

1. Introduction

Determining the maximum temperature within the building envelope is key to assessing potential damage and degradation risks. Such thermal analyses can be carried out using various Physibel software tools. Depending on the desired accuracy, models can range from simplified approaches to more detailed simulations, as illustrated in several case studies here.

2. Theoretical background

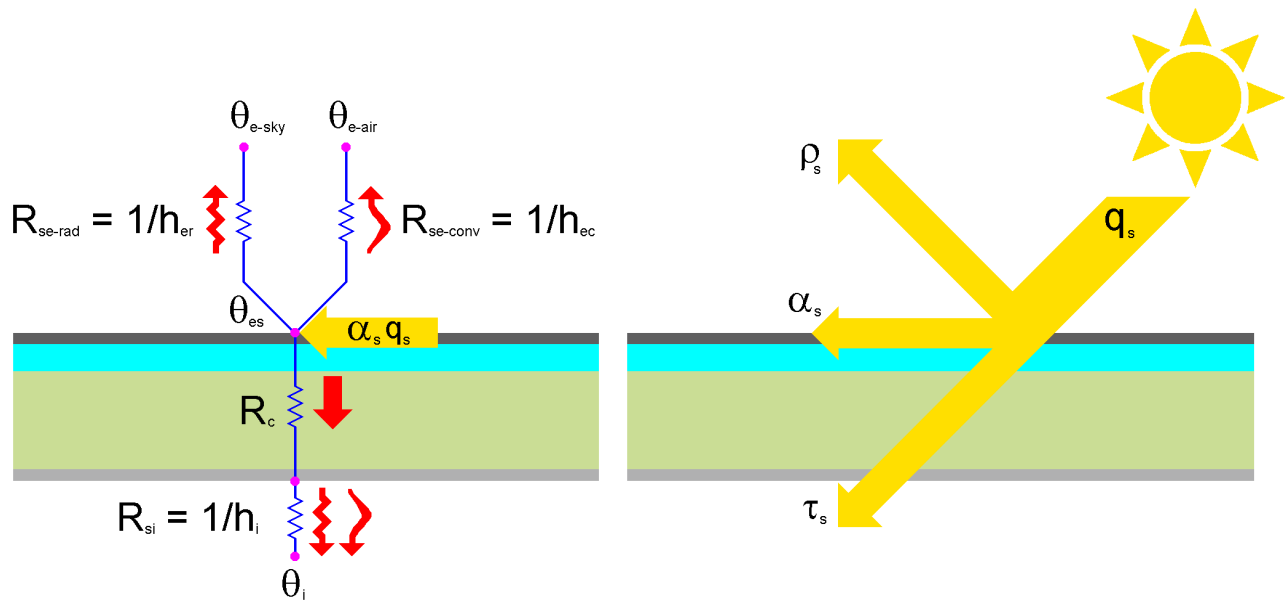


Figure 1 Heat transfer flows in a construction subject to solar radiation

Figure 1 displays the heat transfer flows in a construction subjected to solar radiation.

Solar radiation (the sum of direct solar radiation, diffuse solar radiation and ground reflected radiation) striking a surface, is divided in 3 components (reflection, absorption and solar transmission) that are proportional to the surface properties.

- ρ_s the solar reflectance [-]
- α_s the solar absorptance [-]
- τ_s the solar transmittance factor [-].

$\tau_s = 0$ in case of an opaque element.

From the law of conservation of energy it follows:

$$\rho_s + \alpha_s + \tau_s = 1 \tag{1}$$

The absorbed solar heat $\alpha_s q_s$ will heat up the surface. From the surface heat will flow

- by heat transmission (q_t) to the interior
- by convection (q_s) to the exterior
- by long wave radiation (q_r) to the exterior

The external surface temperature θ_{es} can be derived from the thermal equilibrium equation:

$$\alpha_s q_s = q_t + q_c + q_r \quad (2)$$

The transmission heat transfer q_t equals to:

$$q_t = \frac{\theta_{es} - \theta_i}{R_c + 1/h_i} \quad (3)$$

with θ_i internal resultant temperature [$^{\circ}\text{C}$]

R_c construction thermal resistance [$\text{m}^2\text{K}/\text{W}$]

h_i global internal surface heat transfer coefficient [$\text{W}/\text{m}^2\text{K}$]

The convective heat transfer q_c equals to:

$$q_c = \frac{\theta_{es} - \theta_{e-air}}{1/h_{ec}} \quad (4)$$

with θ_{e-air} external air temperature [$^{\circ}\text{C}$]

h_{ec} external convective surface heat transfer coefficient [$\text{W}/\text{m}^2\text{K}$]

The long wave radiation heat transfer q_r equals to:

$$q_r = \frac{\theta_{es} - \theta_{e-sky}}{1/h_{er}} \quad (5)$$

with θ_{e-sky} external sky temperature [$^{\circ}\text{C}$]

h_{er} external long wave surface heat transfer coefficient [$\text{W}/\text{m}^2\text{K}$]

A simplification is to replace the 2 external parallel resistances by 1 resistance, assuming that the external sky temperature equals the external air temperature. In that way, the global surface heat transfer equals to:

$$q_c + q_r = \frac{\theta_{es} - \theta_{e-air}}{1/h_e} \quad (6)$$

with h_e external global surface heat transfer coefficient [$\text{W}/\text{m}^2\text{K}$]

