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**BUILDING MATTERS: Mitigating climate change transition risks of the construction sector through building capacity in sustainable building materials**

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**WP2. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING MATERIALS AWARENESS & COMPETENCE**

## **Final Report – All Partners**

### **Activity 2.3 Delivery of the Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence Transnational Toolkit**

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## WP2. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING MATERIALS AWARENESS & COMPETENCE

### Activity 2.3 Delivery of the Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence Transnational Toolkit

## Final Report on Transnational Interaction Round Table

The aim of A2.3 was to raise awareness and build competencies for sustainable decision-making in building materials selection, as well as to conclude the transnational joint recommendations for the inventory of sustainable building materials.

This activity had 2 objectives, which were fulfilled, namely:

1. To provide a set of transnational skills training tools that summarize and capitalize on the experience, knowledge and results of discussions with VET experts and stakeholders in transnational interactions.
2. To provide a set of transnational tools for awareness of sustainable construction materials that can be exploited in the form of awareness campaigns that will enable behavioral changes in sustainable decision-making in the selection of materials for construction projects.

The obtained result at the end of A2.3 implementation was an effective interaction and dialogue on ways to increase the capacity to respond to the sustainability challenges of the construction industry and in preparing the training offer adapted to the needs of learners and VET representatives.

Initially, WP2 was planned to be implemented in the period October 2022 - May 2023. In order to involve as many stakeholders as possible and achieve the quality indicators assumed, together with ensuring the best coherence with the objectives proposed for WP3, at the level the partnership it was agreed to extend the implementation period of WP2 (mainly A2.2 and A2.3) until September 2023. In the following, the achievements of the partners will be presented.

The partners involved in the implementation of A2.3 are presented in the following table:

Code	Acronym	Partner's Name	Country
PP	FGS FAMILIA	FEDERATIA GENERALA A SINDICATELOR FAMILIA	Romania
P1	PEDMEDE SOMATEIO	PEDMEDE SOMATEIO	Greece
P2	CCIS	GOSPODARSKA ZBORNICA SLOVENIJE (GZS ZGIGM)	Slovenia
P3	K&S SKOPJE	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS MANAGEMENT CENTRE	Macedonia
P4	BZB	BILDUNGSZENTREN DES BAUGEWERBES EV	Germany
P5	IIPLE	ISTITUTO PER L'ISTRUZIONE PROFESSIONALE DEI LAVORATORI EDILI DELLA PROVINCIA DI BOLOGNA	Italy
P6	PEDMEDE ECO	PEDMEDE ECO	Greece



The **Transnational Interaction Round Tables** took place online on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2023, according to the following **schedule**:

Join Link: [https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_Y2Y4OThmN2ItYzEyNi00MTAwLTIlZTUtMWEyMDQ1NTAyNDc0%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2261c8563e-85d1-40da-9efd-7cd572bd0b23%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%220033bda4-6df6-4a70-ab87-58f04fbabfbd%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_Y2Y4OThmN2ItYzEyNi00MTAwLTIlZTUtMWEyMDQ1NTAyNDc0%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2261c8563e-85d1-40da-9efd-7cd572bd0b23%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%220033bda4-6df6-4a70-ab87-58f04fbabfbd%22%7d)

### **Central European Time (CET)**

<b>10:00</b>	<b>Welcoming the participants</b>
<b>10:05</b>	<b>Opening</b> <i>Filio Petridou, Project Manager, Panhellenic Association of Engineers Contractors of Public Works – Greece</i>
<b>10:10</b>	<b>Presentation of Building Matters project, Daniela Zirra, Project Manager, FGS Familia-Romania</b>
<b>10:30</b>	<b>Topics of discussion – Experiences from participants country:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustainable building materials - focus on recycled/ secondary raw materials.</li><li>• Technical, legal, institutional and financial barriers for sustainable evolution in construction.</li><li>• Main issues, needs, and challenges regarding conventional and sustainable building materials.</li><li>• Familiarization with the National and EU strategies related to sustainable building materials.</li><li>• Available training related to sustainable building materials.</li><li>• Level of awareness and the environmental impact of the construction sector.</li><li>• Main challenges regarding delivering and designing a training curriculum for building professionals.</li><li>• Suggestions for approaches and ideas for better engagement of learners in the training program.</li></ul>
<b>11:50</b>	<b>Key conclusions</b>
<b>12:00</b>	<b>End of the roundtable</b>

The activity consisted in conducting discussions, based on the list of topics that were agreed at the partnership level and included in the methodology developed for WP2 by PEDMEDE (the coordinator of this activity) and the drafting of conclusions and recommendations, which were agreed at the end by the participants.



Regarding **the number of participants to the Transnational Interaction Round Table**, the **planned number** was set to:

- **A minimum of 8 participants** in 1 Transnational interaction roundtable (Romania, Greece, Slovenia), representatives from the including researchers, trainers, experts, training providers and the academia.
- **A minimum of 8 participants** in 1 Transnational interaction roundtable (**Italy, Germany, North Macedonia**), training-oriented stakeholders to interact in roundtables and focus to discuss on accommodating effectively training offers and innovative learning approaches in line with labor market needs and responding to the sustainable and environmental transition of the construction and building industry.

