



Organizational tools for the EPC+ international platform

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1. Introduction

The EPC+ project aims at developing and promoting new business models for the implementation of energy efficiency services through cooperation between Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

Through cooperation innovative energy efficiency services (EES) can be offered. Cooperation enables SMEs to offer novel and high quality energy services which they could not provide as stand-alone companies. Such services are serious alternatives to standard energy efficiency services provided by large energy service companies (ESCOs) and may provide promising opportunities in terms of innovation and services.

The cooperation of SMEs with the aim to offer joint EES to the market is described as a SPIN.

A SPIN (SME Partnership for Innovative Energy Services) is an organized cluster of independent companies, mainly SMEs, that jointly supply energy efficiency services and that have a structured long-term collaboration with commonly agreed objectives.

While the benefits of SPINs are clear the creation of a SPIN is a difficult process. SMEs will not engage in collaboration unless there is a strong feeling of Need, Trust, and Control. Sustained commitment from parties involved can only be achieved when all the parties see a clear need to collaborate. Trust is needed to limit self-interest actions. The SME's ability to largely control its own destiny is a prerequisite for SME decision makers to engage in a collaborative network.

One of the objectives of the EPC+ project is the development of an international EPC+ platform.

The international EPC+ platform is an international '**market place**', where - **according to commonly agreed rules** – its members can safely **exchange valuable know-how** and **develop EPC-models and SPIN-concepts**.

An analysis of the opportunities, barriers and requirements and a description of the preferred approach to realise the platform is given in the 'Analysis of opportunities, barriers and requirements of the International EPC+ platform' (D 6.01).

In this report an overview is given of the organisational tools that are developed to create, manage and grow the International EPC+ platform. The name 'Network for Energy Efficiency Europe' (EENE) was introduced as a more commercial name for the international EPC+ platform. "Platform" and "network" is used in this report as synonyms.

2. Description of the international EPC+ platform

A key success factor of the international EPC+ platform is the willingness of companies to join the platform as a member and to participate in interactions and potential business transaction. This willingness depends on the (initially perceived) added value of the platform for members and on the other hand the effort that member will have to spend to participate in the network.

In our previous analysis¹ we identified that quick wins in the form of concrete business opportunities in the short term would strongly increase this added value.

To create these quick wins it was decided to make use of the mandatory energy audits for large enterprises (Art. 8 of the Energy Efficiency Directive). Many large enterprises that have to conduct mandatory energy audits are present in several member states while external energy efficiency auditors and SME energy efficiency audit firms, including several EPC+ partners, are mostly only active in one European member state. Several partners in the EPC+ consortium and many energy services providers outside the EPC+ consortium have been supporting public authorities and/or private companies to develop and conduct voluntary energy audits and to support clients with the development of energy action plans and energy management systems (e.g. ISO 50001). Most of these Energy Services Providers started to provide audit services in 2015 in the framework of the mandatory energy audit for large enterprises.

To attract Energy Services Providers to join the international EPC+ platform the focus of the network in 2015 was on the development of a shared capacity to serve international clients with mandatory energy audits in a large number of EU members states. As several EU member states have not transposed Art. 8 of the EED or were very late with the practical implementation, many large enterprises still have to comply. This means that the attention of the EPC+ platform for mandatory energy audits in some countries will continue in 2016.

Energy Performance Contracting and related services were added as from the beginning of 2016 and these topics will become the main focus of the EPC+ platform in 2016.

