

PassREg Communication Strategy – executive summary

A Communication Strategy

1. General communication strategy

As part of the overall communication strategy for the PassREg project, key communication tools and dissemination channels (PR materials, online media and dissemination events) were identified and all project partners were asked to identify the key target group for the region(s), explaining what makes them key, describing their goals and motivations as well as the key message for them to take home from PassREg, what style of communication they respond to and through which channels they can be reached.

In addition, partners were asked to identify existing connections to known experts in the target group as well as existing networks to get involved, and analyse potential challenges and opportunities in communicating with this target group as well as their current level of awareness for Passive House and Renewables concepts.

Based on these regional analyses, the following 7 key target groups were established:

- General public & press
- Policy makers & local authorities
- Architects & engineers
- Financiers
- Construction companies & craftspeople
- Developers & housing associations
- Manufacturers of building components

Regional partners will be free to select 5 or all 6 of the 6 specific target groups, in addition to the general public & press as a general and thus mandatory target group, based on which target groups they consider most important for their respective region(s).

These target groups will be addressed through the selected dissemination channels and making use of the selected communication tools.

1.1 PR materials

Project related communication and PR materials will be tailored to suit these target groups' needs, interests and styles as described below, either addressing the general public and all target groups alike, or each target group individually through target group specific versions. These materials should be used and/or distributed as needed to address these target groups and include the following:

- PassREg pamphlet (1 general + 6 target group specific versions (at least 5 selected by each partner); all partner languages)
- PowerPoint presentation (13 general slides + 7 target group specific slides; all partner languages)
- Project poster (DIN A1 format; all partner languages)
- PassREg Competition poster exhibition (English)
- Press releases (at least 6 over the project duration; all partner languages)
- Project newsletters (at least 3 over the duration of the project; all partner languages)
- Project brochure (English)

1.2 Dissemination events

Project related activities and events will be organised, taking into account each target group's individual needs and interests as described below and making use of the PR materials described above. These events include the following:

- International events (6.4.1):
 - PassREg workshops at International Passive House Conferences 2013 – 2015 (participation and contributions from all partners)
 - Participation in 3 additional international events
 - Passive House Symposium/Brussels 2012 (organisation and participation by PMP/PHP)
 - BAU/Munich 2013 (participation by PHI/iPHA)
 - Ecobuild/London 2014 (participation by BRE))

- Regional events (6.4.2 + other WPs):
 - Regional informational sessions (≥ 5 per AR / ≥ 2 per standalone beacon over the duration of the project)
 - International PH Days side events 2012 – 2014 (≥ 1 per partner per year)
 - Participation in regional conferences/trade fairs (≥ 3 per AR over the duration of the project)
 - Regional building forums with critical market players in each AR
 - 3 Study Tours + International Workshops (1 per FR region)
 - Other International Workshops

See *Appendix 1 – Event Details* for timeline of all international and regional events as per the PassREg work programme as well as other related events planned by individual partners.

1.3 Online media

In addition, the project will rely on online media including partner websites as well as a project website (www.passreg.eu) for the wider dissemination of project related findings and materials and to establish a growing network of PassREg stakeholders consisting of project partners, representatives of each target group as well as all those interested in the project. A PassREg forum will provide an open platform for all stakeholders to exchange ideas and experiences and discuss opportunities and challenges. Experts will offer individual advice and expertise through an online helpdesk, accessible via the PassREg website. Key project findings and solutions will also be published in the form of articles and made accessible on [Passipedia](#), the online Passive House resource.

2. Analysis of target groups

2.1 General public & press

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as it offers a significant potential for the dissemination of Passive House + Renewables concepts throughout the EU, thus increasing the general level of awareness and public support of such concepts. While the general public is the ultimate addressee in this target group, the press plays a key role in disseminating project-related findings and materials, thus helping to reach various target groups (including but not limited to the general public). As such, the press serves as an important multiplier. This target group's main goals and motivations lie in the distribution of innovative and attractive concepts as well as stories that will attract attention. The key take home message for this target group is that PassREg concepts are innovative, climate-friendly and attractive, and their popularity is constantly growing. These aspects can best be combined by providing attractive, illustrative PR materials as well as visits (e.g. Passive House Days), tours and other PR events. The communication style for this target group should combine clear messages with emotional aspects, presented through attractive, illustrative materials in different formats, ranging from short previews to more in-depth reports and stories. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) online and print media such as press releases, journals, newspapers and websites, as well as 2) PR events such as press conferences and informational sessions.

