



In Short – State of the art March 2005

This Newsletter is published for national policy makers to inform them about sustainable construction and the operation of buildings. It contains a brief description of the current state of the art with respect to the European Research Area ERABUILD

From the editor's desk

ERABUILD is the ambitious ERANET-Project on construction and real estate that aims to establish strategic cooperation between national governments in Europe.

Ambitious indeed, some would call construction the sector where cooperation, innovation and efficiency are needed the most from whatever the point of view: planet, people or profit. Others would simply call it a mission impossible, since attempts to establish cooperation and unity in policies generally seem to fail, even on a national level.

Nevertheless, some six months ago, a consortium from eight European countries took up the challenge to establish some synergy in policy development within this seriously fragmented area. They started to compare nine national programmes that aim to intervene in the building sector. This comparison was based on scientific content as well as formal and administrative aspects. The ultimate objective was to ensure a common understanding between the participants and to create a basis for continuation.

Now, in less than six months, the consortium has presented the first results to the Steering Committee, leaving to them the task of discussing the initial findings and deciding on the further course of action. The SC meets on 18 March. More soon.

Antoinet Smits, erabuild@senternovem.nl



Description of programmes

Method of action

The first step towards strategic transnational cooperation in the construction sector was a thorough inventory of nine existing national programmes. This inventory was carried out on the basis of three templates. The first summarises the facts, such as the number of submitted and funded projects, the total programme funding and average funding per project.

The second template provides an overview of the formal and administrative programme aspects, including programme administration, information and dissemination, evaluation and enhancement.

The third template describes the strategic and scientific contents of the ERABUILD Programmes, including summaries of project examples and detailed reports on programme development.

The templates are compiled into a booklet that now forms the basis for the next step: the analyses. The booklet will be published on the website after formal approval by the Steering Committee during its meeting in March.

“There is so much to learn, even by simple translations of projects dealing with problems we all face...”

Harry Boschloo, Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment in The Netherlands

Initial findings

The total funding of the nine national programmes amounts to over €240 million. Approximately €47 million is spent annually supporting innovative projects within the programmes. The total number of submitted projects amounts to over 4300, and the total number of funded projects exceeds 1400, so the average funding rate is fairly high (32%), which is a clear advantage for the applicants.

The average project duration varies between programmes. While the average project duration in the Dutch programme Compass is only three months, the average project duration in other programmes (France, Denmark and Germany) is three years. The programmes also have different roles for project participation. While some programmes allow large enterprises, SMEs, universities, research institutes etc. to participate, the participation in other programmes is limited to a specific group. In most of the programmes the involvement of foreign partners on the level of information exchange is fairly common, but only a few programmes are able to fund foreign partners.

"I was surprised that the programmes are managed so differently. This will be a great challenge for our future work!"

Herbert Greisberger Austrian Society of Environment and Technology – ÖGUT, Coordinator of WP1,

The scientific fields cover the complete area of construction and maintenance. Themes vary between ICT, mass customisation, prefabrication, life cycle aspects, energy efficiency, new materials, as well as health and consumer-related aspects.

A further important issue is how calls are developed in the various programmes. Within the ERABUILD consortium this varies between ad hoc calls, continuous and annual calls. But nearly all the programmes involved see the possibility to announce a joint call within the ERABUILD project, which is an important point for the ERABUILD project.

"The fact that nearly all partners are interested in launching a joint call shows a real commitment to the project. It is a pleasure to work in such a motivated team",

Ursula Bodisch, Assistant Coordinator of WP1, Austrian Society of Environment and Technology – ÖGUT.

Next steps

Work Package 2: Programme Comparison and Analysis has started to take full effect. The objectives of this activity are to identify scope for future cooperation and coordination activities, identify and overcome barriers that hinder transnational cooperation and to identify best practices.

The first steps of the analyses include concentrating on comparing formal and administrative programme aspects and programme strategies and scientific contents to find the first ideas for cooperation by identifying areas of common interest. The next steps will be to identify Cooperation Areas and to develop a Common Cooperation plan.

Early Pilot Actions of Work Package 3 are also planned, based on the findings resulting from the analyses of the programmes. Such actions include "Clustering existing projects to make use of synergies" and "Pilot Calls" between some of the programmes.

It is obvious that coordination of national research and innovation programmes will have an important impact on the construction sector, in improving the quality of construction and increasing productivity and competitiveness within the sector. Only the clustering of projects from those programmes will give industry and research societies access to an enormous quantity of information and knowledge from the projects.

