

SRI platform plenary meeting #2: Report

Introduction

This report summarises the topics and questions that were covered during the second edition of the SRI platform plenary meeting. It briefly describes the main content that was presented and the most important discussion topics. Readers can consult the slide deck and access the full webinar recording from the SRI website.

Time indications from the recording are included in the report at the beginning of each subject according to the agenda of the call.

Agenda

- Welcome and introduction [Stijn Verbeke]
- SRI in EU policy [Stefan Moser]
- Activities of the SRI support team [Stijn Verbeke]
- LIFE Clean Energy Transition: LIFE-2021-CET-SMARTREADY projects [Sylvain Robert]
- The SRI test phase - What is in the legal acts; how can the SRI be configured? [Sophie Dourlens]
- Break
- Updates from the SRI Platform Working Groups
 - WG1: Member State SRI test phase [Sophie Dourlens / Jaakko Ketomäki]
 - WG2: Maintenance & potential extension of the SRI calculation methodology [Mariana Duarte]
 - WG3: SRI value proposition and supporting measures [Andrei Litui]
- Q&A [Moderator: Régis Decorme]
- Closing remarks [Brigitte Jacquemont]

Number of participants

Almost 400 people registered for the meeting. There were 248 unique participants during the webinar.

Moderator of the event and presenter of the intermediate polling: Régis Decorme [SRI support team / R2M]

00:00:00

Welcome and intro [Stijn Verbeke; SRI support team / VITO]

Stijn opened the session with welcoming words and an introduction giving an overview of the agenda. He encouraged the audience to pose questions via the chat and share views via the dedicated Q&A session at the end of the meeting.

00:06:05

SRI in EU policy [Stefan Moser; European Commission - DG ENER]

Stefan Moser welcomed the audience and expressed gratitude to the SRI support team, EC colleagues for organisation of the SRI Platform meeting and the work done on the SRI support. Stefan stresses the importance of the SRI for the European Commission and highlights the impressive work that has been carried out to properly implement the EPBD which was adopted as part of the Clean Energy Package in 2018. He also expressed gratitude to the six member states that have launched an official test phase of the SRI and are taking the pioneering position on the testing of implementation of the SRI and also the several other countries that are taking part in the four LIFE projects related to smartness in buildings, as well as CINEA. A final word of gratitude is directed to the organisations and representatives in the three working groups for their work results.

Stefan explained the various challenges that we are currently being faced at the same time; global climate change, the decarbonisation challenge and the energy crisis and emphasized the role of buildings in this transition to increase building resilience by improving energy efficiency, increasing the share of energy from renewable sources, more smartness and better interaction with the energy system. The SRI and increasing smartness of buildings are crucial for structurally improving resilience and we are facing very strong reinforced need for actions to keep on track for mediating the climate change and for energy security as well.

REPower EU is a reinforcement of the Green Deal in terms of energy security but also going hand in hand with the other objectives of reducing energy demand, having smarter and more efficient buildings and pushing forward renewable energy deployment.

The work on SRI contributes to speeding up the clean energy transition towards the increase of energy efficiency and deployment of renewables, which should be achieved in a cost effective manner with attention to environmental quality, health and safety aspects.

Digitisation is a key priority for the EC. As a concrete reflection of the digitisation priority, Stefan briefly summarized the key points of the digitisation of the Energy Action Plan as proposed by the EC on 18/10 and the role and status of the recasting of EPBD, EED and RED. The SRI is an implementation of the current EPBD and will also play a major role in the revised EPBD which builds further on the current EPBD. The overall objective is to mobilise industrial support needed to renovate and to double at least the renovation rate and increase renovation depth.

00:19:58

Activities of the SRI technical support team [Stijn Verbeke; SRI support team / VITO]

Stijn briefly gave an overview of the two year SRI technical support contract, the main aim, the consortium and the tasks, mainly contributing to making the SRI deployment a reality. Stijn also showed some impressive facts and figures on the concrete support activities and interactions with stakeholders and gives a comprehensive overview of the most important resources. He highlighted the specific task of setting up the SRI Platform with its plenary meetings and three working groups with insights in the establishment of these interactive initiatives.