3. Boundary conditions

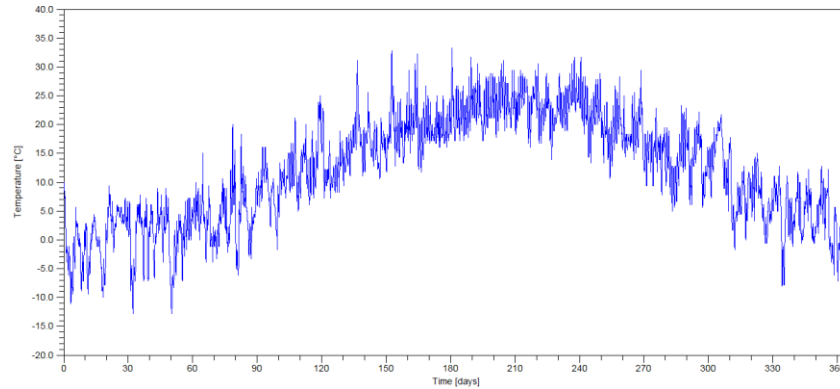


Figure 2 Temperature for New York City

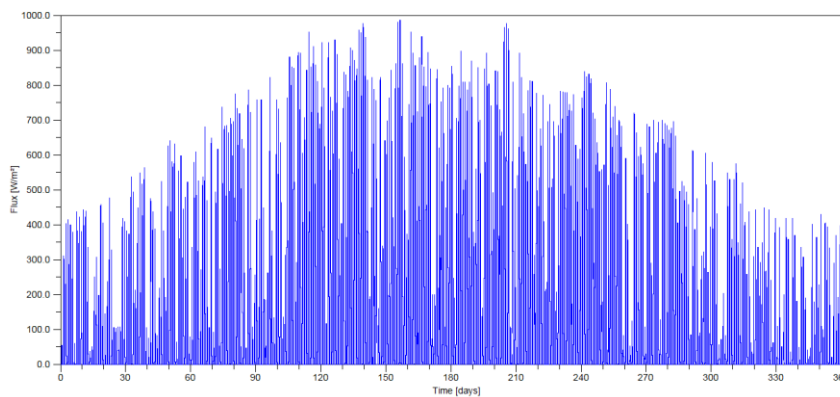


Figure 3 Horizontal global solar radiation for New York City

Outdoors

Hourly values of air temperature, global (and diffuse) solar radiation and sky temperature on a yearly basis can be retrieved from databases. It is assumed further that the sky temperature equals the air temperature¹. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show such values for New York City. Such functions can be used in a transient analysis (programs BISTRA and VOLTRA). In a steady state analysis (programs BISCO, TRISCO, SOLIDO) one value of the air temperature and of the incident solar radiation is required. From the graphs it can be read that for a horizontal surface in New York City:

$$\theta_{e\text{-air}} = 33.3^{\circ}\text{C} \quad q_s = 985 \text{ W/m}^2 \quad (7)$$

are maximum values. These values will be used in the steady state analysis.

¹ The sky temperature is normally equal or lower than the air temperature. Assuming a sky temperature equal to the air temperature is a conservative in regard of the purpose of the thermal analysis, i.e the knowledge of maximum temperatures.

Indoors

The indoor temperature course depends on multiple parameters. In the case studies a constant indoor temperature will be used:

$$\theta_i = 25^\circ\text{C} \quad (8)$$

4. Surface Properties

In the first instance, the case studies concern opaque constructions, i.e. the solar transmittance factor $\tau_s = 0$. The solar absorptance depends mainly on the colour of the surface. Table 1 (from EN ISO 52016-1) gives values of the solar absorptance that may be used when no specific values are available.

	light colour Category 1	intermediate colour Category 2	dark colour Category 3
α_s	0.3	0.6	0.9

Table 1 Solar absorptance factors (EN ISO 52016-1)

5. Surface heat transfer coefficients

Indoors

Table 2 (from ISO 6946: 2017) gives values for the indoor surface heat transfer coefficient h_i .

	upwards heat transfer	horizontal heat transfer	downwards heat transfer
h_i [W/m ² K]	10.0	7.7	5.9

Table 2 Indoor surface heat transfer coefficients (ISO 6946)

Outdoors convection

Both forced (due to the wind) and natural (due to temperature difference) convection occur at the external surface. For summer calculations, EN ISO 52022-3 recommends:

$$h_{ec} = 8 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K} \quad (9)$$

A more physical approach is to use a h_{ec} -value based on the temperature difference between air and surface (assuming no forced convection due to wind) (EN ISO 6946 Table D.2)²:

$$\text{for horizontal heat flow} \quad h_{ec} = 1.46\Delta\theta^{1/3} \text{ [W/m}^2\text{K]} \quad (10)$$

$$\text{for upwards heat flow} \quad h_{ec} = 2.28\Delta\theta^{1/3} \text{ [W/m}^2\text{K]} \quad (11)$$

$$\text{for downward heat flow} \quad h_{ec} = 0.18\Delta\theta^{0.187} \text{ [W/m}^2\text{K]} \quad (11)$$

² Other relations are available in the literature.

Outdoors long wave radiation

For summer calculations, EN ISO 13789 recommends:

$$h_{er} = 4,14 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K} \quad (12)$$

A more physical approach is to calculate the radiation surface heat transfer coefficient:

$$h_r = \varepsilon h_{rb} \quad h_{rb} = \sigma(T_{sky}^2 + T_{es}^2)(T_{sky} + T_{es}) \approx 4\sigma T_m^3 \quad (13)$$

with ε long wave emissivity [-]

h_{rb} black radiation heat transfer coefficient [W/m²K]

σ Stefan-Boltzmann constant (5.67 10⁻⁸ W/m²K⁴)

T_{sky} absolute temperature of the sky [K]

T_{es} absolute temperature of the surface [K]

T_m mean temperature [K]

Table 3 gives the values of h_{rb} for different values of T_m .

T_m [°C]	0	10	20	30	40	50
h_{rb} [W/m ² K]	4.63	5.15	5.72	6.33	6.98	7.67

Table 3 Values of h_{rb} for different values of T_m

The Physibel software (with RADCON module installed) allows both an automatic iterative calculation of Eq. 13 (this is called non-linear radiation), and the specification of a h_{rb} -value from Table 3 (this is called linear radiation). The non-linear radiation model results in the more correct result. The linear radiation model results in correct results as long as the h_{rb} -value is correctly estimated.

Outdoors convection and radiation

The global external heat transfer coefficient h_e (see Eq. 6) is the sum of the convective and radiation surface coefficient. For summer calculations (with low wind velocity) this could lead to:

$$h_e = h_{ce} + h_{re} = 8 \frac{\text{W}}{\text{m}^2\text{K}} + 4.14 \frac{\text{W}}{\text{m}^2\text{K}} = 12.14 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K} \quad (14)$$

A commonly used value in practice is 13.5 W/m²K; this value was previously specified in EN ISO 13792. This standard has been withdrawn and replaced by ISO 52016-1:2017 and ISO 52017-1:2017. This value will also be used in the example cases in this document.

