



Position paper – SPAIN

*(WP2 EXPERIENCE AND VIABILITY OF NZE REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS –
D2.7, position paper)*

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THE EU INITIATIVE NEARLY ZERO ENERGY HOTELS (neZEH)

neZEH's scope is to accelerate the rate of refurbishment of existing hotels into Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (nZEB), providing technical advice to hoteliers for nZEB renovations, demonstrating the sustainability of such projects, challenging further large scale renovations through capacity building activities, showcasing best practices and promoting the front runners. The project covers seven (7) EU countries: Greece, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Romania, Croatia, France and has a wide EU level impact.

The expected results are:

- An integrated set of decision support tools to assist hoteliers in identifying appropriate solutions and designing feasible and sustainable nZEB projects;
- A dynamic communication channel between the building sector and the hotels industry, which will enable the exchanging between demand and supply side and the endorsement of the nZEB concept;
- Demonstration pilot projects in 7 countries to act as "living" examples; aiming to increase the rate of nZE renovation projects in the participating countries
- Practical training, informational materials and capacity building activities to support nationally the implementation and uptake of nZEB projects;
- Integrated communication campaigns to increase awareness for the NZEB benefits, to promote front runners and to foster replication; challenging much more SMEs to invest in refurbishment projects in order to achieve nZE levels.

In the long term, the project will assist the European hospitality sector to reduce operational costs, to improve their image and products and thus to enhance their competitiveness; contributing in parallel to the EU efforts for the reduction of GHGs.

neZEH started at May 2013 and will end at April 2016 and is co-financed by the Intelligent Energy - Europe (IEE) programme.

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World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)	EU/Int.
Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECSTouR)	EU
Federation of European Heating, Ventilation and Air-conditioning Associations (REHVA)	EU
Agency of Braşov for Energy Management and Environment Protection (ABMEE)	Romania
Creara Consultores S.L. (CREARA)	Spain
ENERGIES 2050 (ENERGIES 2050)	France
Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar (EIHP)	Croatia
Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l'Innovazione (SITI)	Italy
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1. INTRODUCTION

The European initiative Nearly Zero Energy Hotels (neZEH), aims at accelerating the rate of the refurbishment of existing buildings into Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB), focusing on the European accommodation industry, especially the Small and Medium properties which represent 90% of the European hospitality market.

neZEH is an initiative co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme (2013-2016), proposed and implemented by a consortium of 10 partners from 7 European countries (Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain and Sweden), including 2 European associations and one UN specialized agency.

Sixteen hotels across the 7 neZEH countries have committed to become neZEH Pilot Hotels. These hotels are to become inspiring frontrunners to the European hotel industry as examples of good practice to achieve NZEB performance levels. The neZEH initiative provides sound and adapted guidance for the EU accommodation industry to reach neZEH levels, and offers a free online neZEH tool for a wide use of SME hotels, across the EU Member States.

In Spain, neZEH selected as pilots the rural hotel Amalurra of Bizkaia and the hotel Corona del Mar in Benidorm.

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Tourism is a key industry sector of the European Union. It contributes 5% to EU GDP and accounts for 5.2% of the total labour force (which equates to some 9.7 million jobs). When its close links with other economic sectors are taken into account, these figures become even higher as 10% of GDP and 12% of total employment.

During the last fifty years, tourism has experienced continued expansion to become amongst the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors globally. International tourist arrivals worldwide are expected to increase by 3.3% per year between 2010 and 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. In Europe, arrivals grew by 3% in 2014 covering 51.4% of the total world tourist arrivals .

In the case of **Spain**, according to the latest report developed by the World Council of Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism (including hotels, travel agents, airlines, transport, restaurants or leisure services) had a direct contribution of €62,100 million in 2015 to the Spanish economy, representing 5.8% of Spanish GDP. In total, that is, taking into account the effects of investment, public spending in the sector and the impact of purchases from suppliers, the tourism sector and travel accounted for Spain 173,100 million euros, representing 16% of GDP.

Regarding employment, tourism and travel in **Spain** generated a total of 937,500 direct jobs (5.2% of total employment).

