

Abstract for ERSCP 2008, Topic IV Sustainable Energy Supply and Consumption:  
**Improving DSM Practice by Analysing Previous Success and Failure**

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Europe has set ambitious and far-reaching goals for managing energy demand. The aim is to shift the European energy market toward an increased focus on energy services based on end-user needs (e.g., thermal comfort rather than heat). Such a shift requires the adoption of radically innovative technologies entailing significant behavioural and social change. This requires a close understanding of the role of end-users in technology adoption, appropriation and changing use patterns. Energy demand-side management (DSM) programmes and the intermediary organisations operating them are key in encouraging more sustainable energy consumption patterns. The exchange of best practice is a good way to accelerate energy demand side management in Europe, but it is equally important to understand the role of local actors and context in the adoption new energy efficient and energy conserving behaviours.

This paper is based on an ongoing EU FP7 project called CHANGING BEHAVIOUR. The project aims to support the shift toward end-user services in European energy policy. It will (1) develop a sophisticated but practical model of end-user behaviour and stakeholder interaction, based on previous best and bad practices, (2) integrate knowledge of context (e.g., national culture and institutions), timing and actors into demand management practice, (3) pilot the transfer of context-tailored demand side programmes from one European country to another, and (4) create a toolkit for practitioners to manage the social and technical change involved in DSM programmes. The project works through intensive co-operation between researchers and intermediary organisations in the field of DSM. Such organisations include governmental or semi-governmental energy agencies, non-governmental organisations, consultancies and energy service companies. Together with these organisations, the project evaluates and analyse behavioral responses to demand side measures, and tests the transfer of demand side programmes from one European context to another.

The paper focuses on the possibilities to draw lessons from previous success and failure. It discusses these possibilities in the practical context of designing pilot projects demonstrating improved strategies for encouraging sustainable energy consumption. Further, it examines the practical value of a thorough analysis of previous experience for the transfer of European best practices across countries. This is done by analysing one successful case of in-situ energy consultation and examining how other programmes can learn from it.

We discuss two forms of utilisation of previous experience, both supported by the CHANGING BEHAVIOUR project. The first, and most prevalent type of utilisation is to draw 'immediate lessons', such as new ideas to test or knowledge about potential pitfalls (instrumental utilisation). The second, which is also supported by the CHANGING BEHAVIOUR project, involves meta-analysis, conceptualisation and generalisation of success factors to identify key issues across local and national contexts (conceptual utilisation). Both forms of learning from previous experience are important for improving practice. The paper illustrates examples of both types of the utilisation of prior knowledge in the CHANGING BEHAVIOUR project, and presents examples of features and procedures identified as successful and worth testing in future DSM programmes.

**Key words:** energy consumption demand-side-management

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