

EEW4 External Event Report

Title of the event: **EUFORES Meeting with Energy Attaché of the Incoming Slovenian EU Council Presidency: "Priorities and agenda of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency concerning renewables and energy efficiency"**

<i>Date & location:</i>	25 June 2021, ONLINE
<i>Organiser(s):</i>	EUFORES
<i>Summary of the event</i>	<p>On Friday 25 June 2021 EUFORES organised a meeting with Members of the European Parliament and Urska Dolinsek, Energy Attaché, from the Permanent Representation of Slovenia of the Incoming Slovenian EU Council Presidency to discuss the "Priorities and agenda of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency concerning renewables and energy efficiency".</p> <p>See presentation & slides by Urska Dolinsek, Energy Attaché, from the Permanent Representation of Slovenia.</p> <p>Niels Fuglsang: When it comes to the EED we need new targets that are higher to reach 55% reduction targets, how can we proceed from that? In our view binding targets is the best, we want something to hold Member States accountable. How do you see your view forward?</p> <p>Urska Dolinsek: From our side there is not much support on National binding targets because in Slovenia we are not talking about big shares of the energy mix. Member States need to make sure how to implement the targets, the situation is not the same in each Member State, the government regulations do not consider the restrictions that members can have.</p> <p>When looking at the application of RES the governments take into account the general potential of the country but not the field restrictions such as protected areas, that does not reflect the real issue. Our target is low because of the environmental impact of the NECP was seen negatively, there is a collision between environment protection and new energy projects. Member States</p>



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"

The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains

need more flexibility on the ground otherwise you come up with these problems.

Niels Fuglsang: Countries have different conditions, the advantage of having a target is that you call politicians accountable.

Jutta Paulus: Methane is a very important issue, and I would love to see this issue tackled at EU level. Methane is attributed to a lot of emissions, if we curb methane emission will save us 0.5 degrees celsius. We need to become active here and have a progressive EU position to the issue.

Urska Dolinsek: No there have not been, we have talked to the Commission about methane legislative act scheduled in December. I do not expect that to have a big debate in this presidency, I expect that for the French Presidency.

Niels Fuglsang: When it comes to hydrogen, we have made a strategy in the Parliament and Commission, we should increase investment in RES hydrogen. We will need more hydrogen in the transport sector. We have currently no solutions for airplanes and heavy trucks we need hydrogen in that aspect. What opportunities do you see to further your agenda?

Urska Dolinsek: It is part of the discussion within the Tenn-e; there is a split in the council whether we should use RES hydrogen or low carbon hydrogen? Not only by gas but also nuclear. This is where we will focus our efforts within the Tenn-e debate.

Jori: What is the timing and goal on what to achieve on the fit for 55?

Urska Dolinsek: On the fit for 55 we intend to go parallel withal the files, these are early stages, we will start talking about them. We will have 3 months of discussion on it. Should there be any horizontal there is always corer responsible of bringing these issues together.

Jutta Paulus: I was surprised you said to move from coal to gas and than more sustainable options. Heat pump have made so much progress that I am not sure it is a good idea to switch from one fossil fuel to another fossil fuel. I think it is highly debated in the parliament, at EUFORES we are interested in energy efficiency and cost efficiency and that is why it does not make sense to invest in technologies that will have to be exchanged before 2050 anyways.

Urska Dolinsek: I did not say it is a necessary switch, I would not want to speculate why nations took different directions. It comes down to national



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"

The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains

specificities and cost efficiency. For some it is a question of energy poverty and how much investment is needed for the initial switch. It does depend on the national circumstances and policies on how we intend to do the switch from fuels to non-emitting fuels.

Tomas Baynes: Given at the state of the president you will be handed huge files, what does the presidency expect from you by December? Internally what are your goals by December?

Urska Dolinsek: My priority will be the Tenn-e regulation as it will require intensive negotiations with the Parliament. We expect to have a progress report on the files you mentioned. For the two files the deliverable will be to read through all the articles in detail which means we issue a progress report to the Ministers for them to be updated about where we are.

Rasmus: You touched on the climate topic, the cop 26 will come in November, to what extent will this be on the table?

Urska Dolinsek: Cop will be dealt by my climate colleagues, huge research demand for a small delegation. We mention cop because it is a reminder to our climate commitment. As for the phase out, the Slovenian strategy in public consultation is 2023 as the date for the phase out. There is of course a lot of opposition, this is a complex issue. For us coal is one power plant that represents 1/3 of electricity production. Part of the just transition is contact with coal regions, it is not that the phase out is not happening but it is happening at a different level.

Jutta Paulus: Small hydropower is controversially discussed. I am split on hydropower myself; it is RES and less dependent on energy conditions, still we had severe problems in summer with low rivers. Small hydropower installations add only few electricity in the grid and have very little environmental impact. It will be more worthwhile in Slovenia to look at combination of solar and wind and battery storage. I would be happy if you try to make a point for this at the council.

