

— Reduce —



**RE
DUCE**

Loop project - National research
INTERVIEWS: Entry # 42



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DEMETRIS THEOTIS

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Authorized by Demetris Theotis,
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Demetris Theotis

holds a BSc degree in Environmental Health from Middlesex University and a Diploma for Public Health Inspectors from the Royal Society of Health, after receiving the first training bases at the Limassol Technical School. He currently (as of 2013) serves as the Head of Public Health Services of Limassol Municipality and previously he served the Municipality as a Public Health Inspector / Senior Public Health Inspector from 1983.

Over these years he gained extensive experience, skills and knowledge in all public health and environmental matters and legislation. Furthermore, he has considerable experience in EU funded projects and seminars on subjects relating to the Environment, Energy Saving and Climate change.

REDUCING also means wasting less: tell us how you approached this topic both economically and culturally.

As it is known, Cyprus is one of the countries with the largest waste production in Europe, with more than 600 kg per person, of which more than 80% are driven to dump landfills. Limassol, the largest municipality in Cyprus with a total population of around 230,000, has always prioritized the proper management of its waste, always keeping in mind the three principles: Reduce - Reuse - Recycle.



Limassol municipality seal -<https://www.limassolmunicipal.com.cy/en/home>



Recycling bins used for the implementation european project "Benefit As you Save – BAS"
<https://www.limassolmunicipal.com.cy/uploads/Latest-News-Media/md/3181f3f59c.jpeg>

We reduce waste production by making smart purchases, we reuse or give for reuse anything that can be reused and we recycle our packaging, our old electrical and electronic appliances and our batteries by participating in the programs offered by our Cyprus Green Dot Non-profit Organizations, Electrocyling and AFIS.

As recycling is one way to reduce waste, at the end of 2007, Limassol, like the other Regional Municipalities, contracted with Green Dot Cyprus, a non-profit organization set up on the initiative of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry, about a year earlier.

The Republic of Cyprus, incorporated the European Parliament Decision and Council Directive 94/62 / EC of 20 December 1994 on packaging and packaging waste. In the early stages of implementing the recycling program, in cooperation with Green Dot Cyprus, a large number of containers were installed in apartment buildings. PMD (Plastic – Metal – Drink Cartons), were misused by the citizens, resulting in the materials being collected being rendered useless.



https://www.loop-erasmus.eu/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/1-17d8863d906bd651e098a494a42c9bf5/2021/10/4.-Presentation-of-Reduce.jpg

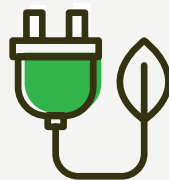
The main reason, as mentioned above, was the lack of a culture for protecting the environment by saving natural resources. The Municipality and the Cyprus Green Dot Organization have focused their attention on information, and especially on informing young children in elementary and kindergarten, in order to raise awareness and cultivate a culture of saving natural resources.

Regarding the infrastructure that the Municipality will need to implement the legislation on proper waste management, it is in the final stages of approving its application for almost a € 2 million project to be financed from non-municipal funds available from the NSRF Fund (National Strategic Reference Program). This program provides for the purchase and installation at designated points of coastal front and city center, a sufficient number of submersible, semi-submersible, compressors and bailer compressors to collect PMD, glass, paper, organic waste (food waste) and mixed waste.



At the same time, the Municipality participates in European Programs which aim at promoting recycling. The first, called BAS (Benefits As You Save), will give to 250 households the bins to sort out all the recyclables, and will be counted until we have the least amount to be transported to the “Pentakomo” unit.

The program is a pilot and its main aim is to stimulate citizens’ participation to the recycle process as well as the encouragement of citizens, businesses and institutions, to participate actively through the application of incentive systems. This initiative has a 140.000 euros European Regional Development Fund. This programme gives citizens some ‘Benefits’ like a reduction of annual cleaning tax by up to 20%, free admission to Municipal Parking Places for a limited time, create or upgrade a park in the area if the goals are met, free tickets for the Limassol Zoo for a specific period of time, free admission to various events organized by the Municipality like the Wine Festival, the Grand Ballet and so on, honorary plaque on the 3 best houses according to the results and posting them on a special signboard and free recycling bags.



