

CEECAP – Implementing EU Appliance Policy in Central and Eastern Europe

National Verification and Enforcement Plan – Czech Republic – List of problems and their potential solutions

SEVEn, The Energy Efficiency Center

www.ceecap.org

Introduction

The CEECAP – Implementing EU Appliance Policy in Central and Eastern Europe project was developed with the aim of supporting Central and Eastern European countries, including the Czech Republic, in creating suitable conditions for implementing appliance labelling and efficiency policies in accordance with EU Appliance efficiency legislation and programmes.

CEECAP aims to increase expertise and experience the verification and enforcement, market introduction aspects, strengthen relationships between stakeholders and the start up of national actions to improve energy efficiency.

Main activities are: identification of the national experts and decision maker leaders, their training, designing and preparation of national appliance labelling and efficiency actions; set-up of the national multi-disciplinary committees as a forum for discussion about best practices; cooperation opportunities and knowledge transfer.

The results will be an improved policy infrastructure for appliance labelling and efficiency and the future EU policies; a verification infrastructure for product and retailer compliance; collaborative activities to increase the consumer response to labels; and the establishment of a platform for information exchange and transfer.

This document – the proposal of the National Verification and Enforcement Plan, lists the main issues related to the energy labelling of appliances from the state institution's point of view. It discusses the main current issues at stake and proposes solutions to the problems which are observed. It's goal is to introduce possible solutions, practical advice and best practice experience related to these problems and provide assistance on behalf of the CEECAP project to all involved partners with the goal to promote energy labelling and more energy efficient appliances.

In the year 2008 this document will be followed by an Implementation Document, which will list concrete activities undertaken by Ceecap partners, government institutions and other market players.

Note: For further information about the situation in the Czech Republic please consult the „Summary of state national compliance and of the government activities – Czech Republic“ document, available at:

http://www.ceecap.org/img_assets/File/D4_CZECH_SEVEn.pdf

SUMMARY TABLE

The following table summarises the problems and activities suggested by CEECAP project organisers to handle these problems within the system of energy labelling in the Czech Republic (from the verification and enforcement point of view):

<i>Target activity or target group</i>	<i>Goals (of Ceecap and in general towards labels promotion)</i>	<i>Proposed activity</i>
Shop visits	Monitor and increase the number, provide feedback	Support increased number of visits, enlarge capacity and increase motivation of control organisations
Appliance tests	Monitor and increase the number, exchange info	Support undertaking tests, exchange info on current tests
New legislation	Support early adoption and effective implementation	Support early adoption, interaction of activities of all target groups
Promotion campaigns	Monitor existing and support new ones	Initiate further public promotion, provide with best practice examples
Manufacturers	Monitor activities and support higher promotion involvement	Support proper labeling and increase involvement in promotion of labels
Retailers	Monitor compliance and support proper promotion	Inform about proper usage of labels and higher involvement in promotion towards customers
Consumer groups and NGOs	Support involvement in the system by testing, promotion or shop visits	Increase number of independent tests, cooperate on promotion activities and on controlling the proper system of labelling.

MAIN DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Legislation:**

Current situation

Already before joining the EU, the main part of the energy labelling legislation was in force in the Czech Republic. After joining the EU in 2004, the Czech Republic has adopted formally the full scope of the EU legislation, including the energy labelling of appliances.

One major difference in comparison to the EU appliance labelling system, however, is the fact that electric water heaters should be also labelled in the Czech shops. This results in low degree of labelling compliance of electric water heaters in the shops.

Also, other appliances, which are relatively new to the system, such as the air-conditioning units, show lower level of labels' presence in the shops.

Before joining the EU, the electric ovens had to be labeled already (with another type of label, showing only two concrete figures and no energy class). These appliances therefore also had low grade of appliance labelling.

Proposed improvement

The current legislation in place is in line with the EU energy labelling legislation and similar to the legislation of other EU member states. This relates to the list of labelled appliances, institutions enforced to control the mechanism of labelling, system of potential actions to be taken to enforce the labelling.

