



Connecting Europe's Digital Construction Ecosystem :

Insights from the EDIH Working Group in Construction



The image features a central photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The scene is dimly lit, with a teal color overlay covering the entire image. Two large orange circles are positioned on the right side, partially overlapping the teal overlay and the photograph. The text 'Introduction to the construction's challenges' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Introduction to the construction's challenges

The construction sector is one of the pillars of Europe's economy, shaping our cities, infrastructures and living environments. Yet it remains among the least digitalised industries in Europe. With a market composed of 99% SMEs, often operating with limited resources and fragmented value chains, digital transformation has historically been slow to gain traction. This low level of digital maturity has concrete consequences: productivity stagnates, project delays accumulate, environmental objectives become harder to reach, and the sector struggles to attract new talent.

And yet, the potential of digital technologies for construction is widely recognised. Tools such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), digital twins, IoT sensors, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity systems, additive manufacturing and augmented or virtual reality increasingly reshape how buildings are planned, built and maintained. Their **adoption**, however, varies significantly across Europe, and many companies—especially SMEs—still lack the support, expertise and testing environments needed to deploy these innovations safely and efficiently.

This is exactly why the **European Digital Innovation Hubs** were created. EDIHs offer a comprehensive, four-pillar support structure designed to help companies embrace digital and green technologies throughout their transformation journey.

They provide Test Before Invest opportunities through access to specialised facilities and demonstrators; they develop Skills and Training programmes to strengthen digital competences across the workforce;

they offer Support to Innovate, helping organisations design, prototype and validate new solutions; and they facilitate Access to Finance, guiding companies toward European, national and private funding schemes.

Together, these pillars ensure that businesses—from small construction SMEs to public authorities—can move forward with confidence, backed by high-quality expertise and pragmatic support.

In a sector as **diverse and fragmented** as construction, no single region or country can address these challenges alone. Construction markets differ significantly across Europe in terms of regulatory frameworks, industrial structures, levels of digital maturity and workforce skills. As a result, the needs of construction companies vary from one country to another. And it is precisely the role of EDIHs to respond to these specific national and regional realities, offering tailored support rooted in local ecosystems.

At the same time, digital innovation cannot thrive in isolation. It requires a **coordinated European effort**, where experiences are shared, infrastructures are connected and services are reinforced through collective intelligence. By collaborating across borders, EDIHs can learn from each other's approaches, adapt proven solutions to new contexts and avoid duplicating efforts, while still respecting national specificities.

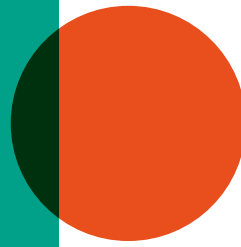
Europe now has a unique opportunity to **combine the strength of its regional ecosystems** with the added value of European cooperation. By bringing EDIHs together and aligning their capabilities, the network enables construction companies, public authorities and technology providers to benefit from a truly interconnected European innovation ecosystem—one that is flexible enough to address local needs, yet strong enough to accelerate digital transformation at scale.



