

# Policy Developments on Circular Economy and an Introduction to Level(s)



**Josefina Lindblom**

***European Commission***

***DG Environment***

***Sustainable Production, Products & Consumption***



*"I will propose a European Green Deal in my first 100 days in office"*

**Ms. Ursula von der Leyen**  
President-elect European Commission

## Priorities of the new European Commission 2019-2024

- A European Green Deal**
- An economy that works for people**
- A Europe fit for the digital age**
- Protecting our European way of life**
- A stronger Europe in the world**
- A new push for European democracy**

# Towards a European Green Deal

*A new framework for the future of environmental policy*

**1. First Climate-Neutral Continent**

**2. Sustainable Europe Investment Plan & Just Transition Fund**

**3. Preserving Europe's Environment**

# Preserving Europe's environment

*"I will propose a New Circular Economy Action Plan, focusing on sustainable resource use, especially in resource-intensive and high impact sectors such as textiles and **construction**"*



**Ms. Ursula von der Leyen**  
President-elect European  
Commission



**Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius**  
Commissioner-elect for  
Environment and Oceans

**A biodiversity strategy**

**Zero pollution ambition**

**From Farm to Fork**

## **A new Circular Economy Action Plan**

*"We need to find ways to further reduce the environmental footprint of our production and consumption. (...) I will be looking at a wide range of measures to achieve more circularity in our economy."*

# New Circular Economy Action Plan (2020)

## Possible focus - based on open challenges from last implementation report

- Circular products and services
- Empowering circular consumers
- Implementation of legislation
- Develop markets for secondary raw materials
- Sectorial approach (high impact sectors: textiles, **construction**, food, others)
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Monitoring framework





