



Energy Efficiency Week ABMEE, Romania

Summary

The first Energy Efficiency Week is the first initiative of its kind that took place in Brasov. It is a method to promote energy efficiency and to raise awareness. The event took place in 10th – 14th October 2005.

The events of this week have been targeted to a large variety of stakeholders: teachers, pupils, citizens, local administration, governmental representatives as well as other local, national and international actors in the energy efficiency field:

- The 10th – 11th October 2005 – were the launching dates of Display Campaign.
- On 12th October 2005 the first Energy Info Point in Romania was launched.
- On 13th – 14th October 2005 the first Romanian BISE Forum in Romania took place at Brasov.

The three activities merged into a single large scale event that aimed at introducing and promoting energy efficiency measures and initiatives to various public categories in Brasov.

End-user area

New buildings
 Refurbishment of buildings
 Transport and mobility
 Financial instruments
 Industry
 Legal initiatives (regulations, directives, etc)
 Planning issues
 Sustainable communities
 User behaviour
 Education
 Other

Target Audience

Citizens
 Households
 Property owners
 Schools and universities
 Decision makers
 Local and regional authorities
 Transport companies
 Utilities
 ESCOs
 Architects and engineers
 Financial institutions
 Other

Technical

Energy efficiency
 Heating
 Cooling
 Appliances
 Lighting
 CHP
 District Heating
 Solar energy
 Biomass
 Wind
 Geothermal
 Hydro power
 Other

Context

Energy efficiency is a rather new concept in Romania. Even if energy efficiency seems easy to understand and sometimes it is over used in certain contexts, there is a lack of concrete actions at local level.

Since 2003, an energy management and environment protection agency – ABMEE – was set up in Brasov.

The settling up of this agency at Brasov is the direct result of the involvement of the municipality in the energy efficiency and environment protection field.

ABMEE was the main organizer of the Energy Efficiency Week. Its activity was targeted to both citizens and local and national authorities as well as other international actors in the field. While citizens were given useful information and advice on energy efficiency issues, as well as simple actions that can be implemented for reducing consumption, the local and national authorities were encouraged to join the BISE and Display initiatives.

As the name states, the Energy Efficiency Week was a one week event (10 – 14 October 2005).



Objectives

The objective of the energy efficiency week is to raise awareness and disseminate information on energy efficiency and the local and European initiatives in this field. The main objective was to get exposure of the activities developed by ABMEE for the Brasov municipality and to present them to the general public and specific target audience.

It aimed at becoming an annual event that showcases the progress of different projects, the launching of initiatives and new concepts, the introduction of new RES and RUE policies, instruments and technology.

Process

1. Display Campaign in Braşov

Launching Display in Braşov, was the first Display event in Romania. This represents the next step of another activity developed by ABMEE - the implementation of an Energy Management System (EMS). EMS is a web based application for the creation of a database of energy and water consumption in Brasov municipality.

The European Display Campaign is aimed at encouraging local authorities to publicly display the energy and environmental performances of their public buildings using the same energy label that is used for household appliances.

ABMEE has set as objective for 2005 the launching of Display Campaign in 10 schools and high schools in Brasov. During the Energy Efficiency Week, Display was launched in 2 high schools: Liceul cu Program Sportiv (sports profile) and Liceul de Arte (arts profile), and 1 elementary school (Scoala Generala nr. 20). By the end of 2005, other 7 schools were scheduled to become part of the Display Campaign.

The official launching event took place at the Sports High School on the 10th of October 2005.

The local authorities were represented by the deputy mayor, Mr. Gabriel Andronache and the launching was followed by a press conference that took place at the Sports High School.

Two days of the Energy Efficiency Week were dedicated to the Display Campaign with different activities planned for each school and high school.

The pupils were presented the Display Campaign's objectives and they were told the simple measures by which they can contribute to a better classification next year.

For this event pupils have prepared special activities according to their school profile. The pupils from Liceul cu Program Sportiv presented a short match of handball in which two special teams confronted one another: the "turn-off the light" team and the "close the tap" team. Pupils from Liceul de Arta prepared on site an interesting painting on the topic of energy efficiency and renewables, while the pupils and their teacher from Scoala Generală Nr. 20 prepared a presentation on what energy is and how we can contribute to energy efficiency.

Each pupil received a small promotional gift consisting of stickers, pens, rulers, balloons and mouse pads, branded with the "Display" logo. Moreover, every institution received 6 digital thermometers for temperature monitoring in the key points of the building.

As a total, this event gathered 110 pupils from the 3 schools and high schools where Display was launched.

As follow-up ABMEE will prepare a course module on the topic of energy efficiency to be implemented in those schools that are now part of the Display Campaign.



More information on the Display Campaign can be found at: www.display-campaign.org.

2. The First Energy Info Point in Romania

On the 12th of October 2005, the first Energy Info Point in Romania was launched.

This information point is the result of a PHARE project, RO-2002/000-586.04.08/01 "Supporting energy efficiency at local level," of which ABMEE is one of the beneficiaries. This project has been coordinated by the Romanian Ministry of Economy and Trade. The Energy Info Point is located within ABMEE's office at the following address: 23 M. Kogălniceanu Str., Bl. C7, room 301, Brasov 500 090.