2.2 Buildings consume 40% of the total of energy and emit 36% of greenhouse gases in the EU, so the building sector is a key priority of the EU's energy efficiency related policies. Two key directives target buildings energy efficiency: the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPBD recast)¹ and the Energy Efficiency Directives (EED)² that are to be implemented by every EU Member State. The long term aim is to transform the European building stock into NZEBs by deep renovation of the existing building stock and ensuring that all new buildings are NZEB. Although not fully defined in the final agreement this is in harmony and priorities of the COP21³, where the neZEH project organized and participated in different events.

Spain has been a country with considerable dependence on fossil fuel imports over the past 50 years. The final energy consumption in the country exceeded the 90 Mtoe mark in 2010 and, particularly, the tertiary sector surpassed the 10 Mtoe mark in 2011. However, consumption has been gradually decreasing since 2011 due to the economic crisis.

2.3 The neZEH initiative provides SME hotels with the opportunity to achieve NZEB performance levels, by specifying an acceptable level of energy performance for them to be a nearly zero energy hotel (neZEH), as well as offering tailored technical assistance for deep energy renovation of the buildings and showcasing best-practice examples. This approach can lead to 60% primary energy consumption reduction and to 70% savings in operational costs compared with pre-renovation performance.

An important specificity of the accommodation sector is that hotels represent specific building types, where a significant part of the total energy use relates to service functions not taken into account in the NZEB performance calculation methodology (hosting and non-hosting functions). The neZEH initiative is addressing this gap by considering and proposing policies related to the distinctive features of accommodation sector at EU level, and within national NZEB policies.

To be able to come up with a set of recommendations at EU level, the neZEH consortium has prepared 7 national position papers in the partner countries to foster adequate supporting policies and mechanisms at national and regional levels. The 7 national position papers are based on expert views from the 7 partner countries about the current situation, specific needs of SME hotels with regard to the NZEB transition and some recommendations to address the challenges.

In the case of **Spain**, the energy cost, which varies from a 4% to a 25% of the whole operational cost of a hotel, can be substantially reduced with the implementation of energy efficiency measures. In addition to the direct benefits for the hospitality sector, the development of these measures could generate an industry that could contribute with more than 860 M€ to the Spanish GDP and with about 5.000 jobs per year. This will help to achieve an energy saving of about 420 toe which will lead at least to a significant environmental improvement (reduction of 835 kt CO₂)

¹ Directive 2010/31/EU

² Directive 2012/27/EU

³ <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09.pdf>

3. COMMON FEATURES OF SME HOTELS: THE BUSINESS CASE OF ACCOMMODATION SECTOR BUILDINGS AND ENERGY PERFORMANCES

Tourism is the third-largest industry sector of the European Union. Eurostat highlights that the number of nights spent in tourist accommodation in the EU continued to grow in 2014, by 1.6 %, reaching 2.7 billion, hotels being the most popular type of accommodation with 64% of the nights.

During 2012, the hospitality sector in **Spain** reported 281 million overnight stays, highly above European average. Energy efficiency is therefore an important tool to enhance the competitiveness of such a strategic sector for Spain.

The tourism sector is composed of several industries and by 1.8 million businesses, 99.5% of which being SMEs and 91% being micro enterprises⁴, especially family business. The sector is very fragmented and not well federated. Hotels and similar accommodation numbered more than 200,000 establishments in the EU-28, according to Eurostat data⁵.

In **Spain**, the total number of establishments has remained virtually constant over the period 2008-2014 (an increase of 0.2 %), and it lies in a total of 14,728 . By category, however, we can see a reduction in the number of low category hotels (a decrease of 14.7 %), while the number of high category hotels has experienced an overall increase - 4 star hotels (+ 27.6 %) and 5 stars (+ 20.8 %).

The average age of the Spanish hospitality sector is above 30 years. The overwhelming majority of the oldest accommodations are located in mature coastal tourist areas, so they suffer from bad quality enclosures, windows and facilities.

Because the sector is mainly made of M-SMEs and fragmented, accessing information for better understanding and/or responding to energy or building directives is rather complex. The size of the companies, the industry business model (own and operate – or operate only), the technical support and financial implications add to the difficulties for accommodation industry SMEs to engage.