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# Level(↑s)↓

Building sustainability  
performance

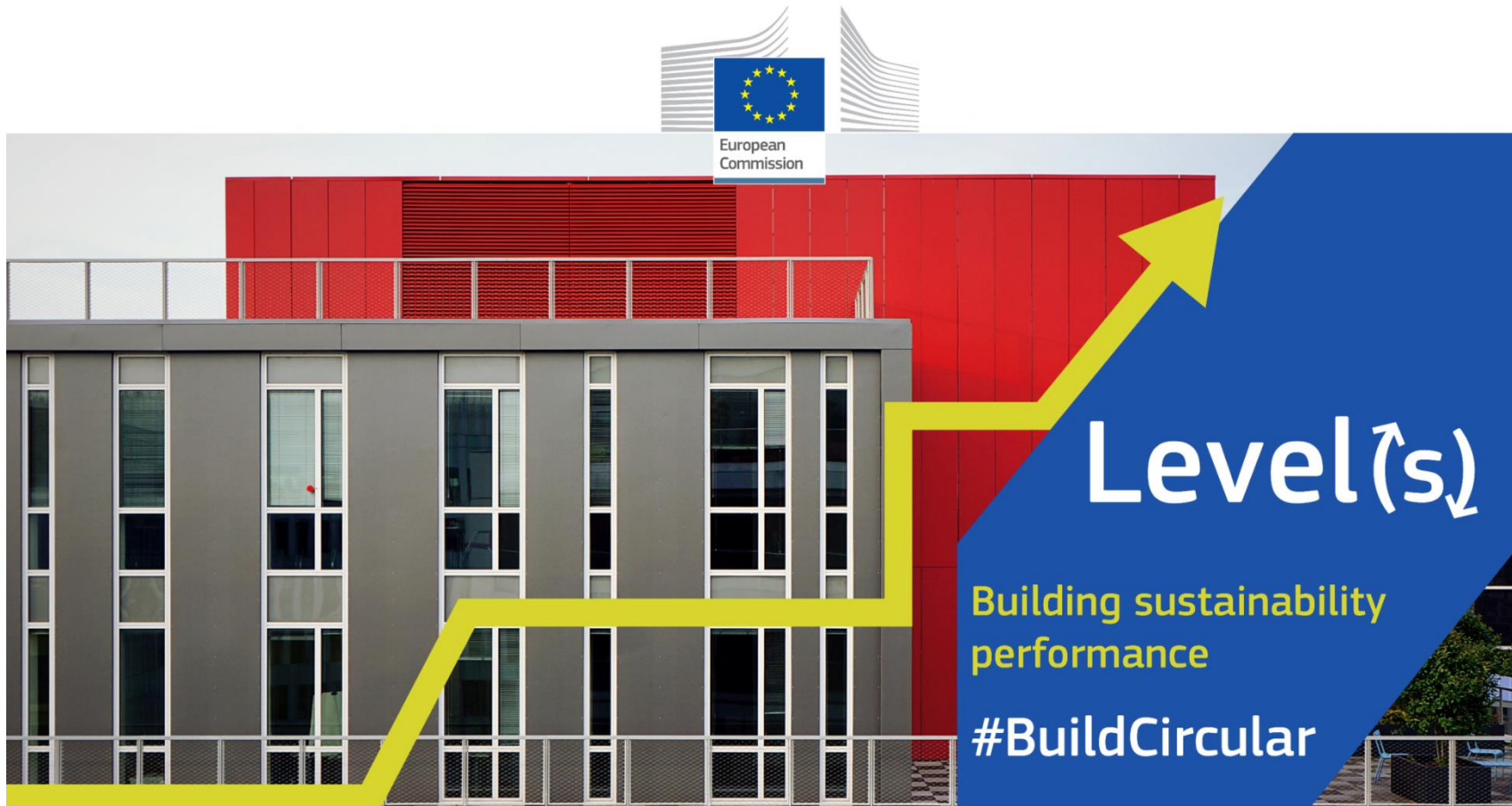
#BuildCircular



©gettyimage/Petmal

**50% energy**  
**50% materials**  
**50% carbon**

**1%**



**Common language for building life cycle**  
**➡ from niche to the new normal**





Images courtesy of Judit Kimpian, ACE



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# Level(s)

- Sustainability assessment and reporting
- Full life cycle with few indicators
- Based on standards
- Bringing normal building projects into the circular economy





