



Energocredit – you have to remember this innovation if you’re planning to invest in energy efficiency. This is a new project initiated in Georgia by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development -EBRD. EBRD has made available \$35 million USD credit line through the Commercial Georgian banks for issue of loans.

Energocredit can be used by the private businesses as well as homeowners. Project serves two main goals – development of banking system and energy efficiency. EBRD has selected two Georgian banks – “TBC” and “Cartu Banks” at first stage through which the Energocredit can be issued. Energocredit is intended for the persons who are ready to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The shortest way for implementation of the project is the road from your office or home to the mentioned 2 Georgian banks.

Team Leader of the Georgian Energy Efficiency Project Dr Helene Ryding advises the readers of “BRAVACASA” about how to reduce the heating and cooling costs within the framework of the available credit and to improve their comfort.

INVEST IN YOUR COMFORT

A new home should not only be modern, spacious and well designed but also comfortable and easy to run. Photos in Casa Brava often show homes with big open spaces with large areas of glass creating a light modern spacious feel. They almost never show the boilers and air conditioning which are needed at home. It is also impossible to see the electricity bills or the running costs of living in these homes from the pages of the magazine.

In reality big spaces can easily be too hot or cold or too cluttered if the same attention is not paid to construction details, insulation and equipment as to it is to the architecture, interior design and furniture. Measures helping to increase comfort are not difficult to incorporate during construction, but expensive or even impossible to change afterwards.

As prices per square metre rise for housing, you will want to make sure that you can use each square metre that you have paid for, and that parts of your home are not too hot or too cold, too dark, or simply too cluttered with equipment, pipes and cables, which were ignored during construction. You also do not want to spend a large part of your income on electricity and gas simply to be comfortable in your own home.

There are several important issues to be considered in homes as well as in the offices and factories.

Insulation

The building walls, roof and floor have to be properly insulated in accordance with the European standards. At present this is not a legal requirement in Georgia. This will help keep in the heat in winter and heat out in summer.

Sound insulation in the floors between apartments is also a strong recommendation, to avoid hearing your neighbour's arguments, piano practice and children bicycling indoors.

Windows

While large areas of glazing look modern, they can hugely restrict the use of space near them: too cold in winter, too hot in summer. With the right design they can help to trap heat in, or reflect heat away. Double glazing with sealed units is essential. Opening windows should open from the top and the side, to give variable amounts of ventilation, and also for cleaning.

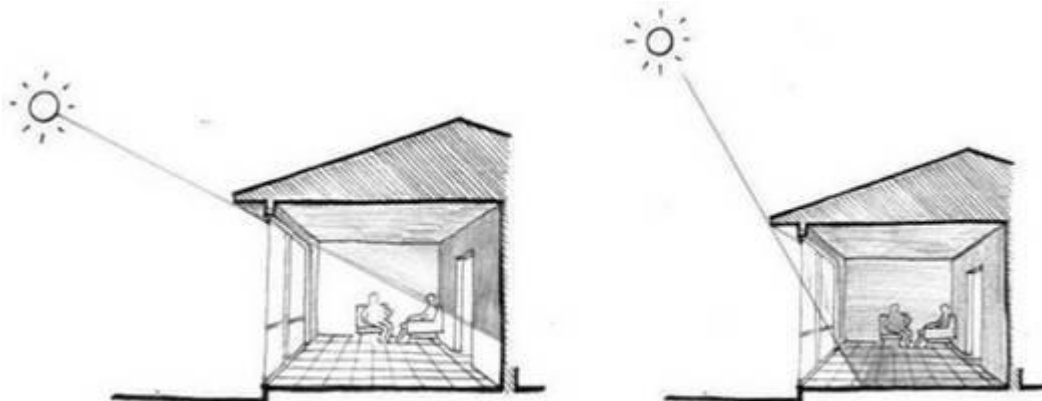


In summer everyone aims at reduction of the amount of heat coming into the building through windows. Air conditioning should only be used when necessary. Built in blinds on the outside are good not only for security, but also for shading to keep rooms cool in the day. Windows can be purchased with these built in.

In winter, sunny days can be a bonus for heating, but the windows can also trap the heat in like a greenhouse, causing overheating, especially in spring when the heating is still operating. It is essential that the heating system can respond to these conditions and there should be the possibility to switch off the heating, rather than just open the window!

Shading

In Georgia, balconies are a place for extra storage and for equipment which was added as an afterthought. But in other hot countries such as Greece and Turkey, not only do balconies provide extra living space, but they also provide shade for the windows on the floor below. Spaces that are not shaded enough by the overhanging floor/roof can have adjustable blinds or louvres to provide variable shade. All this reduces the amount of light and heat entering internal spaces during the day, and reduces the need for air conditioning. So big balconies which provide shade are a good investment, and even small overhangs can help.



Many traditional buildings in hot climates use this principle as well as thick, heavy walls, courtyards, trees, fountains and wind cooling towers. This decision is interesting in the view of architecture. You can have the best of both worlds: modern materials and comfort with traditional designs.

Efficient heating systems

The most efficient heating system for a home is a gas-fired radiator system with a boiler which also heats the hot water. Essential features for comfort and energy saving are:

- Condensing boilers are more efficient than ordinary boilers

- Radiators should have their own thermostatic valves so each room can be comfortable and energy not wasted (e.g. by needing to open the window to prevent overheating)
- A house thermostat allows the whole house to be heated to a given level, (useful to save energy, or to lower the temperature when you are away).

Solar water heating

In Georgia solar heat can easily be used to provide free water heating for most of the summer, and even on sunny winter days. Every day with free water heating reduces your electricity and gas bill. Solar panels and storage tanks are easy to install on a flat roof or the solar panels can replace part of the roof tiles, when the roof is built. They look elegant and modern as well.



Lighting

The easiest way to save energy with lighting is to switch it off when it is not in use. If one is not very disciplined then it is possible to use a time switch, a light-level control, or even a people detector.



Using energy efficient light bulbs also helps, using less electricity and needing replacing much less often.

Energocredit

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has made a 35m USD credit line available for energy efficiency loans. This is a way to help you invest in comfort. The loans (through local banks) are available now to legal entities in private sector and in the autumn they will be also available for physical entities. Consult our website www.energocredit.ge. If you're interested in more details on how to save energy and how to apply for loans, or would like to talk to our help desk, contact us on 22 49 62.

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