

Voluntary energy performance certification schemes

Disclaimer: The graphs below show data available in the EU Building Stock Observatory: a country not represented only means data was not available for this specific country.

Introduction

The market for voluntary building certification schemes is mainly developed and used for commercial buildings. Public and private users rely primarily on the mandatory Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) required by the EPBD.

There are over 20 schemes for voluntary building certification that are used across Europe. Of these, the most common are: **BREEAM, LEED, DGNB, HQE, Minergie and PassivHaus**. The main difference between these schemes is the environmental and energy aspects included in the assessment. This makes benchmarking or comparisons between the schemes difficult as their baselines, scopes and indicators differ.

Table 1: Overview of the main voluntary certification used across EU -28 (DG ENER 2014)

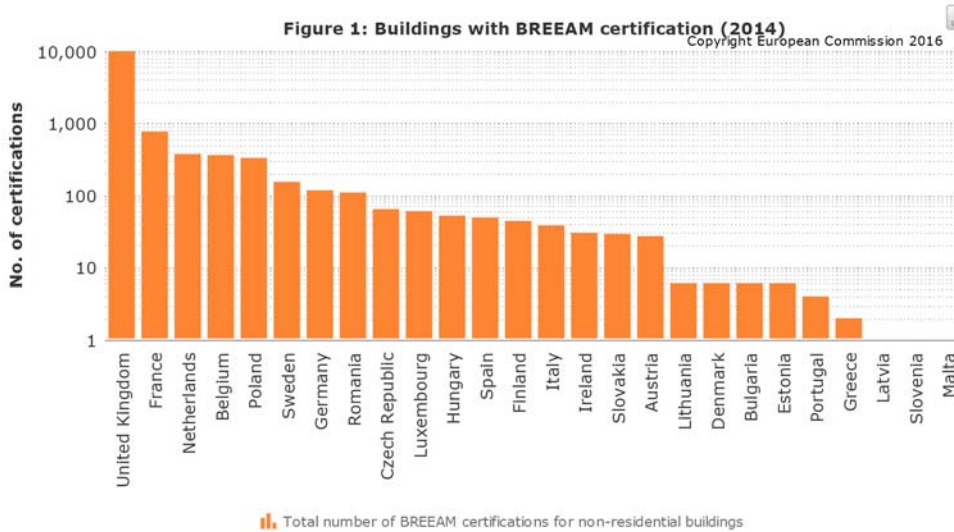
Certification system	Country or origin, year	Use of the scheme across EU-28	Type of assessment	Main type of buildings
BREEAM	UK, 1988	> 20 countries	Whole Environmental Impact	Offices, retail, industrial
LEED	US, 1993	> 20 countries	Whole Environmental Impact	Offices, industrial
DGNB	DE, 2007	> 10 countries	Whole Environmental Impact	Offices, retail, industrial
HQE	FR, 2005	5 - 10 countries	Whole Environmental Impact	Tertiary
PassivHaus	DE, 1996	> 10 countries	Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB) related	Single family houses

Certification system	Country or origin, year	Use of the scheme across EU-28	Type of assessment	Main type of buildings
Minergie	CH, 1994	5 - 10 countries	Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB) related	Single family houses

Following the EPBD (Art. 11), the European Commission shall adopt, in consultation with the relevant sectors, a voluntary common European Union certification scheme for the energy performance of non-residential buildings. The aim is to facilitate the delivery of a single market for energy efficiency in EU-28 and enhance transparent and lower transaction costs for businesses. Unlike the existing voluntary certification schemes, it is only intended to cover energy - wider sustainability issues are not mentioned. Moreover, it is to be used in addition to the mandatory EPCs or to be taken up by Member States on a voluntary basis.

