



iEPB

Survey on Energy Certification of Buildings

Understanding Needs and Constraints



Co-funded by
the European Union



Introduction

This document presents the findings of a survey conducted as part of the iEPB project under the LIFE CET programme. The overarching goal of the iEPB project is to enhance the energy performance of buildings in the European Union by improving synchronisation among the various assessments buildings undergo throughout their lifecycle and by developing a common data model. This will be achieved through the creation of a digital tool, the iEPB web application, which features two distinct interfaces: one tailored for construction professionals and another designed for end-users.

The first interface will streamline the data collection process during different on-site visits by technical personnel, highlighting the added value of integrating multiple building inspections into the iEPB scheme. The end-user interface will enable flexible, interactive, and comprehensive access to the results of the building's evaluations, such as Energy Certification, SRI, or Building Renovation Passport. Both interfaces will be adapted to the national contexts of Spain, Austria, and the Netherlands. More information is available at www.iepb-project.eu.

The survey discussed herein explores the barriers to energy certification and potential solutions, with over one thousand participants from the three countries involved in the project. The insights gained from this survey lay the groundwork for the development of the various tools and outcomes the project aims to achieve.

Survey Insights on Enhancing Energy Certification Market Penetration

The survey outcomes span from EPBD Implementing bodies, Building Energy Assessors, Product manufacturer-suppliers, and End-users across the three pilot sites: Austria, Spain, and the Netherlands.

The survey results provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for improving the market penetration of energy certification for buildings.

The common constraints identified across the surveyed countries are:



- Lack of awareness
- Reluctance to invest in energy efficiency
- Administrative burdens
- Funding constraints
- Shortage of qualified personnel

EPBD Implementing bodies

Addressing these constraints necessitates a multifaceted approach, as **EPBD Implementing bodies** have highlighted.

Key strategies involve:



- Raising awareness of EPBD
- Providing information and resources
- Offering training and support
- Improving the certification system
- Harmonizing energy certification processes

Additionally, it is important to underscore the relevance of practical application of energy efficiency certificates, clearer quantification of benefits, establishment of minimum fees for certification technicians, and greater governmental support and oversight.

Despite these challenges, there is a significant lack of awareness among EPBD Implementing bodies regarding the new measures introduced in the EPBD Recast: this is why better communication and dissemination of information regarding policy changes are of critical need.

Collaboration between policymakers and relevant stakeholders will address the identified constraints and implement strategies to enhance the acceptance and effectiveness of building energy certification. By leveraging insights gained from this survey, the EU can advance towards its goals of improving energy efficiency standards and promoting sustainable building practices across member states.

Building Energy Assessors

Insights gathered from Building Energy Assessors across Austria, Spain, and the Netherlands provide valuable perspectives on the current landscape of building energy assessments and the challenges hindering wider market penetration of energy certification.



Austria

Building Energy Assessors primarily engage in energy certification of buildings, with a preference for tools that facilitate data collection and seamless integration with certification programs.

Challenges include: achieving owner understanding of energy certification, data transfer challenges, and complex EPB assessment regulations. Addressing these hurdles requires streamlined processes, standardized information, and increased awareness campaigns.



Spain

Building Energy Assessors heavily rely on energy certification programs, highlighting the need for improved data collection tools and standardized building information.

Challenges include: achieving owner understanding, changing customer habits, and lack of standardization. Enhancing acceptance necessitates access to grants and subsidies, greater availability of building data, and better tools and methodologies for energy assessment.



The Netherlands

Building Energy Assessors predominantly conduct energy certification of buildings and emphasize the importance of streamlined data access and collaboration with stakeholders.

Challenges include: standardized information, data transfer issues, and achieving owner understanding. Strategies for improvement include centralized data access, increased public awareness, and better tools for energy assessment.

Efforts from policymakers, stakeholders, and Building Energy Assessors are needed to improve processes, data access, and public awareness, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and acceptance of building energy certification to support the EU's energy efficiency goals and sustainable building practices.

Product manufacturer-suppliers

Insights gathered from product manufacturer-suppliers across Austria, Spain, and the Netherlands shed light on the current challenges and opportunities in the realm of building energy certification.



Austria

Manufacturer-supplier key constraints include lack of clarity in requirements and complexity of regulations. Collaboration with stakeholders, better monitoring options, and clearer guidelines are identified as crucial for enhancing certification acceptance.



Spain

Manufacturer-supplier challenges include complexity of regulations and lack of clarity in requirements. Enhancing certification acceptance requires better control of certificates by the administration, greater collaboration among stakeholders, and increased availability of building data.