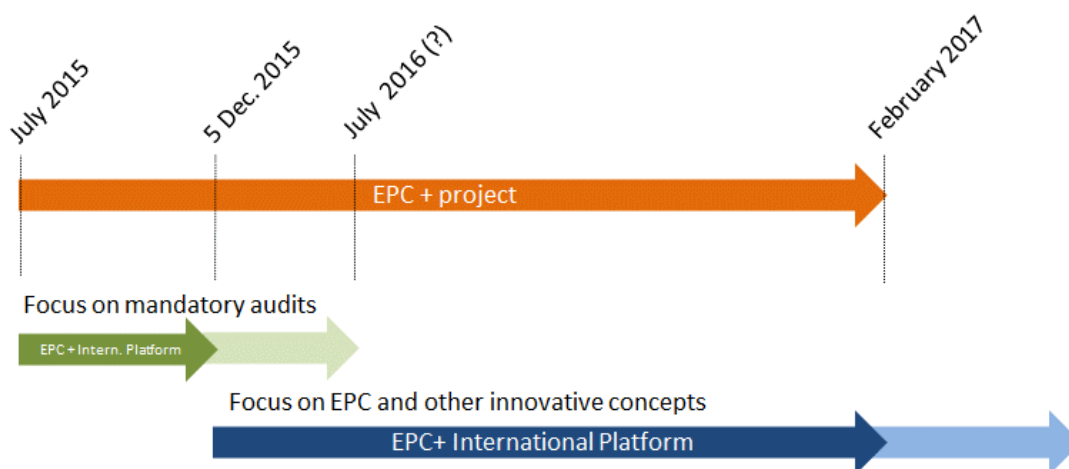
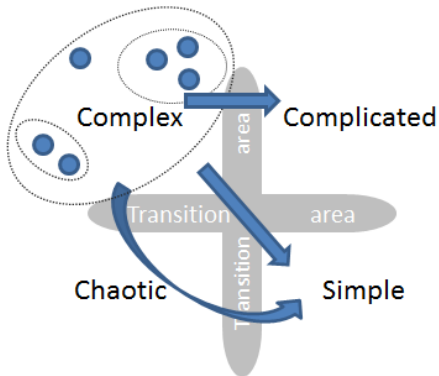


Fig. 1 - Timeline of topics in the International EPC+ platform

¹ Analysis of opportunities, barriers and requirements of the International EPC+ platform'

Based on a previous analysis of different organisational types the international EPC+ platform can be seen as an international Complex SPIN to support the development of international Simple SPINs and/or Complicated SPINs.²



A Complex SPIN is the best type to generate interactions that could lead to innovation and to facilitate the collaboration between Energy Services Providers. Simple and Complicated SPINs are the best types for actors to join forces with the objective to transform new ideas (e.g. generated in the Complex Spin) into business opportunities and to generate revenues by the collaboration of actors in SPINs.

Fig. 2 – Moving from the Complex SPIN to Simple or Complicated SPINs
Source Factor4, 2015, based on the Cynefin framework

Apart from interactions with all members at the network level, members can contact each other member directly and create a temporary business relationship or a SPIN with one or more members.

Organisational tools are specifically developed for the international EPC+ platform or are similar to the tools that are already developed for the creation of national SPINs.

3. Organisational tools for the EPC+ platform and process description

In this chapter a description is given of the process to build the network and the (organisational) tools that have been developed to realise the objectives of the EPC+ platform. Organisational tools are defined as tools that are needed to set-up the network and to facilitate interactions between members in the network. Non-organisational tools are supporting tools that add value to the network or/and to members. Both type of tools are mentioned in this report.

The need for additional (organisational) tools might be identified in the future by the members of the network and by the monitoring of interactions between members and the outcomes of these interactions. This monitoring will be done by the coordinator.

3.1. Prospecting and setting appointments

For the identification of potential members we use the list of certified energy auditors of the Association of Energy Engineers, names of energy efficiency auditors that are officially registered in members states in the framework of Art. 8 of the EED, the names of partners in EU co-funded programmes and contacts with companies that are part of existing networks of partners in the EPC+ consortium.

² For more information on Complex, Complicated and Simple SPINs see “Organisational tools for SME Partnerships for Innovative Energy Services” and the “Guidebook for organisational tools”.