⁴ HOTREC, Green Paper on the safety of tourism accommodation services-HOTREC contribution, November 2014

⁵ Eurostat, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/tourism/data/database>

The neZEH initiative has been prepared to address this gap through its approach with pilot countries/hotels, aiming to better inform SMEs and help them to understand the challenges that the accommodation industry faces in relation to energy performance measures. neZEH provides an integrated approach to pilot SMEs for responding to the existing challenges.

- **The highest priority for SME hotels is to reduce their operational costs** and boost their competitiveness. However in the majority of the neZEH countries, reducing energy-related operational costs requires significant investment in energy efficiency renovation.
- **SME Hotels lack technical knowledge and awareness of buildings energy efficiency issues**; they do not have skilled personnel to deal with technical building maintenance or energy management issues.
- **The majority of SMEs cannot prepare their own refurbishment plans**, are lost when it comes to look for incentives related to energy measures, and do not have access to private loans in the current economic environment.
- **Resource efficiency/sustainability certification** schemes are the most common approach SME Hotels can relate to, for understanding neZEH level requirements.
- **SME hotels do not have the capacity to leverage available support policies** and do not know how to use available existing support schemes for investing in efficiency. Furthermore, they lack information on how to plan and implement energy efficiency investments.
- **SME Hotels have difficulties in understanding the full economic benefit** of investing in energy retrofit in cooperation with private energy consultancy companies.
- **SME hotels business models can make it difficult to achieve neZEH status**. Many EU hotels do not own the buildings in which they operate.

The implementation of energy performance measures by the accommodation industry presents opportunities to boost its competitiveness, but this is not always well understood and the capacity to engage is sometimes limited. Such measures require attention and support from relevant policy makers at the local level.

Tourism, energy and infrastructural development (including buildings) are usually related to different government portfolios, at both national and EU levels.

- Improving energy efficiency in the tourism sector relates to energy policies which are not always part of tourism authorities' portfolios, nor are policies related to buildings.
- Discussion of energy or resource efficiency in the sector usually refers to either sustainability or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies for SMEs, and relates to regulations for the tourism sector in the public domain, as issues pertaining to resource efficiency are related to quality and standards regulations. There is an obvious need to better address the tourism-energy-buildings nexus.

Member States policy makers, while preparing their National NZEB policies, do not differentiate the specificities of the accommodation sector and the involved building type.

- The neZEH consortium is sharing lessons learned from the work undertaken in 7 EU countries and key findings stemming from the SMEs in the pilot countries. Both business features and related policies and challenges have been identified. Tourism policies and regulations should take note of the key findings.
- Existing Member State level legislation on NZEB define numerical values mostly for new buildings only. It is difficult to comply with these values in the case of a refurbished building. There is a need for different and realistic NZEB criteria for refurbished buildings.
- The existing NZEB calculation methodology is usually based on the standard use of generic non-residential buildings, which do not sufficiently include hotel-specific uses and functions (for example wellness areas, spas, gyms, laundry facilities, etc.). The result is that the calculated energy performance does not sufficiently consider a significant amount of the energy that is used by hotels in practice. **Hotels represent a specific building type, where a high ratio of the delivered energy is used for non-residential, hotel-specific functions.** It is necessary for hotels to be recognised as a separate building type in Member States' building regulations.

At National level, there is a lack of interaction between policies and sectors linked to the energy efficiency of hotel buildings.

- Ministries and authorities in charge of tourism are often not aware of the EPBD and EED related obligations which apply to hotel buildings. At the same time, authorities that are in charge of support policies for energy efficiency in buildings are often not aware of the special characteristics of the tourism sector, nor the possible synergies that can be exploited when drafting energy refurbishment plans or defining NZEB criteria.

At EU, National and Regional/local levels, better coherence is required for support policies/incentives for deep energy refurbishment in hotels.

- The neZEH consortium observed that in some neZEH target countries, there are strong regional competences (e.g. France, Italy) and support policies and incentives at national, regional and municipal level lack of coordination or are overlapping. In these countries there is a need for better coordination between the measures and programmes in place at different authority levels (local, regional and national/federal) so that the available support measures strengthen each other and create synergies.

