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European Transport Projects – new
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13.05.2010, POZNAŃ, POLAND

Lessons Learned from the RECODRIVE project: Promoting sustainable fleet management and eco-driving in SMEs

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RECODRIVE (“Rewarding and Recognition Schemes for Energy Conserving Driving, Vehicle procurement and maintenance”) sought to merge existing eco-driving initiatives with advanced fleet management and logistics optimization practices in order to push fuel saving in fleets beyond 10%. The project was successfully accomplished in March 2010. Fleets of associated companies and organizations acted as demonstrators and implemented different energy saving policies. The project showed that fuel savings beyond 10 % are indeed possible. However, in order to achieve sustainable savings, companies and organizations must adopt a comprehensive energy saving strategy, which should also include recognition and rewarding schemes for employees.

Many research projects have found that eco-driving training of professional drivers alone does not guarantee economical driving behaviour in the long term. The key to achieving a sustainable reduction of fuel consumption is the motivation of employees to behave in an energy efficient manner – for drivers this means driving in line with eco-driving principles, for maintenance staff - keeping to adequate maintenance standards. Furthermore, procurement should take company-specific requirements into account and purchase the most suitable and energy efficient vehicles. Finally, management should apply energy saving measures throughout a company’s operations. Following these findings, the focus of the project was the implementation of recognition and rewarding schemes for several types of employees with the main focus on drivers.

Different types of recognition and rewarding schemes were implemented, depending also on the business culture of a company and the country of origin. RECODRIVE has shown that carefully designed recognition and rewarding schemes have the power to sustain energy conserving behaviour of drivers and other employees and thereby bring considerable fuel savings. In addition to eco-driving courses for drivers, fleet managers were trained to improve business practices and procedures linked to: the implementation of recognition and rewarding schemes, maintenance of vehicles, procurement and logistics optimization practices. Special attention was also devoted to the setting up of an energy saving strategy, which is the first step to significant cost reductions.



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During the implementation of the project, partners have identified numerous barriers to the advancement of sustainable fleet management practices in fleets. On the basis of the outcomes of the project, the University of Maribor has designed guidelines in order to support fleet owners in setting up recognition and rewarding schemes for drivers and managers, procurement and maintenance staff. Furthermore, policy guidelines addressing policy-makers at regional, national and EU level were designed in order to strengthen sustainable fleet management in companies. Namely, sustainable fleet management practices have important positive externalities on the environment such as reduction of gaseous emissions, mitigation of congestion in road transport, mitigation of road transport noise, improved safety in road transport, etc. Hence, there are many reasons why policy should support the implementation of sustainable fleet management practices in the private and public sector.

For more information, visit <http://www.recodrive.eu/> or write to mitja.stiglic@uni-mb.si

Biographical information

Mitja Štiglic – economist working at the Transport Economics Centre at the University of Maribor. He is active in several European Projects in the field of transport economics and logistics. Transport SMEs and their business problems are currently one of his main subjects of interest.