BREEAM

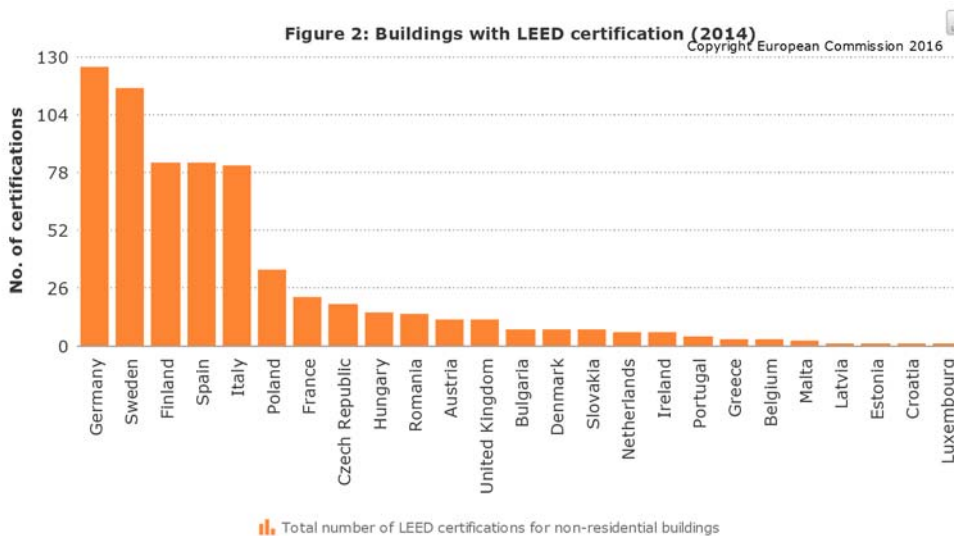
The BREEAM scheme was developed by BRE (UK) in 1988. It is the European market leader, accounting for over 81% of all sustainable commercial building certifications in Europe, based on 2014 data on the number of certifications for commercial buildings. BREEAM remains the most popular scheme in the country of its origin as well. In 2014, over 80% of all certificates have been issued in the United Kingdom.



Sources: BREEAM - RICS [Notes](#)

LEED

The LEED scheme has been developed by the US Green Building Council in 1993. The European market grows rapidly and the number of certificates increase every year; only between 2013 and 2014, the number of certificates almost doubled (from 379 to 663 certificates). In 2014, LEED certificates accounted for 4% of all the sustainable commercial building certifications in Europe. The scheme is the most popular in Germany, Sweden, Finland, Spain and Italy.



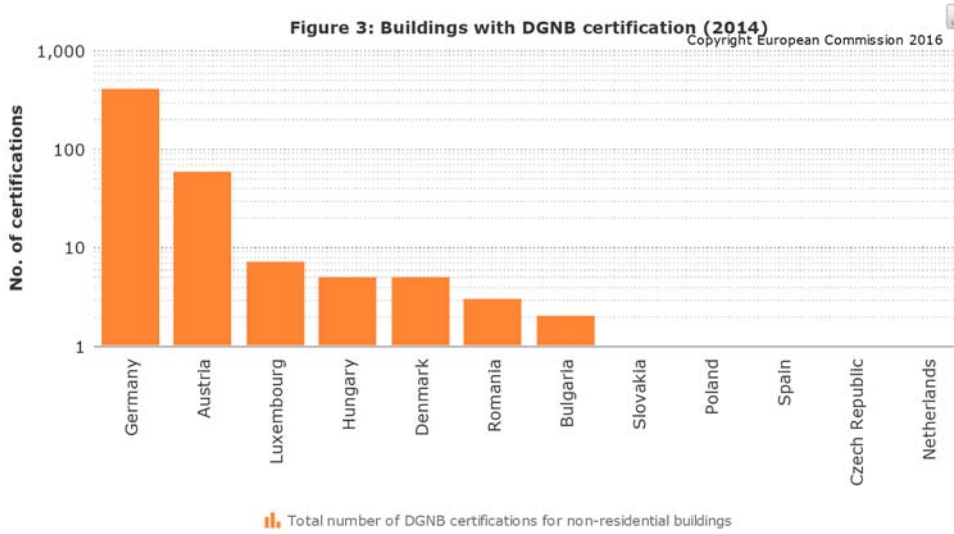
Sources: RICS - USGBC [Notes](#)

DGNB & HQE

The DGNB scheme has been developed by the German Sustainable Building Council in 2007. It is among the youngest voluntary certification schemes, popular mainly in Germany and Austria. By 2014, there were 487 DGNB certificates issued in Europe, which accounts for 3% of all