6. Case study A1. Flat roof, 1D steady state simplified approach

BISCO data [flat roof 1.bsc](#)

TRISCO data [flat roof 1.trc](#)

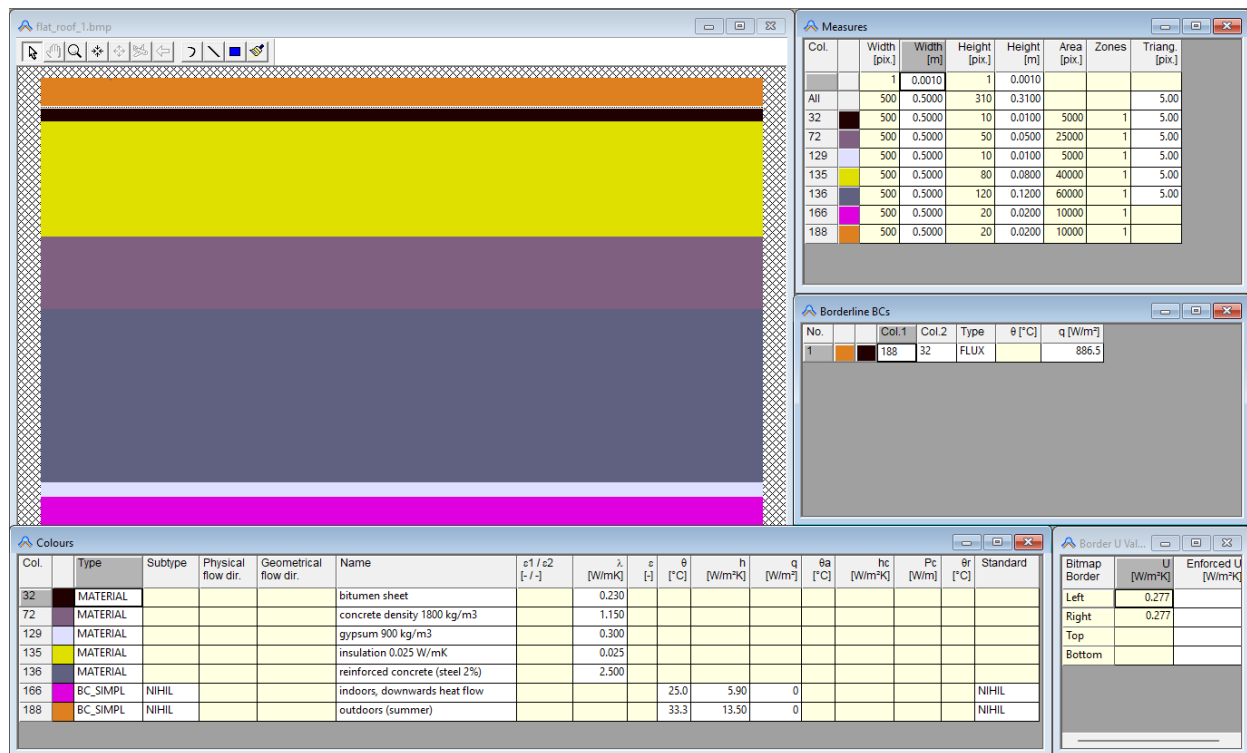


Figure 4 BISCO data [flat roof 1.bsc](#)

The case study concerns a flat roof with a black surface, located in New York City. Although this case easily can be calculated by hand, as the heat flow is 1D, the programs BISCO/TRISCO are used to solve it. Figure 4 shows the BISCO data for a flat roof. A simplified steady state approach is used:

-Indoors: temperature = 25 °C (Eq. 8)

global surface heat transfer coefficient $h_i = 5.9 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$ (Table 2)

-Outdoors: temperature = 33.3 °C (Eq. 7)

global surface heat transfer coefficient $h_o = 13.5 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$ (Eq. 14)

absorbed solar radiation = $0.9 \times 985 \text{ W/m}^2 = 886.5 \text{ W/m}^2$ (Eq. 7 and Table 1).

The absorbed solar radiation is entered as a "borderline boundary condition".

Figure 5 shows the temperature course found. The external surface temperature is 97.45 °C.

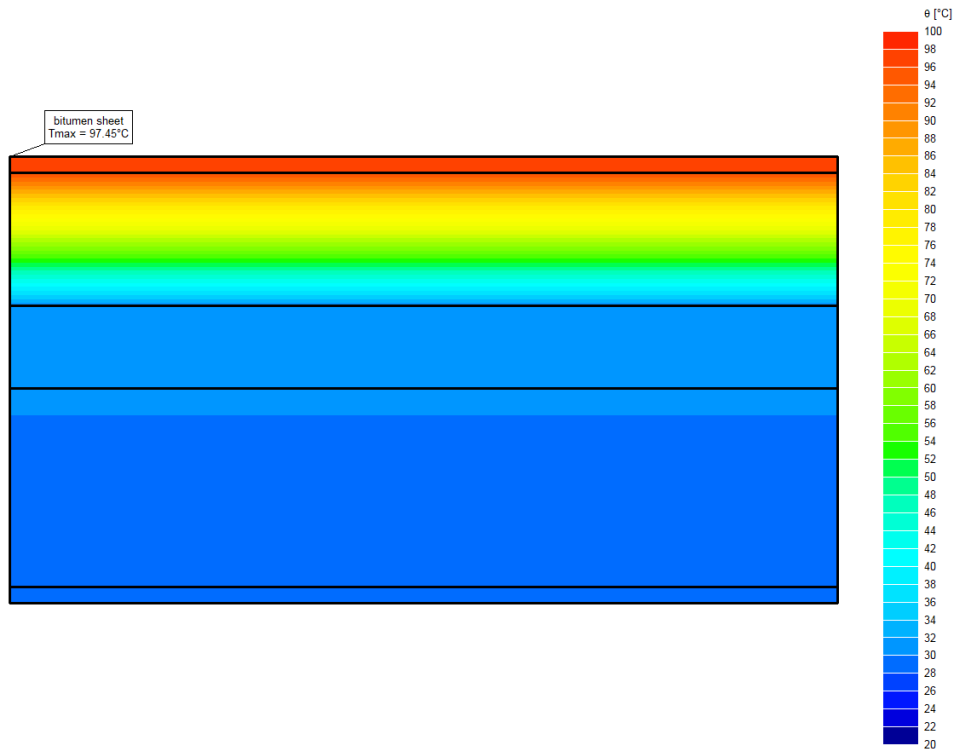


Figure 5 Temperature course

7. Case study A2. Flat roof, 1D steady state detailed approach

BISCO data [flat_roof_1_RADCON.bsc](#)

VOLTRA data [flat_roof_1_RADCON.trc](#)