4. COMMON FEATURES OF THE TOURISM SECTOR IN ENERGY PERFORMANCES: THE CURRENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

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5. EXISTING NATIONAL POLICIES ON NZEB AND ENERGY REFURBISHMENT OF HOTELS

Spain has enjoyed several consecutive good touristic seasons, and that has led to an environment of trust which is helping the appearance of new financial tools for hospitality renovation. Particularly, in the last two years more than 500 M€ have been granted for financing actions that are directly or indirectly related to improving the energy efficiency in hotels. Why this sudden interest in energy efficiency from funds? Mainly because it is known that most investment conducted in this regard are cost effective and therefore economically viable. Another reason could be that most refurbishments include measures to enhance the energy efficiency and normally the refurbishments are conducted by big hotel chains with good solvency, so financing companies are eager to finance this type of projects, especially because this sector is considered as a refuge within the national economic outlook.

Subsidies lines available

PIMA SOL – Santander Bank

The European Investment Bank (EIB), through Santander Bank as the entity responsible for processing these funds, provides loans and leases of up to 75% of investment in energy efficiency (max. 12.5M €) of 2 to 8 years with variable interest rates 12-month Euribor + 4% with quarterly reviews.

HOTEL SOSTENIBLE ITH – Sabadell Bank

The Institute for Technology in Hotels (ITH), which is an organization dependant on the Federation for Spanish Hoteliers (CEHAT) has developed a credit line of 200 M€ to finance projects with special focus on energy efficiency and hotel sustainability. The peculiarity of this line is that is offered in a renting format which fee depends directly on the savings. Periods are set up to 7 years.

PAREER – IDAE

In September 2013, the Institute for Diversification and Saving of Energy (IDAE), announced the PAREER Program, an investment fund endowed with 125 M€ for energy efficiency projects in the hospitality and residential sector (existing buildings). While the above lines are subject to the approval of a risk committee of private financial institutions, this particular one is directly evaluated from IDAE, hence their evaluation criteria about energy efficiency and sustainability are more specific and demanding.

Subsequently, in 2015 IDAE set up the PAREER-CRECE program, containing specific aids to finance thermal insulation projects, thermal and lighting appliances, biomass and geothermal installations, as long as these measures help increase the energy qualification of the building in at least one degree in the energy rating scale.

This program will provide a total of 200 M€ before 2020 and it works through two mechanisms, financial assistance and refundable loans.

6. NEZEH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPROVED NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICIES FOR TOURISM

There is an obvious need to address the tourism-energy-buildings nexus at all levels. The implementation of energy performance measures by the accommodation industry presents opportunities to boost its competitiveness, but this is not always well understood and the capacity to engage is limited. Such measures require the attention and support from related policy makers at the local level.

The neZEH consortium is proposing to bridge this gap, by presenting possible avenues to policy makers, through the key findings stemming from the work carried out in seven neZEH target countries. Local, regional and national authorities were consulted in the field of tourism, energy and building regulatory bodies, as well as SME Hotels championing to become neZEH.

ISSUE 1: Policy makers do not differentiate the specificities of the accommodation sectors - which are primarily buildings and SMEs- while preparing their National NZEB policies.

National NZEB definitions do not sufficiently recognize the specificities of the accommodation industry. They should address the particular building features, uses and operating models, since hotels cannot be considered as typical non-residential buildings; their business models usually include a number of energy intensive operations associated with their customers' comfort and expectations, which are therefore closely linked with their competitiveness and viability. In order to develop viable scenarios for hotels, a "modular" benchmarking could be considered to include the non-hosting functions. Furthermore, different targets should be set for new and renovated buildings.

Different measures could be promoted in different climate zones within a particular country; data at a national and regional level should be evaluated to prioritize the available measures, according to their cost-efficiency depending on the climate zone.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Policy makers should coordinate a dialogue between Ministries and other Public bodies: (i) Identify the specificities of the accommodation industry and address these features in NZEB approach and targets in national levels); (ii) Define better guidance for NZEB for refurbished buildings – SME Hotels.

ISSUE 2: National Policy Makers lack of interaction between the policy sectors related to energy efficiency of hotel buildings.

The ministries/authorities in charge of tourism are often not aware of the EPBD and EED related obligations which apply to hotel buildings. On the other hand, the ministries/authorities in charge of support policies for buildings energy efficiency are not aware of the special characteristics of the tourism sector neither possible synergies that can be exploited when drafting energy refurbishment plans or defining NZEB criteria.

