

Educational & promotional campaign "Bielsko-Biała protects the Climate"

Sector: Educational & promotional campaign

Timeframe: 2011 – 2020

Location: Bielsko-Biała, Poland



Photo: Bielsko-Biała City Hall

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Bielsko-Biała has approx. 178 000 inhabitants and is located in the southern part of Poland, in the Silesian Voivodeship. In January 1994 the city joined the Association of Municipalities Polish Network "Energie Cités" as one of the first cities in Poland. It is still an active member of the network implementing many projects and actions aiming at sustainable energy development and climate protection. In January 2009 Bielsko-Biała signed the Covenant of Mayors and its representative participated in the first formal signature ceremony organised in Brussels, in the seat of the European Parliament. In 2010 Bielsko-Biała's City Council approved local Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP), which was the first document of this kind adopted in Poland. The SEAP shows how the city plans to achieve its climate & energy targets set for the period 2010-2020. From the document it is clear that it is impossible to reach 3x20 goals without active engagement of different local stakeholders and without aid funds. Until now, the city has done a lot to improve its energy situation. It needs to be taken into consideration, however, that only 10% of all buildings located in Bielsko-Biała are in the hands of local authorities. Therefore, it was necessary to involve in this process as many citizens and local entities as possible.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2011 Bielsko-Biała was invited by the European Network "Energy Cities" to join the project entitled ENGAGE, which aimed at encouraging citizens and local stakeholders to play their part in building more sustainable energy future. The project was based on two main pillars: poster exhibition involving so called "Climate Ambassadors" and an open-air "Energy Days" event for the citizens. The poster exhibition was the main tool for influencing local society and comprised of 300 posters presenting silhouettes of Climate Ambassadors - over 1 000 citizens representing different social environments, institutions and families, who individually committed to undertake actions aiming at reducing energy



Bielsko Biała  chroni klimat  włącz się!



www.energia.um.bielsko.pl

www.festiwaldobrejenergii.pl





Photo: Bielsko-Biala City Hall

consumption and at using natural resources in a more reasonable way. The exhibition was used as a basis for the organisation of a dedicated event for the citizens called "Beskid Festival of Good Energy". Over 100 Climate Ambassadors engaged in this common event, helping to transfer knowledge about rational use of energy and other resources. Couple of thousands of people took part in the festive activities and 65 Climate Ambassadors agreed that the city will monitor the execution of their energy commitments.



Photo: Bielsko-Biala City Hall

Based on the outcomes of the ENGAGE project Bielsko-Biala launched long-term promotional & educational campaign, which received its own logo and name - "Bielsko-Biala protects the Climate". The campaign comprises of the three main elements: contests for children and teenagers called "Conserve energy and protect the Climate", cyclic meetings with institutions and businesses (over 60 different entities) aiming at promotion of local good practices and annual celebration for the citizens called "Beskid Festival of Good Energy". The event integrates the citizens around the idea of environmental & climate protection. There have been already five editions of the festival and as a result over half of the Bielsko-Biala's citizens heard about the energy conservation concept. The most valuable, however, is the cooperation with the educational community. 150 teachers coordinate campaign-related activities in their own educational centers. Thanks to their engagement



Photo: Bielsko-Biala City Hall

and permanent cooperation, thousands of children and their parents can be activated.

The benefits of the campaign are felt by more and more inhabitants of our city, who become convinced that it makes sense to use energy more reasonably as in this way they can spend less money on buying it. In the long term this will result in better air quality and improved health of the citizens.

FINANCING SCHEME

The campaign is financed from the municipal budget and supported with contributions from different local entities. It costs approx. 100 000 PLN per year. From time to time also funds from other funding sources (including Voivodeship Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, Operational Programme "Infrastructure & Environment", "Intelligent Energy Europe" programme, etc.) are used to finance specific elements of the campaign.

PROJECT RESULTS

It turned out that in 2011 Climate Ambassadors, who agreed to monitor their performance (65 people and institutions), saved over 7,6 million kWh of energy and nearly 4 million kg of CO₂. The value of so called "negawatts" could reach even 2-3 million PLN.



Photo: Bielsko-Biala City Hall

The monitoring procedure was different for institutional ambassadors (organisations and businesses) and for individual people. The citizens' performance was monitored on the basis of a special questionnaire designed by the municipal Energy Management Office and concerning their way of life and related carbon footprint. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of the on-line tool for calculating environmental footprint:

www.ziemiaarozdrozu.pl/encyklopedia/50/moja-emisja-co2-kalkulator,

www.ziemiaarozdrozu.pl/kalkulator, which was designed by Marcin Popkiewicz.

Individual Climate Ambassadors completed the questionnaire in 2011 and one year later. After entering their inputs into the special database, there were calculated energy and CO₂ savings achieved for different types of energy and as a total. Data from institutional Climate Ambassadors, on the other hand, were gathered through individual contacts with people responsible for energy & environmental issues in participating companies and organisations. They concerned the same monitoring period. People and institutions, whose performance was monitored, constitute approx. 22% of all Climate Ambassadors.

Measurable results of the social campaign include also: 5 editions of the Beskid Festival of Good Energy, 300 posters presenting 1 000 citizens - Climate Ambassadors (that have already been publicly displayed 10 times), 150 teachers and 120 educational centres (kindergartens and schools) involved, 120 companies saving energy and 70 citizens trained in eco-driving.

In 2013 Bielsko-Biala received European Public Sector Award (EPSA 2013), which was granted for the "Bielsko-Biala protects the Climate" campaign. The competition aims at honouring these self-government projects, which are particularly well organised, efficient and consistent with self-governments' social mission. In this edition 230 project from 26 countries and European institutions were competing. What attracted jury's attention to the Bielsko-Biala's campaign was wide cooperation with local society, scale of activities and innovative approach.



Photo: Bielsko-Biala City Hall

Also the European Community of Natural Sciences Teachers awarded the "Bielsko-Biala protects the Climate" campaign. It received the main prize in the category of "Cooperation between the municipality and the educational community", which was handed in at the festival Best Project on Science on Stage in 2013.

Reports developed by the Voivodeship Environmental Protection Inspectorate in Katowice prove that the air quality in the city of Bielsko-Biala is slowly and systematically improving. It is especially visible in case of particulate matter PM₁₀, whose annual mean concentration is decreasing from year to year. "Bielsko-Biala protects the Climate" campaign is surely one of the contributors to this improvement.

MORE INFORMATION

Energy Management Office
Bielsko-Biala City Hall
Plac Ratuszowy 6
43-300 Bielsko-Biala, Poland
e-mail: pze@um.bielsko.pl
phone: +48 33 4971 518
www.miastodobrejenergii.pl