

SAVE AGE, first results and challenges

First results

Officially started in France in the last quarter of 2010 with participation of managers of nursing homes, the project SAVE AGE looks very success-promising. Indeed, these professionals are very sensitive to sustainable development and look for solutions to optimize the operating costs of their institutions related to energy consumptions. This is the reason why the request for participation in the project, launched in October 2010, permitted to recruit all of the pilot institutions in a few days.

Furthermore, the setup of the project, mobilizing 100 pilot institutions in ten European member states is particularly appreciated by the managers who will have the possibility to network with other professionals facing the same situation, to compare and discuss best practices.

The 10 audits of the pilot institutions showed that none of them conducts regular monitoring of energy consumption, single exception is the acknowledgement of the energy bill once a year. Most of the institutions have an average age of 20 years (the oldest have been built in 1928 and the youngest in 2010). This average doesn't necessarily mean that the energy consumption is high: it depends on the interest of the manager and technical agent involved in these questions.

Also, heating consumption is mostly constant, not only because of insufficient insulation, but also for comfort reasons: the elderly are very sensitive to temperature. In some institutions, the temperature can reach 26 °C in living rooms.

Although we have not yet drawn all the conclusions from the project, we can already identify two challenges.

The nursery home is energy efficient

Especially one institution, built in 2010, integrated the principles of the energy performance (wood boiler, recovery tank rainwater...) in its conception and wants to make further progress in controlling its energy consumption.

In the case of new constructions or refurbished institutions, when all energy optimizations were taken into account during the construction phase, there will be only a few approaches to operate in terms of new installations ... It will be necessary to focus on behaviour of the employees, visitors and managers. However, the analysis made with the professionals of the pilots nursery homes shows that no institution had any training plan for employees and users and the information on how to be exemplary with regard to energy consumption.



EHPAD La Barthavelle, Meythet, Construite en 2010

In these cases, the focus will be on convincing managers, employees and visitors to act in an exemplary way.

The funding is external

In France, most of the institutions are public, they depend administratively and financially on a municipal corporation, a hospital etc.

80% of the institutions audited within the SAVE AGE project are public institutions. It means that it is important to think about the actions which can be launched for the involved people. We have to reflect on the successful way to involve and raise the awareness of the authorities, in order to answer the real needs of the institutions. Investments in energy efficiency are not always corresponding to the actual requirements of the institutions.

The SAVE AGE project focuses on analysis of the diverse conditions in residential homes to reduce energy consumption in Europe and will provide effective assistance to the special needs of the residential home care sector.

This work is supported by two sponsors: SDEL and GTM.