Better coordination is required between support policies targeting the development of the tourism sector and the improvement of buildings energy efficiency. Existing ESIF funding for infrastructural development in the tourism sector should integrate building energy performance requirements and special incentives should be developed to promote ambitious energy refurbishment of existing hotels.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Stimulate a better dialogue between tourism, energy and building policy makers to facilitate SME Hotels engagement towards NZEB regulations at local, regional, national and EU levels.

ISSUE 3: *In order to reach NZEB and neZEH energy performance, SME Hotels require technical assistance for deep renovation with tailored support from policies and incentives.*

There is a need for tailored energy efficiency support policies and financial incentives targeting the accommodation industry to help hotel owners getting started and begin accomplishing NZEB goals. Tailored financial support schemes and incentives have to be provided in order to help SME hotels to overcome the problem of high initial investment costs of ambitious NZEB renovations. For example, these policies should group the needs and capabilities of the different market segments of the accommodation industry (i.e. size, geographical position, seasonality, eco-friendly etc.) in order to reach also SME hotels effectively.

In the countries where incentives and support schemes for energy efficiency investments are developed by different authority levels (national, regional and local) there's a need for better coordination among the involved policy levels (national, regional and sub-regional support schemes) and the authorities in charge of the implementation in order to use synergies.

Policies should also facilitate the development of regional and local financial schemes (e.g. revolving funds, guaranteed or supported loan programmes, EPC schemes), which are able to mobilize private financing. The ongoing programming of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF, 2014-2020)⁶ is a huge opportunity to mainstream buildings energy efficiency policies and achieve large scale improvements in the Member States.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Policy makers need to engage for scaling up refurbishment of the accommodation industry to meet NZEB performance, and reach neZEH status – the use of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) is a possible option; (ii) Information, technical and financial support could be provided by an innovative approach and the creation of a “One Stop Shop” for SME hotels.

ISSUE 4: *Important terminology details needs to be addressed for NZEB definition*

According to the Recast EPBD⁷, the definition of NZEBs is left to each Member State and there is no unique and harmonized NZEB definition throughout the EU.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Policy makers need to work urgently to create the NZEB national targets, especially as concerns Renewable Energy Sources (RES).

⁶ Financing the energy renovation of buildings with Cohesion Policy funding. Technical guide. DG Regio, 2014 https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/2014_guidance_energy_renovation_buildings.pdf

⁷ Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 May 2010 on the energy performance of buildings <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:153:0013:0035:EN:PDF>

ISSUE 5: Moving towards a low carbon growth, requires a holistic resources management approach for SME Hotels

SME Hotels should be more resource efficient (energy and water consumption, combined with minimization of waste production, sustainable mobility etc.). In most activities related to SME hotel operation – hosting and non hosting functions - energy consumption is hidden and the market asks for integrated and innovative actions. A more strategic viewpoint to fostering sustainability and innovation should include broad policy coordination in order to integrate multiple policies (energy, transport and environment).

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Adapted policies, related to regulations, resource efficiency management, advocacy campaigns and staff training can help SME Hotels to engage in green innovation, thus building a vibrant and competitive tourism sector contributing to EU Low carbon growth.

neZEH INITIATIVE: CREDIBLE AND INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Hotels need reliable technical assistance supported by financial incentives to design energy refurbishments and plan the investment financially. As reported in the recent EPBD public consultation report⁸, a major barrier for the insufficient take-up of available financing mechanisms for energy efficiency in buildings (where these are available), is the complexity of the renovation decision as such, which requires only financial insights, but also technical, organizational and legal. Financing mechanisms available are also complex for non-professionals to understand at an adequate level for decision-making.

neZEH recommends the set-up of “one-stop-shop” services in the public or private domains, or energy help desks also for the non-residential building sector (i.e. similar to the “*point renovation info service*” or “*Espace Info Energie*”⁹ service of ADEME in France for the residential sector), in order to guide hotel owners through the whole renovation process. These services should provide independent, credible and evidence-based information on the available technical solutions; have knowledge of the available public and private financial support schemes as well as expertise in the design and implementation of hotel refurbishment projects. The fundamental role of local authorities in providing energy advice, due to their involvement in planning and building permits, is to be emphasized here¹⁰.