Connections to experts such as specialised journalists and media representatives typically already exist both in FRs and ARs, but should be expanded to achieve a greater exposure in the general media. Connections to existing networks typically already exist in FRs; in ARs such networks typically exist but connections will often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in communicating with this target group especially through high quality PR materials and in using and expanding existing networks and channels to achieve a wide dissemination of PassREg materials and contents. The main challenges lie in the general information overload in all media and thus in offering distinct, memorable and high quality information to make the concept known. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is typically quite high in FRs, although misconceptions still exist, but lower or very low in most ARs with many misconceptions and very few demonstration projects in place to increase the awareness and acceptance level.

2.2 Policy makers & local authorities

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as policy makers and local authorities are responsible for regional decisions and thus have a strong influence on future construction and energy standards, legislations and incentives. Their goals and motivations lie in the implementation of EU guidelines, in developing regional regulations to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions as well as in increasing the attractiveness and public image of their region, in creating jobs and promoting economic growth. The key take home message for this target group is that PassREg provides THE solution for NZEBs (energy efficiency first + on-site or nearby renewable energies where possible) and offers valuable tools for its implementation (in the form of the Set of Solutions, the success guide, the models, etc.); Politicians in the FRs should also take home that PassREg will help them increase their visibility as a front runner region in the EU, whereas those in ARs should understand that they can benefit from these existing successful models and become a front runner themselves. These aspects can best be combined by disseminating information

on the models, the SoS, the success guide etc. to show that PassREg can provide the tools they need for the successful implementation of future-proof energy efficiency standards, and by showcasing real projects (beacons). The communication style for this target group should be formal, informative, concise and comprehensive. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) in person, i.e. through meetings with experts, local/regional events (which already exist in many of the PassREg regions – more will be organised as part of the PassREg project); site visits; presentations, project reports and demonstrations, as well as 2) through the press, i.e. through press releases and print materials from renowned sources.

Connections to experts in this target group typically already exist in FRs. In ARs connections sometimes exist but often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. Whether or not such connections exist, often depends on the partners' role in regional/national policies. Connections to existing networks typically already exist in FRs; in ARs such networks typically exist but connections will often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in creating new networks and communication channels for this target group or expanding existing ones as they can play an important role in the promotion of the PassREg concept and the implementation of legislation that leads to real projects. The challenges in communicating with this target group lie in their inaccessibility as well as the strong political influence from “competing” lobbies such as energy and heating industries. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is typically high with legislation already in place in the FRs; but lower or very low in ARs. In some regions (e.g. Wales), policy makers and local authorities are aware of such concepts but need to be convinced of its benefits and misconceptions with regard to the role of energy efficiency vs. renewables need to be overcome.

2.3 Architects & engineers

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as they are typically the first (and lead) member of the design team and the first to set out the overall shape, direction and style of proposed buildings with the power to convince clients. As such, they play a pivotal role in deciding whether to take the Passive House route, and subsequently form a very important part of ensuring it is implemented successfully. Their main goals and motivations typically lie in having design freedom to bring distinctiveness to their projects, in learning about state-of-the-art products and practices to distinguish themselves from their competitors and, generally, in balancing the needs of their clients with the demand of the wider environment (both built and global), thus achieving the optimum blend of these on each individual project. The key take home message for this target group is that Passive House as the basis for future building practices offers a competitive advantage with a steadily growing market demand. At the same time, the Passive House Standard is cost effective and flexible enough to accommodate varied construction methodologies and designs, whilst still delivering ‘cutting edge’ environmental performance. These aspects can best be combined by increasing this target group’s awareness and education of Passive House via training sessions, information provision and a wide range of case studies demonstrating different construction techniques and styles as well as by offering networking platforms for an enhanced exchange of expert experiences and information. The communication style for this target group should be technical, peer-to-peer communication supported by attractive, illustrative publications containing visual elements as well as practical (ready to use – learning by doing) information. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) existing networks (e.g. architectural chambers), 2) expert events (conferences, symposiums, trade fairs), especially well-established events, 3) seminars, lectures and site visits and 4) the press, i.e. trade journals & magazines, press releases and websites.