Introduction to the Thematic working group



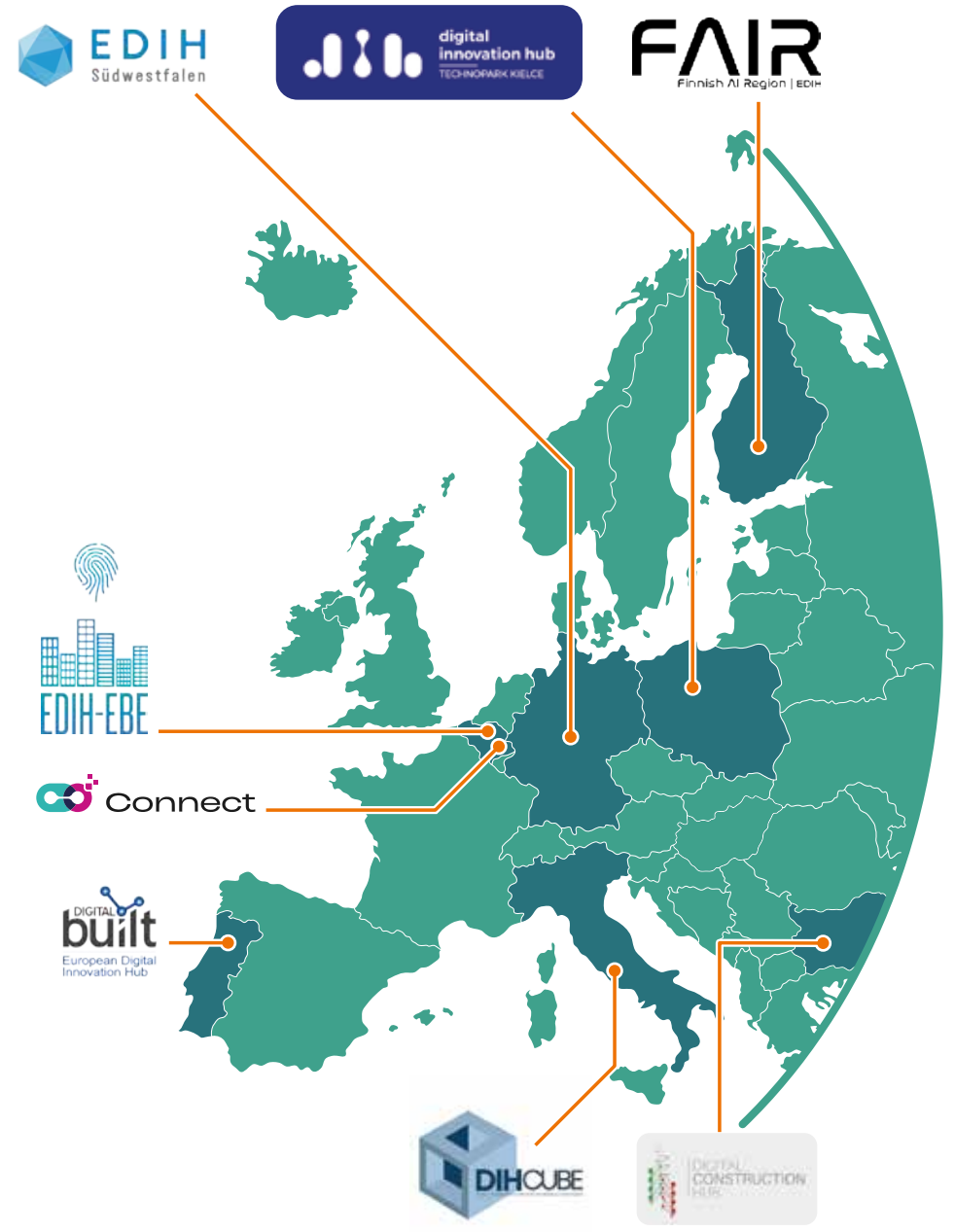
The EDIH Working Group on Construction emerged in 2022, during the preparation of proposals for the first wave of European Digital Innovation Hubs. It was born from a shared observation: although each country was developing its own national initiatives to support digitalisation, construction SMEs across Europe were encountering remarkably similar challenges. Limited resources, fragmented value chains, and uneven access to expertise made digital adoption difficult. Yet many of these obstacles could be addressed far more effectively by working together, pooling knowledge, and aligning approaches across borders.



From the very beginning, the group established a clear and ambitious purpose. Its mission is to accelerate the digital transformation of the construction sector by sharing methodologies, combining complementary expertise and enabling the development of cross-border services. The working group's ambition is to provide companies with the most appropriate support, increase their knowledge on how digitalisation can improve their company performance, on concrete digital applications and services, provide better access to regional, national and European funding and enhance their digital maturity. The group also plays a key role in strengthening the visibility of construction-focused EDIHs within the wider European landscape, fostering deeper cooperation between regional ecosystems, and ensuring that SMEs, public authorities and technology providers can access the right partners and services regardless of geographical boundaries.



Today, the Working Group brings together a committed community of EDIHs that are either fully dedicated to construction or have a significant specialisation in the built environment. **8 hubs**. Each contributes unique strengths, infrastructures and regional networks. Together, they constitute a powerful European alliance working to bridge the gap between the construction industry's vast digital potential and its practical, on-the-ground implementation.



Members

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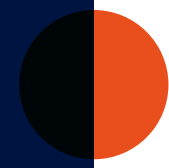
EDIH Connect

Territorial focus

Wallonia (Be)

Target

EDIH Connect focuses on SMEs and public sector linked to the digitalisation of the construction sector. The main focus of the project is on contractors, AECO sector, public sector, digital providers



Digital technology focus

The project addresses a wide range of technologies. Due to the small size of the targeted companies and their low digital maturity, the primary technology needs are often basic software solutions such as CRM, ERP, or billing systems, rather than advanced robotics. The specific technology focus also varies depending on the type of service and the characteristics of each company.

Context

The Walloon region of Belgium is characterized by a highly fragmented construction sector dominated by micro-enterprises, with over 96% of firms employing fewer than 10 people. Despite its small scale, the sector is vital to the regional economy, encompassing 35,000 companies, 24,000 self-employed workers, and accounting for 5.7% of regional value added in 2023. Wallonia faces acute shortages of skilled labor in modern construction technologies, project management, and digital competencies. Digital adoption is among the lowest in the

EU, with fragmented tools, limited interoperability, and a weak digital culture that constrains the effective use of data for productivity, sustainability, and innovation. Once a key industrial hub for coal, steel, glass, and textiles, Wallonia's territory today is dominated by small-scale residential buildings such as single-family homes, townhouses, and semi-detached dwellings. Energy retrofitting of old buildings and integration of renewable energy systems are of high priority for the region. Construction projects are typically modest in size and involve diverse materials, requiring tailored and flexible digital solutions.

