



# **Evaluation of the BUILD UP Skills initiative under the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme**

2011 - 2015

Executive Summary



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Unit: Unit B1 - H2020 Energy

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Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CfP	Calls for Proposals
CIF	Competitiveness and Innovation Framework
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
DG ENER	Directorate General for Energy
EACI	Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation
EASME	Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
EE	Energy Efficiency
EED	Energy Efficiency Directive, Directive 2012/27/EU
EPBD	Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, Directive 2010/31/EC
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
IEE	Intelligent Energy Europe Programme
INTERREG	Community initiative which aims to stimulate interregional cooperation
IVET	Initial Vocational Education and Training
LLL	Life Long Learning programme
MS	Member State(s)
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Tons of CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent
TOR	Terms of Reference
VET	Vocational Education and Training



## Executive summary

**The BUILD UP Skills initiative has been set up to contribute to enhancing the skills of on-site workers and craftsmen in the building sector in order to meet the EU 20-20-20 objectives on energy efficiency and renewable energy in buildings.**

The BUILD UP Skills evaluation has been commissioned by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME) under the Framework Contract SRD MOVE/ENER/ SRD.1/2012-409, Lot 3, Technical Assistance in the Field of Energy.

### Background

The Energy Policy for Europe, agreed by the European Council in March 2007, establishes the Union's core energy policy objectives of competitiveness, sustainability and security of supply. By 2020 renewable energy sources have to contribute 20% to the final energy consumption; greenhouse gas emissions have to be reduced by 20% and energy consumption has to deliver a 20% cut in Europe's annual primary energy consumption compared to 1990.

In 2007 an Ex-Ante Assessment report<sup>1</sup> established the need for an initiative supporting the development of skills in the building workforce. Such an initiative was considered to be in line with the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme (Calls for proposals 2011-2012-2013), aiming at boosting the further education systems for workers in order to promote a high energy performance in buildings. The initiative was part the European Commission's Energy Efficiency Plan adopted in 2011. The Ex-Ante Assessment report proposed a preferred action for member state specific projects, taking into account the complex diversity of training of workers across the Member States. This should be done in two phases: the first phase should focus on data gathering, while the second phase should focus on the design and implementation of training courses.

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<sup>1</sup> ECORYS, 2007, Ex-ante evaluation of the initiative on the building workforce training and qualification in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy within the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme

On this basis, the BUILD UP Skills initiative was planned and launched by the EASME (earlier called EACI).

With the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) 2012/27/EU has established a common framework of measures for the promotion of energy efficiency within the Union in order to ensure the achievement of the Union's 2020 20% headline target on energy efficiency and to ensure further energy efficiency improvements in the future.

The EED includes under Article 8 on energy audits and energy management systems a provision requiring Member States to encourage training programmes for auditors "in order to facilitate sufficient availability of experts".

The appropriate level of competence of installers and builders is considered as critical in achieving the objectives of the EPBD, which therefore includes in Article 20 a requirement for Member States to ensure that "guidance and training is made available for those implementing this Directive".

The recent EU Heating and Cooling Strategy<sup>2</sup> announced that, in the context of the ongoing review of the energy efficiency legislation, the Commission will extend the work of the BUILD UP Skills initiative to improve training for building professionals, in particular through a new module for energy experts and architects.

Since only a small percentage of the buildings stock is new buildings, there is a large demand for quality energy renovation of the existing building stock. In fact, it is estimated that new buildings account of only 1% of the building stock each year, which means that almost two thirds of the buildings in use in 2050 have already been built. At the same time the retrofit rate is considered to be around 2% each year<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, this overseen link is a serious barrier towards realised energy savings and therefore a lost opportunity. This represents the main non-technical barrier to reaching EE in building objectives by 2020.

## Objectives of the initiative

The objectives of the BUILD UP Skills initiative were to support Member States in assessing training needs for the construction sector, developing strategies to meet them, and fostering effective training schemes.

