



Ethnographic Research Report on the recognition of energy efficiency skills

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Related Deliverable: D2.3



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BUSLeague ethnographic approach

BUSLeague is dedicated to stimulating demand for energy efficiency and sustainability skills (EE Skills) in the construction sector. In search for solutions to challenges found in existing markets for EE Skills, BUSLeague decided to put special emphasis on people. Researchers made ethnographic research principles an integral part of their work within the project. This allows them to better understand a variety of explicit and tacit aspects of everyday life of people, communities, and societies they work with throughout the project development. In this context, the Ethnographic Research Report on the recognition of energy efficiency skills (D2.3) is a concrete outcome from BUSLeague's initial ethnographic research activities and a concrete step towards developing effective and long-lasting solutions. For the outside reader, this report is a reference point to think about challenges in the existing market for EE Skills, and thus a source of inspiration in forming new knowledge and ideas in the outlined and related fields of interest.

Purpose and outcomes

The main purpose of the report is to highlight new insights into the social, cultural, and material realities of the construction and renovation sector. These will inform the project's efforts for stimulating demand for sustainable energy skills. Outcomes of the ethnographic research created grounds for deeper understanding of perspectives shared by a variety of different actors that constitute and co-create country or regionally specific value chains of the construction and renovation markets. Some of the relevant topics that emerged as from the research are:

- **The shortcomings and opportunities** in the existing market for upskilling in EE Skills,
- **The relevance and challenges of policy interventions** into the balance of supply and demand in the market for EE Skills,
- **Intersections of quality, availability, and necessity of upskilling** and certification opportunities for EE Skills,
- **Intersections of awareness, motivation, and opposition** to developments and change in the field of EE Skills in the sector,
- **The role of well-established industries** – suppliers and producers of market-specific products and services – and opportunities for synergies,
- **Digitalization** of the sector and its prospects for upskilling activities,
- **The question of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities** within construction and renovation sector (consideration of demographic aspects, such as gender, migrations, age, language, etc.),
- **Social, cultural, and organisational aspects and patterns** that characterize the sector (trends and developing technologies, inertia of the markets and systems, tradition and identities, hierarchies of knowledge and power, etc.)



Research process

The report builds on a tailored ethnography-inspired qualitative research of the construction and renovation value chain. The main method used were semi-structured interviews – approximately 1-hour long interactions via video-conferencing tools that combined closed- and open-ended questions regarding challenges and opportunities within the market for EE Skills. In total, 58 research participants were interviewed in six different BUSLeague countries – Austria, Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Spain, and the Netherlands. Knowledge established through the research will continue to be used and relations with key stakeholders strengthened throughout the project development in order to monitor and optimize effective rollout of BUSLeague interventions and development of solutions.

Stakeholder group	No. of activities	No. of participants
National Government	3	3
Regional Governments	3	3
Local Governments	5	5
DIY retail companies	3	4
Small and Medium Enterprises	5	9
Independent workers and experts	2	2
Female workers and experts	4	4
Building managers	1	1
Professional associations	6	10
Construction sector training providers	5	7
Building owners	3	3
Financial bodies	5	5
Suppliers	2	2
Total No.	47 interviews	58 participants

Table 1: Table indicating the sum of BUSLeague research participants and activities by identified key stakeholder groups.

Report structure

The report offers valuable insights for anyone interested in the markets for EE Skills in the EU. In-depth overview of the report's purpose and content can be found in the **introductory chapter** (Chapter 1), which also includes a more detailed section on the research method. Section 1.3, which highlights relations with other project tasks, is primarily intended for project members. Readers interested in the ethnographic research by individual countries participating in BUSLeague can focus on **Case studies** (Chapter 2). Complete qualitative data and information gathered in the research is included in the annex to the report for further analysis and interpretation. Readers interested in the **general overview of challenges** within the EU's market for EE Skills **and opportunities** waiting to be realised are advised to read first two sections of the introduction and then proceed to the Synthesis (Chapter 3). This chapter includes a collection and interpretation of barriers and challenges, followed by a list of opportunities and solutions.



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Conclusion

For BUSLeague partners, the ethnographic research provided ground for understanding value and expectations regarding working with recognized EE Skills. With regard to countries' National Implementation Plans – country-specific roadmaps to reaching desired goals of BUSLeague – the ethnographic research enabled project partners to:

- **Identify key market stakeholders** and engage them in a mutually beneficial relationship and collaborative process,
- **Create ground for collaboration** not only between BUSLeague and individual stakeholders, but also between stakeholders through concrete hands-on action,
- **Reach out to specific communities within the sector**, specifically women and younger generations of workers,
- **Confirm, further specify, or disprove pre-established assumptions** on barriers and challenges within the EE Skills markets,
- **Raise awareness of specific target groups** (such as local authorities, DIY stores, workers and professionals, etc.) on the importance of EE Skills and upskilling,
- **Build capacity for progressive policy advocacy and promotion** campaigns on national, regional, and local levels,
- **Contribute to deeper understanding** of how BUSLeague fits into the existing country-specific markets for qualifications and certifications within the sector,
- **Contribute to better evaluation of the current state of the market** for EE Skills in the contexts of EU and individual Member States,
- **Open and explore new questions and topics** that were previously obscured or deemed less relevant,
- **Give confidence** that BUSLeague is dealing not only with an interesting, but an essential topic in the context of building pathways towards a sustainable future.

In summary, the report provides an insight into the varied landscape of the construction and renovation sector in the EU, focusing specifically on complexities in the existing markets for EE Skills. In the context of project activities, it is a milestone on the way towards people-centred products, and effective, long-lasting solutions. In the light of BUSLeague's mission, the report is a result of working for *and* with the people who (co-)create the reality that BUSLeague explores and strives to improve.

MORE INFORMATION

The full version of this deliverable can be found on the BUSLeague project website at the following link:

<https://busleague.eu/outcomes/>



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