Services

The EDIH Connect offers a comprehensive set of modular services to support companies in their digitalisation journey, structured around the four pillars of the EDIH initiative. For most companies, the first step is an initial assessment of their digital maturity (using the DMA and the regional Digiscore tool), carried out through an on-site

meeting to analyse internal processes (quotations, orders, invoicing, management, etc.) and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and streamline operations. This results in a tailored report including quick-win recommendations, guidance on software solutions, as well as connections with relevant stakeholders in the Walloon ecosystem, while also helping to direct the company towards other EDIH services or partners. The technological support service is highly demanded by companies, as it allows them to test the relevance and feasibility of solutions in real-life demo environments before making any investment. Based on specific business challenges, companies can experiment with technologies such as drones, measurement tools, or artificial intelligence. Specific online training modules covering various key digital topics allow them to allow businesses to develop their skills in a flexible and autonomous way. For innovation-oriented companies, dedicated support is provided to co-create project ideas, identify relevant calls for proposals, assist in proposal development, and connect with relevant partners. In addition, internationalisation support helps companies develop export activities, identify international partners, participate in global events, and strengthen their positioning in new markets.



2

DIHCUBE

Territorial focus

Italy

Target

SMEs, professionals, and PSOs involved in the construction industry and its supply chain

DIHCUBE's target customers are, on the one hand, all companies and entities in the construction supply chain, especially SMEs. This includes construction companies, specialized craftsmen, manufacturers of components and operating machines. On the other hand, there are the clients and real estate managers (public and private), engineering / architecture companies and professionals. The Public Administration is crucial for the sector given its role as driver of change in the supply chain and the growing digitalization of public procurement.

Members



Digital technology focus

The technological focus of DIHCUBE are the Building Information Modelling, Artificial Intelligence and its dissemination (AI literacy), and strategical technologies for the construction sector including, for example: advanced 3D printing systems, ultra-high definition digital surveys, digital twin, etc.





Context

In Italy the construction sector accounts for 22% of the national economy (22% of GDP). However, it suffers from low competitiveness and productivity due to a marked digital lag and a strong presence of micro and small enterprises (95%). The real challenge today is to establish a data culture that stimulates digital information exchange and management, thanks to genuine interoperability between the various digital platforms used in the construction industry (design, material procurement, site management, building/asset management, sales, etc.). The issues of sustainability, urban regeneration and energy transition are also central in Italy, capable of innovating the management of the built environment through the integration of digital applications that improve the living conditions of people and society as a whole.



Services

Test before investing and Training and Skills development are the central services delivered by DIHCUBE, focused on the technologies above-mentioned : test and training and skill development services focused on BIM are the main requested from our customer base,

Thanks to these services, one of them, or in combination, it is possible for SMEs and PSOs to evaluate potential investments, rise awareness on the potential of digital technologies, defining innovative processes for the analysis of training needs closely related to the skills needs required by companies and it focuses on guidance and skills assessment actions aimed at both workers in the sector and young people interested in joining it.

To help SMEs realise their investment choices, DIHCUBE offers support services for accessing credit, and with the aim of building an innovative national ecosystem, the HUB has selected a number of start-ups (focusing on AI and processes efficiency) through Call4startups, which are now involved in the Hub's activities, creating networking opportunities with DIHCUBE customers and generating added value for both of them.

3

EDIH-EBE

Territorial focus

Flanders, Belgium

Target

start-ups, SMEs, midcaps (<3000 FTE)
related to energy applications and
digital providers and public sector
organizations

Members



Context

Many companies and organizations in the public sector (social housing companies, towns and cities, ...) that are working on energy applications in the built environment are neglecting innovations and opportunities in the field of digital transformation. A lost opportunity, for extensive digitalization brings many positive outcomes. It enables companies to improve products, processes and services in order to boost energy efficiency in the construction and renovation of buildings and districts.





Services

The EDIH-EBE was established to reduce digital disparities among enterprises, acting as a one-stop hub to enhance digital knowledge, skills, and practical experience for companies across the EU and Flanders, strengthening their competitiveness. It offers Test-Before-Invest support, enabling companies to discuss ideas with experts and experiment with digital, physical, and living lab applications. Skills and training activities provide targeted programmes to upskill enterprises in the digitalisation of energy applications. Support to find investment

helps companies develop business plans, prepare pitches, and connect with funding opportunities. Internationalisation services assist companies in exploring new markets and growth prospects. Finally, innovation ecosystem and networking activities foster collaboration through inspiring events, matchmaking, and cross-sector engagement, ensuring companies can leverage knowledge, partnerships, and practical tools to accelerate their digital transformation.

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DIGITALbuilt

Territorial focus

Portugal

Target

The target sectors and company types are the AEC / construction sector (design offices, contractors, specialist trades, public works departments), natural rock and mineral resources stakeholders (quarries, stone processors, materials producers and associated SMEs), and the railway fixed infrastructures cluster (track managers, maintenance contractors, signalling civils and asset owners). Typical beneficiaries are micro-SMEs and SMEs that lack in-house R&D, plus local and regional public authorities responsible for infrastructure procurement and asset management. The Hub also supports start-ups and spin-outs emerging from cluster RTOs, and acts as a bridge between consortium research outputs and fieldable commercial services.

