the group leads the WE@EU project: Water Efficiency in European Urban Areas.





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3. WE@EU Regions of knowledge in depth (V)

ARAGON R&D Excellence

CIRCE

Research Centre with more than 200 researchers focused on energy in 10 work areas. The area of Natural Resources of CIRCE works on the assessment of resources such as biomass, water and residual energy flows, from the technical-economical and environmental point of view, as well as in the efficient and sustainable use of these resources. As for water, the following capabilities:

- ✓Water energy integration: optimization of the joint management of energy and water production to minimize the consumption of both resources. Optimization of dual plants and polygeneration schemes. Integration of renewable energies.
- ✓Industrial ecology and exergetic analysis of water resources. Improvement of energy behaviour and environmental sustainability of energy-intensive industry processes.

EUPLA

Technical College of engineering degree, including Civil Engineering with specialism in Civil constructions and Hydrology. EUPLA develops its activity in the fields of hydraulics, hydrology and environmental engineering.

ITA

The technological Institute of Aragón (ITA) is a public Technology Center with the mission of helping companies, technology leaders, our institutions and our society at large to boost a new future hand in hand with innovation and technological development. ITA has the following Technical Divisions:

- ✓Industrial Systems
- ✓Materials and Components
- ✓Logistics
- ✓Multimedia Tech
- ✓Technological qualification and training
- ✓Laboratories





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4. SMAGUA 2014

During last March 2014 4th-7th, a new edition of SMAGUA, the international water and irrigation fair of Aragon took place. SMAGUA 2014 has been the most international of all with 32.000 visitors and 754 exhibitors from 26 countries. 215 delegations from 29 countries have participated in this fair. SMAGUA 2014 hosted also an Iberoamerican Forum, having presentations from Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, República Dominicana, Argentina, Ecuador, Perú y Brasil.

ZINNAE and Ea Ecoentreprises participated in SMAGUA 2014 and had a strong presence through different activities.

- Europe Entreprise Network Matchmaking Event.
- ZINNAE Stand
- [ZINNAE Workshop \(07/03/2014\). Innovative solutions for water efficiency in urban areas.](#)



Do not miss our pictures
selection of SMAGUA 2014

Pictures of WE@EU in
SMAGUA 2014





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4. SMAGUA 2014 – ZINNAE Workshop review

[ZINNAE Workshop \(07/03/2014\). Innovative solutions for water efficiency in urban areas.](#)

The meeting aimed to gather business entities, research centers and government sector with interest in an open dialogue for mutual understanding and identifying opportunities for innovation in the water sector in urban areas.

Moreover, the specific objectives of the meeting were:

- ✓To present innovative initiatives of aragonese business entities
- ✓To facilitate a meeting point of innovative agents representing the triple helix
- ✓To present the opportunities for innovation through public procurement

This meeting was based in an innovative methodology that consisted on giving the speakers only 3-6 minutes for explaining their offer or demand of innovation in water-related products or services in urban areas. A great success! Some results of the meeting have been:

- ✓65 attendees from triple helix
- ✓Public presentation of the preliminary results of innovation data of [WE@EU-Region of Aragon](#).
- ✓Public presentation of the Smart Specialization strategy draft of Aragon.
- ✓Public introduction of Public procurement opportunities in H2020 and Water PiPP project.
- ✓Seven presentations of water innovation demands from public administrations.
- ✓Seven presentations of water innovation offers from business entities.





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5. INNOVATIVE SME INTERVIEW Grupo Verne (I)

Grupo Verne is a spanish SME that creates specific applications for remote control solutions and measurement in the agricultural and livestock sector. TRD Microturbine is specifically designed for the charge of batteries using water pressured lines. We have interviewed Marta Gracia, Grupo Verne CEO.



Why is Grupo Verne an innovative SME?

Innovation is written into our DNA. All our activities are based on innovation, and more specifically, applying innovative technological solutions to activities in agriculture and irrigation. In this sector, technological solutions offer the greatest improvements for our clients, especially when done using existing technology adapted to the specific needs of the sector. Recently an irrigation community manager told us that with our automations they have reduced their water usage by up to 20%. In any organization this volume of water is very significant both from economic and environmental point of view.