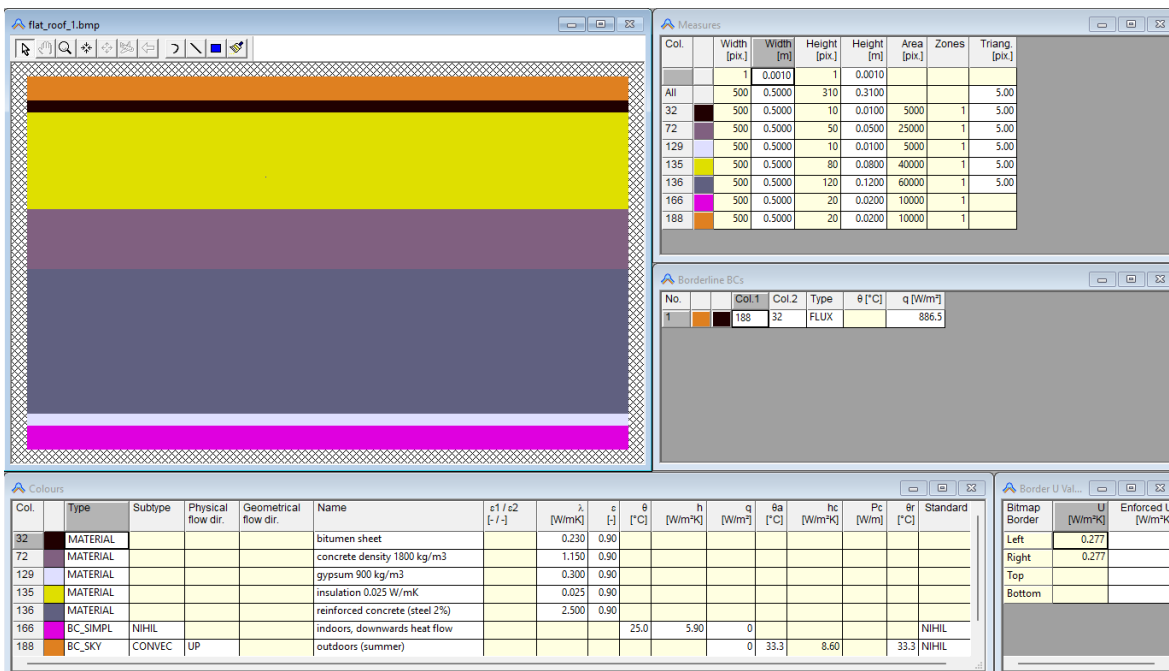


Figure 6 BISCO data [flat_roof_1_RADCON.bsc](#)

At the external surface, the heat transfer by convection and radiation is considered separately. Therefore the outdoors boundary condition is taken as a BC_SKY type (Figure 6) with

- air temperature = sky temperature = 33.3 °C (Eq. 7)

- convective heat transfer coefficient calculated iteratively according to Eq. 11. This is forced by applying the Subtype: "CONVEC" and Physical flow dir.: "UP" to the colour 188. In the window Calculation Parameters, "recalculate before each iteration cycles" and "Use solution temperatures" are specified.
- long wave emission of the external surface = 0.9. In the window Calculation Parameters, non-linear radiation is specified.

Figure 7 shows the temperature course found. The external surface temperature is 86.94 °C.

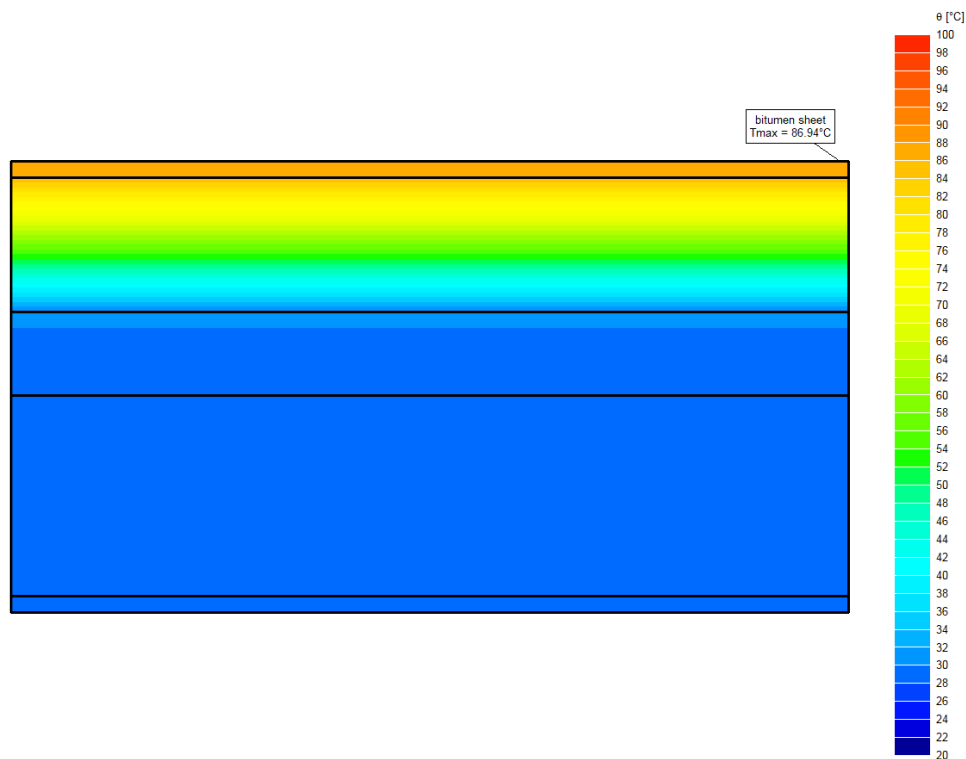


Figure 7 Temperature course

8. Case study A3. Flat roof, 1D transient simplified approach

BISTRA data [flat roof 1 transient.bst](#)

VOLTRA data [flat roof 1 transient.vtr](#)

Col.	Type	Subtype	Physical flow dir.	Geometrical flow dir.	Name	$\alpha 1 / \alpha 2$ [- / -]	λ [W/mK]	ρ [kg/m ³]	c [J/kgK]	θ [°C]	h [W/m ²]	q [W/m ²]	θ_a [°C]	h_c [W/m ² K]	P_c [W/m]	θ_r [°C]	Sun	ρ_s [-]	Specular [%]	ρ_s [-]	Standard
32	MATERIAL				bitumen sheet		0.230	1100	1000									0.10	0	0.00	
72	MATERIAL				concrete density 1800 kg/m ³		1.150	1800	1000									0.10	0	0.00	
129	MATERIAL				gypsum 900 kg/m ³		0.300	900	1000									0.10	0	0.00	
135	MATERIAL				insulation 0.025 W/mK		0.025	30	1000									0.10	0	0.00	
136	MATERIAL				reinforced concrete (steel 2%)		2.500	2500	1000									0.10	0	0.00	
166	BC_SIMPL	NIHIL			indoors, downwards heat flow					25.0	5.90	0					NO				NIHIL
188	BC_SIMPL	NIHIL			outdoors (summer)					T01	13.50	0					YES				NIHIL