Connections to experts in this target group already exist in most regions, with FRs typically having established an extensive network of design professionals whereas connections in ARs are typically limited to individual (often Certified) Passive House Designers and architects and/or those involved in local beacon projects or their own organisations. Connections to existing networks typically already exist in FRs; in ARs such networks typically exist but connections will often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in using and expanding existing networks and channels to communicate with this target group as successful communication with this target group is likely to be a highly effective means for the promotion of PassREg concepts among all target groups. The challenges, however, lie in the information overload architects often face as they are bombarded with products and materials from the construction sector as well as misconceptions among architects and designers as to the implications of the Passive House concept. Achieving good visibility through attractive materials containing sound information will thus be critical for a successful communication with this target group. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is typically high among architects and engineers in FRs although potential for improvement still exists. In some of the ARs, architects and engineers are slowly becoming familiar with such concepts although the general awareness and/or acceptance level is still rather low, whereas in some regions (especially in the Eastern European partner regions), such concepts are practically unknown among this target group.

2.4 Construction companies & craftspeople

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as they are responsible for the execution of actual buildings. As such they are directly involved in the local building process and have a great impact on whether a building will perform as expected or not. With new designs and detailing being developed to help deliver ever-increasing environmental standards, craftspeople are faced with potentially unfamiliar construction techniques. It is important that they understand the significance of these new methodologies and are capable of implementing them onsite. Otherwise design aspirations may not be achieved in practice. This target

group's goals and motivations are generally based on compliance with regulations but they are also driven by the need to achieve a profit and are thus looking to learn about state-of-the-art products and practices to distinguish themselves from their competitors. As such, they have a strong desire to develop a good reputation for being able to deliver advanced standards to provide confidence to future clients and help secure further work. While some of them may also be concerned with "green goals", their main focus will typically be on growth areas. One of the key take home messages for this target group is that Passive House offers a competitive advantage as the basis for future building practices. The market demand is steadily growing. Construction companies need a skilled, educated workforce that understand the requirements of near zero energy buildings and can deliver the necessary craftsmanship on site. These aspects can best be combined by increasing this target group's awareness of the direction of future legislation and the need for improved skills to deliver high standards, by offering training sessions on the on site delivery of these new standards and by showing best-practice examples. Since this target group is typically deeply rooted in traditions, it is also important to show that these new concepts are based on traditional practices and skills and only require little adaptations in their traditional work while explaining the difference these adaptations can make. The communication style for this target group should be practical and sector specific, peer-to-peer, and straightforward. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) local demonstration projects and site visits, 2) practical and trade-/region-specific trainings/informational events (especially short, evening sessions), 3) sector events such as trade fairs, exhibitions and symposiums, 4) existing networks such as trade associations, especially local networks, and 5) the press, i.e. print materials and informational campaigns.

Connections to experts in this target group already exist in most regions, with FRs typically having established an extensive network of experts in this target group. Some ARs have also already established contacts with experts in this target group, often through their involvement in pilot projects, others are in the process of establishing such contacts through their involvement in the beacon projects. Connection to existing networks typically already exist in FRs; in ARs such networks typically exist but connections will often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in using and expanding existing networks and channels to communicate with this target group, addressing them as critical players in assuring high quality in construction: However, there are various challenges in addressing them as a group as they are generally a dispersed group, often difficult to reach with little time to spare for informational sessions and training courses. Additional challenges lie in the current stagnation/recession of national construction markets as well as a lack of interest from clients and investors which has been slowing down the development of new products and activities in the sector. On the other hand, the economic slow-down in the construction sector can also be seen as an opportunity for those seeking additional qualifications and looking for better practices to distinguish themselves from their competitors. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is typically high among this target group in FRs although potential for improvement still exists. In some of the ARs, construction companies and craftspeople are slowly becoming familiar with such concepts although the general awareness is still rather low with little or no knowledge of the technical skills necessary for their implementation. In some regions (especially in the Eastern European partner regions), such concepts are practically unknown among this target group.