# Level(s)

- NOT: an EU certification
- NOT: setting EU benchmarks



# Why Level(s) ?

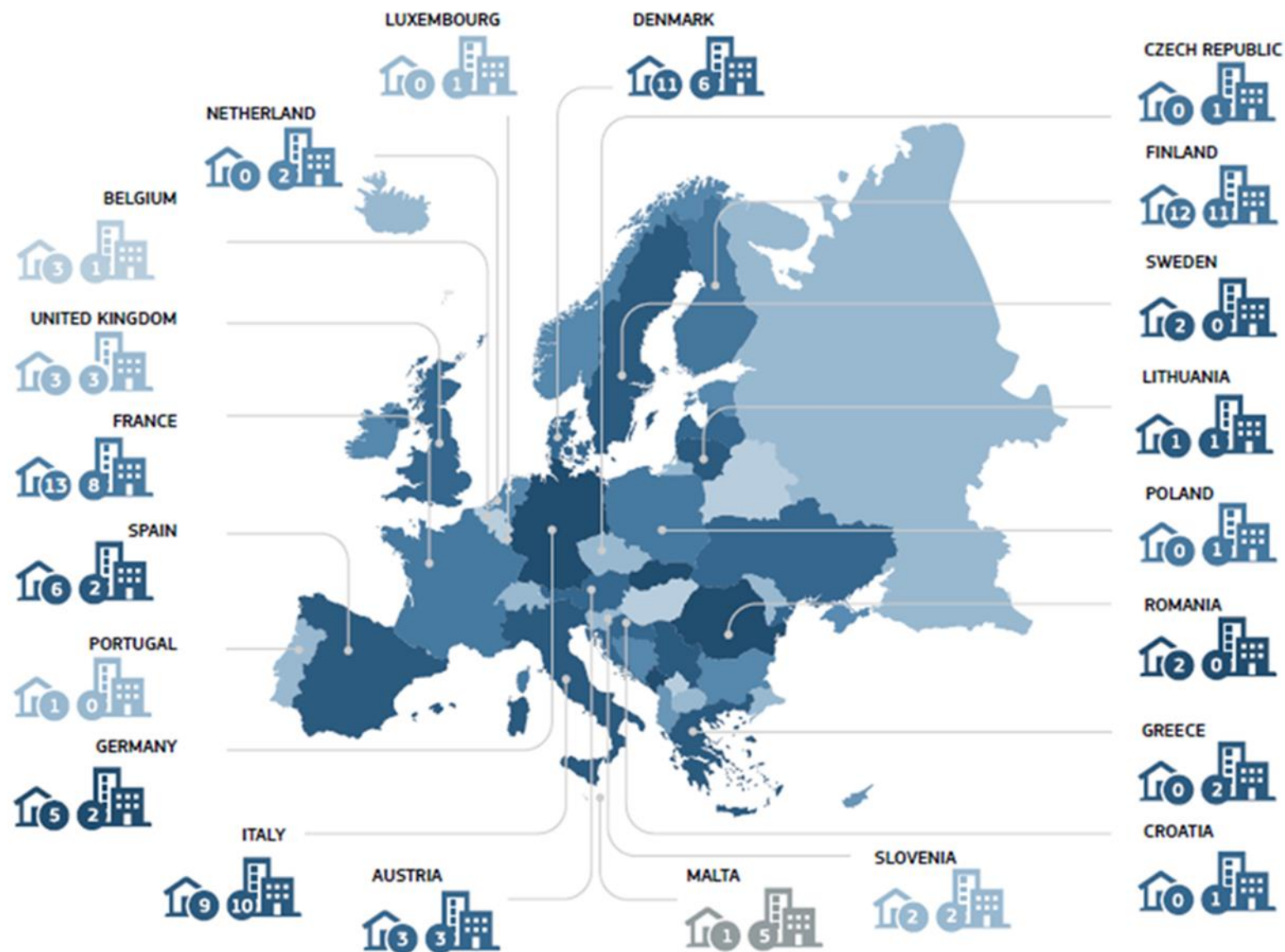
- Link circular economy and carbon neutral Europe
- Integrate life cycle thinking into building codes and procurement
- Comparable life cycle data, enabling learning and benchmarking
- Support normal building projects to consider life cycle
- European sustainability “yardstick” for investors, valuers and companies
- Certification schemes assuring their work reflects European policy

# EU Policy Context

2020 Q1	European Green Deal within 100 days of new Commission, with a new Circular Economy Action Plan “ <i>focusing on sustainable resource use, especially in resource-intensive and high-impact sectors such as textiles and <b>construction.</b></i> ”
2020 Q2	Launch of Level(s)
2020-2021	Green Public Procurement criteria based on Level(s)
2021	Sustainable Finance – with Level(s) input
2021	Public Private Partnership on Sustainable Built Environment, in Horizon Europe



