



European Commission

# Level(s)

Building sustainability performance

#BuildCircular



## INTRODUCING LEVEL(S)

Level(s) is a voluntary reporting framework to improve the sustainability of buildings. Using existing standards, Level(s) provides a common EU approach to the assessment of environmental performance in the built environment.

The buildings sector is one of the most resource consuming sectors in Europe, accounting for approximately half of all extracted materials, half of total energy consumption, one third of water consumption and one third of waste generation. That's why the buildings sector is a key target in the European Commission's policy for circular economy; a regenerative economic system in which resource and energy consumption are minimised.

Level(s) is a sustainability framework of the circular economy, and offers a tiered approach to life cycle assessment.

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The Level(s) common framework of core indicators aims at:

- (s) Raising awareness of, and demand for, better buildings - among the general public, developers and public procurement offices;
- (s) Improving knowledge of resource efficiency in the built environment to support better decision making on the part of designers, architects, developers, construction companies, construction product manufacturers, investors, and building owners.

For each indicator, a 'graduated' approach is possible, enabling users to move from simple through to more complex and precise calculation methods and extended reporting.

## WHAT DO THE INDICATORS COVER?

Within the framework, each indicator is designed to link the individual building's impact with the priorities for sustainability at the European level.

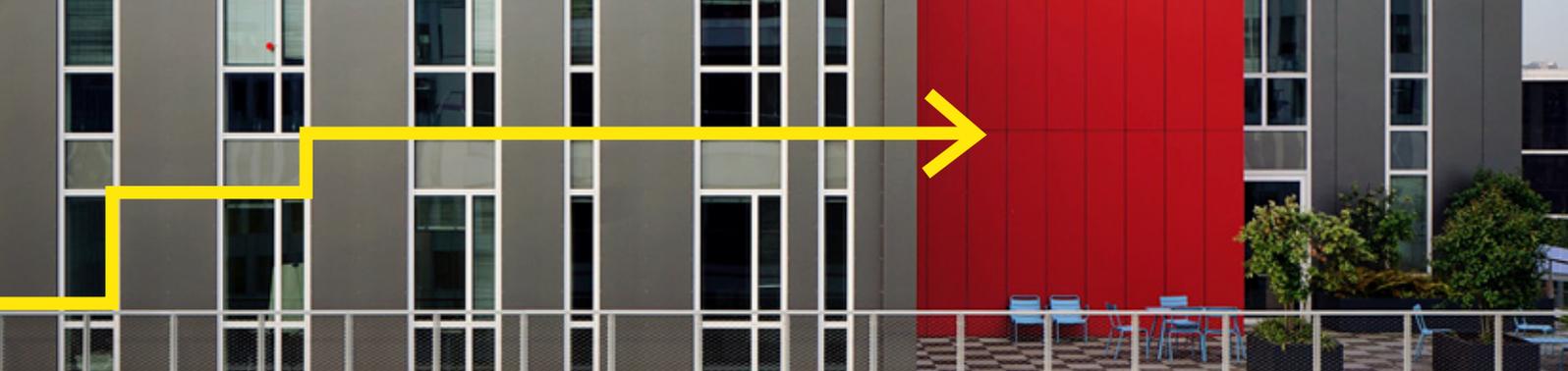
### THESE PRIORITIES ARE:

- Greenhouse gas emissions throughout the building's life cycle
- Resource efficient and circular material life cycles
- Efficient use of water resources
- Healthy and comfortable spaces
- Adaptation and resilience to climate change
- Life cycle cost and value

## STEP BY STEP

Each indicator within Level(s) can be used for different types of performance assessment, from a basic level through to a full Life Cycle Assessment (LCA).

The entry point to Level(s) is through the common performance metrics: the simplest and most accessible use of each indicator. Level(s) sets out common units of measurement and basic calculation methodologies, which



can be used by building professionals, building assessment schemes, investor reporting tools and public sector initiatives.

To compare the environmental performance of buildings, at a portfolio or national level, Level(s) offers the option of comparative performance assessment. This option is suited to building professionals and owner of property portfolios.

For building professionals working at a more detailed level to improve performance and optimise design and as-built performance, the design performance optimisation represents the most sophisticated use of each indicator. To minimise the gap between design, as-built and occupied performance, users can report on the indicators at different project stages: design stage (based on calculations), completion stage (based on as-built drawings), post-completion (based on commissioning and testing), and post-occupancy (based on measured performance).

## WHO'S WHO?

Level(s) was developed by the European Commission in close co-operation with industry stakeholders, including Skanska, Saint Gobain and Sustainable Building Alliance.

## HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

After more than two years of work, Level(s) is ready for testing from autumn 2017. Companies, associations and public authorities are warmly invited to participate in testing Level(s). The test period will last for two years and the European Commission will provide technical support during this process.

Level(s) focuses attention on the most important aspects of a building's performance, providing a simple entry point



to what can be a very complex area. Using Level(s), building professionals and their clients can increase their understanding of how their buildings impact upon the environment. Level(s) shows how to reduce environmental impact, and can prepare users for more challenging performance assessment schemes and tools.

Participants can test the complete Level(s) framework, or only parts of it. The feedback from test results will help improve Level(s) ahead of its final release, to ensure that the indicators and the user guidelines are robust and ready to market.

*To learn more about Level(s)*

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

*To register your interest in testing Level(s)*

<http://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Levels>