



INNOVATIVE QUALIFICATIONS FOR TECHNOLOGICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION IN BUILDING SECTOR

PROJECT CODE:  
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## Project state of play

The coronavirus (COVID-19), which affected the European Union and beyond, had also an impact on the usual activities of European projects by penalising some of the planned activities in favour of new contingency actions. This forced several project leaders to request deadline extensions to the national and EU agencies, according to the type of project and funding.

The Icaro team had to deal with this international health crisis as well, by rethinking and replacing some of the 'live' attendance activities with new actions that would guarantee the same results. Furthermore, technological difficulties were taken into account as not all the partners were fully equipped to work remotely.

However, during this sensitive period the project went ahead with difficulty, finalising a part of the work packages established at the beginning and partly modified according to the agency's evaluation of the interim report.

Let's see in detail what are the project results achieved so far in terms of research and products.

WP2 First results: 'Framing the innovation: GAP analysis of the existing qualification and identification of the needs in the building sector'

Leaders: Flc Madrid – Iiple – Unibo

This WP has 3 tasks with the scope of:

- Providing a better understanding of the current status of vocational training in the construction sector,
- For the SMEs, facing the industry 4.0 challenge and promptly adapting internal skills (through continuous training) and/or acquiring "external" ones.

- Providing an overview of the EU policies and directives framework in terms of R & D. – i.e. EPBD (Energy Performance Building Directions), and the Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement– in order to introduce and regulate new skills and management innovations that have to be acquired by construction companies

The outcomes of these 3 separate analysis will allow to better understand the existing vocational training curricula and how to improve them based on the real needs of the construction sector and the existing policy framework.

According to the European Commission, the construction industry is very important to the EU economy since the sector provides 18 million direct jobs and contributes to about 9% of the EU's GDP. The European Union has put in place a comprehensive legislative and regulatory framework concerning the construction sector, including corresponding European standards as well as financial tools, information platforms, labelling schemes and other instruments.

The first report 'D2.1 Analysis of the professional training system in the building industry' highlighted important points for the project such as: the national qualification and certification systems of the project countries; the role of social partners in the definition of the professional qualifications; the existence or not of qualification similar to the one proposed by the project; the work-based learning as training methodology.

The second report 'D2.2 *The needs of the building and the construction sectors*' consists of a survey addressed to construction companies in order to identify the skills needs in the areas covered by the project.

Specifically, the purpose of the survey was to “understand technological and organisational innovation needs of construction companies and the relationships between business and professional training, highlighting the main needs and gaps identified by the companies in the existing vocational trainings curricula”.

The survey involved more than 200 companies and confirmed the low presence of qualified workers in the field of energy efficiency, circular economy and digitalisation due to a lack of awareness of the companies, which seem to pay little attention on these issues.

This result is quite similar in Spain and Italy in spite of Lithuania, whose companies seem to be more active on these issues and therefore more innovative.

The first part of the report concerns the company profiles, its main characteristics, number of employees, training needs, current situation and expectations. The second part aims to directly compare the scenarios of the 3 countries with respect to each single type of competence listed, immediately highlighting the similarities and / or differences.

The third report “D2.3 – *EU policies and directives in the construction system: which innovation is needed?*” has been recently released to review the main directives and policies of the EU regulatory framework. The outcome is a state-of-the-art investigation where innovations and

effects are highlighted in order to help identifying the actual needs of the construction sector to develop a combined qualification of “Construction Site Technician” that is in step with the times.

Concerning WP4 for Quality Assurance and Evaluation, led by FLC Asturias in strong collaboration with Formedil, D4.2. EQAVET Quality Assurance in ICARO has also been developed, a practical tool based on the EQAVET Recommendation, providing guidelines on quality assurance for VET providers introducing the new qualification for Construction Site Technician in the future.

## **How to make the construction sector more inclusive? Why women and young people are underrepresented in the construction industry? Icaro has formulated a questionnaire to understand the main reasons. It requires few minutes only and it is open to all**

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How can we increase the employment rate of women in the construction sector? How can we inspire young people to join the construction sector? These are two big questions, and increasingly urgent ones.

The construction sector is mainly a man-dominated industry and presents a major challenge for equal opportunities for women. Women are under-represented in all construction occupations and professions. At the same time, youngsters are more attracted from job opportunities from other sectors than the construction industry. People retiring are more than the youngsters starting their carrier in the construction field.

ICARO developed a questionnaire aimed at investigating the main reasons why women and youngsters are under-represented in the construction industry.