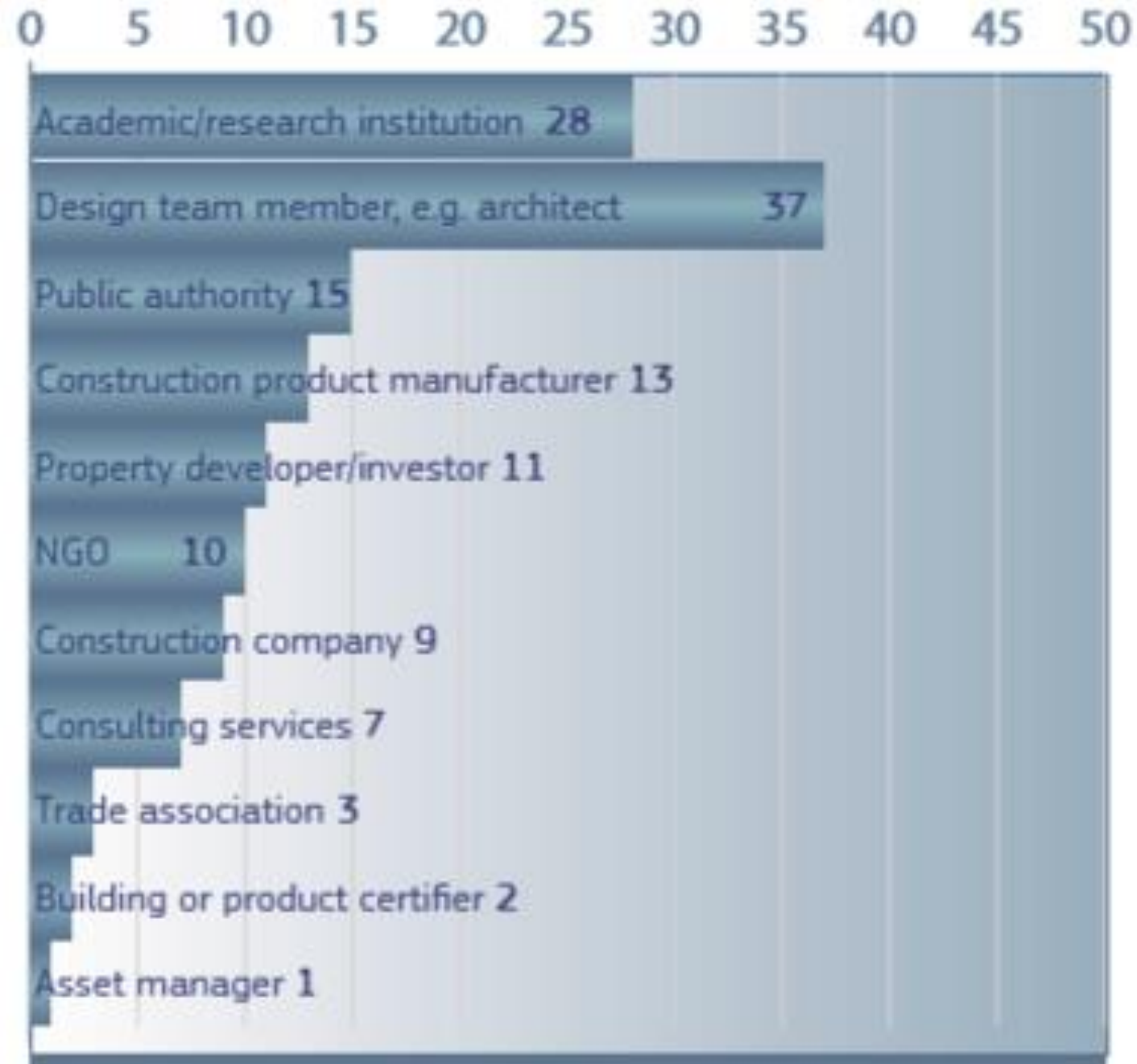
$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \begin{array}{c} \text{House icon} \\ 17 \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{Building icon} \\ 17 \end{array} & \begin{array}{c} \text{House icon} \\ 57 \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{Building icon} \\ 45 \end{array} & = & \begin{array}{c} \text{House icon} \\ 74 \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{Building icon} \\ 62 \end{array} \\
 \text{Major renovation} & \text{New} & & \text{Total}
 \end{array}$$