The BUILD UP Skills initiative formed part of the broader Intelligent Energy Europe Programme (IEE II) which ran from 2007 to 2013 and supported projects that aimed at removing non-technological barriers to improve energy sustainability. It

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<sup>2</sup> COM(2016) 51 final

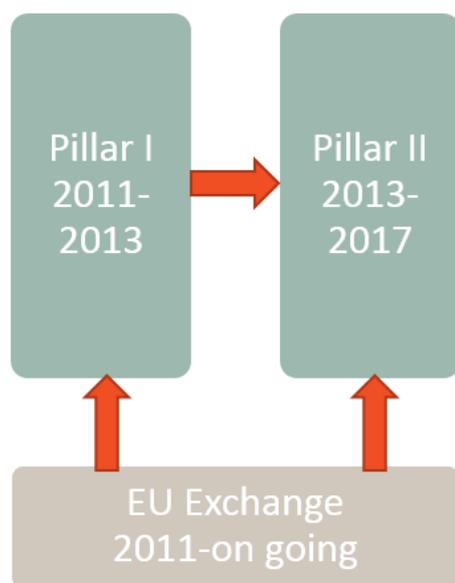
<sup>3</sup> ECORYS, 2007, Ex-ante evaluation of the initiative on the building workforce training and qualification in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy within the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme

supported EU energy efficiency and renewable energy policies, with a view to reaching the EU 2020 targets.

BUILD UP Skills consists of two pillars:

**Pillar I** Supporting the development of national status-quo analysis and national roadmaps (2011-2013);

**Pillar II** Supporting the setup or upgrade of qualification and training schemes (2013-2017).



Under the BUILD UP Skills Initiative 30 countries have developed National Qualification Roadmaps until 2020 under Pillar I. The BUILD UP Skills initiative is also aiming at providing assistance with the preparation and implementation of training and certification schemes under the Pillar II of the initiative.

The two pillars have been supplemented with Europe-wide coordinated support activities (**EU exchange meetings**) to support the exchange of best practices through meetings of all the participating BUILD UP Skills projects.

In November 2011, 21 countries started working under Pillar I on the Status-Quo Analysis and the National Roadmaps. In June 2012 nine additional countries joined the initiative.

At the time of the evaluation most of the Pillar II projects were ongoing (two projects have been completed); it has therefore not been possible to evaluate these projects.

The following key features of the BUILD UP Skills initiative make the initiative somewhat different from other IEE initiatives:

- > Each project is carried out by a national project team;
- > Exchange meetings and peer review activities add the EU dimension to the projects;
- > Standardised Pillar I projects approach (Specific and detailed guide for proposers, templates in the Call for Proposals with outlines for National Roadmaps and Status Quo Reports).

Especially the national dimension makes the projects different from other EU projects. The Ex-Ante Assessment report evaluated that this would be the best approach as the conditions regarding training of on-site workers are very different from one country to another. A multi-national approach would not have allowed mobilising the wide range of stakeholders in each of the countries.

### Outcome of the initiative

The deliverables for Pillar I were set out in the Call for Proposals and were the same for all the countries:

- › The set-up of a National Qualification Platform;
- › A Status Quo Analysis (SQA) with an analysis of the workforces, the national education system for vocational training, an assessment of the training needs and an evaluation of the future lack of workforce in the area of energy efficiency and energy renovation.
- › A fact sheet with a summary of the statistical information in each country;
- › A roadmap of actions for future training and market activities needed to reach national objectives by 2020 with their level of priority and the key stakeholders to be involved.
- › A Project Report summarising the implementation of the projects.

For Pillar II the projects are based on the recommendations in the Roadmaps and are therefore different from one country to the other. The activities are based on the following:

- › Training of trainers
- › Preparation of training and certification schemes
- › Implementation of training and certification schemes

Not all countries managed to have Pillar II projects approved, so from the 30 countries participating in the Pillar I projects, 21 have been awarded a Pillar II project<sup>4</sup>.

### Evaluation of the initiative

The BUILD UP Skills initiative has been evaluated between January 2015 and December 2015 by an independent consortium consisting of the consulting companies COWI Belgium and Viegand Maagoe Denmark.

The evaluation has been made on the basis of:

- › Interviews with EASME Staff including staff not working for the agency at the time of the evaluation, but in charge in the early stages of the design and launch of the initiative;
- › Interviews with country coordinators of both Pillar I and Pillar II projects;
- › Document review (more than 400 project documents including project proposals, reports, Roadmaps, Status Quo Analyses, Fact Sheets, technical assessment reports, interim reports, EU exchange meetings reports, etc.)