The Energy Info Point (EIP) was the first of its kind in Romania. At the Energy Info Point citizens can find free of charge, useful information and advice on energy efficiency issues, simple actions that can be implemented for reducing utilities consumption, what kind of equipment is recommended in different situations, etc. There are also brochures, guides and a whole series of other useful materials available. The technical assistance within the Energy Info Point is provided by ABMEE's staff.

In order to promote the opening of the EIP we launched two contests: one contest for sidewalk drawings and graphics for pupils and one contest for citizens. The drawing contest attracted a lot of children that were awarded for their efforts. For the canvas painting we asked the students of the Arts High School to imagine a better, more energy efficient world. Some amazing artwork was produced, the best 5 students were awarded prizes consisting in promotional materials and funds, and most of the paintings were displayed in the EIP.

On the 12th of October 2005, the official launching event took place at the Energy Info Point premises. Representatives of the main actors in the energy efficiency field attended: the Romanian Agency for Energy Conservation (ARCE), The Romanian Fund for Energy Efficiency (FREE), UNDP Romania, the Agency for Environment Protection (APM), the Ministry of Economy and Trade, the Local Agency for Energy Management Iasi (ALGPEM), and the Public Service for Energy Management in Harghita County (SPME). The local authorities were represented by the mayor of Brasov, Mr. George Scripcaru, the deputy mayors and several local councilors. A press conference was held and both representatives of the local authorities and the ABMEEs staff gave interviews to the local press.

3. The First Romanian BISE Forum

BISE, or Better Integration through Specific Exchanges is addressed to municipalities of the New Member States, Candidate Countries and the Western Balkans. The main objective of the BISE Forum is to promote and support networking activities of municipalities in the field of energy efficiency. In this way, the sustainable energy gap between the Central and Eastern European Countries and the most advanced energy-efficient EU 15 countries is expected to be reduced as quickly as possible.



The first Romanian BISE Forum took place on the 13th – 14th of October 2005. 43 people attended the conference, mainly representatives of Romanian municipalities with more than 100.000 inhabitants, representatives of the Association of Romanian Municipalities (AMR), as well as representatives of national and international networks in the field: Orase Energie Romania (OER), the Romanian Agency for Energy Conservation (ARCE), the Romanian Agency for Regulation in the field of Gas (ANRGN), The Romanian Ministry of Economy and Trade, Energie-Cites, EcoEnergy Bulgaria.

During the 2 day event, participants tried to come forward with practical solutions for the problems the East European countries encounter in their attempt of implementing energy efficiency projects, problems which are quite specific and different from the problems of the West European countries.

The first Romanian BISE forum has been organized by ABMEE and OER with the support of UNDP Romania.

The next step of the BISE Forum in Romania will be the set-up of the BISE network. This network shall give technical assistance to all member municipalities, especially since it is a well known fact that local authorities are the key factors who can take real action into improving energy efficiency at local level.

Financial resources and partners

The partners in this project are:

- The Brasov City Hall - beneficiary
- Public schools and high schools in Brasov - beneficiary
- UNDP Romania - partner
- Orase Energie Romania - partner
- Energie-Cites - partner

The total cost of the event has been 10.000 EUR. Trough the involvement of the partners (Brasov municipality, Energie Cites network in Romania, Energie Cites and UNDP Romania), 7.500 EUR were given as financial support for the action.

Results

The events in the Energy Efficiency Week were very visible to the general public and the specific audience targeted by each event. A total of around 500 people attended the week long events.

The “Display” campaign was a success in Brasov. The work done in the project received European recognition as the Brasov “Display” campaign was awarded the second prize, in the Display Towards Class A award ceremony that took place 26 October in Riga (Latvia).





The Energy InfoPoint cannot be presented as a success story. The response of the public was not as expected and this situation has several causes. The municipality has another InfoPoint that is more visible, but does not cover the specifics of energy efficiency. The Energy InfoPoint was visited by about 50 persons since the launch and most of the questions posed were very technical.

Citizens that need audiences on specific, simple measures do not use the EIP due to the fact that the Energy Info Point is located in a not so visible location and the fact that it is not heavily promoted.

In the future ABMEE plans to develop the EIP while increasing the capacity of the Agency.

The BISE initiative has proven to be a success and the 2nd BISE forum took place in October 2006. This event had more participants than the one in 2005, during the Energy Efficiency Week, and more actors from the field of energy and environment were present. The BISE process will continue and ABMEE will be involved in the further development of this initiative.

Lessons learned and repeatability

The Energy Efficiency week is based on the European model and it does not represent a new activity. At the European level it is already present in the schedules of different municipalities. But the event can and should be organised in Romanian municipalities. It is an excellent opportunity to launch initiatives and to present results to the public. It is also a way to get citizens involved and to raise awareness on different energy and environment related issues. This event can be easily replicated in every municipality as long as there is a commitment towards the rational use of energy.

In Brasov, the Energy Efficiency Week was not repeated in the following year. This is because ABMEE together with the municipality organised, for the first time in Brasov, the "Car Free Day!" event. Linking the two concepts, energy efficiency and mobility in a single event in September is the path to be followed for 2007.

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