Members



Digital technology focus

Four complementary technology vectors: DIGITALbuilt concentrates its technical support around four high-value digital domains: Building Information Modelling (BIM) as the information backbone; Sustainability (life-cycle thinking, embodied carbon and circular use of mineral resources); Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics for decision support and predictive maintenance; and Robotics / Automation (drones, terrestrial robotics and sensorised inspection) for safer, faster field operations. These vectors are chosen because they together enable digital twins of assets, evidence-based lifecycle decisions, automated data capture from constrained sites (quarries, rail corridors) and scalable, repeatable workflows for SMEs.

Context

What makes the Portuguese built environment distinctive is that construction and extractive sectors are regionally diverse, ranging from dense coastal urban regeneration projects in Lisbon and Porto to small-scale rural stone quarries, mountainous infrastructure (roads and railways) and a network of mid-sized municipalities with constrained technical capacity. This geography produces a fragmented market: many micro and small enterprises (specialist trades, local quarries, small civil-works firms) and public bodies that must deliver infrastructure and maintenance with limited staff and budgets. DIGITALbuilt targets that fragmentation by localising services (regional cluster outreach), offering co-funded pilots, and scaling reusable digital assets – for example standardized BIM templates for small municipal projects, mobile-first training for on-site teams, and low-barrier maturity diagnostics that identify the few highest-impact interventions for each organisation. As a result, early deployments show quicker procurement cycles, higher reuse of digital artefacts between municipalities and improved data handover practices that reduce rework on renovation and rail maintenance projects.



Services

DIGITALbuilt provides a comprehensive portfolio of modular services supporting the digital, sustainable, and data-driven transformation of the built environment, covering BIM, sustainability, AI, data analytics, and automation. Services range from digital maturity diagnostics and hands-on BIM implementation pilots to interoperability toolkits that enable SMEs and public authorities to adopt model-based workflows efficiently. Sustainability services include life-cycle assessment and embodied carbon analysis, nature-based solutions, and circular economy pilots enabling the reuse of materials through certified and traceable processes.

DIGITALbuilt also supports decision-making through AI-driven applications such as predictive maintenance for railway assets, automated materials classification, and generative AI tools for design and regulatory compliance. Robotics and automation services further enhance field operations through drone-based inspections, photogrammetry, and robotic solutions for hazardous or repetitive tasks. These services are delivered through a combination of capacity building, co-funded pilot implementations, and ecosystem facilitation, leveraging cluster partners, R&I organisations, and regional nodes to ensure practical deployment. By reducing adoption risks and costs and focusing on reusable tools and templates, DIGITALbuilt enables faster uptake, measurable operational benefits, and scalable impact across the construction, quarrying, and railway infrastructure value chains.



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EDICS

EDIH in construction sector

Territorial focus

Bulgaria

Target

The whole value chain of the construction sector as SME and public sector

Members



Digital technology focus

- Artificial Intelligence (AI);
- BIM;
- digital twin simulations;
- data-driven design tools;
- digital manufacturing;
- models for conservation and restoration of cultural heritage infrastructures and services for data management and digitalization of immovable cultural heritage infrastructures;
- Virtual reality and scanning services to BIM etc.

Context

EDICS, the only one in Bulgaria, is not only sector-focused but also deeply embedded in both national and EU policy frameworks supporting the transition of one of the key sectors of strategic importance for both Bulgarian and European economies. The construction sector is one of the most impactful and influential industries in both Bulgaria and the European Union, playing a central role not only in economic development but also in shaping the social, environmental, and technological landscape. In Bulgaria, the industry accounts for approximately 8.9% of the national GDP and provides employment to around 293,347 people (almost 10 % of the country's workforce) demonstrating its critical contribution to job creation and regional development.

Beyond its economic weight, the sector has a profound ecological footprint as it is responsible for over 35% of total waste generation in the EU and consumes around 40% of energy and raw materials. As such, sustainable construction practices are essential to reducing carbon emissions, enhancing energy efficiency, and transitioning toward a circular economy. With increasing efforts to adopt green building standards, reduce construction and demolition waste, and integrate digital tools and innovation, the sector is uniquely positioned to lead the transformation toward a more sustainable, low-carbon, and resilient future for Europe.



Services

The EDICS EDIH provides a comprehensive suite of services to support digital transformation, AI adoption, and innovation in the construction sector. Its Test-Before-Invest services allow companies to experiment with technologies, including BIM, digital twins, VR/AR, geospatial IoT, AI prototyping, and digitalisation of cultural heritage, before committing to large-scale investments. Skills and training programmes develop competencies in digitalisation, BIM, GIS, AI, and smart construction practices, ranging from introductory courses to advanced modules on AI-assisted design, Large Language Models, and GeoAI. EDICS also offers business support and access to finance, including mentoring, acceleration, innovation project development, and funding guidance. Through networking and ecosystem activities, companies connect with technology providers, public authorities, and other SMEs to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange. Consulting services support digital strategy, BIM/GIS integration, and AI deployment, while package services combine testing, training, business support, and ecosystem engagement tailored to company needs. Strategic partnerships, notably with BRAIN++, Bulgaria's national AI Factory, provide access to advanced AI infrastructures, responsible AI innovation, and European-level AI networks, enabling applications such as predictive maintenance, process optimisation, smart energy management, and digital twin deployment. The modular and flexible service journey ensures companies of all maturity levels can progress at their own pace, benefiting from integrated support, practical experimentation, and international AI collaboration.