00:27:10

Presentation of the LIFE CET SRI projects [Sylvain Robert; European Commission - CINEA]

Sylvain briefly presented CINEA and gave an outline of 4 LIFE-Clean Energy Transition 2021 call projects related to the Smart Readiness Indicator. The bigger picture of the framework or EU programmes initiated by DG ENER and CINEA is explained covering both technical and policy actions with the aim to foster most welcoming conditions for the deployment of the SRI in Europe and its further evolution. Sylvain furthermore gave an overview of the recent history of EU programmes' SRI-relevant action. A special mentioning of the SmartBuilt4EU action that gathers stakeholders in the smart buildings innovation community and to support the SRI.

After introduction of the background, Sylvain explained the LIFE Clean Energy Transition as one main pillar for the successful implementation of energy efficiency and renewables policies. There are three main areas of action; stimulate the uptake of innovative technologies, services and business; deploy mechanisms to attract private financing & engage and empower energy consumers. Sylvain gave a brief outline of the main activities of the four LIFE-CET projects with a specific focus on the Smart Readiness Indicator funded under the 2021 LIFE-CET call (around 2 million € of EU funding each). These four projects are; Easy SRI; SRI2Market; SRI-Enact; Smart². The projects cover good variety of activities related to SRI policy support, the SRI calculation framework, capacity building and market uptake, digital tools and smart capabilities. All of these projects start in the final quarter of this year and last until the 3rd quarter of 2025. In total 42 partners from 16 EU countries are involved in these projects. DG ENER supported by CINEA will foster the networking and coordination of the LIFE SRI projects, ensure their contribution to the SRI Platform and the links with SRI service contracts and, the competent authorities in the member states. To kickstart this support, CINEA together with the SRI support team have already organised in November 2022 a first workshop with the four LIFE SRI projects, also involving representation of the Concerted Action EPBD and the SmartBuilt4EU clustering action. Sylvain also announced the training webinar on the SRI with LIFE projects that is organised by the SRI support team to be held on January 19th 2023. The intention is to ensure the best coordination with the activities of the SRI Platform, the testing phases in the Member States, and more generally, any work or initiative of interest for the Smart Readiness Indicator.

00:43:04

The SRI test phase - What is in the legal acts; how can the SRI be configured? [Sophie Dourlens; SRI support team / R2M]

Sophie gave an overview of the history of the SRI with focus on the development of the SRI calculation methodology and the legal framework of the SRI. Sophie explained what are the required and optional features of the SRI according to the legal acts. Sophie emphasized that formal SRI assessment and certificates can only be issued after a Member State's government decision to launch a test phase or implement the SRI. The mandatory core of the SRI methodology as described in the legal acts consists of the structure containing the three key functionalities with further detail into seven impact criteria and the nine technical domains. Also, the seven SRI class based on the SRI score with their class threshold SRI scores are imposed by the regulations. Potential contextual adaptations are optional, such as adaptations to the service catalogue and the weighting factors. Member States are also free to define the way the SRI classes are

described. Furthermore, Member States can also decide on the way in which aspects of inclusiveness, connectivity, interoperability, cybersecurity and data protection are included in the implementation of the SRI.

00:54:15

Break

Updates from the SRI Platform Working Groups

01:04:26

Working Group 1: Member State SRI test phase – Overview of the SRI test phases [Sophie Dourlens; SRI support team / R2M]

Sophie presented an overview of the ongoing national test phases of the SRI in the six countries that have volunteered to launch an official test phase of the SRI. Four countries launched an official test phase after a first call of expressions of interest in October 2021; Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark and France. Two more countries joined after the second call in June 2022; Croatia and Finland. Apart from those there are also many non-official studies ongoing in other countries.

In Austria, Czech Republic and Denmark the assessments are conducted by technical partners which already have obtained preliminary results. France and Finland are currently in the process of recruiting and training external assessors in a way that would be similar to actual implementation on a large scale and which requires more time. No assessments have been carried out yet or only a few of them. In Croatia the test phase currently is in preparation and there also is a link with one or more of the LIFE-SRI projects.