Why is Grupo Verne participating in a cluster? Do you already collaborate with R&D&I entities in new projects/products development?

Participating in cluster associations for SMEs and micro-SMEs is fundamental as it provides interesting support for us. It opens up a group of contacts from business and public entities that would be outside our network otherwise. It offers infrastructure to reach projects and economic support for project development in a coordinated way. Participating in an umbrella organization definitely increases our visibility and provides an extra support for our presence in the market. For an SME, business collaboration is more interesting than competition. When you compete against everyone you have very low possibilities of success, whereas collaboration between businesses and people breaks barriers. Cluster participation allows us to collaborate in many ways; coordinating supplies; developing new products, facilitating internationalization. We usually develop our products by collaborating with R&D&I entities or with other business.





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5. INNOVATIVE SME INTERVIEW Grupo Verne (II)

Do you participate in any European innovation Projects? If not, are you interested? What does an SME need to be innovative?

We do not currently participate in European innovation projects as they usually have huge dimensions that are outside our possibilities as a micro-SME. However, through ZINNAE we are more open to participate. SMEs have some important advantages for innovation; they are very flexible, dynamic and have quick responses, they know the client needs and information is not lost in the middle or between different departments. They can also tackle market gaps that are not interesting for big companies but are profitable for a specialized SME. However, there are also disadvantages. Innovation requires economic and human resources and although it often generates results quickly, it is expensive in the short term. and there is always extra time needed for testing and validation. That is why public innovation funding through subsidies is not always useful, as organisations are obliged to spend the money upfront, before payment has been made. These funds are designed to support larger companies as the application systems and administration is complex. If innovation support is not guided, day by day supervision can be overwhelming for an SME because of reduced staff numbers,. this is why collaboration with other business entities especially amongst SMEs is key. the essential information for innovation is to know the client needs and understand how to give them a practical solution. It is important that SMEs understand that you cannot know everything or cover all disciplines, and it is very useful to be aware of your own size and not be afraid of collaboration.





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5. INNOVATIVE SME INTERVIEW Grupo Verne (II)

Have you heard of the WE@EU project? What do you expect from ZINNAE's participation in WE@EU?

Yes of course and we consider WE@EU very interesting. If we were not participating in ZINNAE, we could never have access to this kind of projects.. We expect that this project will support us in presenting our innovations in other European countries. We believe that although we speak different languages, water and energy behave the same way everywhere. I am sure our work will be interesting elsewhere the same way we need to know the specific needs for water and energy efficiency in other regions and how this needs are being satisfied.

TRD Microturbine is specifically designed for the charge of batteries using water pressured lines.

More information and contact:

<http://www.grupoverne.com/en>

Tel: +34 976 812 982

Email: info@grupoverne.com





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6. Upcoming Water events

WE@EU recommends not missing:

April 1st-3rd, “Sustainability Live” in Birmingham, UK

Energy efficiency, energy recovery, and water and waste water management . WE@EU will be there!

May, 20th, Business Resource Efficiency Conference, hosted by **Renewables East in Peterborough** in partnership with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Greater Cambridge/Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership.

The conference aims to share the key resource efficiency messages around energy, water, waste materials and environmental management to around 150 businesses from the East of England. WE@EU will be there!

May, 21-22, 4th edition of the “HydroGaïa” trade fair in Hydrogaia, Montpellier, France

Hydrogaia exhibition, an annual meeting in the south of France with water sector professionals with exhibitors, innovations and B2B. WE@EU will be there!

June, 3rd-5th, “Green Week”, Brussels by European Commission

The annual meeting for environmental community of Europe. Can't miss it!

June, 25th-26th, “Water Innovation Europe”, in Brussels, by WssTP.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Technology Platform organizes this annual meeting of the most innovative actors of the water community in Europe. WE@EU will be there!





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1 News

More information:

info@weateu.eu

<http://www.weateu.eu>



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