6

FAIR

Territorial focus

Finland

Target

FAIR primarily targets small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from various sectors:

- Smart Cities and Built environment: construction, real estate owners, property management, engineering, design, and proptech companies,
- Health and wellbeing, and
- Digital service providers



Digital technology focus

- Artificial Intelligence (AI), including data-driven solutions and generative AI,
- High-performance computing (HPC) and data utilisation,
- Cybersecurity, and
- Broader digitalisation supporting smart and sustainable systems



Context

The Finnish regional market is characterised by a large number of SMEs with strong domain expertise, particularly in the built environment (construction, real estate, property services), but with limited internal resources for advanced digitalisation and AI adoption. Digital maturity varies widely, and many companies struggle to move from awareness to concrete implementation. FAIR EDIH addresses this gap by offering low-threshold, structured pathways from diagnostics to piloting and scaling. In the built environment sector, FAIR has accelerated change by:

- Significantly increasing AI awareness and skills among professionals,
- Lowering the risk of experimentation through test-before-invest services, and
- Connecting companies to cross-sector expertise, technology providers, and funding pathways.



Services

FAIR offers a structured support framework that guides companies through the full digital and AI adoption journey, from initial assessment to practical implementation and scaling. It provides an entry point with registration, eligibility checks, digital and AI maturity assessments, and tailored roadmaps, with KIRAHub helping built-environment companies frame sector-specific challenges and identify relevant services.

Skills and training activities strengthen digital and AI capabilities through widely accessible courses, including an updated “AI in the Built Environment” programme complemented by facilitated learning formats to support practical application. Through its test-before-invest approach, FAIR enables companies to experiment with AI solutions in structured accelerator programmes, with several pilots continuing beyond initial support.

FAIR also supports access to finance by helping companies position AI initiatives as credible investment cases and by connecting them to relevant funding opportunities. Finally, innovation ecosystem and networking activities foster cross-sector collaboration by linking construction and real estate actors with AI experts, startups, and public stakeholders, reinforcing long-term innovation capacity.

7

EDIH Südwestfalen

Territorial focus

South Westphalia in Germany

Target

The EDIH South Westphalia aims to enable SMEs, mid-caps, and public sector organizations to adopt and scale advanced digital and AI-based solutions in a sustainable, trustworthy, and human-centered manner across regional industries (socio-technical approach).

Members



Thematic focus

The EDIH South Westphalia focuses on human-centered and socio-technical digital transformation in manufacturing and public services. A particular emphasis from the second funding phase onwards is on the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence, addressing both technological and organizational dimensions. Rather than treating digitalization as a purely technical challenge, the EDIH integrates technological innovation with social, ethical, and human factors to ensure sustainable adoption and real impact in practice, including in complex application domains such as construction-related value chains.

Digital technology focus

- Artificial Intelligence and Data Technologies
- Smart Production and Advanced Manufacturing
- Human–Technology Interaction and Immersive Systems (robotics, HR,...)
- Participatory Digital Engineering and Software Systems
- Organizational and Innovation Capabilities (cross-cutting)
- Application domains (cross-sector, including Construction-related processes and the built environment)

Context

South Westphalia is one of Germany's strongest industrial regions, characterized by a high density of SMEs with deep process knowledge and long-standing expertise across manufacturing and public services. While advanced digital technologies and AI are increasingly available, organizations often struggle with their effective integration into everyday operations due to socio-technical challenges such as skills gaps, organizational complexity, and concerns related to trust, ethics, and regulatory compliance.

In this context, the EDIH South Westphalia acts as a regional enabler of sustainable digital transformation, bridging technological innovation and organizational reality. Through interdisciplinary, practice-oriented, and participatory approaches, the EDIH supports organizations in developing, testing, and implementing digital solutions that are transferable across domains and aligned with European values and regulatory frameworks.



Services

The EDIH South Westphalia provides services that support SMEs, mid-caps, and public sector organizations in planning, testing, and implementing digital and AI-based solutions. These services cover the full transformation process, from initial orientation and experimentation to implementation, skills development, and access to funding and innovation networks. Organizations can learn and test digital technologies in practical environments to tailor prototypes to their specific operational context, enabling informed investment decisions and reducing implementation risks.

In addition, the EDIH offers training, workshops, simulation-based formats, and information events to build technical and organizational capabilities in areas such as AI, data technologies, change management, and innovation management. It also assists in identifying suitable funding opportunities and connecting organizations with regional, national, and European innovation partners. Through these activities, the EDIH contributes to the sustainable and transferable adoption of digital technologies across sectors.



