



## ECOEMPRESAS – Eco-efficiency in Industry

### EDV ENERGIA – Agência de Energia do Entre o Douro e Vouga, Portugal

#### Summary



This project is a regional, medium term program, which aims to promote and implement best practices of eco-efficiency in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It is a joint effort of the energy agencies of the Entre Douro e Vouga (EDV) Region - EDV ENERGIA and of the city of Vila Nova de Gaia – ENERGAIA, with the Business Council of EDV and the Trading and Industrial Association of Vila Nova de Gaia. The target audiences are the SMEs of this territory, estimated in about 10.000. The project combines a set of different activities, outlined by 3 main areas: consultancy, professional education and dissemination and awareness. These activities are financially supported either by the beneficiaries, the promoters or by means of other funds.

#### End-user area

- New buildings
- Refurbishment of buildings
- Transport and mobility
- Financial instruments
- Industry
- Legal initiatives (regulations, directives, etc)
- Planning issues
- Sustainable communities
- User behaviour
- Education
- Other

#### Target Audience

- Citizens
- Households
- Property owners
- Schools and universities
- Decision makers
- Local and regional authorities
- Transport companies
- Utilities
- ESCOs
- Architects and engineers
- Financial institutions
- Other: Industry

#### Technical

- Energy efficiency
- Heating
- Cooling
- Appliances
- Lighting
- CHP
- District Heating
- Solar energy
- Biomass
- Wind
- Geothermal
- Hydro power
- Other:Eco-efficiency

#### Context

The region of EDV and Vila Nova de Gaia is located in the Northwest of Portugal delimited by the rivers Douro and Vouga. Industry and services activity sectors play a major role in the development of the local economy but its analysis and characterization pointed out the gap in terms of effective promotion and practices of eco-efficiency.

Protecting the environment, reducing waste of energy and promoting its rational use are urgent needs for the SMEs of the region, not only as a strategy towards eco-efficiency, but also, as a way of increasing competitiveness by differentiating products and the corporate image of those enterprises.

This project is, therefore, expected to be a driving for the local economy and a contribution for the environmental protection and for a better quality of life for all citizens. The partnership between energy agencies and business councils represent an integrated and organized commitment towards those objectives of the project.

#### Objectives

The main objective of this project is to transform the region into a reference model of eco-efficiency in Industry. This will be achieved through the promotion and implementation of best practices of eco-efficiency in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of the region.



## Process

The conception of this project is dated 2004, when the ideas were strengthened and the promoters were gathered. In March of 2005, the program was launched, with the subscription of a collaboration protocol between the 4 parties involved.

The activities are outlined according to 3 main areas of action: consultancy, professional education and dissemination and awareness.

Consultancy involves audits and a dedicated supporting contact line for program subscribers. Audits are carried out by a multidisciplinary team, embracing different subjects such as energy efficiency, waste, water or process management. With the collected data, improvement needs and opportunities are identified and an action plan is defined.

The program is promoting, jointly with national financial institutions, innovative financing schemes that will help enterprises to support the implementation of improvement actions.

The program has planned a set of technical education actions for SMEs managers and boards, aiming to improve their skills and to enhance the local labour market. These actions include modules and courses in eco-efficiency, as well as more specific thematic workshops and seminars. Collaboration with sector-based industry associations is expected.

Dissemination and awareness campaigns are being performed, in order to spread the program's message. A Web site was developed ([www.ecoempresas.org](http://www.ecoempresas.org)) and it is the engine that supports all the project activities communication. It divulges information on planned actions, promotes eco-efficiency concepts and tools, provides the way for subscribers to register in the program and to apply for workshops and seminars as well as to contact the promoters. The edition and publishing of leaflets and periodical brochures are also being developed.

With the data collected from the program, a data base will be created that will give the energy agencies privileged knowledge about the needs and resources used by enterprises, so that integrated solutions for the territory can be found, taking advantage of important economy of scale.

This is an "open" project, having therefore the flexibility to integrate at any time other actions that may be potentially of major value for the aim of the initiative.

## Financial resources and partners

The promoters of this partnership are the energy agencies of the Entre Douro e Vouga (EDV) Region - EDV ENERGIA and of the city of Vila Nova de Gaia – ENERGAIA, with the Business Council of EDV (CEDV) and the Trading and Industrial Association of Vila Nova de Gaia (ACIGAIA). The formers are in charge for executing the activities and the latter for assuring the financial means and the promotion of the project.

The program activities are financed either by its beneficiaries, the promoters or by means of other funds, such as sponsorships or innovative financial schemes. The annual budget was set on € 200.000.

## Results

The program was launched in March 2005, and a communication campaign has been performed since then. Eco-efficiency is a concept that is broadly spread and local enterprises and authorities have already shown their interest in collaborate actively in this project.

In June 2005, a Seminar in Industrial Eco-efficiency was organised. It took place in the foot-wear industry technological centre, in the region, with the presence of about 100 participants.

We expect to involve 56 SMEs in this program, from Sept. 2005 to Dec. 2006. We are working closely to local industrial associations and professional and technological educational centres, which are also associated to EDV ENERGIA, developing work methodologies and defining strategies.



## Lessons learned and repeatability

The most positive aspect achieved until now is the awareness of the local decision makers, authorities and business managers, to the importance of eco-efficiency practices in the sustainable development of the region.

The partnership between local decision makers and energy agencies, towards the common goal of transforming the region into an example of business-related eco-efficiency, is the main key to make of this program a successful initiative.

The acquired experience with similar actions states that beneficial savings, with this kind of initiatives, can be quite significant for enterprises, reaching about 10-40% of energy consumptions. Best practices can thus be implemented and new business opportunities may be expected, developing markets and increasing competitiveness.

This initiative can be implemented any elsewhere in Europe, once environmental protection and social responsibility are becoming decisive issues for enterprises competitiveness, in a global market.



### Contact for more information:

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