The only exception is the usage of energy labels for the electric water heaters. The legal consequence from this situation is that only producers of water heaters from the Czech Republic and from outside the EU are obliged to attach labels to their products in shops.

Activities to be taken

Similarly to the situation in other EU countries, appliances which „join the list“ of labelled products as the last ones show lower presence of labels in the shops. In addition, for some types of appliances, mainly the cooling ones, the share of A labelled appliances is very high and the original intention to distribute appliances evenly among the A to G classes is being lost.

Therefore, on the local level, it would be desirable to use the force of the legislation and to increase the degree of controls in the shops, test appliances and take further consecutive steps.

On the other hand, it is also desirable to enlarge the list of appliances labelled by new appliance types and to revise the norms for the A to G energy classes so that only the 10 – 20% of best appliances could be A labelled.

Target: full fulfillment of legislation and early adoption of new legislation

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Support the increased involvement of the state energy and trade inspectorates and other government bodies in the verification of labelling system**
- **Distribute the examples of best practice activities to these organisations**
- **Initiate exchange of information between governmental organisations in the Czech Republic on the international level, and between state and private organisations**
- **Support the reorganisation of energy classes and involvement of new appliance categories into the labelling system**

- ***National energy strategy:***

Current situation

Similarly to other countries, the national energy strategy documents mention the household energy and electricity consumption and give a priority to the increase of energy efficiency of household appliances as one of the options to protect the environment, lower energy and fuel imports and increase energy security.

Proposed improvement

The fact that both concrete legislation and the general energy strategy of the Czech Republic give a priority to the improvements of energy efficiency of household labels, it is not sufficiently transferred into concrete action taken by government organisations. This should change by moving the topic of labels higher in the agenda of these organisations.

Activities to be taken

It is important to stress that the increase of electricity consumption by households is among the quickest growing sectors of the energy consumption in the Czech Republic. It is therefore crucial to ensure political priority for energy labelling of appliances and ensure further political effort for organising further activities to promote energy efficient appliances.

Target: ensure the adoption of formal targets from policy documents to practical activities

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Point the attention of the relevant target organisations to this fact and will ask them (notably the government institutions) to bring it into force**

- **Control organisations:**

Current situation

The State Trade Inspection and the Czech Energy Inspectorates are the two organisations which should control and enforce the proper shape of energy labelling and the content of labels. The Trade Inspectorate should control the presence of labels in the shops, and the Energy Inspectorate should control the correct data on labels. While both organisations recognise their duties and responsibilities, very little concrete actions take place in the field of energy labelling of appliances. If any, it is a reaction to queries submitted by involved organisations or individual citizens. Part of the explanation of the problem is that no extra financial resources are being attributed to energy labelling verification and enforcement from the state budget to these organisations.

Proposed improvement

The desired improvement would be to increase the level of political priorities given to energy labelling by these two organisations and by the ministries (mainly the Ministry of Industry and Trade), which make decisions about the strategic orientation of these organisations. Further improvement of human resource capacity towards energy labelling would be also beneficial.

Activities to be taken

Throughout the CEECAP project, its representatives are in contact with the personnel of the above mentioned organisations and give guidance and offer help on further actions. This includes the overview of the situation of presence of labels in the shops, where the main problems are, what is the best practice in other countries and what would be the simplest methods of their adoption in the Czech Republic.

Since this is the crucial part of the project, any further improvement in this field will be very beneficial. Personal training to inspectors and decision makers of the trade and energy inspectorates will be offered to increase their motivation and priorities, enlarge the capacities and experience of these organisations and their personnel towards appliances and energy labeling.

Target: increase the level of regular activities (shop visits, label information control, tests) – not only due to requests from Ceecap but also on its own will.

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Seek for increased involvement of these organisations**
- **Provide with information and best practice examples from abroad and within the Czech Republic**
- **Offer personalised training with the description of the proper activities related to shop visits and control of information on labels**
- **Ask the state organisations for the action on concrete tasks**

- **Tests:**

Current situation

According to the information from the state control organisations, no appliances are being currently tested to verify the information on their labels. The main reason for this is the lack of public financial funds for undertaking these tests. This is a result of lower political priorities given to the energy labelling.