8

Technopark Kielce DIH (TKDIH)

Territorial focus

Mainly Świętokrzyskie region (Poland)

Target

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the digital transformation process



Digital technology focus

Automation and robotisation of processes, Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial intelligence (AI), Cloud computing, BIM technology (digital building information modelling), Cybersecurity.



Context

The Świętokrzyskie region is characterised by a relatively low level of digitalisation and innovation capacity among SMEs, limiting their competitiveness and ability to adopt advanced technologies. Regional analyses and benchmarking at the national and EU level highlighted gaps in access to digital expertise, infrastructure, and investment support. In response, Technopark Kielce Digital Innovation Hub (TKDIH) was established as a one-stop-shop hub, providing SMEs with structured, accessible, and free support across the entire digital transformation process. As a strategic initiative, TKDIH supports companies in effectively implementing modern technologies, increasing their operational efficiency, and strengthening their position in local, national, and international markets.



Services

Technopark Kielce DIH provides a comprehensive, one-stop-shop portfolio of services tailored to the specific needs of SMEs in the Świętokrzyskie region, where limited access to digital expertise and infrastructure remains a key barrier. The hub combines analytical, advisory, training, and implementation services, supporting companies at every stage of the digital transformation process. It starts with digital maturity assessments and in-depth process analyses, identifying areas for optimisation and opportunities for innovation. Based on this, companies receive tailored advisory support, including technology brokering, development of digital roadmaps and business models, as well as access to financing instruments. Through the Digitalisation Academy and dedicated training programmes, TKDIH builds practical digital skills and competences. Importantly, with the support of specialised partners, the hub also enables testing, prototyping, and implementation of solutions, including proof of concept and deployment of digital technologies. Complementary activities such as events, networking, and awareness campaigns further strengthen the regional innovation ecosystem and support companies in scaling their digital transformation efforts.

Achievements in a nutshell



Share the challenges encountered by the construction sector in their respective countries



Exchange of best practices, tools, strategies and initiatives within the EDIHs in the workgroup in order to improve their efficiency, impact and outreach



Develop a DMA tool specific for the construction digital needs.

(see the success story below)



EU funding opportunities identified and shared, leading to the submission of 7 proposals with members of the TWG and related companies



Boost the generation of new collaborations among EDIHs stakeholders

> 7 joint-participation and presentation at international events (ECTP conference, B4P stakeholder forum, Smart City World Expo Congress, SAIE, ...)



Facilitated cascade communication between EDIHs with more than 100 shared communications

> 15 Search for international experts (project reviewing) and for project partners in EU projects



> 10 Link with EU initiative on construction (ECTP, B4PIC, EU peers...)



Create a common digital innovation ecosystem at EU level

Key achievements

DMA tool

The EU-level Digital Maturity Assessment (DMA) tool is designed as a generic instrument applicable to any organisation, sector, and Member State. Its main objective is to ensure a standardised and comparable approach across all EDIHs, enabling the European Commission to collect consistent data for monitoring and analysis.

However, this broad scope also represents a limitation when applied to highly specific sectors such as construction. The tool remains too generic to reflect the operational realities of construction companies, with several questions perceived as abstract or difficult to interpret. Moreover, it does not adequately capture very low levels of digital maturity, which are common among construction SMEs. As a result, the current DMA framework only partially measures sector progress and the real impact of EDIH support.

Within the Thematic Working Group on Construction, EDIHs jointly analysed these challenges by sharing practices, sector-specific adaptations, and value-chain perspectives –from contractors and designers to material producers and public authorities. This collective reflection revealed recurring gaps and confirmed the need for a more relevant, construction-focused assessment approach.

Building on this shared analysis, DIH CUBE, together with its partner Politecnico di Milano, developed a matrix-based assessment tool tailored to the construction sector. While fully aligned with the EU DMA structure and guidelines, the CO DMA introduces clearer terminology, construction-specific questions and technologies (e.g. BIM, Digital Twins, data interoperability, sustainability), and an automated correspondence with the official EU DMA.

The CO DMA is built on the EU DMA's structural framework but adapted to the unique needs of the construction sector (e.g., focus on BIM, Digital Twin adoption, sustainability goals in construction, and data interoperability). It incorporates sector-specific metrics, workflows, and tools that address construction processes, supply chain dynamics, and regulatory requirements, enabling companies to focus on their performance improvement without needing in-depth knowledge of the EU DMA's intricacies.

This enhanced tool aims to provide EDIHs with a more accurate representation of digital maturity within the construction ecosystem and to better guide customers towards the services that have the better impact for them.



Presentation to JRC and EDIH summit

At the EDIH Network Summit 2024, held on 26 – 27 November 2024 at The EGG in Brussels, the European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIH) community convened for its second annual gathering. Within this dynamic and multi-sectoral event, ANCE (DIH Cube) and GreenWin (EDIH Connect), on behalf of the Work Group of EDIHS for Construction, delivered a focused and impactful presentation tailored to the digitalisation realities of the construction sector.