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<sup>4</sup> There are 22 Pillar II projects as Italy was awarded 2 projects.

- › Development and launch of an e-survey sent out to more than 400 stakeholders in all the participating countries.

The aim of the assessment of the BUILD UP Skills initiative was to evaluate the main outcomes and the medium to long term impacts of the BUILD UP Skills initiative.

## Findings

### Overall conclusions from the evaluation

The BUILD UP Skills initiative has been a success in the way that the initiative has managed to create national platforms gathering various construction sector actors and stakeholders throughout Europe. These include representatives of the construction industry, the training sector, the energy sector, politicians and decision makers.

The dialogues that took place in the qualification platforms have raised awareness of the fact that achieving the EU's energy saving objectives by 2020 would require scaling up the capacity of construction craftsmen and expanding the training offer and demand.

Stocktaking exercises were successfully elaborated in each country and roadmaps of high quality have been developed.

The format of the initiative (national projects, Call for Proposals with specified deliveries and prefilled templates, participation in the exchange meetings etc.) has proved appropriate. The EU exchange meetings have brought the EU dimension to the initiative. There is also evidence of involvement, cooperation and synergies with other EU initiatives.

Sustainability of the whole initiative cannot be fully assessed as only two Pillar II projects have been finalised at the time of completing this evaluation report.

### Project activities

The outcomes of the Pillar I project activities include the following deliveries:

- › The set-up of a National Qualification Platform in 30 countries;
- › The elaboration of a Status Quo Analysis (SQA) with an analysis of the workforces, the national education system for vocational training, an assessment of the training needs and an evaluation of the future lack of workforce in the area of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies.
- › A Fact Sheet with a summary of the statistical information in each country;
- › The development of a roadmap of actions for future training and market activities needed to reach national objectives by 2020 with their level of priority and pointing out the key stakeholders to be involved.
- › Endorsement of the Roadmap by decision makers

- › Participating in exchange meetings and peer review groups.

In the following, the outcomes are analysed in relation to the project documents, the interviews and the e-survey.

### The national platforms:

From the interviews with the project coordinators and from the e-survey it can be concluded that the majority of the involved stakeholders and project coordinators agree to the fact that setting up the National Qualification Platforms has been a very great success for the project. Many of the stakeholders involved in the project are even of the opinion that the platform is the most important outcome of the initiative. Stakeholders from the education and training sectors, the energy sectors and the construction sector agree that it was the first time they met in a forum like this, where a dialogue on training needs has been started.

The set-up of the platform has created the basis for the rest of the outcomes of the BUILD UP Skills Initiative. Project coordinators have expressed that starting with setting up the platforms was crucial to achieve the objectives of the Pillar I projects.

While in some countries it was easy to assemble relevant stakeholders e.g. by using existing networks, other countries found it more difficult to identify and gather the right stakeholders. However, at the end of the Pillar I projects, about 1 800 people around Europe have been involved in meetings, seminars and conferences as a result of the work with the platforms.

### Status Quo Analysis (SQA)

In the Status Quo Analyses national statistical information on the numbers of employed workers in the construction sector have been gathered, and based on these figures, an estimate of the need for skilled and trained workers until 2020 has been developed in all the countries. The Status Quo Analyses also contain an estimate of the future needs for training of workers in energy efficient and renewable energy technologies as well as an analysis of the barriers and gaps.

The outcome of the Status Quo Analysis is:

- There will be a shortage of building workers by 2020 in most European countries;
- The need for training of the current workforce is much stronger than the estimated need for additional workers;
- 3-4 million workers will require up-skilling on energy efficiency or renewable energy sources by 2020;
- It is important to look at transferable and cross-trade knowledge and skills.

For some of the countries, the collection of the information turned out to be more difficult than initially expected. This is due to the fact that only little information existed before the initiative; hence large parts of the information had to be collected from scratch. For most of the countries, the Status Quo Analysis was a new exercise, which had not been carried out before on such a broad scale.