WHAT THE REDUCTION INVOLVES

in your activity: give us concrete examples.

Today, in the Municipality of Limassol, although the collection system, as mentioned, is door-to-door, apart from the collection of glass containing bins, the following number of bins is installed: 30 Paper Collection Bins, 315 PMD (Plastic – Metal – Drink Cartons) Collection Bins, 127 Glass Collection Bins.

In addition to the above streams, as I have already mentioned, our Municipality cooperates with AFIS and ELECTROCYCLING for the recycling of batteries and electrical and electronic equipment, respectively. There is a gradual rise in these two currents. Specifically, a large number of AFIS bin batteries have been installed, as well as large containers for collecting electrical and electronic devices.



Snapshot of the interview with Demetris.
Authorized

As part of the effort to reduce waste, the Municipality implemented a pilot program of household composting, where 100 bins were allocated to municipal houses. The first results are encouraging and the Municipality looks forward to its expansion in more houses all over Limassol. Similar programs on green waste management are expected to be implemented in the future.

Also, the Municipality of Limassol participates in the Autonomous Composting Units for Urban Areas (ACUA) program headed by the Technological Educational Institution (TEI) of Crete. The objective of the ACUA is to develop, within the urban fabric and focusing on the block of flats or a small number of blocks of flats or on any area of urban interest, a system for the collection and processing of the bio-waste produced (partial and/or total) in the same area, without of course creating any nuisance. At the heart of these actions are Autonomous Composting Units (ACUs) which are systems that are the spearhead of composting technology and result in minimise waste.



Photo of reduce team with Demetris Theotis. Authorized by Chrystallo Domazou

Finally, we start reducing by making smart purchases within our municipality. For example, we use recycled paper to extend its life cycle, we have installed filters on public fountains to encourage citizens to avoid the purchase of plastic bottles.

We have applied the new law from the 1st July 2021 for no use or sale of plastic objects. We, also, have smart lights to reduce electricity and have changed the traffic lights to LCD ones.

We have many 'purple bins' for fabric recycling where people can bring clothes they do not need and donate them to other families. We do the same with furniture that our citizens donate, we fix and give to other families. After all, it is not surprising that Limassol was awarded as 'Green City' in 2019. All these are concrete examples of our waste management policy as a Municipality.



Recycling bins used for the implementation of european project "Benefit As you Save - BAS". Authorized

DID your choice also involve raising awareness among collaborators, or the supply chain? Tell us how you handled these instances.

It has been found from recent experience that in order to increase the percentage of recyclables, Municipalities need to move on two very important directions: First, the continuous and sustained public information and awareness raising is extremely important.

To this end, campaigns will continue from time to time to disseminate information in homes and business premises, with visits to schools and media promotion. At the initiative of the six Limassol Municipalities and with the cooperation of Green Dot Cyprus, an Environmental and Recycling Festival was held.





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The Municipality was praised for its success. Informative leaflets were distributed and different kiosks were placed where people could see and discuss the issues of reducing, recycling and even composting at home. Kids had the opportunity to play games and learn about these environmental issues at the same time. They could even take photos with the “Green Dot” mascot. This event along with others help to cultivate a culture for a clean city.

Secondly, in addition to the obligations of the Municipalities and their Services, with the contribution of Cyprus Green Dot, every citizen should finally have their own responsibility. Finally, in addition to the European legislation that has been incorporated into national law, Municipalities are in the process of adopting Regulations that make recycling compulsory. With this development, Municipalities will now be able to enforce reducing waste by systematically policing and imposing fines on those who have proven not responsible in reducing their waste.