European Research Area

Establishing durable European cooperation in order to achieve improved innovation, efficiency and impact is needed in many sectors. The European Commission has developed the ERANET Scheme to facilitate this process. This scheme is part of the European Framework programme, as are the Technology Platforms, which both focus on strengthening future research programmes. The ERANETs are networks of programme owners and managers, the Technology Platforms bring together companies, research institutions, the financial world and the regulatory authorities.

Their respective mission:

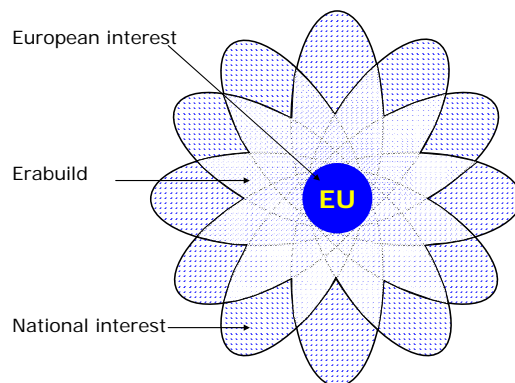
- Compare current programmes, identify common issues and facilitate cooperation;
- Define research and technology development priorities, timeframes and budgets on strategically important areas.

ERABUILD and the European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP) will undertake these activities in the building industry.

Starting Points

The construction industry is fragmented, both in terms of business and in terms of r&d investments and suffering from low productivity development. Simultaneously construction business, as any other business, is getting more and more global. The clients are global and they are expecting the same standards to be met and some business models to be used in all countries.

If the industry wants to benefit from European investments to improve its quality and cost-effectiveness, it will have to get its priorities straight: r&d activities on this level are required to meet the demands of tougher competition. Needless to say the sector has much to gain from a successful European Research Area.



ECTP & ERABUILD

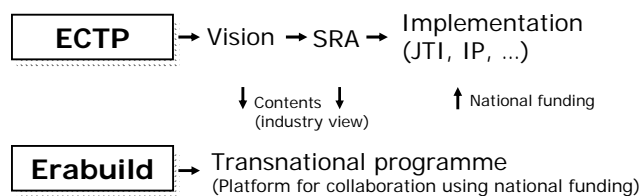
Both ECTP and ERABUILD are supporting the creation of European Research Area but having slightly different approach.

ECTP will develop a vision (first version is available on the ECTP web site), then the strategic research agenda and finally moving to implementation of the research agenda using EC instruments like Joint Technology Initiative (JTI) and Integrated projects (IP) among others. ERABUILD is approaching the same, but from national perspectives, thus from the outer petals of the flower towards the center.

ERABUILD is building the vehicle how to reach the goal defined in Visions and Strategic Research Agenda's (SRAs) of ECTP.

ERABUILD aims to enable national players to initiate joint activities, and these activities should focus on goals defined in ECTP.

"Where to go?"



"How to get there?"

More information on ECTP can be found on the website www.ectp.org
 Commission technology platform site: www.cordis.lu/technology-platforms/

Info:

ERABUILD Newsletter
 Edition: March 2005

More information: www.erabuild.net

Contact us: Erabuild@senternovem.nl
 or
 Contact your national contact persons.
 You can find them on our website.

ERABUILD PARTNERS & PROGRAMMES

Finland: [Tekes](#)

- SARA - Value Networking in Construction
- CUBE – The Building Services Technology Programme

Austria:

[Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology](#),
[ÖGUT – Austrian Society for Development and Technology](#),
[Austrian Industrial Research Promotion](#)

- BUILDING OF TOMORROW

Denmark:

[EBST–National Agency for Enterprise and Housing](#)

- DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION

France:

[Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing](#),
[Centre Scientifique et Technique de Bâtiment](#)

- SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

Germany: [BMBF - German Federal Ministry of Education and Research](#),

[TÜV Akademie Rheinland GmbH](#)

- BUILDING AND HOUSING IN THE 21st CENTURY

Sweden: [Formas –Research Council for Environment, Agricultural and Spatial Planning](#)

[BIC – Construction Innovation Centre](#)

- SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

The Netherlands

[VROM - Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment](#)

[SenterNovem, Dutch Agency for Sustainability and Innovation](#)

- COMPASS

The United Kingdom,

[DTI - Ministry of Trade and Industry](#)

- AVANTI – Collaborative Working using ICT