One of the results of the Status Quo Analysis is that the need for trained workers in energy efficiency and renewable technologies is in most countries much greater

than initially foreseen. A common finding across all the participating countries is that there will be a shortage of trained workers in the near future and that it will be a major challenge to reach the EU 20-20-20 targets in the area of training of workers in energy efficient technologies and renewable technologies. To many countries this was the first time this information was collected under a single coordinated exercise.

## Fact Sheets

Each country was asked to make a short summary of the figures from the Status Quo Analysis in a Fact Sheet. The aim of this was to be able to compare the different countries in a uniform way. However, since the countries have used different methods for gathering or producing the information presented in the fact sheets, it has been very difficult to compare the findings of separate national reports at European level. For instance, the participating countries use different classifications to define buildings, renovation needs and workers as well as level of skills.

About half of the project coordinators have answered that the work with the fact sheets has been very time consuming and that they think that the Fact Sheets did not bring much new information or added value. According to the interviews the majority of the countries did not use the Fact Sheets at national level.

The Fact Sheets have, however, been useful for EASME and at European level, where they have helped obtaining an overall picture of the situation in all the countries.

## The Roadmaps

Based on the Status Quo Analyses, Roadmaps were developed by each of the thirty countries, recommending specific actions and activities until 2020 for the preparation and implementation of training and certification schemes in order to increase the number of trained workers.

The project coordinators generally agree that along with the establishment of the National Qualification Platforms, the development of the Roadmaps has been the most important result achieved under Pillar I projects.

## The endorsing process

The endorsement of the Roadmaps was a key achievement of the initiative. Countries having members from the endorsing authorities as members of the project consortium have expressed that it was comparatively easy to have the roadmap endorsed. In other countries, the endorsement process has been more difficult, but eventually all countries have obtained endorsement from relevant national authorities and key sector representatives. Endorsement was provided in the form of letters of endorsement. In those cases, where a letter has not been produced, the endorsement has been mentioned in the projects' final reports respectively. It is worth mentioning that the endorsement of the roadmaps did not commit the endorsing body to any actual financial support for the implementation of the roadmap, thus making the endorsement a rather symbolic gesture.

The project coordinators express that the endorsement process has been important for securing the implementation of the Pillar II and has also lifted the projects to a higher level.

### Participating in Exchange meetings

Five BUILD UP Skills exchange meetings have been arranged for the Pillar I project coordinators.

The exchange meetings have lifted the projects and added the European dimension to the initiative. EU exchange meetings provided the opportunity for countries to exchange experiences and good practices. The peer review groups, consisting of 3 countries exchanging experience and giving advice, have been greatly appreciated, but some more advanced countries were under the impression that they were rather tutoring other, less advanced, participants and therefore not gaining so much from the meetings. However, the participants expressed that the meetings generated a sense of community among the participants.

## Relevance

The initiative is found relevant to the problems faced by the construction sectors throughout Europe, and more specifically in targeting the critical bottleneck of craftsmen's skills in sustainable energy.

Before the launch of the Call for Proposals, EASME commissioned a detailed study (the Ex-Ante Assessment report<sup>5</sup>, finalised in April 2010). The Assessment contains a thorough analysis of the situation in the building sector in terms of the employment trends and the skills requirements; both subjects are evaluated in the analysis in terms of quality and quantity.

A number of dialogue meetings and consultations with professional organisations were organised to prepare the BUILD UP Skills Initiative and it was concluded that there was a significant deficit in craftsmen's capacity regarding energy efficient construction but that a detailed situation analysis of the skills level and training needs of blue collar workers was required in each Member State.

The e-survey carried out during the evaluation of the BUILD UP Skills Initiative indicates that 84% of the respondents agree to the statement that the BUILD UP Skills initiative addressed important needs in the building sector and that the initiative was very relevant.

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<sup>5</sup> Ex-Ante Assessment , evaluation of the initiative on the building workforce training and qualification in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy within the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme TREN/A2/143-2007, Ecorys, 2010.

## Effectiveness

The initiative has been implemented under a relatively short timeframe with 18 months dedicated to the activities of Pillar I projects. The time from the launch of the Call for Proposals to the signing of contracts was normal as compared to other IEE project types (the Calls For Proposals of the 2011, 2012 and 2013 Work Programmes of IEE).

