

PRESS RELEASE #3 (June 2020)

POTEnT thematic event goes digital

Covid-19 has heavily impacted everyone's life in Europe and beyond, and also POTEnT modified its plans and scheduled activities to cope with this situation. Partners were meant to meet up in March in Ettlingen for the second Thematic Event, but the meeting was cancelled due to the outbreak of the pandemic. POTEnT decided not to stop the project activities and adapted the Interregional Learning process so that it could be done in these months digitally. Accordingly, a number of online meetings has been organized as shorter Thematic Events.

The general aim of this series of online Thematic Events is that partners can concretely discuss learning needs, clarify which good practices to study, and define which study visits to attend.

The first three online Thematic Events on "Awareness among citizens and other stakeholders", "Data and monitoring" and "Governance" have already taken place. After a short introduction each partner discussed its learning needs while the other partners and selected experts on the topic offered suggestions, expertise and knowledge from ongoing projects.

Giuliano Mingardo (Erasmus UPT), Interregional Learning leader and moderator of the thematic events, explains his view about the new guise of the thematic event: "I think the events were very useful. It was nice to meet again after more than six months communicating just via email. Even if the meetings were online people were able to see each other and this is good for the team spirit. Moreover, partners had the opportunity to discuss with each other "in person" about the progress of the project and about their learning needs. It was probably not as efficient as a real-life meeting, but it helped partners to book some important progress in their learning process".

Other thematic events are scheduled in June and July: the programme comprises other 5 events ranging from "Training", "Sustainable mobility", "Circular economy" and "Development of energy communities". Themes have been selected from the learning needs highlighted from the partners at the beginning of the interregional learning process.

The final output of the thematic events is preparing a learning plan for each partner: after the summer break indeed the interregional learning process will get to the heart with the start of the study visits, which will allow partners to get first-hand experience of successful measures to be transferred and to prepare a regional action plan bringing satisfactory and concrete results for the energy transition. Study visits will take place between August 2020 and July 2021, and the first will take place also remotely just after the summer break.

POTEnT is set to run until July 2022, followed by 12 months of monitoring of the results. The project is co-funded by Interreg Europe, a programme helping regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy: by creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions, the programme aims to ensure that government investment, innovation and implementation efforts all lead to integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.