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FOUNDATIONS LAID FOR EUROPEAN QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEMES TO INCREASE UPTAKE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY SERVICES CRITICAL TO ACHIEVING NET ZERO

Press release digest

- ✔ New European toolkit for quality assessment and procurement of Energy Efficiency Services published by the QualitEE project
- ✔ Refined over three years through extensive stakeholder consultation and testing in 28 pilot projects that represent:
 - 33 million Euros of investment
 - 33 GWh of annual primary energy savings
 - Over 9,200 tonnes of annual CO2 emissions savings
- ✔ Feedback from consultation and testing resulted in local adaptations of quality assessment criteria in 11 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom.
- ✔ In these 11 countries, business cases have been assessed and documented for institutionalisation of the quality criteria in national assurance schemes, 9 of which are either operational or in the process of implementation.
- ✔ This work represents a major step forward in tackling lack of trust and low information market barriers seen to be holding back uptake of Energy Efficiency Services that will play a critical role in achieving net zero.
- ✔ View all market research and publications at <https://qualitee.eu/>. To find out more, join online events 17-19 June <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/qualitee-project-18261210897>

Main release

The European Green Deal sets out the ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, in particular through a ‘renovation wave’. Energy Efficiency Services will play a key role in delivering this by offering turnkey packages of expertise, resources and financing to unlock opportunities that may otherwise remain untapped. A 2019 update to a survey conducted biennially by the QualitEE project, revealed that the lack of trust and information remain significant barriers to uptake of such services.

The QualitEE project has recently published a new European toolkit for quality assessment and procurement of Energy Efficiency Services to tackle these barriers. Klemens Leutgöb, project coordinator and CEO of Vienna based consultancy e7 Energy Innovation & Engineering outlines the benefits as follows “This toolkit builds trust between consumers, suppliers and financiers by offering best practice information and a framework to establish consensus on what represents good quality in Energy Efficiency Services. On its own, the toolkit can be used for self-assessment throughout project development, procurement and delivery. Beyond this, the quality assessment criteria have also been designed to form the backbone of quality assurance schemes that will

improve standardisation, accountability and the availability of independent performance information relating to services and their providers.”

The toolkit has been developed through an extensive stakeholder consultation process and testing, in 28 pilot projects over the last three years. They cover 11 European countries and represent 33 million Euros of investment, 33 GWh of annual primary energy savings, and over 9,200 tonnes of annual CO2 emissions savings.

Feedback from the consultation process revealed that – whilst there is a lot of commonality that can be harmonised across Europe – there are local nuances of Energy Efficiency Services markets. National adaptations of the quality assessment criteria (in regional languages) have therefore been developed in QualitEE partner countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Discussions have been initiated to assess the business case for institutionalising these criteria into national quality assurance schemes. The outcomes have been published in business case reports, which outline a diverse range of possible approaches:

- ✔ **Incorporation into national standards** - (Spain) integrates the quality criteria into existing standards published by the national standards body UNE.
- ✔ **Government schemes** - (Czech Republic) uses the national adaptation of the quality criteria as the basis for a scheme led by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Energy Performance Contracting projects are individually certified past the first savings verification point, and service providers are certified based on achieving 2 or 3 certified projects (dependent on value).
- ✔ **Trade association schemes** - (Austria & UK) similar to the Czech Republic, the UK scheme - to be administered by the Energy Services & Technology Association - assesses sample projects past the first savings verification point to accredit service providers. The established DECA scheme in Austria offers a project level label for providers that commit to deliver services in line with the quality criteria.
- ✔ **Incorporation in national ESCO registries** - (Greece, Latvia & Slovenia) all EU countries were required to establish ESCO registries under the Energy Efficiency Directive. The quality criteria are incorporated into the process for appointing ESCOs to these registries.
- ✔ **Enhanced code of conduct** - (Bulgaria & Slovakia) the quality criteria have been included as an extension of the European Code of Conduct for Energy Performance Contracting, which has been signed by service providers in these countries.
- ✔ **Exceptions** - (Belgium & Germany) in Germany it was found there was no demand in the market for certification, so ASEW - the German association of municipal utilities - has opted instead to use the quality criteria to offer a contract checking service. In Belgium it was found that the market was not yet sufficiently mature to accommodate a scheme, although the groundwork has been prepared for the future. Interestingly the most popular approach during consultation was a hybrid scheme using sample projects to accredit providers, similar to the approach selected in the Czech Republic and the UK.

Rodrigo Morell, project lead for quality assurance schemes and Managing Director at Spanish consultancy CREARA commented “This work represents significant progress in developing quality assurance schemes for Energy Efficiency Services across Europe, and the reports will provide a valuable resource to others looking to implement similar approaches. In most cases the schemes

are at early stages of implementation, but the scene is set for these to come to fruition. It is vital that they do so, as the standardisation and simplification of investment appraisal in this area is critical to scaling investments via aggregation to access cost effective financing. External finance will be particularly important in the challenging economic times that are expected to result from the disruption caused by COVID-19.”

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Note for editors

Funded by the EU’s Horizon 2020 programme and running to June 2020, the QualitEE project aims to increase investment in Energy Efficiency Services in the building sector within Europe and improve trust in service providers. To achieve these aims, quality assessment criteria and business cases for quality assurance schemes have been developed.

The QualitEE consortium is coordinated by e7 Energie Markt Analyse GmbH and comprises 12 partner organisations covering 18 European countries, an expert advisory board including the European standards body CEN/CENELEC, and 59 supporters from major financial institutions, government bodies, trade associations and certification bodies.

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About EFIEES

The purpose of the European Federation of Intelligent Energy Efficiency Services is to promote the activities of Energy Efficiency Services Companies (EESCs) in the European Union. EESCs design and implement practical measures to improve the energy efficiency of their customers by means of long-term contracts. Their objective is to optimise the energy management of end-users. www.efiees.eu

About e7 Energy Innovation & Engineering

e7 is a private research and consulting company specialised in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sector. Founded in July 2007, the company is based in Vienna, Austria. In its work, e7 puts a focus on questions regarding energy efficiency, renewable energies and climate change. www.e-sieben.at

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