There should be possibility to trade, to have partnership between Member States that have different conditions and space available for new technology and projects. I would be interested if you leave those discussion in the council.

Urska Dolinsek: That is already the case, NECP makes sure MS look at each sector and production possibilities. It is ongoing, about small hydro they have



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"

The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains

several problems. There are clashes however one hydroplant is in one river and it represents a third of electricity production and it has been there for so long that the natural world developed along it and is part of the protected areas Nature 2000. There is a river crossing from Austria to Slovenia, 20 power plants in Austria but we need to let it run naturally in Slovenia, those are debates we are facing.

A problem for us is windmills, we had potential on wind but there is an organization that lobbies against wind, spatial planning process. Those are the challenges we are facing.

Jutta Paulus: When we show the real benefits of windmills we will win more support, like this windmill is paying for this school. There will be more acceptance.

Urska Dolinsek: It is very interesting, but you know the difficulties there are, it is not black and white situation, there are a lot of nuances. Thank you for the input.

Jan: Do you feel like the U.S. is now a new competitor to EU on the energy issues with the Biden Administration?

Urska Dolinsek: I feel we are not alone anymore, there is not a feeling of competition which would be healthy but there is more positivity in the discussion.

*Objective &
main
programme
point*

EUFORES organised an online meeting with Members of the European Parliament and Urska Dolinsek, Energy Attaché, from the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the European Union, to discuss the priorities and agenda of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency on renewable energy and energy efficiency policies, as well as the EU Green Deal and Recovery Plan. In the next 6 months, the Slovenian Council Presidency will be advancing many important files and be playing a crucial role in finding the best consensus for policies which drive renewable energy and energy efficiency.

EUFORES regularly organises events with the EU Member State to take the next EU Council Presidency, in particular with the Energy Attaché of the respective country's representation in order to have a discussion on the renewable energy and energy efficiency priorities and agenda of the Presidency.

Conclusions

The event organised by EUFORES, discussed the priorities of the Slovenian Council Presidency for the next 6 months. MEPs showed interest in knowing the stand of the Urska



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"

The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains



ENERGY EFFICIENCY WATCH

Dolinsek, Energy Attaché, from the Permanent Representation of Slovenia on several topic related to the energy transition, coal phase out and the energy mix.

Programme

Agenda:

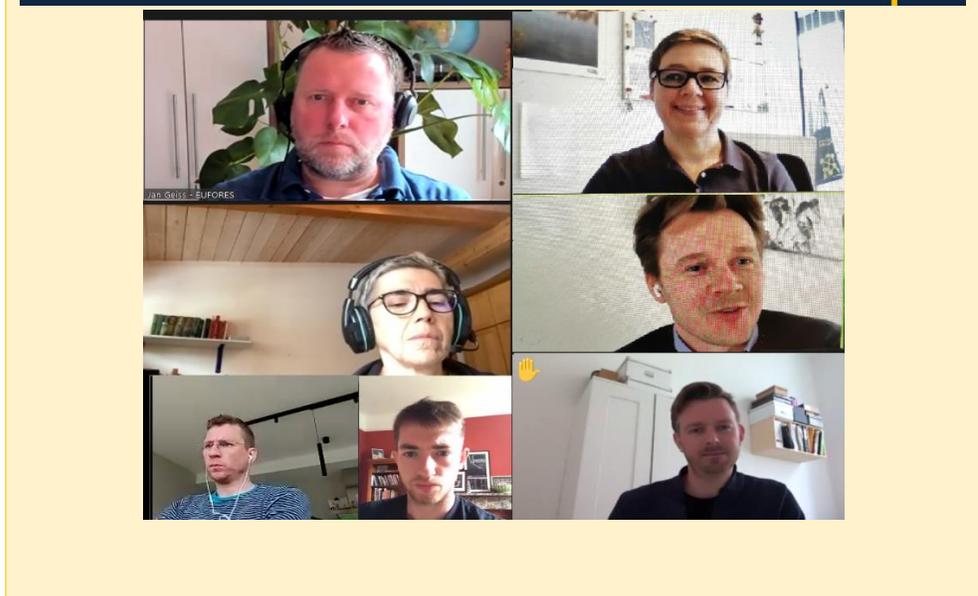
- Introduction, Ciaran Cuffe, MEP, President of EUFORES
- "Priorities and agenda of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency concerning renewables and energy efficiency", Urška Dolinšek, Energy Attaché of the incoming Slovenian EU Council Presidency
- Exchange with MEPs



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"

The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains

Pictures



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"
The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains



"The project EEW4 has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 847153"
The publication reflects only the author's view and that the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains