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## The Organisation of COST

COST- the acronym for European Cooperation in Science and Technology- is the oldest and widest European intergovernmental network for cooperation in research. Established by the Ministerial Conference in November 1971, COST is presently used by the scientific communities of 35 European countries to cooperate in common research projects supported by national funds.

The funds provided by COST - less than 1% of the total value of the projects - support the COST cooperation networks (COST Actions) through which, with EUR 30 million per year, more than 30 000 European scientists are involved in research having a total value which exceeds EUR 2 billion per year. This is the financial worth of the European added value which COST achieves.

A "bottom up approach" (the initiative of launching a COST Action comes from the European scientists themselves), "à la carte participation" (only countries interested in the Action participate), "equality of access" (participation is open also to the scientific communities of countries not belonging to the European Union) and "flexible structure" (easy implementation and light management of the research initiatives) are the main characteristics of COST.

As precursor of advanced multidisciplinary research COST has a very important role for the realisation of the European Research Area (ERA) anticipating and complementing the activities of the Framework Programmes, constituting a "bridge" towards the scientific communities of emerging countries, increasing the mobility of researchers across Europe and fostering the establishment of "Networks of Excellence" in many key scientific domains such as: Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences; Food and Agriculture; Forests, their Products and Services; Materials, Physical and Nanosciences; Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies; Earth System Science and Environmental Management; Information and Communication Technologies; Transport and Urban Development; Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health. It covers basic and more applied research and also addresses issues of pre-normative nature or of societal importance.

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**This publication summarises the activities of the COST C23 Action entitled ‘Strategies for a Low Carbon Urban Built Environments (LCUBE)’ which took place over the period 2004 to 2009.**

**The main objective of the COST C23 Action was to investigate, through a network of nineteen countries across Europe,**

***‘how carbon reductions can be achieved through appropriate design and management of the urban built environment’.***

**This involved investigating the built environment at building and urban scale, focusing on minimising energy use and associated carbon dioxide emissions.**

***The COST C23 Action investigated how nineteen EU member states were active in reducing carbon dioxide levels in the built environment, not only in line with buildings meeting the requirements of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), but also taking standards beyond that and looking at how national and regional planning initiatives are being developed to reduce the energy use of urban areas. A collection of case studies are included that illustrate the development and implementation of low carbon strategies at urban and building scales.***

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