# Testing- where?



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## Testing – *who?*

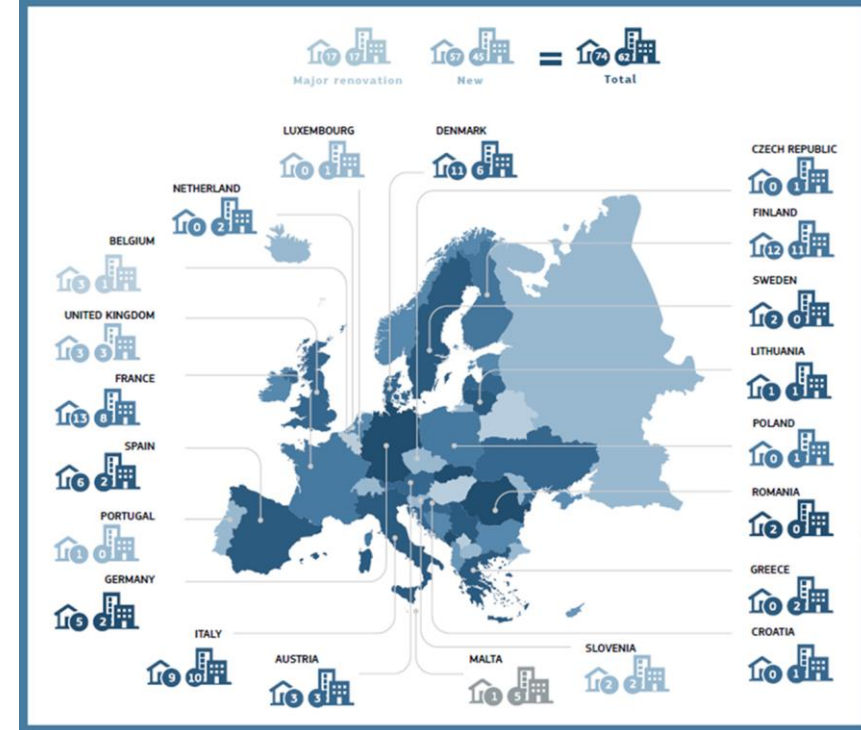
# Analysis of test phase - schedule

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30 June 2019	Reporting of indicator results via spreadsheet
30 September 2019	Horizontal feedback via survey
2019 Q3	Verification via interviews
2019 Q3 Q4	Analysis, internal discussion and draft revision
2020 Q1	Consultation, including conference
2020 Q2	Launch of final version

