

Compliance and quality of the works: critical factors for successful EPBD implementation

The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive recast introduced in 2010 two important articles requiring member states to implement independent control systems for the Energy Performance Certificates (article 18) and penalties in case of non-compliance (article 27). Why?



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One significant hurdle on the route towards NZEB concerns the compliance of buildings to NZEB requirements, in particular, how to ensure they actually comply with applicable regulations or programme specifications. Overlooking this problem can lead to competition distortion and discourage building professionals to deliver compliant build-

ings. To avoid this pitfall, member states should have a good understanding of the situation on the ground. This includes an evaluation and analysis of the gaps observed between declared and “determined as-per-the-rules” building characteristics in Energy Performance Certificates (EPC). In addition, member states should also set up boundary conditions forcing people to do what they declare, consistently with the implied objectives of articles 18 and 27 of the EPBD.

Another high hurdle lies in upgrading the quality of the works to meet NZEB standards at commissioning

but also in a longer term. The approaches to address this problem should build on sufficient knowledge of field practice and boundary conditions urging building professionals to execute works in line with specifications consistent with NZEB levels.

Experience shows that the remedies to overcome both problems aforementioned must be adapted to the local context to be effective. In particular, societal support is a major key to success but it largely depends on the market acceptance of the penalties, control systems, incentives as well as their cost effectiveness.

The QUALICheck project (2014-2017, <http://qualicheck-platform.eu>) funded under the Intelligent Energy Europe programme focuses on EPC compliance and quality of the works, and finding ways to overcome these problems based on the analysis of existing approaches and interaction with stakeholders. We have also foreseen a series of activities (conferences, workshops, webinars, national roadshows and consultation platforms in 9 countries represented in the consortium) to raise awareness among stakeholders by sharing the analysis of the status on the ground and examples of possible approaches.

In this special issue of the journal, you will find syntheses of several outputs of QUALICheck, including results from field studies and analysis of interesting schemes. The hurdles are high and the status on the ground can sometimes be worrying, but there are also promising signals from the evaluation of several recent or old schemes. Disseminating this information is essential to trigger new initiatives and generalize NZEB in practice without market competition distortion. ■



QUALICheck responds to the challenges related to compliance of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) declarations and the quality of the building works. Find out more at <http://qualicheck-platform.eu>.

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