Proposed improvement

Within the Ceecap project, an option was discussed that the results of appliance tests undertaken in individual EU member countries should be shared among the member countries. While such initiative should take place on a general EU level among all member states, CEECAP partners would do their best to promote and support this move within its territories.

On the national level, the desired improvement to be taken would include the start up of testing of selected appliances. Individual negotiations will be undertaken to promote such move.

Activities to be taken

The decision to start testing of appliances would require allocation of financial resources for such a move and a definition of methodology on which appliances to choose. Most notably the financial barrier is seen as a crucial one.

Therefore also information on test results from other countries or other organisations could be very beneficial to be available also to the inspectorates in the Czech Republic, if its own funds would not be allocated in the future in sufficient amount.

Target: motivate the relevant inspections to undertake their own tests, inform them about tests from abroad or other organisations

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Provide domestic organisations with available information from abroad**

- **Initiate information exchange also towards customers (media), retailers and manufacturers**

- ***Appliance producers:***

Current situation

Over 90 % of the market coverage of appliance sales in the Czech Republic are covered by members of the Czech CECED association. These brands show good interest and responsiveness to the energy labelling of appliances. No major problems are reported in the field of label distribution to shops. The only exception to same degree are the air-conditioning units and electric water heaters.

Since many appliances are A labelled, producers are interested to use labels for the promotion of the labels. It is therefore good to use this mood for the common promotion of energy labelling and of energy efficient products.

Proposed improvement

Further improvement in the field of labelling of air-conditioning units would be desirable. This mostly relates to other producers and retailer shops, than in the case of white appliances. Furthermore, electric water heaters should have higher label presence, since these should have labels in the Czech Republic, if the manufacturer is a Czech or non-EU based company. Furthermore, increased general involvement of manufacturers in the promotion of energy labeling would be very welcomed and beneficial for the general public.

Activities to be taken:

- Contact direct air-conditioning and electric water heater manufacturers and request the presence of energy labels in shops, contact retailers and ask for energy labels at the points of sales, prepare concrete educational programmes for manufacturers on the importance of proper label usage.
- Involvement of manufacturers in the promotion of labels towards the retailers and the general public is of highest importance. Their expertise and distribution network can be used to distribute the information widely and effectively.

Target: motivate for continued proper usage of energy labels, increase the share of properly labeled appliances within the more problematic types of labels, motivate manufacturers for their own activities aimed at promoting energy labels towards retailers and the general public

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Involve manufacturers into the marketing activities of labels and energy efficient appliances**
- **Include retailers, media, consumer groups and other bodies in the above mentioned activities**
- **Help with organisation and promotion of labelling in the more problematic areas (product or retail types)**
- **Inform them about problematic labels, appliance types or concrete examples of wrongly undertaken labels**

- **Media:**

Current situation

Media representatives and journalists show on-going interest in the energy efficiency advise, including the energy labelling and in the promotion of energy efficient appliances. It is therefore good to use this opportunity to wider promote energy labels to the general public. And while the general promotion campaign is not a primary target of the CEECAP project, the media coverage to this issue will indirectly support the action of the government organisations and of retailers and manufacturers.

Proposed improvement

Even more attention to this item would be of course beneficial. In addition, joining together with other potential partners would increase the impact, as more activities could be organised (consumer competitions etc.).

Activities to be taken:

- Always react upon concrete requests from journalists and provide information to them about energy labels and energy efficiency implications.
- Connect various partners (state agencies, retailers, manufacturers, energy utilities, consumer groups etc.) to prepare publishing materials and to focus general attention to this topic.

Target: further increase of published materials devoted to energy efficient appliances, offer materials which will enable to publish independent articles

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Involve media to increase public attention towards energy labelling**
- **Motivate other partners to be also active in this field**

- **Consumer organisations:**

Current situation

Czech consumer rights protection organisations are interested in the issue of energy labelling and energy efficient appliances. They are interested to promote the energy labels through their magazines and websites. However, they do not have sufficient funds for testing appliances on their own. Similarly, the environmental NGOs share the goals of promoting energy efficient products and could be cooperative on promoting energy labels to their audience and by assisting with the control of the proper functioning of the labeling system.

