



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

Ongoing Activities:

Lubelskie Voivodeship:

In recent months, the Lubelskie Voivodeship, as the leader of Activity 2.6 Transferability and sustainability, has completed works on creation of the "Transferability plan" document (WP T2: A.T2.6.1). The document describes the ways and possibilities of transferring knowledge and effects developed within the FIRECE project.

At the moment, together with all Partners, we are working on a preliminary analysis of possibilities of implementing further tasks. Due to existing restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we will have to face many challenges in organizing of events summarizing and disseminating the effects of the project. Some tasks are planned to be implemented remotely, using online tools, and some will hopefully be implemented traditionally in form of direct meetings.

Looking for the best opportunities to reach the widest possible number of potentially interested parties, the Lubelskie Voivodeship plans to present the effects of the FIRECE project during the next edition of the Lublin Science Festival, which this year will be exceptionally held online as Virtual Science Days on 22-24 September 2020. It is an opportunity to reach the most active, innovative and opinion-forming representatives of the world of science and higher education, employees of the education and pedagogical supervision system, teachers of various types of schools, principals and school leaders, as well as a whole host of science enthusiasts. The second planned activity towards sustainability of the project effects is publication of an ex-ante analysis report and its placement in the university library network in Polish and English versions.

STRIA:

STRIA, as coordinator of the WPT2 collected the Innovative Financial Instruments (IFI) elaborated by the project partners in the previous period and since the beginning of May started to work together with external expert SAMAS Ltd. on the Evaluation of Pilot Action 1 addressed to Public Authorities.

The first draft version of the document will be ready until the end of July. For the easier dissemination and communication of the IFIs, involved project partners are shooting short video pills. You can watch the Hungarian video on the following link: <https://youtu.be/EkAXE3BsEno>

Because of the COVID-19, STRIA organizes all meetings online. We plan two meetings during the summer, one Local workshop in July and one in August.





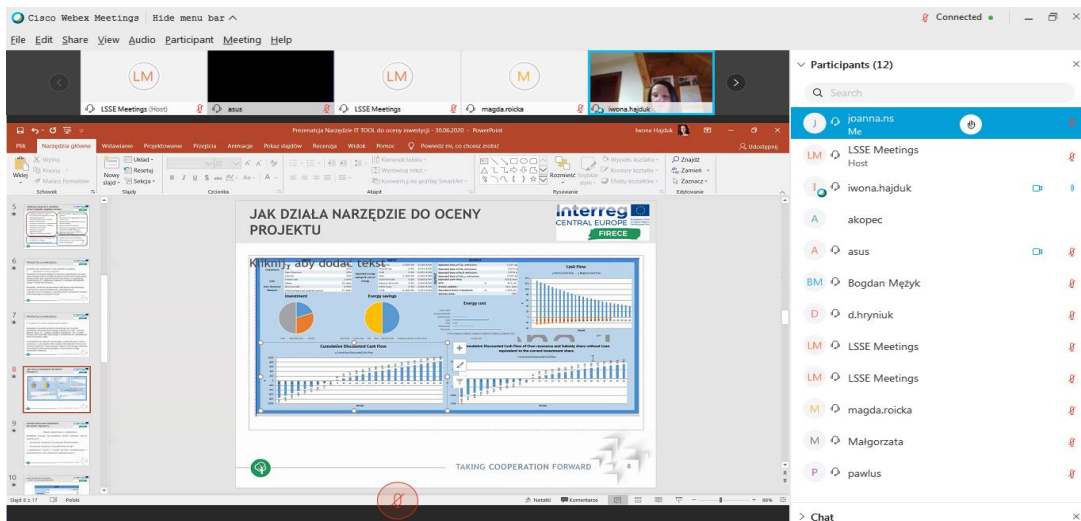
IRENA:

IRENA staff members in the last period have focused their activities on the fine-tuning and adaptation of the Ex-Ante assessment analysis for the implementation of innovative financial instruments in Croatia in the programming period 2021-2027. Together with the Managing Authority of the Operational Programme, Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds and the Istrian County as the target area for the implementation of the IFI, the aim of the work was to adapt the proposed financing model to the framework of the next Operational Programme and also to align it with the “Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan for the Republic of Croatia in the period 2021-2030” and with the “Energy Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 with an outlook to 2050”. Other activities related to the WP T2 were related to the preparation of the transferability and sustainability actions that will be conducted in the last three months of the project. Actions will consist mainly of organizing workshops where staff members will disseminate the outcomes of the project and also motivate representatives of local, regional authorities and financial intermediaries to use the FIRECE outputs to enhance investments in EE and RES to achieve planned targets set in the energy plans.