01:07:58

Working Group 1: Member State SRI test phase – SRI test phase in Finland [Jaakko Ketomäki; Motiva Ltd. / Representing Finland]

Jaakko presented the test phase in Finland funded by the Finnish Ministry of the Environment and carried out by Motiva Ltd. The idea of the test phase in Finland is to simulate SRI assessments as they will be made when the SRI is implemented, including a real process with assessors and evaluated buildings. The testing period will start with an opening seminar (8/12/2022). Recruitment and training (in Finnish) of around 30 to 50 assessors is foreseen including evaluation. These assessors are foreseen to conduct SRI assessments in around 100 to 150 buildings mostly non-residential. Finally, the suitability for Finland will be evaluated including social impact. Findings will be reported to the Finnish government and to the European Commission. A final seminar is foreseen to close the testing period. Conducting an SRI assessment is considered to be fairly simple for a building professional, but guidance on how to improve the SRI with reasonable costs is considered difficult. Pre-study interviews showed that building owners will have “almost a pleasure” to have their building evaluated. There is a lot of interest in Finland for the SRI.

01:16:53

Working Group 1: Member State SRI test phase – Preliminary results and next steps [Sophie Dourlens; SRI support team / R2M]

Sophie presented the preliminary results of the test phases in the countries of Austria, Czech Republic and Denmark. The test phase in each country is led by the ministry officially representing the Member State or the national energy agency with support by a technical partner conducting the assessments. Sophie gave an overview of the number and broad variety of residential and non-residential types of buildings in different geographical locations that already have been assessed per country. These assessments were all carried out using the SRI methodology as described in the technical studies without adaptations. Sophie presented some intermediate common findings from these three testing phases about the conduct of assessments and about the results of the assessments. For the conduct of assessments, there were issues with the availability of data, in relation with the size of the service catalogue. There were difficulties with the concepts of non-available and non-applicable services. And sometimes smartness is related to the building owner (for instance using cloud-based apps) rather than to the building itself. For the results of the assessments, a limited differentiation in SRI scores was observed between old (non performing) and new (performing) buildings as these all showed low scores. It was also found that there is a high interest and need to develop recommendations to improve the SRI scores. Some difficulties were encountered in the communication of the results to building owners which lead to the insight that there is a need for informative materials on exemplary buildings.

Sophie gave an overview of the next steps of Working Group 1 in which actions are included on detailed analysis and evaluation of the test phases, further development of procedures and possible improvements of the assessment

methodology, issuing of recommendations and also the exchange of information with other test phases and with the two other working groups.

Currently there are fourteen Member States represented in Working Group 1 and also representation from DG ENER, The SRI support team and the EPBD concerted action coordination team is also part of the WG1. Eight Member States that are currently members of working group 1 but are not involved in a formal SRI test phase are welcomed to launch a formal test phase as well, possibly supported by one of the LIFE projects. Some of these are running some pre-studies on the SRI, of which WG1 is also looking forward to receiving insights from the results.

01:28:22

WG2: Maintenance & potential extension of the SRI calculation methodology (20') [Mariana Duarte; Chair of WG2 / EU.BAC / JCI]

Mariana Duarte - Chair of the Working Group 2 – presented the vision of the Working group 2 and gave a brief overview of the work that was done by the Working Group 2 in the first period after its establishment in early 2022. Mariana explained the vision of the WG2 which is aligned with EU goals such as part of the REPower EU Plan in the reduction of energy consumption via the increase of the smartness of buildings. SRI WG2 wants to support the European Commission's energy reduction and sustainability ambitions by designing the SRI's future, assuring longevity, consistency and cross-Europe implementation. A working programme consisting of six topics was elaborated based on a brainstorming session on May 12th with prioritisation. In the meantime, work has already been done on two of these topics; one topic on streamlining a common EU approach and a second topic on a change management process. In interaction with WG1 an additional topic with high priority was added to the list, on the topic of what is a high scoring building on the smartness level, also in view of future proofing. Mariana provided further insights on the priorities that are already being tackled at the moment and on the motivation and approach for these priority topics. Mariana explained the proposed plan for the first priority topic – on streamlining a common EU approach - which consists of interactions with WG1 Member States and elaboration of a proposal for alignment of an EU wide approach. The interactions with WG1 will be based on a list of guiding questions - for instance on the needed flexibility within the Member States and on the approach to streamline the methodology. For the second priority topic – a transparent change management process - a flowchart with accompanying guidance document for the procedure of an SRI change request was already drafted. Further discussion on this topic is foreseen to include aspects of responsibility, criteria for evaluating the change requests and the forms and documents needed for this change request procedure.