Against a backdrop of expert debates on digital transformation practices across fields such as agrifood, cybersecurity and smart connectivity, the Work Group introduced the sector-specific Digital Maturity Assessment Tool (DMAT), described above as “CO DMA”, designed to better reflect the operational, organisational and technological particularities of construction companies.



By emphasising real-world applicability and sector alignment, the Work Group made a compelling case for influencing the update of the Digital Maturity Assessment Tool (DMAT 2.0) – currently under development by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission – with a stronger representation of construction-focused dimensions.

The Summit offered a unique opportunity to interface directly with JRC experts and key policymakers engaged in shaping future EU digital transformation instruments, reinforcing the value of embedding industry-specific maturity criteria within EU-wide assessment methodologies.

The inclusion of this construction-adapted DMAT within the broader Summit agenda showcased not only the sector's progress and needs but also positioned the EDIHS-Construction Work Group as a proactive contributor to Europe's digital transformation policy dialogue – especially at a time when digital maturity frameworks are evolving to better support SMEs and mid-sized enterprises on their digital journeys.



ECTP conference

The ECTP Conference, organised by the European Construction Technology Platform (ECTP), is a key European event dedicated to shaping the future of the built environment through research, innovation, and collaboration. Its ambition is to bring together the construction ecosystem to address major European challenges such as sustainability, digital transformation, resilience, and competitiveness of the sector.

Representatives from three EDIHs within the TWG on Construction (Digital built, DIHCUBE and EDIH-CONNECT) came together to showcase the TWG's initiatives during the 20th edition, in 2023. The conference provided a strategic opportunity to position the TWG and its members within the broader European construction and innovation ecosystem, facilitating exchanges with other ongoing European projects, platforms, and networks active in digitalisation and sustainability. Participation in the event supported the establishment of new contacts, the identification of potential synergies, and the exploration of collaboration opportunities extending beyond the initial EDIH funding framework.

By engaging with a diverse, multi-actor audience, the TWG increased its visibility, reinforced its role as a connector between innovation support structures and sectoral stakeholders, and laid the groundwork for future cooperation. This participation contributed to embedding the TWG within a larger European network, strengthening its capacity to sustain and scale its activities and impact over time. It set up the basis of a collaboration between the TWG and the ECTP, leading to the organisation of the Cross-Network Collaboration Forum, described here under.

Key achievements



When the EDIH and the B4PIC networks meet : Services that Empower, Networks that Connect, Actions that are Co-Created

The Thematic Working Group (TWG) on Construction actively contributed to strengthening cross-network collaboration at European level by designing and organising the Cross-Network Collaboration Forum entitled *“When the EDIH and the B4PIC networks meet – Services that Empower, Networks that Connect, Actions that are Co-Created”* (12/02/2026). This event illustrates the TWG’s capacity to move beyond coordination activities and to proactively shape future-oriented collaboration models capable of ensuring the long-term sustainability of its work.

Coordinated by GreenWin, the forum was designed as a strategic meeting point between EDIHs active in the construction sector and Built4People Innovation Clusters (B4PICs), bringing together two highly complementary European ecosystems alongside key stakeholders involved in the digital transformation of the construction sector. By connecting these networks, the TWG aimed to reinforce EU-level linkages, foster mutual understanding, and explore concrete avenues for collaboration beyond the current EDIH programming period.

The event deliberately departed from a traditional conference format and was conceived as a hands-on, participatory forum focused on turning connections into action. Through plenary exchanges, structured collaborative sessions, and targeted networking moments supported by the B2Match platform, participants were encouraged to actively position their expertise, services, and project ideas, and to engage in co-creation rather than passive information exchange.

Two core objectives guided the forum’s design. First, it aimed to create clarity and visibility by enabling participants to develop a shared understanding of the roles, activities, and service portfolios of the EDIH and B4PIC networks, as well as the digital services available to companies across Europe. Second, it sought to “build what comes next” by supporting the identification and co-design of concrete collaboration opportunities for 2026 and beyond.



