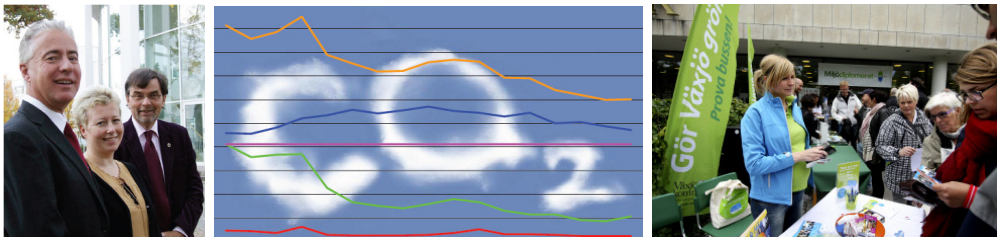




Concept of the Policy maker exchange

Learning from the Best



2 ½ day trip to Växjö (Sweden)

for mayors from EnercitEE regions

to learn on good practices and
to meet local politicians

Background

EnercitEE contributes to the improvement of local and regional policies and provides assistance in the transfer of knowledge on energy efficiency and sustainable transport. EnercitEE identifies and analyses good practices, fosters the exchange of experience and carries out light pilot implementations to increase the level of energy efficiency of local authorities and their citizens. Practical guidelines and policy recommendations produced within EnercitEE will provide valuable assistance for less experienced regions aiming to improve their energy performance and policies.

Out of identified good practices within EnercitEE, the city of Växjö represents a shining example for climate protection. The politicians in the municipality decided back in 1996 that Växjö shall become a fossil fuel free city until 2030. Since then Växjö has worked successfully with environmental and climate issues and has been awarded several times for their remarkable engagement. Since the early 1990s Växjö has reduced its CO₂ emissions by 34% which results nowadays in an amount of 3 t CO₂/year per capita. With its focus on energy efficiency and the use of regional biomass the import of fossil fuels could be lowered significantly. Ever since the regional added value has increased and new jobs have been created.

For these reasons EnercitEE partners decided to organise a 2½ day trip (from 31 May to 01 June 2012) for mayors or its representatives to Växjö, Sweden, to learn from the best.

Objective of the study trip

EnercitEE intends to introduce the good practice example of Växjö to mayors from the EnercitEE regions of Saxony, Lower Silesia, Emilia-Romagna and Haute-Savoie. The overall aim of the Policy maker exchange is to study exemplary energy efficiency solutions in the fields of transport, heat/cooling generation and - distribution, public participation and future strategies. Good practice examples shall be visited and discussed with local politicians. Main topics will be Energy Efficiency, Energy and CO₂ - balancing and its impact on the local and regional economy. Further this study trip offers the possibility for participating mayors to exchange experiences and to socialise with mayors from other EnercitEE regions.

Study good practices and make use of them for own projects

The experiences and impressions gained during the trip shall inspire all participating mayors to test, prepare and implement similar strategies, approaches and policies/instruments as well as investments in their communities and counties. However, it is not about just transferring the overall concept of Växjö to their own community but rather understanding why politicians in Växjö have chosen this way and to see what have been assets and drawbacks.

Participants of the trip should be enabled to make use of one or two measures of Växjö, e.g.:

- How did the city finance the biomass cogeneration plant and a district cooling grid?
- What kinds of contracts have been negotiated with local biomass suppliers?
- Did the projects face opposition?
- How do I set up a database for Energy & CO₂ - balancing?
- How do I get consumption figures?

Answers to these questions should help mayors and decision makers to find convincing arguments for their own projects on energy efficiency, climate protection and sustainability and to refer to successful good practice examples from the EnercitEE partner regions.

Target group

Solely mayors, respectively their representatives, from the EnercitEE partner regions are eligible for taking part in the trip to Växjö. The policy maker exchange aims on the one hand at involving mayors that have already experiences in municipal energy efficiency and climate protection measures and on the other hand mayors that are just about to start with planning and implementing of such. Through this study trip all the mayors will receive inspiration and ideas for new and already advanced measures in their own municipality or region.

Topics

EnercitEE wants to cover three thematic areas for the study tour:

Topic 1: Policies

- Reasons for the political decision
- Växjö's mission statement
- Adapting administrative structures
- Individual solutions e.g. mobility, energy management

Topic 2: Economy/ Technology

- Regional/local added value
- Cogeneration/CHP
- Solarthermal
- Private households

Topic 3: Citizens/cooperations

- Citizen participation
- Cooperations

Benefit of the study trip

The study trip to Växjö offers mayors from the EnercitEE partner regions a great possibility to be informed on an outstanding international practice example on climate protection; to meet and talk to politicians and administration executives of the City of Växjö; and to learn more about exemplary projects on location. Växjö's current status as good practice example on climate protection is the result of a long lasting process. Over the years political decision makers in Växjö have got the chance to assure themselves of the advantages that come along with a renewable, regional and thus sustainable energy supply. Being positive about the overall strategy to become fossil fuel free, the decision makers are gradually implementing necessary measures. "The background to the climate strategy of Växjö is the wide knowledge about climate change and the ability to see solutions instead of problems. This has led to a common understanding from politicians, companies, inhabitants and organisations – we have to stop using fossil fuels. The most important aspect to reach that goal is the political commitment and the political unity. All political parties agree that environmental issues, not at least the ones concerning climate change, are very important. They managed to agree upon clear and long-term goals, which make it easier for the municipal staff to implement the goals into action (Fossil Fuel Växjö, page 10)."

By studying Växjö's various new and rebuilt devices and noticing the many employees in that field, the advantages of a thereby strengthened regional economic cycle are obvious and can easily be perceived. The participants of this study trip can learn from Växjö's development and will be able to identify their own local energy production potential. They will learn about possibilities to strengthen the regional added value and thereby to create more jobs and economic power in their communities. Mayors from 4 different EnercitEE partner regions will take this knowledge back to Poland, Germany, France and Italy and will spread the ideas around their regions and might even implement some of the strategies and measures seen in the greenest city in Europe.