

CEE Climate Policy Frontier

First regional stakeholder workshop in Warsaw

Workshop brief

Date: Monday, 1 July 2019, 9.30 – 16.30

Location: Centrum Zielna, Zielna 37 Street, 00-108 Warsaw

Presentations from the workshop are available for download on the project webpage: <http://wise-europa.eu/en/2019/08/12/cee-climate-policy-frontier-summary-of-the-regional-stakeholder-workshop-in-warsaw/>

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS BY WORKING GROUP

Transport

Working group on electromobility

- Customers are more open to electromobility if there are actual (e.g. availability of additional parking spots) or perceived incentives (e.g. related to the social status) in place.
- Already several of the CEE countries have introduced preferential terms for e-mobility users (e.g. waiving the vehicle registration tax for EVs and VAT-related subsidies in Hungary and subsidy program for supporting electric cars in Slovakia), while others (e.g. Poland) still are in the process of developing terms of financial support for electric cars.
- Increased import of old diesel cars resulting from growing regulatory pressure in Western European countries is the main risk for the timely development of electromobility in the CEE countries.
- It might be worth considering introducing the obligation of scrapping old cars in every clean vehicle subsidy programme across the EU, as well as launching low emission zones in the CEE cities.
- Stakeholder cooperation is one of the key elements needed to enhance the development of the electromobility strategy.

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Working group on sustainable transport modes

- Czech approach to providing public transport connections across the country combines two mechanisms which aim to improve the cost-efficiency of transport service provision through competition:
 - the public service obligation for unprofitable connections, which is co-funded from public funds, with the level of co-funding established based on a competition between service providers ready to meet the obligation,
 - a market-based approach to self-financing routes, which leads to price competition between transport companies.
- Despite implementation and coordination challenges, Czech experiences show that it is possible to establish integrated regional plans for public transport and integrate different transport modes (including a single ticket for rail and bus). The next step is improving the integration between the regions.
- Slovakia is another example of the potential for organisational innovations based on regional cooperation: three regions around Bratislava have a single integrated ticket, despite challenges to integrating municipal buses, regional intercity coaches, and national rail system.
- Fleet modernisation proceeds much faster than infrastructure investments in the whole region. The EU funds and initiatives (especially TEN-T) provide an important push in this context.
- Public transport usage in the CEE region is often supported by quasi-social policies, which may lead to inefficiencies in the transport system. For example, providing free tickets for railways for students and pensioners may lead to an artificial switch from buses to rail and overcrowding problems. Such system-level impacts should be taken into account when introducing public transport subsidies.
- In Poland, the issue of closing the gaps in transport network has become one of the important issues on the national political agenda. Experiences from the Czech Republic and Slovakia may be useful for introducing organisational and policy changes on the regional and national level.
- Overall, good practices point towards the importance of cooperation on the different governance level, gradual scaling up of cooperation, and designing the public transport support system in a way which promotes cost efficiency and quality improvements.

Buildings

Working group on energy efficiency in buildings

- Slovakia has managed to efficiently combine state various public financial instruments with other sources of thermal renovation financing, providing large-scale support and achieving a high pace of retrofit investments.

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- Comparison of efficiency standards across the countries shows that despite the common EU framework, specific indicators vary significantly between the countries. There is significant potential for closer cooperation, knowledge exchange and additional efforts to harmonise energy efficiency requirements in the CEE region.
- Even in countries with successful large-scale retrofit programmes such as Slovakia, it is still important to ensure forward-looking, long-term renovation strategy. Such an approach is necessary to avoid locking in investments in shallow retrofits.
- Ex post evaluation of energy efficiency impacts of retrofits remains a challenge across the CEE region. Such assessments are often based on theoretical calculations or inadequate certification systems. Addressing this common challenge of improving the efficiency of energy certificates use is another area of cooperation for the CEE countries.

Working group on clean heating sources in buildings

- Low administrative burden and various levels of support of programs for households and public buildings in the Czech Republic provides an example of a successful programme that facilitates deployment of the clean heating sources in buildings.
- In Poland, preferential loans and subsidies for the installation of solar collectors serve as an example of an effective subsidy system that can be transferred to support climate action in other sectors, e.g. mainstreaming of clean heating sources in buildings.
- Effectiveness and efficiency of subsidy systems depend on several factors that include:
 - the flexibility of the approach allowing for systematic refinement of assumption – needed to address any shortcomings of the process and adjust it to the demands of the market;
 - “one-stop-shop” design – ensuring the ease of access for consumers and simplifying the process to make it consumer-friendly;
 - the successful promotion of the program that would encourage the participation of not only citizens from large cities, but also smaller towns and rural communities;
 - engagement of third parties (banks), to support greater uptake and much quicker transition towards clean heating sources in buildings.

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