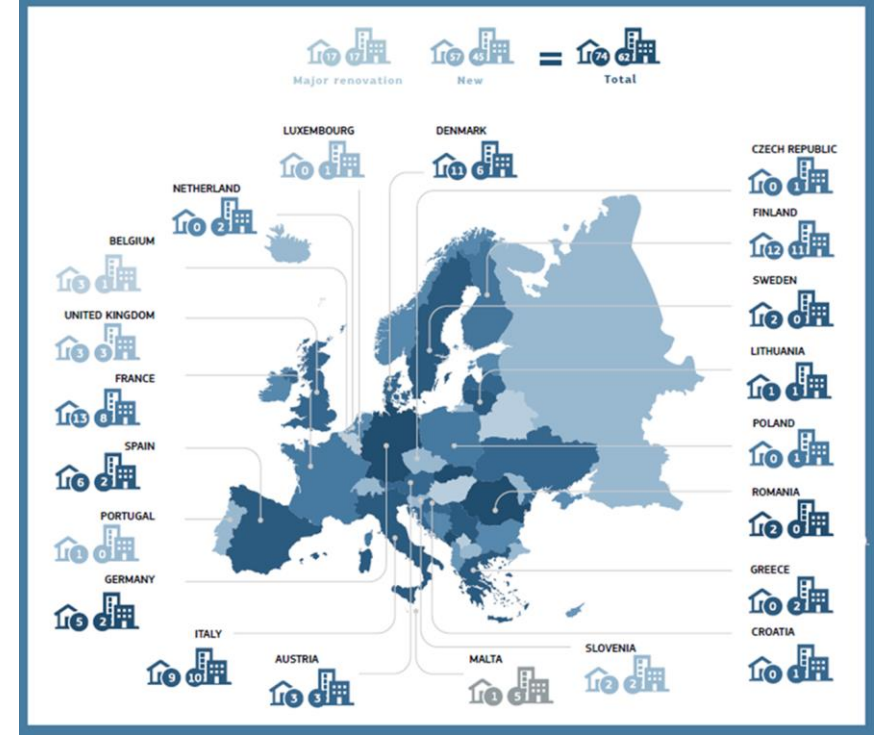
# First global observations - benefits

- Better understanding of sustainability
- Influenced design and reporting of project
- Incentives for setting sustainability goals for contractors
- Calculating carbon footprint not too challenging

