



Innovative Financial Instruments for industry low carbon energy transition in Central Europe

FIRECE project during Corona-Crisis:

The global Corona-Crisis affects everyone. The FIRECE Project is also influenced by the necessary measures set by several Governments. The project partners are facing enormous challenges to successfully implement the project goals.

Fraunhofer IMW & NEU e.V.:

Since beginning of March, the life in Germany is not as we know it so far. The first half of the month was full of suspense and speculations how the development of COVID-19 will affect Germany. The situation developed and is still developing so quickly and unpredictable that it happened the unbelievable - lockdown measures were introduced in whole Germany since middle of March.

This situation put the FIRECE partner in a very unusual situation. The preparation of the planned Steering and Technical Committee Meeting on 12th and 13th of March in Leipzig, Germany, had to be adapted very quickly. The partners took the decision to meet only online and to prevent any possibilities of infections among the project partners.

The further FIRECE activities on local level are also marked by COVID-19, meanwhile, labeled as pandemic. One of the scheduled local event to present some of the FIRECE results will be held most likely only online in form of a webinar. Another tool for transferring the project results and getting feedback from different stakeholders is the preparation of an online questionnaire, which should be spread among all the project partner countries in May and June.

Es spricht: Roberto Sandrini


Thema des Meetings: FIRECE Steering committee

Host: Forschung Burgenland GmbH

Passwort: 728100


Einladungs-URL: <https://zoom.us/j/483175750?pwd=eitXa3FGdUIQTEJYU0FZ...>
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Anderer einladen

Teilnehmer (16)

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STRIA:

The staff members of STRIA have been working from home since the middle of March. In the beginning there were difficulties, but after 1-2 weeks the daily working process started to be really smooth. We organize weekly online meetings for internal communication and for project meetings as well. We contracted with an external expert company in connection with the D.T2.4.7. Evaluation of PA1 addressed to Public Authorities and discussed all details via GoToMeeting. Beside this, we started to plan and organize our next local and national FIRECE dissemination meetings. We hope that by the end of the project we will be able to hold a personal dissemination meeting as well.

RDA ARLEG:

Pilot Action 2 “Improving energy efficiency in industry sector” has started. PA2 is addressed to entrepreneurs and is being implemented in five partner countries (Poland, Germany, Italy, Czech Republic and Austria). In order to check the effectiveness of the IT tool developed by Enviros in the frame of WPT1, each partner will use the tool to assess 8 investments made by SMEs on Energy Efficiency / RES funded with relevant energy saving funds.

ARLEG as a Task Leader of this activity has engaged an external expert company to prepare Pilot Evaluation Report and has involved entrepreneurs and Regional Authorities, including Lower Silesia Intermediate Body in order to collect the necessary data on energy efficiency projects implemented by SMEs under Regional Operational Programme.

Despite the national restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impossibility of personal contact with clients, the pilot activities in the project are carried out on an ongoing basis, and thanks to the previously established cooperation with stakeholders, the necessary data and information to test the tool and analyse the projects implemented by SMEs can take place online with use of technology for remote communication.

IRENA:

In the previous period, IRENA focused its activity on the finalisation of the Ex-Ante assessment and the feasibility study of the Innovative financial instrument that will be implemented in the next programming period in the Istrian County in Croatia. Due to the Corona Crisis, the fine-tuning of the documents and last adaptations were coordinated online, were Managing Authority of the Operational Programme, Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds and the Istrian County have shown maximum cooperation so that the final result is aligned with the FIRECE objectives and that this work will give us excellent results during its implementation phase.





Lubelskie Voivodeship:

In March 2020, remote consultations on the Ex-Ante report were completed. Lubelskie Voivodeship took part in the online meeting of the Steering Committee of the FIRECE project on 18.03.2020. Part of the meeting concerned the possibility of conducting planned workshops and public events in the project in an online form in connection with the threats and limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be particularly important in activities aimed at transferring and disseminating the project results developed.

In April 2020, Lubelskie Voivodeship prepared (as part of remote work) the document "Transferability plan" (WP T2: A.T2.6.1), which was sent for consultation of the project Leader and FIRECE project Partners. Work on the document was carried out remotely. Employees of the European Territorial Community Department and the RES Department consulted the progress of work on the document during Skype meetings.

PP8 also took an active part in online consulting the document FIRECE_Draft_Questionnaire_PA1, adding a set of own questions to the questionnaire. LV has developed questions regarding financial instruments targeted at SMEs and micro-enterprises.

Enviros:

Although the Czech Republic has not been affected by the coronavirus as heavily as many other countries (including those of the project partners), several restrictions has been put in place. The state of emergency was declared on 12th March - the same day when the project meeting in Leipzig was originally planned to start.

The adopted measures included the closure of many establishments and service providers, restrictions on movement, and recommendations to minimize travelling. Most of ENVIROS employees have stayed at home since that time working remotely and meeting together only in a virtual world.

However, the activities of FIRECE project have to go on. The most important task at the moment is implementation of the pilot activities. Possibilities of meeting financial mechanisms operators and other experts are limited to teleconferences, company visits cannot be realized. Fortunately, ENVIROS has enough data and information to describe the pilot cases and apply the tools developed within the project.

Nevertheless, we all look forward to meeting together again and enjoy face-to-face communication as well as social activities.



FB:

Since March Austria and many other countries have been in lockdown due to the Corona Pandemic. This crisis has caused us to change the way we work. It started with the change of our workplace. Instead of working from the company, we work from home now. Since then, meetings have been arranged online instead of in person, like our partner meeting in early March. But even though we were initially skeptical, it turned out that this form of communication works well.

The elaboration of our deliverables has gone without problems so far. We completed the report from PA1 and are now in the process of preparing 8 projects for PA2. In WPC we are working out the infographic set, which will summarise main FIRECE achievements from PA1 & PA2. We also started to develop the digital policy brief and the video pills. However, workshops and seminars will be a challenge. We look forward to achieve all project goals despite the Corona crisis.

**Emilia Romagna Region:**

During this first quarter of 2020, project activities saw the unforeseen emergently lockdown, asking to all of us to re-think our daily work and creativity, together with ICT tools did the rest!

FIRECE has gone further: Emilia -Romagna Region has indeed developed and completed an important deliverable such as the study for the Ex-Ante assessment analysis, deployed in time and shared within the partnership and within the Regional personnel.

The purpose of this study is to understand how the previous Financial Instrument worked and to further improve it, integrating innovative tools emerging from FIRECE partnership, studies and analysis carried out , such as private funding through Lending Crowdfunding and ESCos involvement through Energy Performance Contracts, to make the future Financial Instruments as complete and inclusive as possible.

What is in our agenda for the coming months: Emilia - Romagna Region has planned some meeting to deliver FIRECE results and in order to be sure to meet the objectives...a “contingency” plan is ready ...so in case the emergency will keep all of us safe indoor...FIRECE will not stop and online meetings will take place!

Stay tuned and follow us!