After the launch of the first Call for Proposals in 2011, 41 proposals have been submitted, out of which 2 were not considered eligible and 21 proposals were funded. In 2012, 9 proposals have been submitted and all passed the threshold.

In total 30 projects were finally accepted (28 from the EU Member States and two from non-Member States: Norway and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). The large number of high quality proposals and the large number of projects accepted shows that the Call for Proposals was very effective.

After the selection of the projects, each country had 18 months to produce the deliverables and finalise the projects. This is also a very tight time frame compared to other programmes and initiatives, but in spite of the time pressure, all countries managed to set up the National Qualification Platform, gather data and produce the Status Quo Analysis and elaborate the national Roadmaps.

The participants generally agree that the time table was very strict and that there was a lot of pressure on them in order to finalise the Pillar I activities in time. However, the time pressure has also been appreciated as a driver of the project.

## Key outcomes

The set-up of the initiative has ensured that a large amount of market players already involved in VET have been successfully involved in this initiative. The number of consortium members and platform members deducted from the lists of participants from the exchange meetings and from the final country reports indicate that about 1 800 named people have been involved in the Pillar I activities. It is the opinion of the evaluation team that the total number of people involved in the BUILD UP Skills initiative is more than 2 500.

The evaluation of the initiative confirmed the general appreciation of the need for a detailed stocktaking exercise on the training needs in the building sector. Most actors were aware that there were needs, but all had a partial view of the situation prior to the BUILD UP Skills initiative. The dialogues initiated at country level, not only provided a detailed description of the situation but also supported the development of a consensus that did not exist prior to the Initiative.

The evaluation outlines that the main impact of the Pillar I projects has been the raised awareness about the need for training craftsmen and the establishment of the platforms in each country among all stakeholders and also at higher policy making decision level. This increase of awareness has in some countries impacted

the methods for assessing the needs and the way the system for vocational training is functioning.

One of the key findings from the Pillar I activities is the extent of the future shortage in skilled workers with adequate qualifications in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The Pillar I projects have identified existing and new needs for training and upgrading of qualifications in the building sector in the participating countries. The Roadmaps for the participating countries all contain prioritised suggestions for actions to be implemented. All roadmaps have been endorsed by the national authorities. Pillar II projects are very much aligned with the findings of the Pillar I initiative as requested under the Calls for Proposals' guidelines. The EU funding for the Pillar II projects has not been sufficient to implement all the actions suggested and endorsed under the Pillar I Roadmaps. The countries have therefore been asked to prioritise the most important projects in their proposals for Pillar II projects. In some countries, the implementation of selected activities of the roadmaps has been undertaken by national authorities or with the financial support of national authorities.

One of the evaluation questions was: "which project has been the most successful?". In order to answer this question it is necessary to set up some criteria for success.

The evaluation team has therefore defined the following criteria for a successful project:

<b>Preparatory criteria (these criteria need to be fulfilled first).</b>		
Pillar I activities successfully implemented		
Level 1:	A large amount of stakeholders have been involved in the project	All countries
Level 2:	A platform for dialogue has been developed	All countries
Level 3:	The training needs for energy efficient and renewable energies have been identified	All countries
Level 4:	Good and realistic actions have been identified for the Roadmap. The actions have been prioritised	All countries
Level 5:	The actions in the Roadmaps have been endorsed by the national authorities	All countries
<b>Implementation Criteria.</b>		
Pillar II activities under the BUILD UP Skills Initiative		
Level 6:	Effective training schemes have been developed and implemented either under Pillar II or under national programmes.	Only the Netherlands and Romania have completed the PII projects
Level 7:	Some of the activities not carried out under Pillar I with EU funding have been carried out with national funding.	Austria, Croatia, Estonia, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia
Level 8:	Activities for securing sustainability of the project have been developed.	Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain
<b>Outcome/impact.</b>		
Impacts outside the BUILD UP Skills Initiative		
Level 9:	A large number of craftsmen have been trained in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies.	No countries yet
Level 10:	The amount of employed workers with certified training in energy efficiency and renewable energies has increased.	No countries yet
Level 11:	The energy consumption in existing buildings has decreased due to the training and certification of workers	No countries yet

During the 7<sup>th</sup> Exchange meeting the participants were asked to indicate how far their project had come according to the list showed above. All countries have

fulfilled level 1-5, which was part of the deliverables under Pillar I and since only the Netherlands and Romania have finalised their Pillar II projects at the time of this evaluation, no other countries were able to answer the questions yet. Obviously, the quantification of Level 11 is the most difficult part of this scheme as the number of assumptions to be made renders any number highly unreliable.