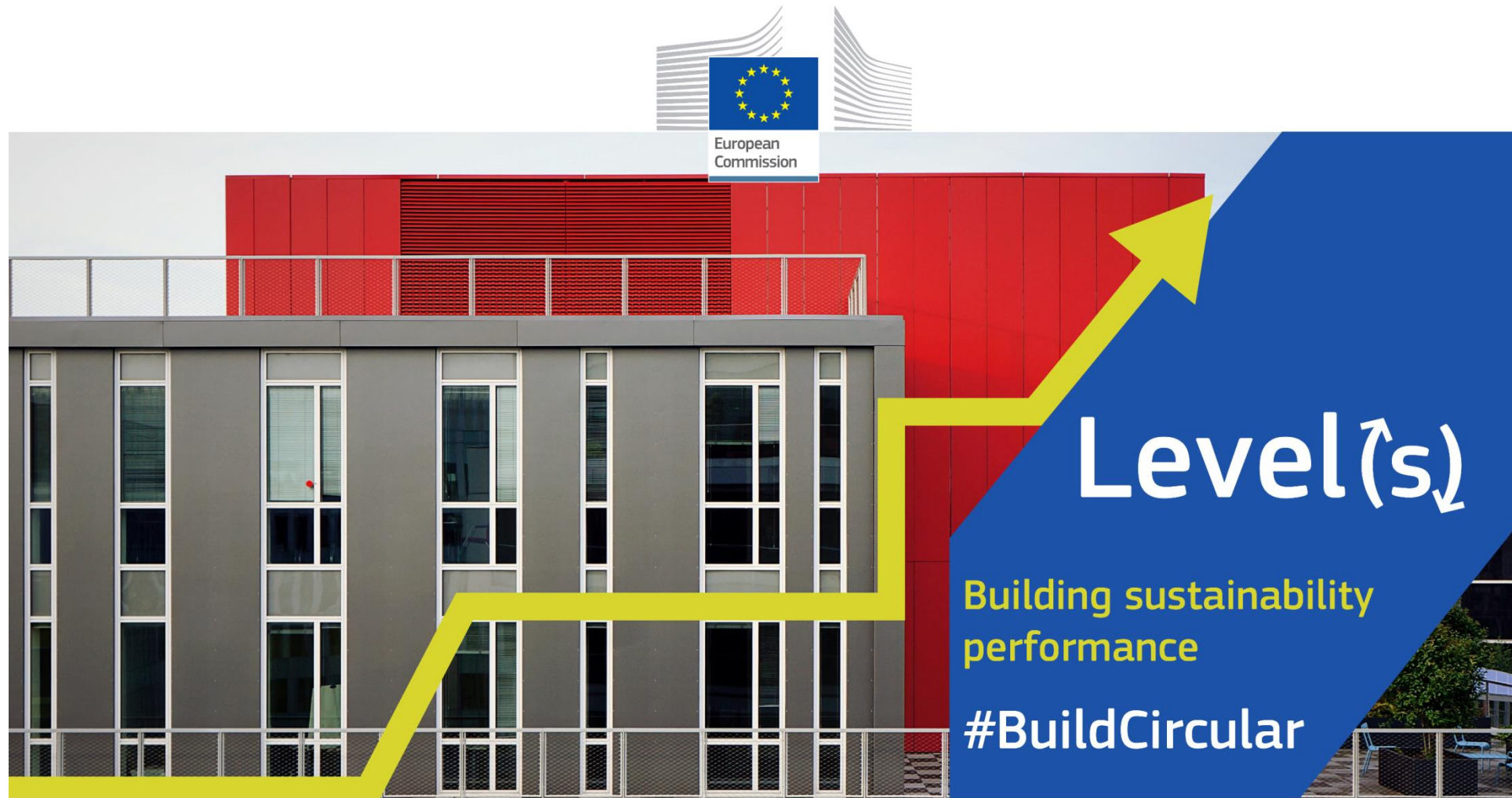


# First global observations - challenges

- Challenging for beginners
- Access/use of standards not obvious
- Spreadsheet (not user-friendly) partly defined the experience
- Difficult to categorise materials and products
- Comparability not obvious







<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/buildings.htm>

[ENV-LEVELS-TESTING@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ENV-LEVELS-TESTING@ec.europa.eu)

**Thematic area:  
Life cycle environmental performance**

**Macro-objective 1:  
Greenhouse gas  
emissions along a  
buildings life cycle**

**1.1 Use stage energy  
performance** (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr)  
✓ Primary energy demand  
✓ Delivered energy demand

**1.2 Life cycle Global  
Warming Potential**  
(CO<sub>2</sub> eq./m<sup>2</sup>/yr)

**Macro-objective 2:  
Resource efficient  
and circular  
material life cycles**

**2.1 Life cycle tool: Building  
bill of materials** (kg)  
✓ The main building elements  
✓ Reporting on the four main  
types of materials

**2.2 Life cycle tools: Scenarios  
for lifespan, adaptability and  
deconstruction**  
✓ Design aspect checklists  
✓ Semi-quantitative and LCA  
based assessments

**2.3 Construction &  
demolition waste and  
materials** (kg/m<sup>2</sup>)  
✓ Demolition  
✓ Construction  
✓ End-of-life

**2.4 Life cycle tool:  
Cradle to cradle Life  
Cycle Assessment  
(LCA)**  
(impact/m<sup>2</sup>/yr)  
✓ Seven impact  
categories (EN  
15978)  
✓ Flows of the four  
main types of  
materials  
✓ Assessment of the  
three life cycle  
scenarios (2.2)

**Overarching  
assessment  
tool**

**Macro-objective 3:  
Efficient use of  
water resources**

**3.1 Use stage  
water consumption**  
(m<sup>3</sup>/occupant/yr)  
✓ Water scarcity by location  
✓ Potable waste substitution

**Thematic area:  
Health and comfort**

**Macro-objective 4:  
healthy and  
comfortable spaces**

**4.1 Indoor air quality**  
✓ Good quality indoor air  
(ventilation, CO<sub>2</sub>, humidity)  
✓ Concentrations of a target  
list of pollutants

**4.2 Time out of thermal  
comfort range**  
% of the time out of range  
during the heating and cooling  
seasons

**Potential future aspects**  
4.3 Lighting and visual  
comfort  
4.4 Acoustics and  
protection against noise

**Thematic area:  
Cost, value and risk**

**Macro-objective 5:  
Adaptation and  
resilience to  
climate change**

**5.1 Life cycle tools:  
Scenarios for projected  
future climatic conditions**  
Protection of occupier health and  
thermal comfort in 2030/2050

**Potential future aspects**  
5.2 Increased risk of extreme  
weather events  
5.3 Increased risk of  
flood events

**Macro-objective 6:  
Optimised life cycle  
cost and value**

**6.1 Life cycle costs** (€/m<sup>2</sup>/yr)  
✓ Use stage energy and water  
costs  
✓ Construction and long-term  
maintenance, repair and  
replacement costs

**6.2 Value creation and risk  
factors**  
✓ Comprehensiveness of a  
valuation or risk rating  
✓ Reliability of the reported  
performance assessments