⁸ Public Consultation on the Evaluation of Directive 2010/31/EU - Final synthesis report, Ecofys, November 2015, <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/MJ-02-15-954-EN-N.pdf>

⁹ French energy counselling service for residential sector. It is an initiative of ADEME, available on regional level. <http://www.ademe.fr/collectivites-secteur-public/integrer-lenvironnement-domaines-dintervention/renovation-lhabitat/doter-soutenir-point-renovation-info-service-pris>

¹⁰ Public Consultation on the Evaluation of Directive 2010/31/EU - Final synthesis report, Ecofys, November 2015, <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/MJ-02-15-954-EN-N.pdf>

SME hotels with less financial capacity should receive technical assistance to develop individual deep renovation roadmaps, required to achieve the NZEB status in a certain time frame. The roadmaps should specify the individual cost-optimal renovation steps, plan their logical timeline and consider the financial feasibility at the same time. EU funding will be critical for enabling such successful approach, the pool of competencies of the neZEH consortium has been key in providing tailored made technical assistance.

WHY becoming a resource efficient hotel? The case of certification schemes

Becoming certified as a resource efficient hotel provides guidance on how to operate a hotel in a sustainable way, brings a competitive advantage while increasing the brand value.

Energy efficiency and renewable energy measures very often reduce operational costs, increase independence from energy suppliers and reduce the hotel's and the guests' carbon footprint.

Endorsing resource efficient initiatives would help to meet the hotel's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies, while increasing the living comfort and enriching the guests' experience and therefore, loyalty.

The neZEH consortium provides an innovative approach which goes beyond resource efficient operations; it offers a step by step approach and tools to enable hoteliers to reach nearly Zero Energy Hotel (neZEH) performance.

AWARENESS RAISING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Advocacy and tailored awareness raising campaigns targeting the hospitality industry can help to convince hotel owners about the economic viability of becoming a neZEH. Insufficient awareness about the benefits of investing in energy efficiency, as a result of lack of information and advertising, is also mentioned as a barrier in the EPBD consultation¹¹. It is easier to engage hotel owners that are already committed to sustainability in the discussion about investing in deep energy retrofit. Synergies with the existing engagement of hotels in different eco- green hotel certification schemes can be exploited when promoting buildings energy efficiency among hoteliers (i.e. by using the EMAS following hotels).

The buildings energy performance criteria should be included in the existing national and European quality and sustainability classification schemes for hotels, i.e. in the EU level Eco certification scheme, to ensure and promote the marketing value of ambitious energy refurbishments for hotels. Also, the voluntary building energy performance certification schemes shall be promoted among hotel owners.

¹¹ Public Consultation on the Evaluation of Directive 2010/31/EU - Final synthesis report, Ecofys, November 2015, <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/MJ-02-15-954-EN-N.pdf>

Hotel managers and the hotel personnel need to be trained on basic technical knowledge related to energy efficiency as well as on the economic and environmental advantages of investing in ambitious refurbishment projects. Hotel owners have to gain a general understanding of sustainable buildings and the available public support schemes for them. Public support schemes for capacity building can facilitate the learning process. Training sources on basic technical knowledge related to energy efficiency/NZEB as well as on the potential of investing in ambitious refurbishment projects¹² and public support schemes for capacity building can contribute to that direction. At the same time, building professionals need to be ready to respond to the new era of NZEB; there should be requirements for training leading to qualified professionals and companies in high energy efficiency, and especially to energy retrofits towards NZEB.

Finally, showcasing existing successful examples of hotels engaging to become NZEB is also important in order to inspire and drive replication. In the 7 neZEH countries, the pilot hotels are already paving the way towards such investments. Awareness raising and capacity building activities should definitely include the study of best practice examples. Moreover, the creation of national or European open-source databases with NZEB buildings, including energy and cost data where available, would very much contribute towards this objective.

The neZEH consortium is committed to further engage towards these advocacy efforts, through its partners at national, EU and global levels.

¹² Nearly Zero Energy Hotels (neZEH). Training courses for hotel owners and for building professionals.
http://www.nezeh.eu/main_menu/library/training/index.html

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