

POWER Newsletter 8 - October 2011



POWER is a €5.8m interregional programme aimed at driving Low Carbon Economies partly funded through INTERREG IVC in 7 European regions. Nine projects are funded under POWER.

POWER - empowering low carbon economies - 21 September 2011

As the POWER Programme draws to a close, 140 delegates assembled at a conference entitled POWER: empowering low carbon economies, to exchange ideas on their policy recommendations and best practices. Each of the regions produced Road Maps which are the inspiration and provide scenarios on how the sub projects' results can be embedded into regional strategies. Some of the regions are planning local events (see forthcoming regional events below) to take this work further.

Thank you to those of you who completed the feedback survey on the conference. Participants described the event as: *'enthusiastic'*, *'buzzing'*, *'energised'*, *'proud'*, *'useful for making new contacts'* and a *'beautiful experience'*.

Regional Events to disseminate the POWER Programme results



Aleksandr Popel, Project Manager at Tallinn City Government took part in a short interview with Janet Borgers, POWER Programme Manager on the Rohevik Festival and the continued promotion of POWER.

JB: Aleksandr, Estonia leads on sustainable transport for the POWER Programme. You recently staged your regional final event within the Rohevik Festival. Can you tell us a little bit about the activities which took place?

AP: Certainly, from 15 – 17 September the environmental festival Rohevik was staged in Tallinn and Tartu cities in Estonia. The festival looked at the kind of future that will be built on economical and environmentally friendly ways of life,

with a focus on electric cars. It also marked the 20th anniversary of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Estonia and our final regional event for the POWER Programme funded through INTERREG IVC.

The organisers were Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Estonia, Tallinn City Government, Environment Department, the Embassy of Finland in Tallinn, Tartu City Government, Estonian University of Life Sciences and Tartu Science Park.

JB: Did linking up with the festival achieve a wider profile for the POWER PROGRAMME or did the message get lost with so many different actors?

The First Energy Congress will present initial findings resulting from the Malopolska Regional Energy Plan. The session about regional energy safety will be combined with a debate among wider stakeholders – including municipalities, the private sector and key energy companies. The second part is a session presenting 5 POWER sub projects: TIMBER, SEECA, E-Mob, GENERATION and TraCit, followed by a discussion on their results.

Key note speakers are:

Marek Sowa, Marshal of the Małopolska Region

Malgorzata Nowaczek, Zaremba, Director of Energy Regulatory Office

Zbigniew Kamienski, Vice Director, Department of Economic Development, Ministry of Economy

Janet Borgers, POWER Programme Manager



To register: <http://www.maes.pl/kongres/index.html>

Reflections from Janet Borgers, POWER Programme Manager



It's hard to believe that it is now ten years ago that I first worked on a short assignment to promote videoconferencing as the low carbon solution to business travel. I then went on to manage the POWER programme, a programme looking at low carbon solutions, which now following our successful final event in Brussels, is drawing to a close. One of the objectives of the POWER programme was to minimise travel. Therefore, I would like to reflect on the question “how necessary is travel within an interregional partnership?”

POWER partners undertook a lot of travel however also made an effort to minimise it. Use of the CO2 calculator helped to raise awareness of the impact travel has on generating CO2 across the partnership. The tool used can be downloaded [here](#). Yet could we have further minimised our travel and did we do enough to change travel for the future?

Recently, one carbon permit, worth one tonne of emitted carbon dioxide, trades in the UK around at around £9 - £11 (Euros 10 – 12). Yet by 2050, physicists estimate the value will be between £630 to £1,260 (Euros 700 – 1,400). http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/emissions/eu_ets/eu_ets.aspx . With an uncertainty of 1 to 2, there is clearly a lot of ambiguity in the models of the world's ecosystems and economies in various climate change scenarios, but even looking at the best case scenario the increase in the value of one carbon permit over the next 40 years will be huge. I believe it is this fact that has motivated us all to work on the many projects that formed the POWER programme and to try to find some practical low carbon solutions for our regions.

We know that some of the most inspirational and innovative ideas aren't all created in “the meeting room” instead they can emerge whilst talking on the train, or informally chatting with colleagues on the coffee shop terrace. These wild ideas are then adapted and formalised in “the meeting room” to ensure all the partners are in agreement with the new idea or proposition. During the tens, maybe 100s of videoconferences and teleconferences I have taken part in over the last 10 years there has never been one which has allowed the time to chat more informally to enable new ideas or pragmatic solutions to respond to changing circumstances. Is that just because we are only able to create that innovative environment when face to face and not whilst in a videoconference or teleconference? I don't believe that is so. We currently have technology that allows us to break off into separate chat rooms to develop different ideas in smaller more informal groups, as well as high definition cameras, TVs and projectors which have vastly improved the “virtual environment” of videoconferencing. But unless the organiser purposely utilises these to create that innovative environment and pushes people to make time on the agenda that allows room for creativity, either separately from or over and above the usual list of project agenda items, it just doesn't happen. I don't believe we are restricted by technology, more that many of us stick doggedly with the format we are most accustomed to.

Whilst there is still work to be done on improving the manner in which we conduct teleconferences and videoconferences to reduce travel, I believe there will always be some need for face to face exchanges. So how can we reduce our carbon footprint whilst travelling? Will we be taking to Zeppelin NTs and hydrogen fuel cars? Will our managers be happy for us to take very long train journeys? Or will governments continue to subsidise and expand the airline industry and will our personal choice remain with the conventional car?

Perhaps there's just time left in the POWER Programme for a bit of experimentation. Did you 'tele-socialise' successfully with your project partners or were the best ideas created and implemented during your face to face meetings? Let us know your experience on the Policy Forum before it closes down. Many thanks to all those of you who signed up and contributed to the Policy Forum – please note the Policy Forum will be closed down at the end of November 2011 – so if there is anything you wish to keep, please download it beforehand! The POWER website will remain in the public domain until March 2017 with the final results of the sub projects.

The SQW final independent evaluation report will be available from mid November 2011 on the POWER Programme website: http://powerprogramme.eu/evaluation_report.php

We are delighted that Agata Wesolowska, Regional Correspondent from the Marshal's Office, will present POWER at the INTERREG IVC Good Practice Fair, on 24 November 2011, in Krakow.

All partners are extremely grateful to the team at the JTS, Lille for their support in helping us deliver the programme over the last couple of years

**For the policy recommendations and best practices and/or the Executive Summary please visit
The POWER Legacy Website
<http://www.powerprogramme.eu/>**

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