RDA ARLEG:

Since the project is coming to an end and in order to disseminate its results and outputs, among others the tool developed in the project, RDA ARLEG organized on 30th June 2020 local thematic workshop for public actors (regional authorities and financial intermediaries, business organization) and private actor (SMEs). In view of the ongoing restrictions on the organization of meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was organized in a form of webinar (as video transmission). The aim of the event was to introduce Financial Instruments to support SMEs investments in energy efficiency and to present the Tool to assess public investments to support Industry’s low-carbon transition. The participants of the webinar potentially interested in using the tool, had the opportunity to see how the Tool works and to ask questions in the form of a chat or live conversation.

The testing phase of the project level tool is currently in progress in 5 partner countries, and after its completion, the RDA ARLEG will develop an evaluation report to check the user-friendliness of the tool implemented.

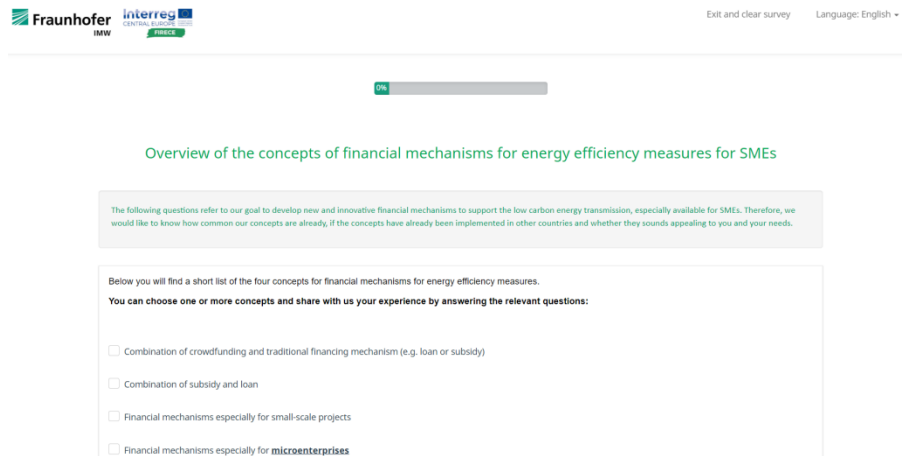




Fraunhofer IMW & NEU e.V.:

The past few months have been characterized by finding new solutions for the implementation of the project goals. As physical meetings aren't feasible yet, the dissemination of projects results and gathering feedback from their beneficiaries was transformed into online available formats. IMW coordinated and developed with the help of the project partners an online questionnaire for SMEs, financial institutions and other institutions related to the energy efficiency and renewable energy sector. The goal of the questionnaire was to collect feedback on all developed innovative financial instruments of FIRECE and about the transferability of the FIRECE project in general. Therefore, the survey was translated into all six project partner languages and English and spread within the project partner countries. It was able to collect of in total 123 responses (see table below) until End of June 2020. Additionally, IMW contributed to the digital policy brief by giving a short introduction of its developed innovative financial instrument.

Questionnaire in ...	Amount
English	3
German	18
Italian	14
Croatian	18
Polish	40
Czech	11
Hungarian	19
Total	123



The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic also severely affected the continuation of implementing Pilot Action 2 of NEU e.V. as SMEs are economically struggling and not prioritizing measures in renewable energies and energy efficiency in the last months. NEU e.V. was therefore looking for alternative ways to support the project goals and to gather data of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures and their related financial instruments. It was able to establish contact with the regional energy agency of SAENA. The agency is accompanying SMEs in implementing energy efficiency measures and is using similar tools in order to calculate energy savings and financial contributions. NEU e.V. was able to receive data sets of energy efficiency projects implemented between 2014-2018, which will now be analyzed.

At last, both partners are working on the implementation of the transferability plan in the region to prepare suitable and feasible events as well as the above-mentioned materials.



Enviros:

In the Czech Republic, the implementation of FIRECE pilot actions is in progress. Within the Testing and evaluation of the tool and methodology to assess industrial sector energy-related projects (pilot action 2), eight projects implemented in SMEs are evaluated.