Proposed improvement

Continued support to providing information about the energy labelling and efficient appliances and an effort to initiate national testing of appliances would help to further increase the general knowledge of consumers about this topic and it would also help to further increase the attention of retailers and manufacturers to this topic.

Activities to be taken

Continued support to the consumer groups in the public information campaigns. New or increased involvement of environmental groups. Also further organisations, such as the energy utilities, could be involved in informing their clients about the energy efficiency aspects of appliances.

Target: increase interest of consumer and other independent organisations in promoting labels to their members, support undertaking independent products tests, involve in controlling the quality of labeling in shops etc.

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Support consumer groups in organising testing of appliances and promoting energy labels towards the interested public**
- **Provide with best practice examples of activities of their counterparts from abroad**
- **Initiate involvement (promotion or control aspects) of environmental groups, energy utilities and other organisations**

- **EU Flower**

Current situation

The logo of the Flower (for environmentally friendly products) can be used on energy label for selected environmentally friendly products. Currently, however, no product sold in the Czech Republic which should have the energy label, has the right to use the Flower logo at the same time.

The governmental organisation Cenia, which is responsible for promoting the EU Flower, is also active in promoting environmentally friendly products. It is therefore also interested in promoting energy labels and energy efficient products.

Proposed improvement

Further coordinated action should be done to promote energy labels as a part of the general promotion of environmentally friendly products.

Activities to be taken

Publishing and distribution of materials focused on energy labels.

Target: enable interaction of these two systems and ensure common promotion towards producers and the general public

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Support the exchange of information and raise of motivation of the state organisations to be involved in the promotion of environmentally friendly and energy efficient products**

- **Retailers and Internet shops:**

Current situation

Retailers show various responsiveness towards energy labelling of products which they sell. In general, the large chains have high degree of presence of labels in their shops. Degree of labelling in smaller shops varies, but also shows high level in general. Internet shops do not show labels as such, but have to show information provided on the labels. Since many products are A labelled, this information is often used for the marketing purposes. If a product has lower energy class grade, it is also more often not published properly.

Also, within the internet shop catalogues, the same products can have different energy related information, due to mistakes in electronic databases. Often, not all requested information is published in the catalogues.

Proposed improvement

Proposed improvement would mean even higher degree of presence of labels in shops, more proactive promotion of labels towards the customers, and giving full attention to the reproduction of information from the energy labels into the retailer catalogues.

Activities to be taken

Work with concrete retailers (both classic shops and internet ones) to increase the presence of labels in their shops, use labels for active promotion of their products, select the most energy efficient products to be sold by them. Prepare concrete tips on how to promote energy labelling and efficiency aspects of appliances to customers, help to follow the market with giving attention to the best or to the most problematic types of appliances etc. Also work with the state control institutions on forcing them to do concrete action and/or to get their support in further action towards the retailers.

Target: increase the level of labeling in all types of shops, increase the self-motivation of retailers for further promotion labels to their customers, proper usage of labels and information from the labels.

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Undertake random shop inspection controls and inform retailers and the state control bodies about the results**
- **Organise random control of the content of energy labels and its method of publication and inform retailers and the state control bodies about the results**

- ***Synergy effects***

Current situation

The general increase of energy prices, raising attention to the negative environmental impacts of energy usage, energy security issues etc. – this all supports the ever wider usage of energy labels.

Proposed improvement

It is possible to reach synergic effects by adding label and appliance information to other projects, organisations and institutions, within public procurement etc.

Activities to be taken

Follow the market and constantly initiate efforts to increase the profile of energy labelling.

Target: ensure a multiplication effect benefitting the promotion of energy efficient labels

Within the Ceecap project we will:

- **Support any multiplication effect of various related activities, initiate such steps and promote them among the project target groups.**

The sole responsibility for the content of this document lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Communities. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Further contact: Juraj Krivošík, SEVEn, juraj.krivosik@svn.cz