No.	Ref.	Type	Filename	Prm.1	Prm.
1	T01	EPW	USA_NY_New		
2	G01	EPW	USA_NY_New		
3	D01	EPW	USA_NY_New		

No.	Object	Object No.	Type	Width	Decimals
1	TIME		[dddd:hh:mm:ss]	8	
2	COLOUR	188	θ	8	1
3	COLOUR	32	θ_{max}	8	1

Solar Data

Real sun path
 Fixed sun position

North orientation

- Rotate bitmap (in XY) around Z axis so that new X axis is parallel to horizon plane
(clockwise) rotation angle = °
- Rotate bitmap upward (in YZ) around X axis so that new XY plane is parallel to horizon plane
elevation angle = °
(0° = horizontal bitmap, 90° = vertical bitmap)
- Azimuth from X axis to north direction
(clockwise) azimuth = °

Earth position

Latitude °N

Longitude °E

Time zone h E

Solar radiation

Horizontal global solar radiation function

Horizontal diffuse solar radiation function

Ground reflection factor

Calculation Parameters

Time axis

Time step dddd:hh:mm:ss

Start-up calculation duration dddd:hh:mm:ss

Calculation duration dddd:hh:mm:ss

Calculation start Day i Time hh:mm:ss

Triangulation

Contour approximation margin pixels

Iterations

Iteration cycles

Maximum number of iterations (per iteration cycle)

Maximum temperature difference °C

Max. heat flow divergence for total object %

Max. heat flow divergence for any node %

Radiation

Linear Radiation

Black radiation heat transfer coefficient W/(m².K) (linear radiation)

Smallest accepted view factor

Number of visibility rays between radiative surfaces

Max. number of view factor faces (per view factor zone)

Automatic calculation of thermal properties

Recalculate before each iteration cycle

Use solution temperatures

Default temperature difference for hc calculation (subtype CONVEC) °C

Bitmap border is axis of symmetry

OK Cancel Set As Default

Figure 8 BISTRA data [flat roof 1 transient.bst](#)

Compared to the steady state case studies, the absorbed solar radiation doesn't need to be defined as a borderline boundary condition. The program BISTRA contains a solar processor, and the absorbed solar radiation is calculated at each time step from the horizontal global and diffuse

radiation functions defined (New York City), the solar reflection factor of the surface, the orientation of the construction element as defined in the BISTRA data windows (Figure 8). For the heat transfer by radiation and convection from the roof surface to the outdoor environment a simplified approach is used (Eq. 14). The transient thermal behaviour is simulated from the 1st May until the 30th September.

Figure 9 shows the evolution of the outdoors and roof surface temperature. The maximum roof surface temperature is 93°C and occurs on 24 July. The file [flat roof 1 transient 24 July.mp4](#) contains an animation of the temperature course on that day.

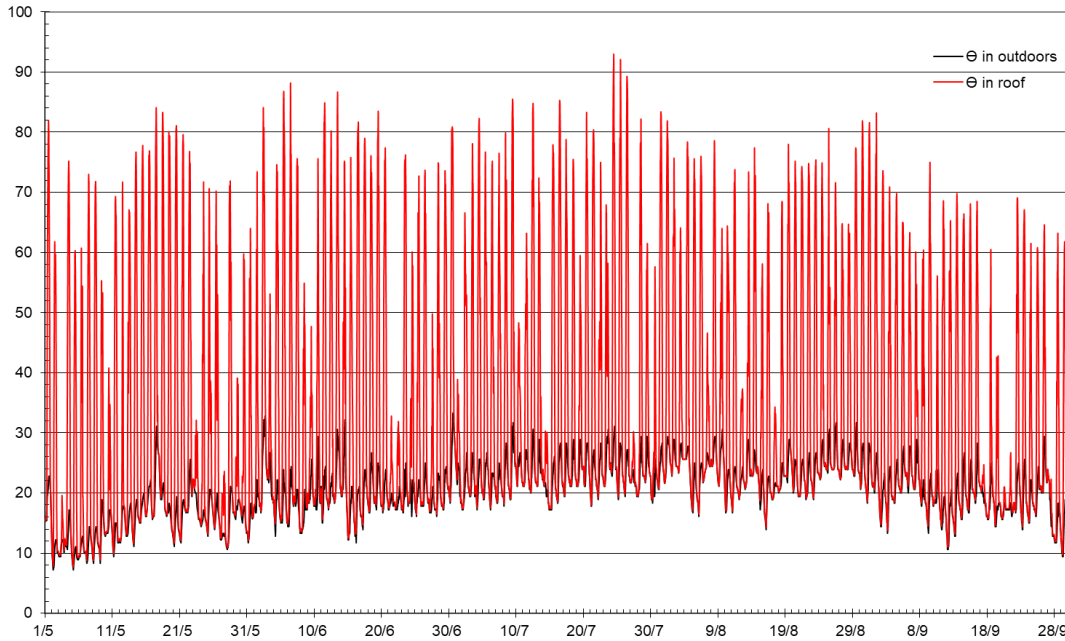


Figure 9 Outdoors and roof surface temperatures [°C].

9. Case study A4. Flat roof, 1D transient detailed approach

BISTRA data [flat_roof_1_RADCON_transient.bst](#)

VOLTRA data [flat_roof_1_RADCON_transient.vtr](#)

Colours

Col.	Type	Subtype	Physical flow dir.	Geometrical flow dir.	Name	ϵ_1 / ϵ_2 [-/-]	λ [W/mK]	ρ [kg/m ³]	c [J/kgK]	θ [°C]	h [W/m ² K]	q [W/m ²]	θ_a [°C]	h_c [W/m ² K]	P_c [W/m]	θ_r [°C]	Sun	ρ_s [-]	Specular [%]	ϵ_s [-]	Standard
32	MATERIAL				bitumen sheet		0.230	0.90	1100	1000								0.10	0	0.00	
72	MATERIAL				concrete density 1800 kg/m ³		1.150	0.90	1800	1000								0.10	0	0.00	
129	MATERIAL				gypsum 900 kg/m ³		0.300	0.90	900	1000								0.10	0	0.00	
135	MATERIAL				insulation 0.025 W/mK		0.025	0.90	30	1000								0.10	0	0.00	
136	MATERIAL				reinforced concrete (steel 2%)		2.500	0.90	2500	1000								0.10	0	0.00	
166	BC_SIMPL	NIHIL			indoors, downwards heat flow					25.0	5.90	0					NO				NIHIL
188	BC_SKY	CONVEC	UP		outdoors (summer)							0	T01	4.91		T02	YES				