The Netherlands

For the manufacturer-suppliers, finding qualified personnel emerges as a significant constraint. Better monitoring options are highlighted as crucial for enhancing certification acceptance.

Collaborative efforts among policymakers, stakeholders, and manufacturer-suppliers are essential to streamline regulations, clarify requirements, and improve monitoring options, thus significantly enhancing the acceptance and effectiveness of building energy certification to support the EU's energy efficiency goals and sustainable building practices.

End-users – Building or dwelling owners

Insights gleaned from building or dwelling owners across Austria, Spain, and the Netherlands provide valuable perspectives on the challenges and opportunities surrounding the market penetration of energy certification for buildings.

Austria



Owners highlight additional costs, absence of clear incentives, and lack of awareness as primary constraints. Enhancing certification acceptance requires improved access to incentives and funding, easy-to-understand energy information, and better financial feasibility of living spaces.

Spain



Additional costs and absence of clear incentives are major hindrances. To improve acceptance, owners advocate for enhanced access to incentives, better housing affordability, and more exhaustive quality control. Addressing bureaucratic challenges and advocating for real, tangible benefits are also crucial.

The Netherlands



Absence of clear incentives and complexity of regulations stand out as key constraints. Owners emphasize the importance of easy-to-understand energy information and objective references for housing quality. Integration with other sustainability tools and certifications is also deemed crucial.

Across all regions, a large portion of owners are unaware of new measures introduced in the EPBD Recast, indicating a need for improved communication.

When considering enhancements for energy efficiency, owners prioritize information on available grants, actual final energy consumption, and potential energy-saving measures. Providing clear, comprehensive information and fostering awareness about the benefits of energy certification are vital for encouraging adoption and driving positive change in building energy efficiency practices.

General conclusions

Common themes emerge across the surveyed countries, including:

1. **Lack of Awareness:** A significant barrier to wider acceptance of energy certification is the lack of awareness among stakeholders, including EPBD Implementing bodies, Building Energy Assessors, Product manufacturer-suppliers, and End-users.
2. **Regulatory Complexity:** Complex regulations and unclear requirements pose challenges for stakeholders involved in energy certification processes, hindering effective implementation and acceptance.
3. **Financial Constraints:** Additional costs associated with energy certification, coupled with absence of clear incentives and funding, deter stakeholders from embracing energy efficiency measures and certification programs.
4. **Shortage of Qualified Personnel:** Across various sectors, there is a shortage of qualified personnel, including energy performance assessors, which impedes the smooth implementation of energy certification processes.
5. **Need for Standardization and Streamlining:** Stakeholders emphasize the importance of standardized processes, clearer guidelines, and streamlined data access to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of energy certification programs.

Key strategies include:

- **Raising Awareness:** Comprehensive awareness campaigns and targeted communication efforts are necessary to educate stakeholders about energy certification benefits, requirements, and policy updates.
- **Streamlining Regulations:** Simplifying regulatory frameworks, providing clearer guidelines, and standardizing processes can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of energy certification programs.
- **Access to Incentives and Funding:** Ensuring better access to incentives, grants, and financial support can encourage stakeholders to invest in energy efficiency measures and embrace certification programs.
- **Capacity Building:** Investing in training and capacity building initiatives to address the shortage of qualified personnel is crucial for the successful implementation of energy certification processes.
- **Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement:** Foster collaboration between policymakers, industry players, and end-users to develop targeted strategies, share best practices, and drive innovation in energy certification practices.



Challenges Identified

Lack of awareness, reluctance to invest, administrative burdens, funding constraints, and shortage of qualified personnel hinder market penetration of energy certification.



EPBD Implementing Bodies

Multifaceted approach required, including raising awareness, providing resources, improving the certification system, and harmonizing processes. Lack of awareness about new EPBD Recast measures underscores the need for better communication.



Building Energy Assessors

Key challenges include data transfer issues, complex regulations, and achieving owner understanding. Strategies for improvement include streamlined processes, standardized information, and increased awareness.



Product Manufacturer-Suppliers

Challenges include lack of clarity in requirements and finding qualified personnel. Collaborative efforts needed to streamline regulations, improve clarity, and enhance monitoring options.



End-users - Building or Dwelling Owners

Primary constraints include additional costs, absence of clear incentives, and lack of awareness. Strategies for improvement include enhanced access to incentives, easy-to-understand information, and advocacy for tangible benefits.



General Conclusions

Lack of awareness, regulatory complexity, financial constraints, and shortage of qualified personnel are common challenges. Coordinated approach involving policymakers, stakeholders, and industry players essential for driving meaningful change. Key strategies include raising awareness, streamlining regulations, improving access to incentives, investing in capacity building, and fostering collaboration.