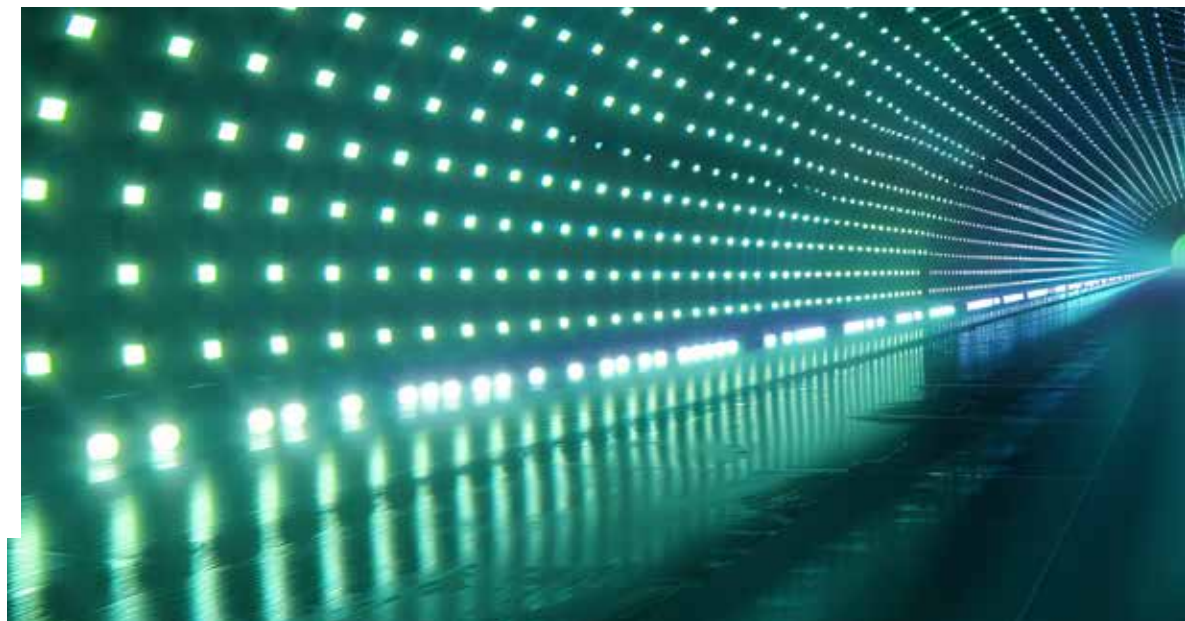
In line with this ambition, the forum was explicitly oriented towards tangible collaborative outcomes, including the joint drafting of 4 concept notes for future EU funding proposals, the definition of action plans for 2 events (start-up based event and a joint mission to Smart City World Expo Congress) and the valorisation pathways of digital tools from 2 European projects. Additional outputs included a shared database mapping participants' interest and positioning for future EU calls, as well as a portfolio of projects the digitalisation of the construction sector.

Beyond its immediate outputs, the forum represents a strategic milestone for the TWG on Construction, demonstrating its ability to act as a connector between European innovation ecosystems and to design collaborative formats that support continuity and sustainability beyond the first EDIH funding round.

Recordings



After-movie





Key achievements

From sectoral challenges to innovations

Key take aways and follow up

Overall, the work of the TWG has shown that, while each EDIH has tailored its methodology, approach, and service implementation to specific regional and national contexts, the TWG provided a structured space for exchange of best practices and peer learning, enabling EDIHs to strengthen and refine their own approaches.

Through open dialogue and structured interaction, EDIHs were able to benchmark their own practices against those of peers operating in different regional, sectoral, and organisational contexts. This exposure was instrumental in inspiring participating EDIHs to reflect critically on their existing portfolios and operational models, leading to the identification and adoption of new services, methodologies, and approaches better aligned with emerging needs and best practices across the network.

Another key lesson learned is that progressive and adaptive collaboration, which respects the pace and maturity of each EDIH, has been highly effective: the TWG initially focused on sharing experiences, guidance, and practical advice before gradually moving towards co-creation of concrete collaboration opportunities, following an incremental collaboration curve.

A key added value of the TWG lies in its strong European dimension, which has enabled EDIHs to move beyond isolated regional actions and position themselves within a broader, interconnected innovation landscape. By fostering cross-border exchanges and collaboration, the group has facilitated the emergence of new partnerships and strengthened links with major European initiatives and networks such as the ECTP (European Construction Technology Platform) and Built4People (B4P). This integration into a wider ecosystem has not only increased the visibility of the participating EDIHs but has also created new opportunities for joint actions, knowledge sharing and alignment with European priorities for the digital and green transition of the construction sector.

Looking ahead, ensuring the sustainability of the TWG beyond the initial EDIH funding phase has become a shared priority. This was one of the main objectives of the event organised in collaboration with ECTP (12/02/2026), during which concrete actions were co-created and subsequently followed up to maximise their implementation potential.

After three years of continuous collaboration, the Working Group has established a stable dynamic through regular meetings and joint activities. However, with the transition to the next phase of the EDIH programme, the composition of the group is expected to evolve, as some hubs conclude their participation while new ones may join. In this context, maintaining continuity and preserving collective knowledge are essential to sustain the impact achieved so far.

To support this transition, the EDIH Hub, developed by the EDIH South Westphalia, has recently been introduced as a shared digital collaboration environment for the Working Group Construction. The platform provides a persistent workspace that allows existing and new members to remain connected, access relevant documents and intermediate results, and trace the development of topics over time. This helps to preserve institutional knowledge and reduces the risk of information loss when participants or organizations change. By complementing physical meetings with a stable digital infrastructure, the EDIH Hub supports continuous and structured collaboration within the Working Group Construction. It enables asynchronous exchange, transparent documentation, and the onboarding of new participants, thereby contributing to the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the working group across changing project constellations and funding phases.

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