

Local energy advice centres in France: quite active but how effective?

An evaluation of local energy actions in France

The local energy advice system in France

- Launched in 2001 by ADEME
 - To provide free and neutral advice to the general public, organisations and small companies
 - To carry out awareness-raising activities (conferences & workshops, fairs & trades, exhibitions, visits of pilot sites, etc.)

ESPACE **INFO** → **ÉNERGIE**

Structure of the advice system

- Mainly existing NGOs can become host organisations
- Environment or energy / housing / urbanism & architecture organisms
- Receive funding from ADEME (15 000 €/year) and training (initial: 3 days), regional councils, cities...
- Regional networks and national coordination

Context of the evaluation

- In 2004 ADEME assessed « individualised advice » activity
 - 90% beneficiaries satisfied
 - Almost 30% contacts led to actions
- In 2005, ADEME decided to evaluate the awareness-raising activities for 3 regions

Objectives

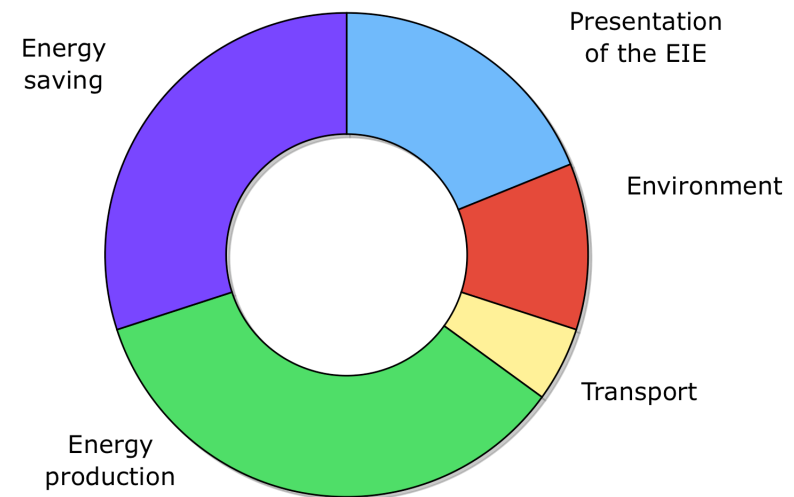
- Objective 1 = quantify & characterise activities
- Objective 2 = assess satisfaction & impacts
- Objective 3 = optimise the local advice system by defining which activities are more effective

Methods

- Interviews with regional coordinators and local advisers
- Analysis of activity database
- On-site surveys in markets & fairs
- Phone surveys for workshops, site visits
(not statistically representative)

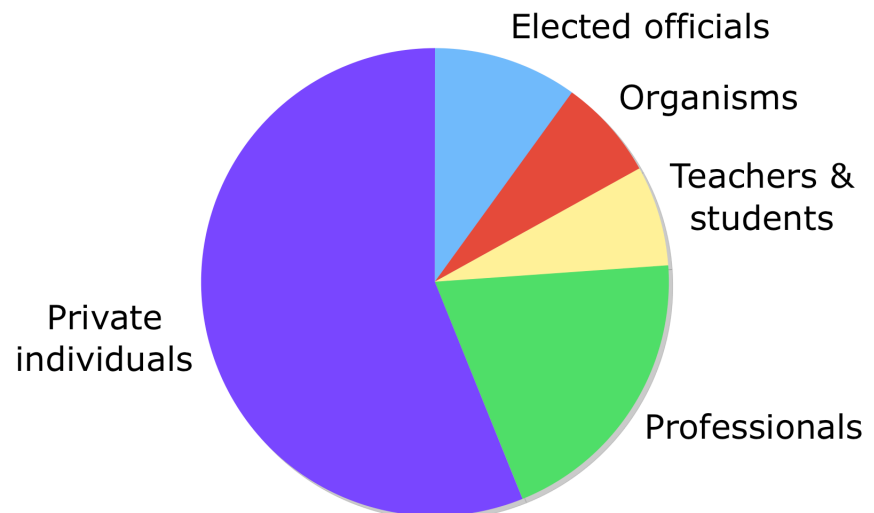
What the local advice centres do?

- Mainly booths in markets or fairs (32%), then conferences & workshops (21% - 23%)
- Lots of media activities but unquantified
- Regional disparities
- Focus mainly on renewables



Who do they reach?

- A working age public highly aware of environmental issues, homeowners with a project
- 16-25 under-represented
- « Which professionals? » (~ 20%) unspecified
- Elected officials = 10%



Satisfaction & impact

- Positive ratings by participants
- « Gross » impact (those w/out a pre-existing project):
> 50%
- Solar projects prevalent before and after
- Outreach activities lead to individual advice

Recommendations

- To improve the monitoring system (professionals, mass media)
- Diversify, within the general public
- Increase recourse to « agents »; to direct the public more quickly to professionals
- To encourage regional building as well as exchanges of good practices between advice centres or regions

Important issues

- Mobilise co-funding (more local authority involvement, private financiers? ...)
- Establish the « good name » of the advice centres
- Improve services for insufficiently covered parts of the territory
- Secure jobs, well-trained professionals
- Provide better information, data to the advice centres