Functions

No.	Ref.	Type	Filename
1	T01	EPW	USA_NY_New.York.City-Central.Park.94728_TMY
2	G01	EPW	USA_NY_New.York.City-Central.Park.94728_TMY
3	D01	EPW	USA_NY_New.York.City-Central.Park.94728_TMY
4	T02	FILE	New_York_City_Central_Sky

Report Definition

No.	Object	Object No.	Type	Width	Decimals
1	TIME		[dddd:hh:mm:ss]	8	
2	COLOUR	188	θ_a	8	1
3	COLOUR	188	θ_r	8	2
4	COLOUR	32	θ_{max}	8	1
5	COLOUR	188	h_c	8	1

Solar Data

Real sun path
 Fixed sun position

North orientation

- Rotate bitmap (in XY) around Z axis so that new X axis is parallel to horizon plane
(clockwise) rotation angle = °
- Rotate bitmap upward (in YZ) around X axis so that new XY plane is parallel to horizon plane
elevation angle = °
(0° = horizontal bitmap, 90° = vertical bitmap)
- Azimuth from X axis to north direction
(clockwise) azimuth = °

Earth position

Latitude °N
Longitude °E
Time zone h E

Solar radiation

Horizontal global solar radiation function
Horizontal diffuse solar radiation function
Ground reflection factor

Calculation Parameters

Time axis

Time step dddd:hh:mm:ss
Start-up calculation duration dddd:hh:mm:ss
Calculation duration dddd:hh:mm:ss
Calculation start Day i Time hh:mm:ss

Triangulation

Contour approximation margin pixels

Iterations

Iteration cycles
Maximum number of iterations (per iteration cycle)
Maximum temperature difference °C
Max. heat flow divergence for total object %
Max. heat flow divergence for any node %

Radiation

Linear Radiation

Black radiation heat transfer coefficient W/(m².K) (linear radiation)
Smallest accepted view factor
Number of visibility rays between radiative surfaces
Max. number of view factor faces (per view factor zone)

Automatic calculation of thermal properties

Recalculate before each iteration cycle
 Use solution temperatures
Default temperature difference for hc calculation (subtype CONVEC) °C
 Bitmap border is axis of symmetry

OK
Cancel
Set As Default

Figure 10 BISTRA data [flat_roof_1_RADCON_transient.bst](#)

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In the detailed radiation transient approach, a similar procedure is followed as in the simplified transient case. The key difference lies in the treatment of heat transfer at the external surface, where convection and radiation are considered separately. Consequently, the outdoor boundary condition is defined as a BC_SKY type, allowing for distinct air and sky temperatures.

The air temperature is directly obtained from the EPW file, whereas the sky temperature must be generated through a preprocessing step. Using the [F9 – Preparing sky temperature and convective surface heat transfer coefficient from EPW file Physibel software format](#) document available in the Physibel Knowledge Base, a corresponding .FTE file containing the sky temperature can be created. This file is then imported as a T02 function and assigned to θ_r in the colours window.

Figure 10 illustrates the BISTRA data windows used for this setup. The transient thermal behaviour is simulated over the period from 1st May to 30th September.

Figure 11 shows the evolution of the outdoors and roof surface temperature and of the convective heat transfer coefficient³. The maximum roof surface temperature is 80.4 °C and occurs on 25 July. The file [flat roof 1 RADCON transient 25 July.mp4](#) contains an animation of the temperature course on that day.

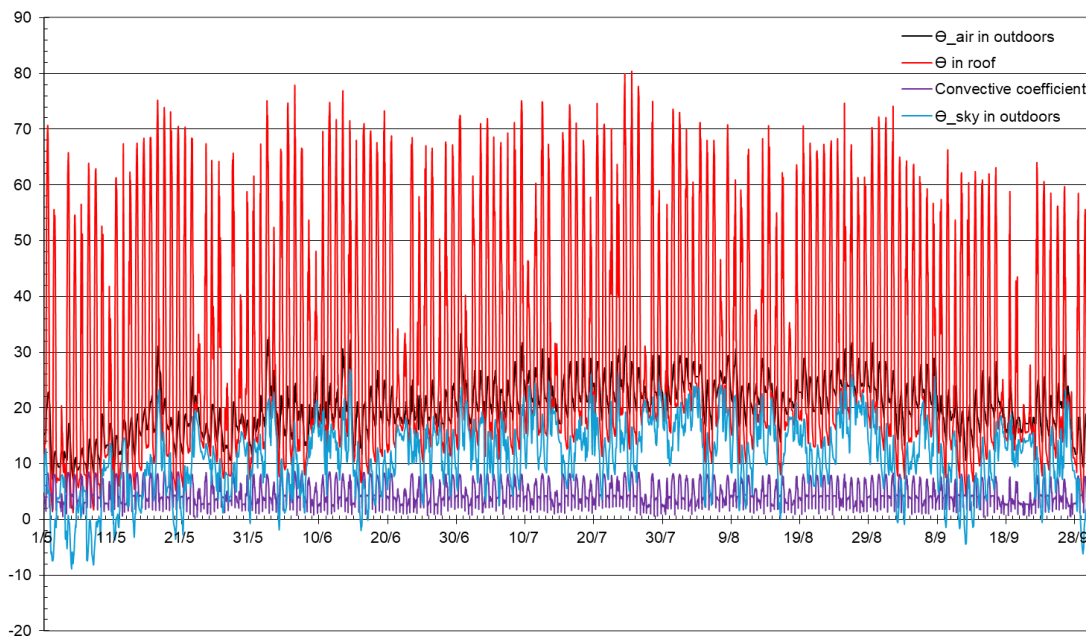


Figure 11 Outdoors air, sky and roof surface temperatures [°C] and convective heat transfer coefficient [W/m²K]

Case studies A1-A2-A3-A4 (Flat roof): summary and discussion

The steady state and simplified approach (case study A1) leads to the highest roof surface temperature: 97.5°C.

³ The convective heat transfer coefficient is only due to natural convection. No forced convection due to the wind is considered.

A steady state detailed approach (case study A2) results in a roof surface temperature of 86.9 °C.
 A transient simplified approach (case study A3) results in a roof surface temperature of 93 °C.
 The transient detailed approach (case study A4) leads to the lowest roof surface temperature: 80.4 °C.