At the partnership level, it was decided that the Transnational Interaction Round Tables should take place after the completion of all National Interaction Round Tables. Therefore, the only viable period for the organization of the Transnational Interaction Round Tables, so as to gather a sufficient number of participants and not to affect the start of WP3, was May 2023. Following the long consultation of the partners and taking into account the extremely various and busy schedules in the months of April, May and June, it was decided that both events will take place at the same time, on May 25, within a single event.

The number of **participants to the Transnational Interaction Round Table, according to the technical documents** collected, was **18 Participants**, of which:

- Representatives from the VET and educational sector representing the construction industry, including researchers, trainers, experts, training providers and the academia.
- Training-oriented stakeholders.
- Business representatives, etc.

All participants made an important contribution to providing essential input and recommendations for creating an up-to-date VET curriculum for the Building Matters training program.

**The relevant areas represented were:**

- Training/Education in constructions
- Education Consulting and Training in constructions
- Training providers
- Producers of construction materials
- VET Centers
- Academia in the area of constructions
- Construction industry
- Research in sustainable constructions and construction materials
- Business representatives in the construction sector
- Suppliers of construction materials
- Knowledge and skills management Centre
- NGOs in Constructions area
- Economic Chambers, etc.



Regarding the tangible outputs of A2.3, they were planned and carried out:

- 1 Transnational Report with recommendations for the inventory of sustainable building materials and their potential
- 1 Transnational Toolkit for the Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence training package

The report is reflecting the outcomes of the transnational exchanges and construction dialogues in the topic, boosting the transnational cooperation and raised awareness of targeted stakeholders.

**The key conclusions of the event are:**

- There are very few (almost non-existent) training programs in initial education, both at high school and at higher education level, dedicated to the field of energy efficiency and circular economy.
- There are no continuing professional training programs dedicated to this field.
- Currently, in the revision process of the occupational standards, in the new standards on the basis of which the continuous training programs (qualification, specialization, improvement) are developed, competences regarding energy efficiency, environmental protection measures, digitalization, etc. are introduced.

**The key conclusions regarding the challenges, barriers, and familiarity with national and EU strategies** related to sustainable building materials are identified:

- Technical Barriers - lack of knowledge and expertise in sustainable building practices is a common challenge in all the mentioned countries. More education and training are needed to promote the adoption of sustainable construction practices among architects, engineers, and builders.
- Legal Barriers - Greece, Romania, and Slovenia face challenges with their legislation. The implementation of EU regulations into national law is problematic, and there is a need for more supportive regulations to promote sustainable building. Inconsistencies and outdated building codes and regulations also hinder the use of sustainable materials.
- Institutional Challenges - lack of policy and regulatory coherence is a significant barrier in Slovenia and Greece. There is a need for better coordination and awareness at the local and regional level. In Romania, the lack of specialists in sustainable construction and energy efficiency is a challenge.
- Financial Challenges - sustainable construction and the use of sustainable materials are often more expensive than conventional practices. The additional costs are a deterrent for customers, and the lack of financing options for sustainable projects poses a challenge.
- Awareness and Familiarity with Strategies - overall, participants in the mentioned countries have some level of familiarity with national and EU strategies related to sustainable building materials and energy efficiency. The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (nZEB) standard are commonly known. However, there are variations in the level of awareness and implementation across different stakeholders.



And finally, **the conclusions for the challenges in designing and delivering a training curriculum for building professionals** are as follows:

- The curriculum should be up to date, addressing current needs and trends in the building industry.
- Technical information and practical applications should be included to enhance the relevance and specificity of the training.
- Balancing theoretical and practical learning.
- Collaboration with industry stakeholders is crucial to align the curriculum with industry needs and practices.
- Time availability and cost can be significant challenges in delivering training programs. Ensuring affordability and providing flexible training options, such as self-paced or asynchronous learning, can help overcome these challenges.

**The final conclusions of the report are:**

1. All the quality requirements (KPI), provided in the submitted project and in the WP2 Methodology, were respected, because the partners organized the Transnational Interaction Round Table, in which participated more than 16 key stakeholders, all important sectors in the construction field being represented (the VET, the educational sector, the academia, and the industry – construction sector and construction materials producers, certification bodies, producers' associations and unions, etc.).
2. Moreover, based on the discussions, recommendations were developed, and were included in the report elaborated by the Coordinator of WP2.
3. The Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence Transnational Toolkit, aiming to raise awareness and build competences for sustainable decision making in materials selection in building projects, was strategically designed to multiply the impact of replicability activities.
4. The Transnational Toolkit for the Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence was uploaded in the project's platform and website.
5. The Transnational Toolkit for the Sustainable Building Materials Awareness and Competence will also be published as an e-Handbook and it was already translated in all partner languages. Also, this result was already integrated in the training materials of the Building Matters VET curricula, in a form of providing workable knowledge.
6. By extending the duration of the implementation of WP2 it was possible to achieve a high quality of the main result (in final version), as well as its translation into the languages of the countries participating in this project. Also, the coherence of WP2 and WP3 was ensured, taking into account that the basis for starting WP3 is constituted by the final result of WP2 (the Transnational toolkit for training package).
7. When organizing the Transnational Interaction Round Table, all the template documents provided in the WP2 Methodology (developed by PEDMEDE, and approved at the partnership level) were used.