Half of the projects represent installation of renewable energy sources in particular roof photovoltaic power plants, in two cases combined with a storage battery system and a charging station for electric vehicles. Two projects focus on increasing the energy efficiency of a heating system (biomass boiler, modernization of a distribution system for heat and hot water), while the remaining two consist of a wider set of energy saving measures, such as building envelop insulation, replacement of doors and windows, installation of LED lighting, and modernization of technology.

The projects were funded from ERDF Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation for Competitiveness (OP EIC), and most of them were implemented by various manufacturing enterprises, which are typical organizations applying for funding from OP EIC. However, there are examples of projects realized also by a heating plant, a construction company, and a logistics park.

The technical solutions have already been implemented and financing has been finished. As OP EIC offered only funding via subsidies, no financial instruments were applied. Therefore, the aim of the pilot action is to simulate the situation with a use of financial instruments (in particular soft loans) and calculate how it could change the project economic performance in terms of cash flow, payback period, and other indicators.



CCIA DL:

The Chamber of Commerce of Venezia-Rovigo is testing the SMEs investment assessment tool considering a bunch of those projects funded with the Innovative Revolving fund established by Veneto Region using ERDF funds (2013-2020). The Innovative Fund, managed by Veneto Sviluppo, the financial agency of Veneto Region, supported more than 230 projects with an innovative fund combining grant & loans. CCIAA DL is in contact with VENETO SVILUPPO and the Energy department of Veneto Region to discuss which projects should be selected and how to monitor their performances considering the indicators required by the tool. The tool, particularly has been adapted including indicators coming from different Italian sources. During following weeks, the assessment of the projects will be finalized and the report will include some consideration enlarged to the whole Fund. One expert hired by the Chamber of Commerce - Eng. Pesavento - is coordinating the whole process with the support of CCIAA DL team.



Forschung Burgenland:

In PA 2, 8 pilot projects were used, including three SMEs, one private project, three municipalities and one large-scale project. The data for the tool was broken down project by project - the inputs have been investment costs, the share of subsidies and measures, which were improved to renewable energy. Among the 20 measures the following have been implemented into the pilot projects:

Solar: Installation of a PV system, a solar thermal system and Installation of a heat pump

Energy efficiency: Replacing the illumination on LED, buildings insulation, waste heat utilization and Change of technological processes like replacement of compressors

In WP C we developed an infographic set, in order to summarize main FIRECE achievements from PA1 & PA2. We have also produced a video, which illustrates the development of an IFI in Burgenland and its implementation. Furthermore, Forschung Burgenland organized a local coffee workshop on 23rd of June with stakeholders of Landesholding Burgenland and experts of IFIs from Forschung Burgenland. Due to COVID-19 restriction the workshop was arranged as a direct meeting and a video conference. On 9th of July a local Seminar was organized in Oberwart with mayors from the Region Südburgenland. All the stakeholders were informed about the IFIs Tool, which was developed within the framework of the FIRECE project. The future plan is now to insert and use the Tool in Burgenlands regional government.



Emilia Romagna Region:

In the view of good results achieved thanks to the fruitful cooperation with FIRECE partnership, now it comes the right time to start an intense communication campaign, getting over COVID-19 restrictions.

September will be a strategic month and the 1st event (D.C.5.1 “Local seminars to promote FIRECE Plan and the training contents”) addressed to Public operators will present the FIRECE action plan and the training modules to support the low-carbon transition of Industry through public funds. 8th of September from 10.00am to 12.00am Online.

The same day, but in a noon session targeted to Industry, both Enterprises and SMEs, a “Local coffee workshops” (D.C.5.2) will take place from 04.30pm to 06.30pm Online to present (Innovative) Financial Instruments to improve the Regional Energy Plans and to better support the Industry investments in EE measures and to assess the effectiveness of public funds in reaching EE targets.

Last but not least, the 10th of September 2020, from 10.00am to 12.30pm a “Final Event”-Regional edition (D.C.4.2) involving Emilia Romagna and Veneto Regions, will take place Online with the aim to involve all key regional stakeholders, both public and private, to present the FIRECE Guidelines to set up Innovative Financial Instruments and to present key results achieved to discuss, compare and plan future actions to strengthen EE measures implementation and possible joint projects to follow-up FIRECE results.