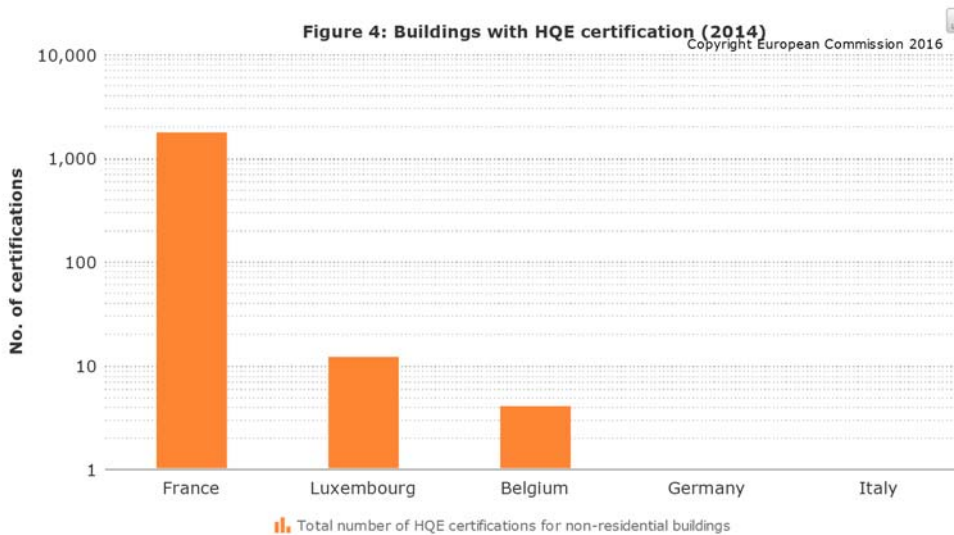
sustainable commercial building certifications in Europe.

The DGNB scheme follows the provisions in the upcoming European standards EN 15804 and EN 15978 (under CEN TC350) and it is therefore well suited to describe the material and building impacts during the building's lifetime.



Sources: DGNB - RICS [Notes](#)

The HQE scheme has been developed by the Association pour la Haute Qualité Environnementale (France) in 2005. With 1793 certificates issued by 2014, it accounts for 12% of all sustainable commercial building certifications in Europe. Over 90% of all HQE certificates are issued in France. This scheme also follows the provisions in the upcoming European standards EN 15804 and EN 15978 (under CEN TC350).



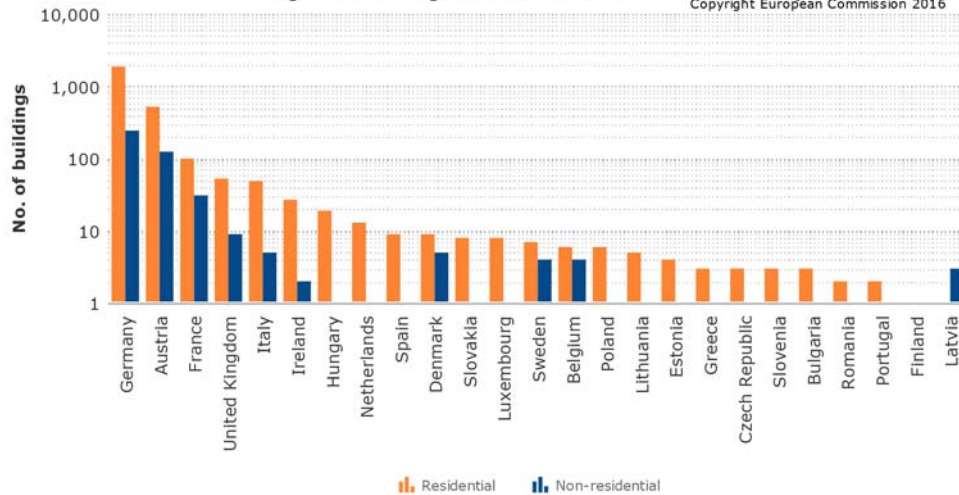
Sources: RICS [Notes](#)

PassivHaus

In 2014, the scheme was present in the majority Member States. It is most popular in Germany and Austria.

Figure 5: Buildings with PassivHaus certification (2015)

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Sources: - Passive House Database

[Notes](#)

Minergie

The Minergie scheme, established in 1994, is the voluntary certification scheme primarily used in the residential sector. The core market for this scheme is France, where Minergie is also produced for non-residential buildings.

Sources: Minergie

[Notes](#)