Table 4 Results

Example flat roof	BC_SIMPL (global surface coefficient)	BC_SKY (detailed radiation)
Steady-state	97.5°C (Case A1)	86.9°C (Case A2)
Transient	93°C (Case A3)	80.4°C (Case A4)

10. Case study B1. Window frame, 2D steady state simplified approach

BISCO data [Frame glazed 1.bsc](#)

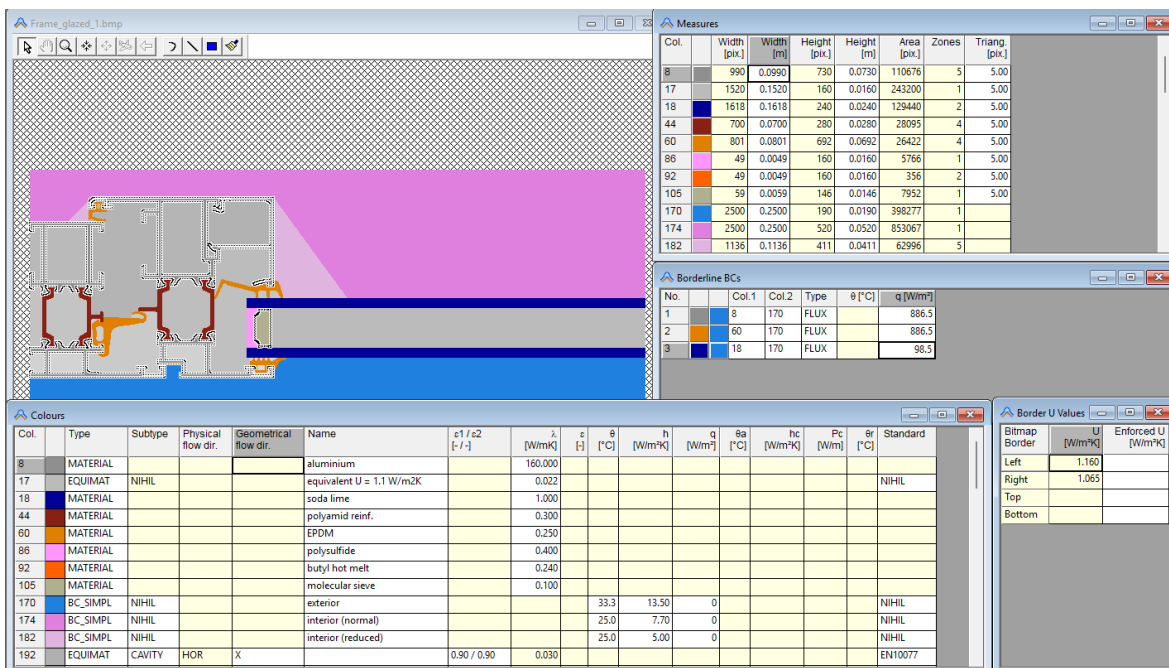


Figure 12 BISCO data [Frame glazed 1.bsc](#)

The case study concerns a dark coloured window frame, vertically positioned, south oriented and located in New York City. It is assumed that the maximal incident solar radiation on a vertical south oriented surface is about 985 W/m² ⁴. The frame is glazed. In this case the solar transmittance through the glazing is not considered. It is simply assumed that the external pane of the glazing

⁴ Little higher solar incidence may occur in wintertime (in combination with lower temperature). Higher solar incidence may occur due to reflections by water, snow and glazings. The maximum solar incidence on a surface can be calculated using the programs BISTRA and VOLTRA.

absorbs 10 % of the incident solar radiation. Figure 12 shows the BISCO data. A simplified steady state approach is used:

-Indoors: temperature = 25 °C (Eq. 8)

global surface heat transfer coefficient $h_i = 7.7$ or 5.0 W/m²K (EN 10077-2)

-Outdoors: temperature = 33.3 °C (Eq. 7)

global surface heat transfer coefficient $h_o = 13.5$ W/m²K (Eq. 14)

absorbed solar radiation (frame and EPDM) = 0.9×985 W/m² = 886.5 W/m²

absorbed solar radiation (glazing) = 0.1×985 W/m² = 98.5 W/m² (Eq. 7 and Table 1).

The absorbed solar radiation is entered as a “borderline boundary condition”.

Figure 13 gives the temperature course found. The maximum external surface temperature is 85.19 °C.

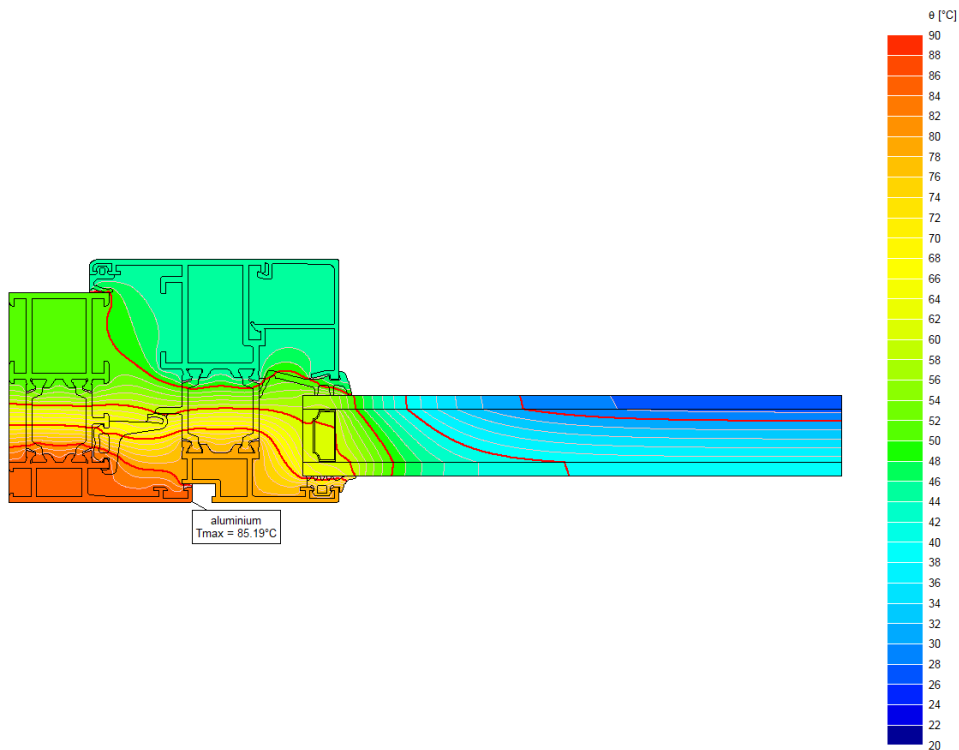


Figure 13 Temperature course

11. Case study B2. Window frame, 2D transient detailed approach

BISTRA data [Frame glazed transient 1.bst](#)