Discussion of the “Reduce team” with Head of Health Services in Limassol Municipality. Authorized



Waste management- Instructions to citizens. Authorized

In Limassol after a study which was conducted during 2011 – 2012, they found that the waste collected was: organic 37,2%, paper 17,5%, plastic 14,7%, metal 3,6%, glass 3,4%, tetrapak 1,1%, others (leaves, fabric, etc.): 10,8%. Also, during the last four years, we can see an increase in the quantity (in kilos) of recycled waste collected: PMD from 11,19% to 15,77%, paper from 16,33% to 16,98%, glass from 5,53% to 8,04%. Currently, in Limassol there are 30 bins for paper, 315 bins for PMD and 127 bins for glass.



Advertising campaign to encourage citizens to actively participate in the process of separate selection
<https://www.facebook.com/lemesosofficialpage/photos/2812769092291775TK>

Of course, all our employees undergo training and attend seminars to keep them up-to-date with current trends on the issue of sustainability.

Raising awareness among our staff on a regular basis, is important to make sure they understand their required role.

To finish off, I would like to emphasize the municipality's goals. We want to gradually change people's attitudes towards a cleaner way of living. We desire our city to be seen as a role model for other cities which only be achieved with the involvement of all citizens.

RE
DUCE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the so-called “circular economy”?

A	B	C
30	10	10

2. Do you believe that a more sustainable economic system can be equally productive than the current one?

A	B	C
12	28	10

3. Which of these consumer choices have you decided to implement in the last 10 years to protect the environment?

A	B	C
18	17	15

4. How will the so-called “circular economy” affect the job market?

A	B	C
6	36	8

5. In your work, how many strategic choices related to sustainability have been made in the last 10 years?

A	B	C
18	22	10

6. Which of these 4 “Rs” is more important to ensure a better future for humanity?

A	B	C	D
14	9	17	10

7. Which of these 4 “Rs” is most present in your family’s daily life?

A	B	C	D
7	8	29	6

8. In your opinion, what link is there between technology and the “circular economy”?

A	B	C
36	9	5

9. Do you think we will be able to change the way we consume so as not to affect the environment and its limited resources?

A	B	C
6	40	4

10. Are you familiar with the UN 2030 Agenda or have you ever heard of SDGs?

A	B	C
30	6	14

QUESTIONNAIRE

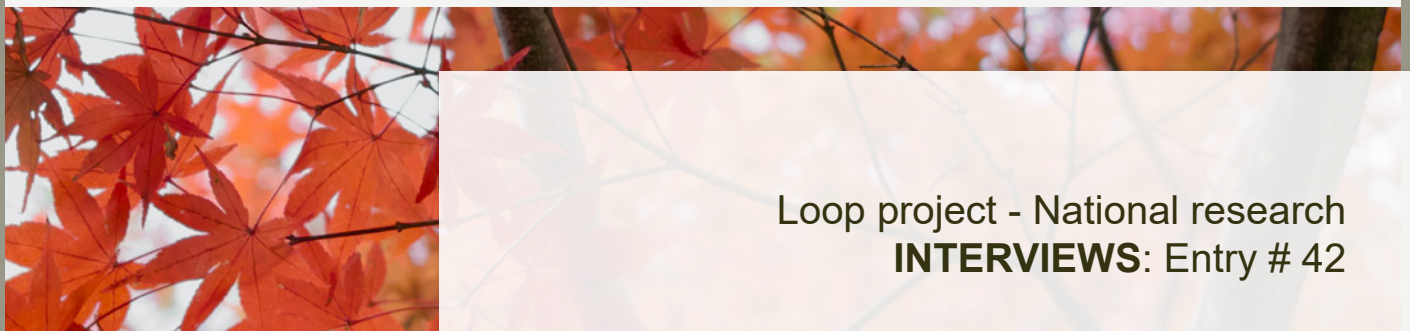
QUESTIONNAIRE

11. Do you think that the economy in the past was more sustainable than it is today?

A	B	C
26	14	10

12. Which of these 3 statements do you consider the most true and important?

A	B	C
10	37	3



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