## EU added value

Since the nature of the initiative is different than other EU projects due to the one-country approach, the EU added value is not as apparent as in other initiatives. A means of reaching EU added value was through the development of standardised fact sheets. However, the information contained in these fact sheets was not gathered consistently in each country, and it turned out that it was difficult to compare the information between countries or aggregate them at EU level.

The EU exchange meetings are, however, highlighted as the EU added value through the exchange of good practices and the building of an EU wide community. In addition, the EU exchange meetings have provided opportunities to identify common challenges and develop solutions collectively. Finally, the peer reviews groups, where representatives of different countries were advising each other on their way forward have also added to the European value of the Initiative.

## Long term impacts and sustainability

In the Calls for Proposals the countries were asked to describe activities for ensuring sustainability. In the proposals the activities were generally not described in detail, since most of the countries were expecting to continue with Pillar II projects implementing the actions identified in the roadmaps under Pillar I. In the interviews, the project coordinators generally characterised the Pillar II projects as the long term impact of Pillar I.

The answers both from the interviews and the e-survey also highlight the creation, and maintaining of the National Qualification Platforms. Another impact of the Pillar I activities lies in the raised awareness of decision makers of the size of skills shortages making it difficult to reach EU 2020 sustainable energy objectives in the building sector.

In the interviews with the project coordinators, many answer that the sustainability of the BUILD UP Skills initiative will be ensured by the implementation of the activities included in the Roadmap i.e. the Pillar II projects. Other actions for securing the sustainability of the project are not very elaborated. There is only documentation from three of the countries trying to implement one or two of the actions identified in the Roadmap with other resources (**France, UK and The Netherlands**). More initiatives may well have been implemented but they are not documented or described in the project reports.

However, there is still evidence of activities going beyond the BUILD UP Skills Initiative. Some countries have managed to incorporate some of the

recommendations from the Roadmap into national schemes. In **Austria** results have been included in the National Climate Initiative; in **Bulgaria** initiatives are included into Lifelong Learning Programme Projects. In **Croatia** results have been included in the Fund for Environmental Protection. In **FYROM** training curricula have been changed according to some of the recommendations by the National Employment Agency. **Ireland** has secured sustainability by implementing the recommendations from the Roadmap mentioned in high level policy documents. In **Portugal** the courses created under Pillar II may be included in the National Catalogue of Qualifications. In **Slovenia** recommendations are included in the National Plan for Renovation of Buildings, Ingress/H2020. **Lithuania** is currently looking for funding. The sources of funding vary from country to country, but are mainly public funding.

The other countries may have included recommendations into national programmes, there is, however, no clear evidence in the documents or the interviews on this.

For the countries not participating in Pillar II projects (**Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Malta, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and the UK**), there are not many sustainable activities specified. During the interviews, these countries have expressed that they had expected to continue the activities under Pillar II and that they are disappointed not to be able to continue the dialogue with the stakeholders. **France** is trying to secure the sustainability of the project by finding financing for continuing the training of workers from national initiatives.

Concerning Pillar II projects, only 2 out of 22 have recently been finalised (**The Netherlands** and **Romania**) and all others are still on-going. Hence, long term impacts cannot be specifically identified at this point. Trends are however emerging and include:

- i) Updated national skills gaps identification systems that encompass a broader range of construction and VET stakeholders;
- ii) Establishment of monitoring systems to continuously or regularly review needs for training;
- iii) Updated curricula that better meet the needs of the future; and
- iv) Greater level of awareness among the involved stakeholders.

