



Energy Neighbourhoods Anke Merziger, Germany

Summary

The aim of the Energy Neighbourhood Project is to inspire and encourage communities to reduce energy consumption through changes in behaviour. Some eight to 12 households form a team, the so-called Energy Neighbourhood. Each neighbourhood accepts a bet offered by the city: to win the bet (and a prize), the neighbourhood must achieve an energy savings of at least 8 % within six months compared with the previous year. Each team is coached by an Energy Master who pulls the team together and provides good incentives. The Energy Master has access to an energy saving toolkit to assist households in measuring their savings and takes responsibility for the collection of energy consumption data throughout the project. A specially designed online tool calculates the energy savings of each household. Last but not least, the municipality and the project partners play an important role in the project as supporters and referees, by informing their citizens on how to save energy, organizing get-togethers and information events and ensuring that the teams abide by the rules. In addition to the competition, the cities initiated local climate debates in order to facilitate the communication between cities and the local administration and create a place for exchanging questions, needs and proposals in the field of environmental protection and climate change on a local level.

Almost 6000 households from 9 different countries in Europe took up the Energy Neighbourhoods challenge of saving at least 8 % energy in 6 months. The results are inspirational: teams achieved an average energy saving of 10 %. The winning team from Sweden managed an impressive 37% through simple and cost effective measures such as using energy saving lamps, disabling standby and changing their heating habits. Following on from the success, the project partners are planning to run the competition again in 2010 with even more participants.

Main source of funding: EACI (Intelligent Energy Europe Programme)

End-user area

Sustainable communities
User behaviour
Education

Target Audience

Citizens
Households
Local and regional authorities

Technical

Energy efficiency
Heating
Cooling
Appliances
Lighting

Context

- Project was implemented in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Germany, Ireland and England.
- Building stock accounts for 40% of the European energy use; 2/3 of this energy consumption is ascribed to the residential building stock, energy savings by implementing a changed behaviour can have an important impact on the goal to reduce the energy consumption of households
- Contribute to the 20-20-20 strategy of the European Union, by contributing to the goal of saving 20% energy by 2020



Objectives

- Reaching important group: households
- Informing about energy saving possibilities
- Bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and acting
- Increasing household energy awareness
- Setting up a dialogue (local climate debate) between citizens and cities
- Creating a common spirit to save energy

Process

Different working steps were realized by the project consortium and the cities:

- Set up of Steering Committees responsible for running the project in the countries and cities
- Development of:
 - o a) communication kits for cities (containing posters and leaflets, manual for the campaign, standard press releases)
 - o b) a communication kit for Energy Masters (containing energy saving tips, implementation structure, information on the communication materials for the households, manual for the online tool)
 - o c) a communication kit for households (containing metering chart, small scale energy audit, information leaflet, manual for the website, certificate)
- Development and adjustment of the online tool for calculating the energy savings realized by the participants
- Training sessions for cities and Energy Masters on the online tool and toolkit
- Promoting the project and deciding on Energy Neighbourhoods and Energy Masters
- Implementing the campaign: Organisation of Kick-Off events, interim information events, general support and advice for Energy Neighbourhoods
- Evaluation of results and regional prize events
- International awarding of a prize in Brussels with the best energy savers from Europe
- Local climate debates
- Press releases and presentations to communicate the project
- Further development of the online tool for future projects and further development of the project structure for continuing the project in the different countries
- The target groups of the project were the cities, and the citizens, it was the goal to bring these two groups closer together in order to help both sides to become more active for climate protection.

Financial resources and partners

Total project costs: €1 198 331, where 50% of the funding came from EACI, the rest of the funding came from national resources (such as regional department of economy or environment, city budgets, own funding etc).

The following partners participated in the project and implemented the action in their respective countries:

- B.&S.U gmbH, Germany: Environmental service company, working in national and international projects in the field of climate protection and energy – coordinator of the European partner consortium and national coordinator
- BBLV, Belgium, NGO: project idea contributor, based upon the forerunner project “Klimatwijken”, national coordinator
- Energikontor Sydost, Sweden, Energy Agency: National coordinator
- Seven Wye Energy Agency, England, Energy Agency: National coordinator



- Agencia Energetica de la Ribera, Spain, Energy Agency: National coordinator
- ECUBA, Italy: National coordinator
- FCVRE, Foundation: responsible partner for common project dissemination
- Energy Agency of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Energy Agency: National coordinator
- Prioriterre, France, NGO: National coordinator
- Agenzia per L'Energia e lo Sviluppo Sostenibile de Modena, Energy Agency: National coordinator

Results

- 578 neighbourhoods, 5727 households participated
- Motivation for participation: Climate protection, information on energy saving, and money saving
- 10.09% average energy saving
- 60% won the bet, 81% saved energy
- Main measures implemented: adaption of room temperature, stand-by and energy saving lamps
- Long-term motivation to save energy was created among participants

The objectives of the project were to 100% realised. The Energy Neighbourhood succeeded to motivate households to save energy and could at the same time reach a broad public. The Neighbourhood project was very well presented both from the media and at the conferences and seminars. An intensified communication between citizens and cities was established. The partner consortium is right now working on the continuation of the project.

Rank	Country	Average saved energy in %
1	Bulgaria	-18.11%
2	France	-12.18%
3	Belgium	-12.16%
4	Germany	-12.15%
5	Sweden	-9.57%
6	England	-9.52%
7	Spain	9.15%
8	Italy	-6.91%
9	Ireland	-1.17%



Rank	Energy Neighbourhood	Country	Average saved energy in %
1	Team Ahlgren	Sweden	-37.63%
2	Temse	Belgium	-37.6%
3	Nova Zagora	Bulgaria	-35.49%
4	Lornay	France	-24.50%
5	Mirandola Gruppo 2	Italy	-22.68%
6	Energia amb seny	Spain	-20.47%
7	BVV 2008	Germany	-18.01%
8	Wotton Energy Watch	England	-17.22%
9	Tipperary Town	Ireland	-17%

Lessons learned and repeatability

Challenges:

- Recruitment of participants: the recruitment of participants was a crucial phase of the project. The partners used all communication channels in order to advertise the project: press articles in the local media, flyers, posters, information stands at city festivals, telephone and email communication, etc. In the end all countries could meet the set targets.
- Use of the website and online tool by participants/masters: the partner consortium has experienced that the use of the online tool was for many participants more difficult than expected. The problem was overcome by intensifying the training on the tool.
- Motivation: another challenge faced was to keep up the motivation of the participants over the life of the campaign. The project outline has proven to work very well in this respect, as many information and social events were organised, the energy masters kept close contact with their participants, emailing energy saving tips reminded the households to save energy.

Factors of success:

- Strong support from energy masters and cities: crucial for the successful implementation was the strong support from energy masters and cities that often functioned as a bridge between participants and project partners.
- Group action: nobody had to save energy on their own. The group action and the social ideas of the project was an important factor for the participants, as they had the possibility to exchange their experiences and to get constant support and motivation from their team buddies.
- Constant information and updates on competition from project partners and cities was important to keep up the motivation, provide the required energy saving tips and stir up competition.



Contact for more information:

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Organisation / Agency: Beratungs- und Service Gesellschaft Umwelt mbH

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