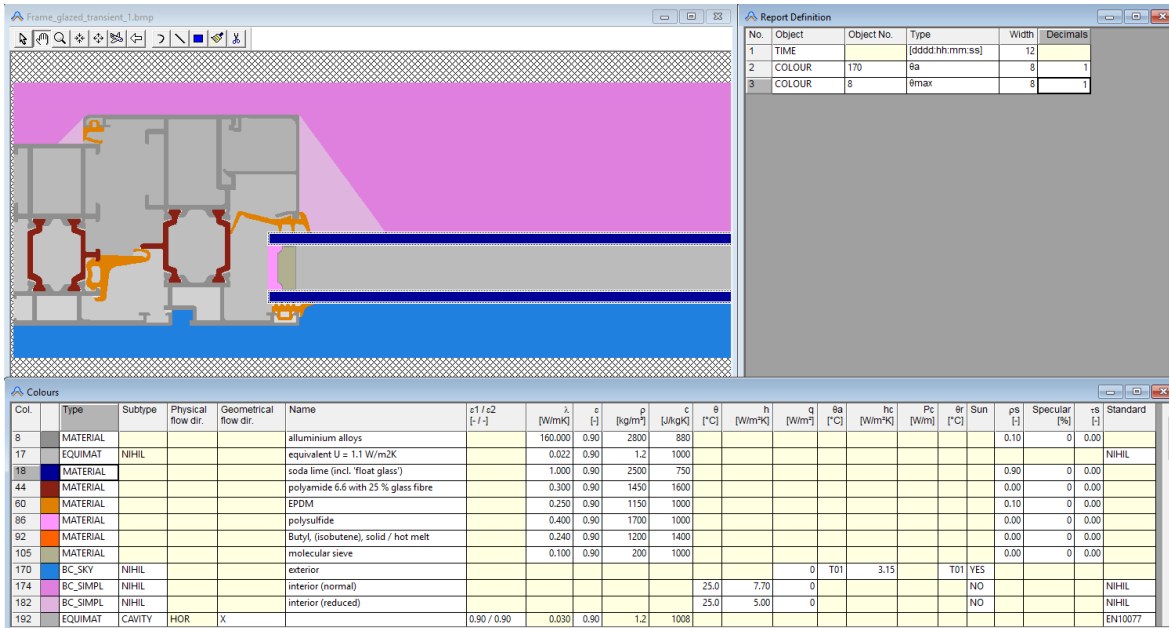


Figure 14 BISTRA data [Frame glazed transient 1.bst](#)

The detailed approach doesn't concern the glazing. Again we only assume solar absorption in the outer glass pane (solar absorption of 10%). Part II of this document will focus on transparent construction elements.

Compared to the steady state case studies, the absorbed solar radiation doesn't need to be defined as a borderline boundary condition. The program BISTRA contains a solar processor, and the absorbed solar radiation is calculated at each time step from the horizontal global and diffuse radiation functions defined (New York City), the solar reflection factor of the surface, the orientation of the construction element as defined in the BISTRA data windows (Figure 14). The transient thermal behaviour is simulated for the 24th September.

Figure 15 shows the temperature course at 12:30. The maximum external surface temperature is 61.3 °C.

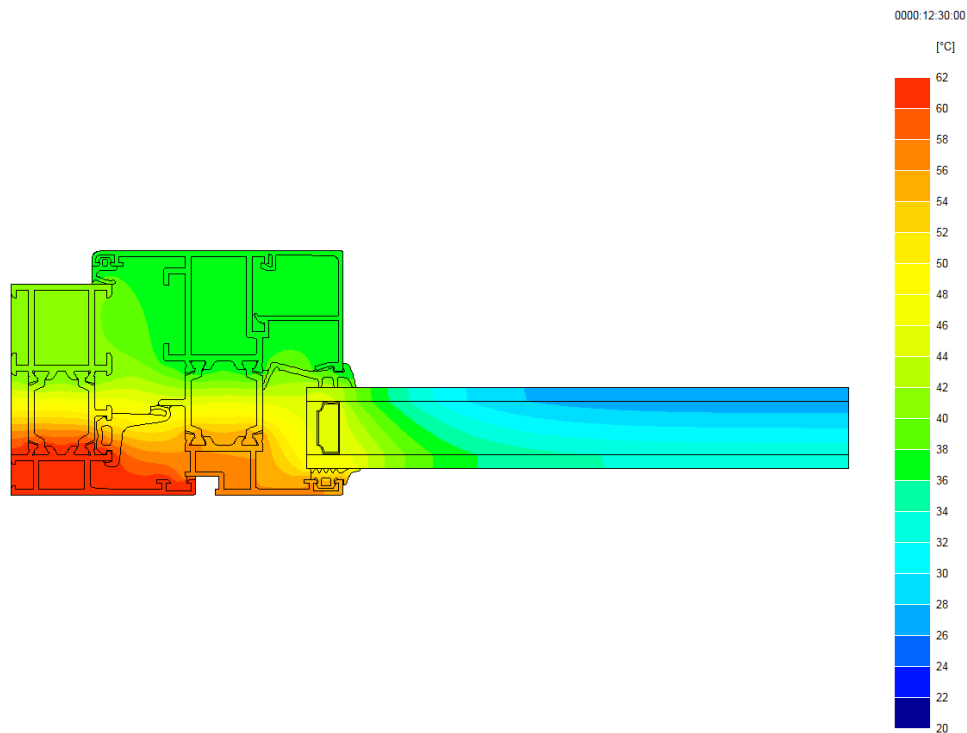


Figure 15 Temperature course at 12.30

12. References

- EN ISO 52016-1(2017) : Energy performance of buildings - Energy needs for heating and cooling, internal temperatures and sensible and latent heat loads - Part 1: Calculation procedures. ISO 6946: 2017. Building components and building elements – Thermal resistance and thermal transmittance - Calculation methods
- ISO 52022-3:2017 Energy performance of buildings — Thermal, solar and daylight properties of building components and elements Part 3: Detailed calculation method of the solar and daylight characteristics for solar protection devices combined with glazing
- ISO 10077-2:2017. Thermal performance of windows, doors and shutters - Calculation of thermal transmittance - Part 2: Numerical method for frames)