## Coherence and synergies

In the 2013 Call for Proposals the text clearly states:” *With BUILD UP Skills, IEE aims to unite forces to increase the number of qualified workers in the building workforce in Europe. BUILD UP Skills will contribute to the objectives of the two flagship initiatives of the Commission’s ‘Europe 2020’ strategy — ‘Resource-efficient Europe’ and ‘An Agenda for new skills and jobs’ as well as the Energy Efficiency Plan. It will also enhance interactions with the existing structures and funding instruments like the Lifelong Learning Programme and the European Social Fund, the latter in particular for the support of concrete qualification and training schemes.*”

Going through the project documents there are indications of cooperation with several other EU programmes especially the following programmes and initiatives:

- › Erasmus+
- › Leonardo da Vinci
- › Interreg
- › Structural funds
- › H2020
- › LIFE
- › IEE
- › ESF

There have been synergies with other EU programmes where possible but not necessarily in a planned or structured way. This remains a weakness of the initiative impeding its potential sustainability.

## Recommendations

### **Continuation of the BUILD UP Skills initiative**

It is recommended that the BUILD UP Skills initiative is continued in order to provide opportunities for additional projects from the Roadmaps to be financed and thus increasing the scope of pilot initiatives throughout Member States. Participating countries having no Pillar II projects so far should also be invited to make proposals based on the suggestions for activities in the Roadmaps.

To further emphasise the importance of craftsmen's upskilling in reaching the objectives the Union has set itself in terms of energy efficiency and renewable energies in the building sector, the Commission will extend the work of the BUILD UP Skills initiative to improve training for building professionals, in particular through a new module for energy experts and architects<sup>6</sup>. It is recommended that the results of this evaluation are considered in that context.

### **EU Exchange meetings**

It is recommended to continue the work with the exchange meetings and to keep the number of meeting to at least two per year. It is also recommended to consider re-introducing the work with the peer groups as this has been a very successful initiative. Furthermore, it is recommended to assemble the peer review groups taking more into account the characteristics of each country and the level of progress of the projects.

A new feature, which has been added to the exchange meetings for the Pillar II project, is the technical working groups, where participants in the meeting meet

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<sup>6</sup> COM(2016) 51 final; Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, An EU Strategy on Heating and Cooling .  
This is particularly relevant to deliver nearly zero-energy buildings and renovations to high energy performance.

and discuss a certain topic. These groups are led by one of the project managers. This is seen as a very good way to involve the participants even more in the meetings and it is recommended to carry on with these technical working groups.

### **Synergy with other EU programmes.**

It is recommended that in the next Call for Proposals, synergy with other EU programmes is receiving even more attention than now. It is also recommended to make it easier to cooperate with other EU programmes, e.g. by inviting representatives from the relevant EU programmes to participate in the exchange meetings. This was the case for the 7<sup>th</sup> exchange meeting where representatives from the following DG's participated and made a presentation on the relevance of the BUILD UP Skills Initiative for their programmes:

- DG ENER
- DG EMPL
- DG GROW

It is recommended that the Agency, with the support of DG ENER, focuses on developing further synergies with other EU funding opportunities. This also could be carried out at Member States level as to seek synergies with available funding for regional and cohesion policy over the period 2014-2020. A close dialogue with national managing authorities might be required to achieve this.

### **Expansion of the initiative to other sectors**

Most of the countries indicate that, when there is a real demand for energy efficient renovation of buildings (thereby saying that there is no real demand today), training of both blue collar and white collar workers in energy efficient technologies and renovation will be a natural part of the building sector (i.e. it is not so today).

In order to keep the focus on the ongoing projects, emphasising the preparation and implementation of training and certification schemes for blue collar workers, it is, for the time being, not recommended to expand the initiative directly to other sectors (architects, engineers and planners etc.) without making a new stocktaking exercise similar to the BUILD UP Skills initiative before launching a new programme. Training needs, demands and opportunities differ significantly between the sectors of white collar and blue collar workers. Hence, it is recommended to evaluate the needs for training of white collar workers individually, before starting a programme for this sector. Furthermore, these professions have a rather long qualification timeframe (3-5 years of studying period). Incorporating new or adapted curricula will be a lengthy process and therefore, it will take time before actual impacts on energy efficiency can be expected.

At the moment, the most pressing subject is to maintain the momentum of the BUILD UP Skills Initiative and to continue the platform work and the launch of more Pillar II projects.

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