The survey will take few minutes only, it can be accessed from the following link:

<https://forms.gle/4hpdAK1JwN3j8kVq5>

## **EU Renovation wave for construction stakeholders**

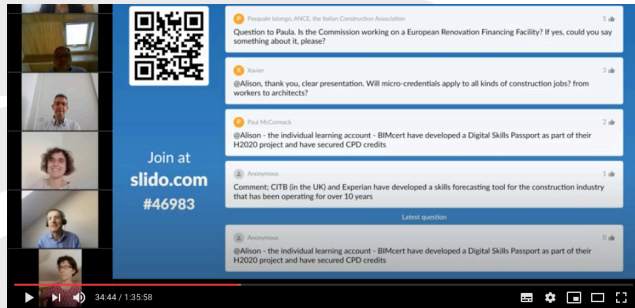
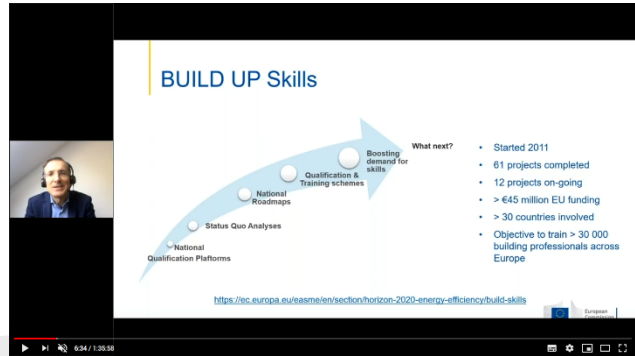
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The ‘**Renovation Wave**’ initiative has been recently announced as a part of the new **EU Green Deal**, with the ambition to increase the rate and quality of building renovation in the European Union.

The construction sector is responsible for 40% of the final amount of energy consumption in EU. Furthermore, the energy estimated to be used during renovation often differs from the actual one. This is partly due to the ‘human capital’ and possible lack of skills, which can affect the quality and speed of building renovation.

How can we address this issue? How can we prepare building professionals in order to face this new challenge? BuildUP Skills tries to answer this question: it is an EU initiative that aims to fill the

skills gap of the building workforce, taking into account transversal competences and the inevitable digitalisation of the sector.



The Icaro team supports this EU initiative as we both share the ambition to develop an up-dated qualification of the construction site technician able to better coordinate a renovation worksite. The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises **EASME** recently ran and moderated the webinar **‘Renovation wave in Europe: how to equip building professionals with future-proof skills?’**. Have you missed it? You still have time to catch-up by watching the recorded video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqT72OH2C3o>

In the framework of the Renovation Wave initiative, the European Commission has also opened a public consultation on boosting the renovation of buildings across the EU. The consultation will be open until 9 July with the aim of collect views and input from a broad range of construction stakeholders. Contribute to the public consultation [here!](#)

## Focus on Icaro’s sister project BIMzeED

BIMzeED is an Erasmus+ project focusing on the training needs of the construction industry in order to encourage **1) better employability; 2) low-carbon growth; 3) green and nZEB skills; 4) youth employment.**

The construction industry across Europe is facing major challenges in achieving energy efficiency targets, in particular for nearly Zero Energy Buildings (nZEB), but it is also experiencing a digital

revolution, with Building Information Modelling (BIM). The aim of the project is to up-date training material by including learning units on BIM and nZEB in higher and vocational education.



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## About

The BIMzeED project focuses on the training needs for the current and future construction industry with the main purpose to encourage **1) better employability 2) low-carbon growth, 3) green and NZEB skills 4) increase in youth employment**. The challenge of the BIMzeED project is to overcome skills mismatching and improve employability in the current European construction market by improving and extending the **existing skills of Trainers, SMEs, site managers, craftworkers and other experienced operatives**.

## Resources

Keep up to date with all the latest news, updates, project reports and toolkits from the BIMzeED project.

NEWSLETTERS

E-PLATFORM

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

PUBLICATIONS

BIMzeED develops and pilots 12 Learning Units as Open Educational Resources (OERs), and train and upskill 120 educators at European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Vocational Education and Trainings (VETs). The Learning Units will be common units with flexible standardised delivery (in class, on-line and on-site) suitable for HEI and VET training.

The training content will be developed and delivered in a Blended Learning format supported by an E-Learning portal, and once finalised the Learning Units will be made available as Toolkits to potential students, HEIs, VETs and SMEs.

BIMzeED project started in November 2018 and it is expected to end by the end of 2021.

If you would like to keep updated about BIMzeED initiatives, visit <http://bimzeed.eu> and subscribe to the project's bi-annual newsletter!

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