Future timeline of activities shows actions to revise the topics list and the priority ranking, further elaboration on the priorities 1 and 2 and also focus on the new priority, all in preparation for the 3rd plenary session of the SRI platform foreseen in March 2023.

Mariana also emphasized the need for a continuation of the work after the end of the SRI3 support contract's duration. Finally, Mariana introduced the members of working group 2, representing a broad variety of stakeholder types.

01:44:14

WG3: SRI value proposition and supporting measures [Andrei Litiu; Chair of WG3 / REHVA]

Andrei Litiu – Chair of the Working Group 3 – presented the members of the Working Group 3, its scope, the previous work done during the prior studies and the process and outcomes of the Working Group 3. WG3 consists of a broad variety of stakeholder organisation types. WG3 had a meeting in May 2022 in which during a brainstorm session the theme and scope of the working group was translated into a specific working programme with six priority topics, some of which are cross-cutting. Two topics with highest priority have been identified; one on the clarification and communication of the SRI's value proposition and a second one on the consideration of needs for a common online assessment tool. Andrei linked the programme of the working group 3 to some previous work done in the previous SRI studies by SRI Topical Group C that looked at the evolution of the SRI, its first recommendation report and its members. Andrei provided more details on the process, which includes setting priorities, identifying relevant aspects to define questions for a survey/consultation to be used for interactions with the next generation EPC cluster, the LIFE SRI cluster, as presented by Sylvain earlier, the two other working groups and the broader public. The intention is to report findings from this process in a recommendations report. Finally, Andrei advocated for actual performance rating on energy performance, indoor environmental quality and smart readiness of buildings and for the people.

01:57:51

Q&A (Questions via the chat) [Moderator: Régis Decorme; SRI support team / R2M]

The audience were able to ask questions via the chat. The SRI consortium received many questions, mainly on the following topics;

- How to become involved in the Working Groups of the SRI Platform.
- On the methodology and future updating, for instance on carbon emissions' tracking/management; embedded carbon consideration, the scoring scale; accordance to the recent ISO 52120-1.
- Impact of digitalisation measures for various types of buildings (and the low hanging fruits to reduce emissions)
- Availability of graphics to allow for local modifications

Furthermore, some specific questions related to the Finnish test phase were also posed, including aspects of the method's reproducibility, payment of the assessments, the gathering of input data and the perception of the building owners.

The reader is referred to the recording of this second plenary meeting of the SRI platform to find answers on the specific questions related to these topics.

02:21:00

Closing remarks [Brigitte Jacquemont; European Commission - DG ENER]

Brigitte closed the second edition of the SRI platform plenary meeting by thanking all the participants. There were more than 200 attendants in the audience, showing great interest for the platform. Brigitte also thanked the frontrunner countries. In particular Finland for presenting the test phase and the other countries for sharing first findings, Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark and France. Also, many thanks to the three working groups for their work and contribution to the platform. She also welcomed participation in the platform of the four granted LIFE projects. Their activities will support our initiative, in particular in the test phase of the SRI. We hope that it will nicely upscale the number of buildings assessed. It is foreseen that more than 1000 buildings will be assessed in these four projects. We also hope that it will inspire other countries to sign up for official test phase of the SRI. They have a key role to play. The SRI platform is an important place to discuss on technical, regulatory and implementation aspects of the SRI. Finally, Brigitte announced the next plenary session of the SRI platform, that is foreseen to take place in March 2023.