

BULGARIA | MARCH 27TH, 2025

2nd NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR: FINANCING, DIGITALISATION, AND SKILLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Organised by: EnEffect Consult
Supported by: Center for Energy Efficiency EnEffect
In collaboration with: Bulgarian Construction Chamber, Renovate Bulgaria and Cleantech Bulgaria.



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**23
SPEAKERS
AND
MODERATORS**

**68
DELEGATES**

6 SESSIONS

**Official Opening | Opening Plenary |
3 Discussion Sessions | Closing**

01

DISCUSSION SESSION

**opportunities for
innovation, digitalisation
and skills' development
as tools to carry out
reforms**

02

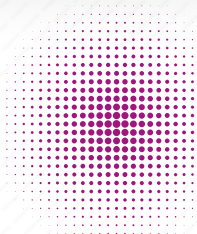
DISCUSSION SESSION

**energy performance
of buildings directive
and financial
instruments to
support the building
renovation**

03

DISCUSSION SESSION

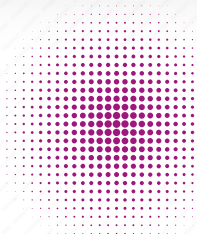
**the role of local
authorities in the
process of building
renovation**



DISCUSSION SESSION 1

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION, DIGITALISATION AND SKILLS' DEVELOPMENT AS TOOLS TO CARRY OUT REFORMS

- ☐ Participants identified predictable financing, clear regulations and institutional capacity as conditions for expanding building renovation. The discussion called for long-term frameworks combining public subsidies, loans, guarantees and private capital, rather than relying predominantly on intermittent, fully grant-funded programmes.
- ☐ Delays under the Recovery and Resilience Plan were highlighted as a risk to project completion and funding absorption. Participants called for faster administrative procedures, stronger inter-institutional coordination and technical and legal support for municipalities, while construction representatives stressed the need to protect implementation quality.
- ☐ Workforce development was discussed as an investment requirement, not only an educational activity. Speakers emphasised that renovation programmes depend on qualified professionals able to meet technical standards, performance targets and deadlines. Modern, flexible training and continuous upskilling were identified as priorities.
- ☐ Training programmes presented by the Bulgarian Construction Chamber through the European Digital Innovation Hub covered the construction and investment process, with more than 40 modules organised into seven thematic categories. The discussion linked digital transformation and professional training with the need for sustained investment and alignment with financing frameworks.
- ☐ The BUILD UP Skills Bulgaria 2030 roadmap proposed a national register of qualified professionals, skills passports, lifelong learning and qualification requirements in public procurement. These measures were presented as ways to strengthen project quality, reduce implementation risks and support confidence in renovation investment.
- ☐ Speakers highlighted the need to combine investment in innovation with investment in skills. The InnoBuilder programme and AFCOS roadmap illustrated support for developing solutions, understanding standardisation requirements and preparing innovative construction products for market use.



DISCUSSION SESSION 2

ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE AND FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE BUILDING RENOVATION

- ☐ Participants identified institutional clarity and coordinated implementation as central challenges in using available financing instruments. The discussion called for clearer responsibilities and stronger cooperation between public institutions, financial organisations and the construction sector.
- ☐ Blended financing was discussed as an alternative to fully grant-based renovation schemes. Participants emphasised that combining public support with repayable instruments should be accompanied by clear communication, supportive policies and safeguards for vulnerable households.
- ☐ The INSPIRenov project presented models under development combining public grants and guarantees for multifamily building renovation. Consultations with banks identified uncertainty in homeowners' association governance, insufficient creditworthiness data and limited banking-sector expertise in renovation financing as barriers requiring attention.
- ☐ The Sofia one-stop-shop pilot and SHEERenov+ experience highlighted the role of integrated assistance in supporting homeowners' technical, legal and financial obligations. Stable, long-term financing and consistent policy support were identified as necessary for these services to operate beyond information provision.
- ☐ The discussion called for building on the existing expertise of the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Sources Fund in developing the proposed National Decarbonisation Fund. Participants also highlighted standardisation, digitalisation and improvements to energy performance certification as priorities for supporting implementation and access to finance.



DISCUSSION SESSION 3

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE PROCESS OF BUILDING RENOVATION

- ☐ Municipalities were recognised as central to renovation delivery, but participants stressed that they require technical training, institutional partnerships and practical support. Cooperation with NGOs and private experts was identified as important for strengthening local capacity.
- ☐ Experience from six Bulgarian cities illustrated municipal-led, NGO-led and hybrid one-stop-shop models. The discussion highlighted services extending from information and technical assistance to financing options and continuing support throughout renovation, supported by local partnerships and peer learning.
- ☐ The National Trust EcoFund emphasised that infrastructure improvements should be accompanied by user engagement and effective municipal energy management. Planning, monitoring and attention to how renovated buildings are used were discussed as necessary for sustaining energy savings.
- ☐ Gabrovo's first energy community was presented as an operating public-private partnership, while a second community was awaiting municipal council approval. The experience highlighted legal and contractual preparation, adaptable financing arrangements, clear guidance and trust as important considerations for replication.
- ☐ EncomHub was presented as a project supporting citizen-led energy communities, with the aim of establishing centres providing technical, legal and financial guidance. Complex connection procedures, limited support from grid operators and low public awareness were identified as barriers. The discussion emphasised citizen participation and cooperation between municipalities, businesses and civil society.

