

Press Release

Boosting low carbon building renovation across Europe

In conjunction with the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference in Oslo, the World Green Building Council and partners announce BUILD UPON²; a project that will accelerate the renovation of buildings in European cities

Oslo, Norway – 23 May 2019 – Today, the [World Green Building Council's](#) European network in collaboration with eight cities and partners announced the launch of BUILD UPON², the next phase of the world's largest collaborative project on building renovation.

With cities across the world declaring climate emergencies and climate action high up on the agenda for the European elections, this European Union (EU) funded project will empower cities across Europe to join forces with national governments and industry to decarbonise their existing building stock by 2050. BUILD UPON² will strengthen the effectiveness and implementation of the national building renovation strategies required by the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD).

The following eight pilot cities will actively be involved in the project:

- Velika Gorica, Croatia
- Budaörs, Hungary
- Dublin, Ireland
- Padova, Italy
- Wroclaw, Poland
- Madrid, Spain
- Eskişehir, Turkey
- Leeds, UK

These cities will develop and test a multi-level renovation impact framework containing a suite of milestones and measurable progress indicators including: emissions reductions, increased employment and improved health. By capturing data at a local level, the framework will link renovation to policy and decision making processes at a national level. The overall aim of the project is to have at least 10 cities publicly commit to establish strategies to decarbonise their building stock by 2050.

Cristina Gamboa, CEO, World Green Building Council states: *“We have to scale up our efforts to bring all our buildings up to date and renovate to provide healthy and comfortable living conditions, whilst at the same time reducing their energy demand. Energy renovation is an indispensable long-term sustainable solution to alleviate energy poverty and to deliver warmer homes for our residents, healthier schools for our children and reduced energy bills for our hospitals and businesses.”*

At least 50 million Europeans, around 10% of the total population, are energy poor. Energy poverty is linked to low household income, high energy costs and energy inefficient homes and is known to have severe impacts on the health of EU citizens including increased numbers of winter deaths, detrimental effects on mental health, respiratory and circulatory problems.¹

Deep renovation has far-reaching benefits for society as increasing indoor comfort and air quality avoids illnesses and premature deaths associated with living in cold and damp homes. This in turn reduces pressure on healthcare and social services.

Arturo Lorenzoni, Deputy Mayor of City of Padova said: *“Padova is committed to renovating our buildings to improve our city for visitors and citizens. Renovating our buildings will help to strengthen our economic growth and offers employment opportunities for local people. As a nation we will learn from the pilot cities to support our work in the rest of Italy.”*

Owen Keegan, Chief Executive, Dublin City Council said: *“Dublin City is committed to renovating its older buildings to improve energy performance. This will also contribute to sustainability, economic growth and employment. The Council is pleased to be working with seven other cities across Europe to strengthen implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.”*

Terry McCallion, Director, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development said: *“The demand for climate action and supportive national policies is now greater than ever before as the region and specifically urban environment is facing a climate emergency already. Tackling the built environment plays a key role in getting up to speed with climate action goals. Without faster action to renovate buildings, we will not achieve Europe’s 2030 climate and energy targets. The EBRD is committed to mobilise resources and support at scale the transition to low carbon and climate-safe building sector in the region.”*

BUILD UPON² will be led by a consortium of eight national green building councils (GBCs), members of World Green Building Council, working with the Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE) and the municipal network Climate Alliance which leads the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) Office-Europe, representing 7,000+ local and regional authorities.

In the future, the framework will be used as a blueprint for the EU’s EPBD implementation and cities signed up to the CoM in their efforts to tackle the decarbonisation of their building stock, as well as for governments worldwide looking for guidance in their national building strategies.

###

MEDIA CONTACT:

Angela Howarth, Marketing Communications Director at the World Green Building Council
ahowarth@worldgbc.org +44 (0) 79 7631 2060

¹ Buildings Performance Institute Europe - http://bpie.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Factsheet_A-170420v4.compressed.pdf

Editor's Notes

Buildings are responsible for 40% of energy consumption in the EU. As 90% of the buildings that exist today will still stand in 2050, renovation of the existing building stock is key to achieving the decarbonisation goals. However, Europe's buildings are not being renovated at the necessary rate and depth to realise these goals. As 75% of Europeans are currently living in cities, it is even more crucial for cities to fulfil their role in leading Europe's building renovation challenge.

BUILD UPON was initially started in 2015 and created a community of stakeholders of over 2,000 diverse organisations that led a shift in tackling Europe's buildings renovation challenge. This first phase concluded with key recommendations that national renovation strategies should focus on facilitating action at a local city level. Therefore, BUILD UPON² will engage with European cities to design and facilitate local action to implement national building renovation strategies. The project's activities will be implemented across eight European countries with Green Building Council España as lead facilitator.

BUILD UPON² is the second phase of the world's largest collaborative project on building renovation. This project has received €1,371,755 funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 840926 - BUILD UPON2 - H2020 - LC-SC3-EE-16-2018.

Europe's energy renovation sector has a turnover of €109 billion and represents over 800,000 jobs (Renovate Europe). The sector will help to drive the EU economy creating jobs, mostly within SMEs. Renovation represents local jobs and the sector employs a wide range of people from different professions such as civil engineers to architects.

About the World Green Building Council

The World Green Building Council is a global network of Green Building Councils in almost 70 countries. Collectively, our goal is to achieve the following by 2050: limit global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius; reduce the building and construction sector's CO₂ emissions by 84 gigatonnes, and ensure all buildings are net zero emissions. These goals will help deliver on the ambition of the Paris Agreement. We are building a better future, and are committed to green buildings for everyone, everywhere www.worldgbc.org