

INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION 3 AND EXPERIENCE FROM NEZEH

In light with the previous “**Session 2: Innovating for the accommodation Industry 3.0**” addressing the technical know-how to define alone the best renovation plan and the e-toolik neZEH that can provide such support the accommodation industry,

this **session will focus** on how the lack of adequate information hinder the efforts of the accommodation industry – how to change the trend? What is the neZEH initiative, and its pilot hotels, doing to help improving the situation? Are capacity building or training activities enough? How to raise awareness among the industry but also policy makers, funding organisations to support these initiatives? Experts and the public will be invited to debate other possible solutions – such as awareness and sensitization campaigns of hotel owners, staff and clients, actions promoting the benefits of investing in becoming a neZEH – how much attention is being given to the matter and the spill-over effects these can have.

NECSTouR role: NECSTouR WP7 Communication and Dissemination leader. Besides ensuring the dissemination of the project through several actions aiming at raising the visibility and knowledge of the project within the neZEH 7 countries (by the regional leaders) and at EU level, NECSTouR is also in charge of raising awareness toward the public administrations (since NECSTouR is the EU network of regions for ST) on the neZEH initiative: its benefits but also the needs of the SMEs accommodation industry of public support through: initiatives/policies, subsidies, incentives, loans. Under the framework of neZEH, NECSTouR and MEP Grapini will organize a high level event next March at the EP to further involve public policy makers on the support of neZEH initiative to move from isolated examples towards a critical mass.

NECSTouR has been also tackling this aspect within the CC working group through several workshops tackling the mitigation aspect of CC where neZEH project implies an essential strategy and on the aspect of CC adaptation.

Experience from neZEH project with this topic

The neZEH project has been able to offer **several benefits to the 16 selected pilot hotels**: access to technical expertise; implementation and interpretation of energy audits with technical solutions and Return of Investment calculations; feasibility studies; technical advice on tendering, selection of contractors and monitoring; identification of financing opportunities; and access to marketing tools, **but also hotel staff training and increased market visibility at national and EU/International level.**

In this light neZEH has been focusing on mobilising major key actors of the building construction including architects and designers, also the hotels industry, creating awareness of the benefits of NZEB by:

- providing **Technical information** through Training courses at national level:
 - o Training courses for hotel owners/managers and hotel technical staff “Towards NEZEH hotels –Steps and Guidelines”
 - o Training courses for building professionals “How to design a NEZEH project

- enforcing **Capacity Building** and spreading inspiration from identified best practices at national and EU

*The produced material is available in neZEH website.

The renovation plan of each pilot hotels includes not only challenging energy efficiency measures and the integration of renewable energy solutions but also a change in **behaviour of management, staff and guests as they interact with the hotel**

Within the neZEH project we always stress that nearly zero energy implies acting in 3 key areas: energy efficiency, renewable energy and behavioral change. **Behavioral change** is essential to ensure the success of the neZEH/green initiatives. We need to change the mindset of the industry, but also of the policy makers and funding organisations to provide support to SMEs hotels to endorse the appropriate refurbishment to become neZEH. Attracting SMEs hotels to endorse neZEH/greener initiatives is a challenge due to the lack of awareness/competences, human resources or funding resources; it is also challenge to make funding organisations/policy makers understand the long term benefits of such investments. How to change this trend?