Potential members are selected based on their ability to act as a partner or principal (generation of income for other partners acting as associates), their ability to act as an associate (e.g. certified energy efficiency auditor) and their expertise and services related to Energy Performance Contracting or/and other more innovative services. Another criterion is the limited geographic presence of the potential member (members should be present in a maximum of two member states, but not in two large member states). This limited geographic presence is important to avoid that a member becomes too dominant or/and would become a competitor of one or more other members.

The initial contact is made by sending an email to potential members with information about the network and an invitation for a web meeting. When a prospect shows an interest a webmeeting is organised to exchange information about the network and about the potential member. The webmeeting is followed by a short period to evaluate whether the prospect fulfils the requirements and for the potential member to confirm its interests.

3.2. Contract between the network coordinator and each member

When a prospect wants to join the network it has to sign the network contract with the coordinator. This contract is stipulating:

- The objectives of the platform;
- General requirements for members to join the network;
- The role and obligations of the coordinator;
- The role and obligation of the member;
- The duration and (early) termination;
- Standard boilerplate clauses.

Members are free to contact other members directly without involvement of the coordinator but are requested to inform the coordinator about these transactions on a monthly basis or when requested by the coordinator. The information about a transaction disclosed to the coordinator can be limited to non-confidential information and will only be used by the coordinator for the monitoring of the interactions and the evaluation of the International EPC+ platform and the anonymous reporting of deliverables in the framework of the EPC+ project.

The network contract is an annex to this report (D6.02a).

3.3. Common network website

An initial website www.energyefficiencynetwork.eu with information on the network, its members and the EPC+ project has been developed. Members can refer to this website in their communication to their clients. The website is also used in contacts with potential members. The design of the Website is mobile device friendly.

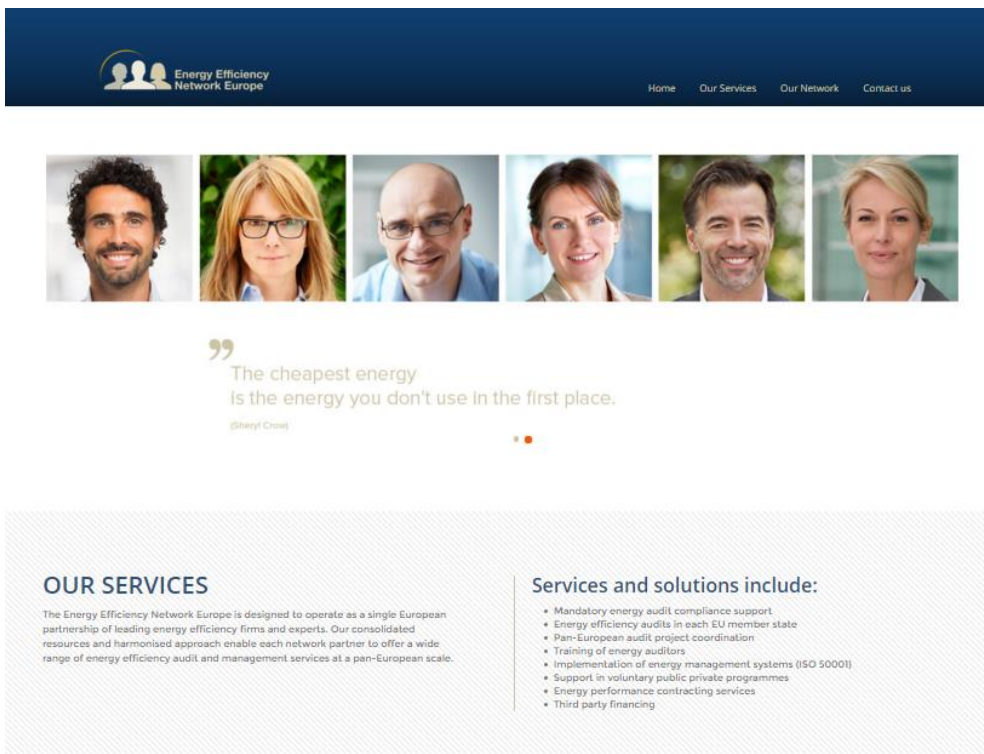


Fig. 3 – Part of the home page of the network website

The website will become a multi-lingual website in the first part of 2016 with more specific information per member and per service offered. It will also include additional information on Energy Performance Contracting and related topics.

