

# Development of Quality Assurance Schemes for Energy Efficiency Services

9 Energie in Gebäuden – Energiedienstleistungs-Contracting

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## Motivation and research question

The European Union has identified that there is currently insufficient investment in energy efficiency from energy users and financial institutions to achieve the 2030 energy efficiency target [1]. Energy efficiency services (EES) are expected to make a key contribution to the achievement of targets in public, commercial and large residential buildings. Some of the main barriers of the markets are the lack of trust in energy service providers and low customer demand. One way to generate greater trust in the ESCO industry and hence increased demand from the client side is quality assurance for EES and the EES providers. The overall objective of the QualitEE project is to develop quality assurance frameworks for energy efficiency services to scale up responsible investment in the sector.

The results of a market analysis recommended developing and implementing a quality assurance scheme to overcome the existing barriers. Quality assurance for EES services and providers will on the one hand help clients to distinguish good quality projects and will on the other hand set quality benchmarks for a good quality project for both existing and new providers [2]. The implementation of quality assurance systems is also supported by the provisions of the European Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU [3].

## Methodological approach

In the frame of the QualitEE project national quality assurance schemes for energy efficiency services shall be established to increase the service quality and increase the trust of clients and financial institutions, thereby reducing the complexity of energy efficiency services as well as taking major steps towards standardisation.

Based on the results of the EU-wide survey of the energy efficiency services market in the project's 15 focus countries and of the previous Transparens project [4] a set of European technical quality criteria has been developed to define quality aspects of the energy efficiency service value chain, with a focus on EPC as a starting point. The set of criteria is aimed to act as a uniform basis in every country expanded by additional nationally specific criteria. These criteria are designed that they can be easily applied by clients, energy service providers and financing institutions. They provide a common understanding of "good quality" for market actors on the energy efficiency service market as they build the core element for the national quality assurance schemes of energy efficiency services to be implemented. The implementation of national quality assurance schemes is based on national dialogues performed by dedicated panels, called national promotion teams that involve the national stakeholders to ensure acceptance and the scheme's continuity after project completion. While the structures and business models of the national schemes are up to the individual countries, the basic set of quality criteria is uniform throughout the countries. The quality assurance schemes will provide the basis for market introduction in further countries and future standardisation of EES. A set of financial quality criteria and a procurement handbook for energy efficiency services will be established as supporting tools for clients, providers and financial institutions involved in EES projects.

To test the applicability of the quality criteria the set is applied to 24 pilot projects across the participating countries. The above mentioned activities are accompanied by training sessions and capacity building activities in non-participating European countries.

## Results and conclusions

Draft technical quality criteria have been developed based on the "preliminary quality criteria for energy efficiency services" of the previous Transparens project. They are targeted at the relevant energy efficiency services.

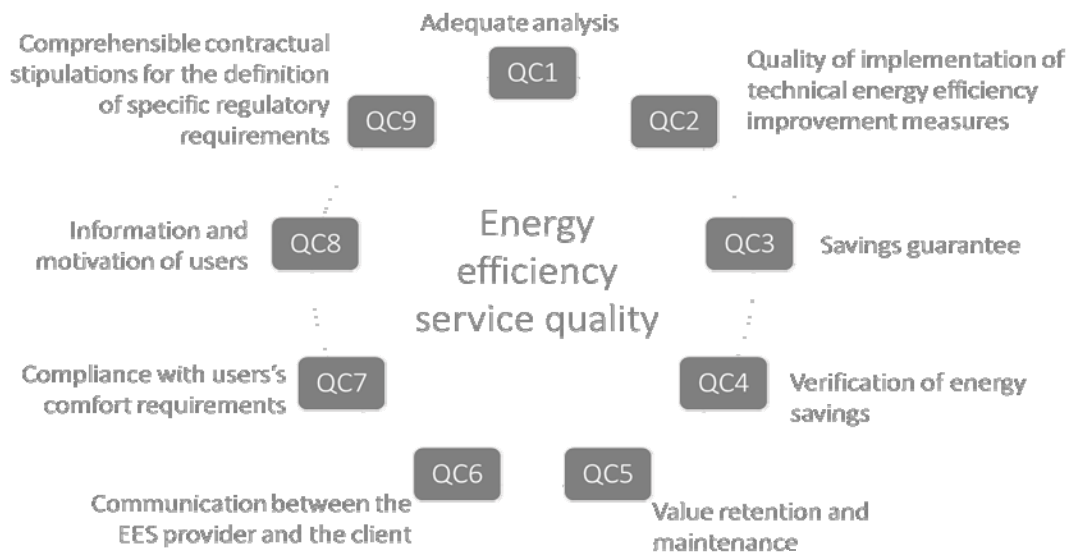


Figure 1: European technical quality criteria, QualiEE 2018

The guidelines of technical quality criteria are the key result of the QualiEE project as they build the basis for quality assurance and represent a major step towards European standardisation of energy efficiency services. The guidelines are targeted at public and private clients, energy service providers, financial institutions, procurement staff and policy makers. They define and operationalize technical, economic, communicational, and other criteria, which allow a comprehensive set of quality criteria to be applicable in quality assurance and certification schemes. Assessment criteria are introduced as well as evidence and verification processes. The technical guidelines allow, inter alia, clients to select poor projects from good quality projects. The criteria set covers nine topics along the whole value chain of EES (Figure 1), each consisting of three to five assessment criteria that incorporate the service process as well as relevant aspects such as communication within the service project. The QualiEE's Financial Guidelines present a set of quality criteria relevant for the financing of energy efficiency services. The guidelines aim to establish a common understanding for the assessment of bankability of EES projects targeting at financial institutions, energy service providers and clients and define which minimum financial information is relevant for financing EES projects.

The European energy efficiency service market has seen substantial growth over the last 20 years; however market expectations are not yet completely met. Numerous challenges need to be overcome on the way from a niche to a standardized market that is fully trusted by all market actors. It involves, inter alia, accepted quality criteria as basis for a quality assurance scheme, active promoters, best practice examples and the willingness to invest money for quality assurance.

The QualiEE project aims to increase market transparency and the quality of energy efficiency services and thus increase trust of clients, investors and financial institutions leading to higher investments and a broader roll out of energy efficiency services.

Quality criteria have been developed to be used in the procurement and implementation of energy efficiency services. The technical quality criteria build the basis for the national quality assurance schemes which will be a major step towards standardization of EES in Europe.

## Literatur

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