3.4. Common marketing

Common marketing of the network can improve the competitive situation of members and strengthen the common group identity. Apart from the website a common logo has been developed that members can use in their own external communication.



Fig. 4 – Network logo on a white background and on a blue background

The common marketing is also a topic discussed at monthly meetings (e.g. the development of a common brochure).

3.5. Monthly webmeetings

A webmeeting of about 2 hours is organised each month. Topics on the agenda in 2015 were largely about mandatory energy audits (status of national transposition of Art. 8 of the EED, market developments, collaboration between members, etc.), the development of the network and the expertise and services of members. One or two members present their company and services during each webmeeting. The minutes of the meeting and presentations are disseminated and stored in the common Google Drive information storage and synchronisation platform.

3.6. Google Drive

Documents and supporting documents are stored on Google Drive. Members have access to the different folders and can down- or upload documents. Information is structured in the following folders:

- Information about each member and members contact information;
- Network activities (minutes of meetings, agenda of meetings, business proposals);
- Supporting tools (guideline google drive, templates, logo's, information exchange Excel sheet);
- Library with relevant external information on EPC, financing , innovative services;
- Relevant legislation at European and national levels.

3.7. Face to face meetings

Although webmeetings, bilateral business transactions, a common website etc. created some common group feeling the importance of face to face meetings to build trust that will support the development of business contact and transactions between members has been recommended by several members. A decision to organise one of more common face to face meetings during the duration of the EPC+ project will be taken in March 2016.

3.8. From business ideas to concrete projects

Members are free to present business ideas to one or more members or to all the members in the network.

Common webmeetings with regard to business ideas or proposals are organised with two main objectives:

- Facilitating members to present a business idea and to get initial feedback from a large group of members and to know the interest from other members in a potential collaboration with the member that initiated the business idea; and
- Motivating members to launch business ideas and showing the added value of the platform to all members.

An example of a common meeting is the webmeeting on Energy Performance Contracting and Financing that was organised on the 2nd of February 2016. After an introduction about Energy Performance Contracting and financing by one of the members with a strong expertise in the field, three business ideas were presented by two members followed by a first discussion about its potential impact, innovative potential and feasibility.

Each business idea/proposal receives a number (e.g. 2016-03) and a document with a short description of it is stored on Google Drive. The member that launches a business idea/proposal remains the owner and the document and the information contained therein may not be used by other members for any purpose other than the evaluation of the business idea/proposal in the context of which the document is made available.

The presentations are disseminated after the webmeeting together with the short description and a standard document that is used by members to evaluate the proposal, to give recommendations and to indicate their interest to collaborate with the member that initiated the business idea/proposal.

The member that launched the business idea/proposal can use the feedback from other members to decide whether its idea/proposal is attractive and merits further development and to select members to collaborate with in follow-up phases (e.g. additional initial meetings, working group, consortium, ...).

4. Organisational tools that are not specific for the international EPC+ platform

A number of organisational tools have been developed in work package two of the EPC+ project to support the establishment of national SPINs. These organisational tools are also valuable for members of the international EPC+ platform to support the establishment of an international Simple or Complicated SPIN.

The following documents are available in English and some other languages on www.epcplus.org:

- Analysis of opportunities, barriers and requirements of SME Partnerships for Innovative Energy Services (D2.01);
- Organisational tools for SME Partnerships for Innovative Energy Services (D2.02);
- Guidebook for organizational tools (D2.03);
- A Simple SPIN master contract template (D2.03a);
- A Complicated SPIN contract template (D2.03b).