2.5 Developers & housing associations

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as the key decision makers for large construction and renovation projects. As such, they also have a social and environmental responsibility and thus are often among the early adopters of new technologies and concepts. Their main goals and motivations typically lie in achieving a high market value through low energy costs and high quality. Housing Associations also have a social obligation to move their tenants out of fuel poverty. Large developers and housing associations are thus looking for cost effective building solutions to meet the various standards and requirements imposed on them, and, once they have a 'template' that meets all the necessary requirements, they will often roll this out as their standard approach. The key take home message for this target group is that Passive House buildings are feasible, sustainable and cost-effective and thus offer a future-proof solution. These aspects can best be combined by offering informational sessions and material on PassREg concepts and by showing best practice examples that can provide evidence of costs, benefits and challenges of meeting current and future energy performance standards. The communication style for this target group should be illustrative, with a clear language and a focus on technical, organizational and economical details as well as on larger, public, non-residential buildings and social housing, presented in attractive publications. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) local demonstration projects and site visits along with project reports and documents, 2) informational events and personal meetings with representatives, 3) sector events such as trade fairs, exhibitions and symposiums, and 5) the press, i.e. print materials, press releases and informational campaigns.

Connections to experts in this target group already exist in most regions, with FRs and most ARs having established direct contacts to representatives of this target group. Connections to existing networks typically already exist in FRs; in ARs such networks typically exist but connections will often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in using and expanding existing networks and channels to communicate with this target group by disseminating the project findings in the form of the Set of Solutions, the Success Guide, etc as evidence of these concepts' applicability in various regions. Additionally, there is a great potential if housing associations widely adopt the Passive House Standard as it would be a positive signal for the rest of the industry to follow while increasing public awareness and interest. The main challenges lie in this target group's concern about additional upfront costs and payback periods; therefore, financial arguments should be focussed when communicating with developers and housing associations. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is typically high among this target group in FRs although potential for

improvement still exists. In some of the ARs, housing associations and developers are likely to be aware of the Passive House Standard as a low energy building standard but may not know the actual performance indicators and may not be able to place them with regard to other concepts. In some regions (especially in the Eastern European partner regions), PassREg concepts are practically unknown among this target group.

2.6 Manufacturers of building components

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as they are responsible for the availability of suitable components on the market. Additionally, they are typically represented by strong lobbies and as such have a strong influence on political decision making and legal developments. Their main goals and motivations lie in offering products that meet the industry needs. As such, they are typically driven by regulations, i.e. they will look to develop their products to comply with requirements once they have a clear indication of the targets and standards that will be set by policy makers. At the same time, manufacturers and developers are looking to offer products and components with a high market value and high market shares, expand into new markets and improve their reputation by communicating a “green” image. The key take home message for this target group is that there is a strong and continuously increasing market demand for Passive House suitable components. These aspects can best be combined by showing the direction of future legislation and the need for new products to deliver high standards, by raise awareness of the market opportunities of PH suitable components and explaining the characteristics of such components. The communication style for this target group should be technical and informative, providing sector specific information. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) trade associations, 2) informational/networking events such as the manufacturers’ workshop at the International Passive House Conference, and 3) sector specific media such as press releases, website, projects reports, newsletters and trade journals.

Connections to experts in this target group typically already exist in FRs. In ARs connections sometimes exists but often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. Networks typically exist in the form of trade specific associations but connections will need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in using and expanding existing networks and channels to communicate with this target group by disseminating technical information and project outcomes among manufacturers and developers to convince them of the market opportunities

2.7 Financiers

This target group is key to the communication of the PassREg project as those responsible for project financing. As such financiers can promote the Passive House concept through low-interest loans and other financial products. Their main goals and motivations typically lie in attractive, high-value and low-risk investments, and sometimes in communicating a “green” image. The key take home message for this target group is that Passive House buildings are cost-effective and a low-risk investment. These aspects can best be combined by demonstrating best practices, existing business plans and completed projects. The communication style for this target group should be professional and informative. Contents should focus on economic aspects supported by facts and figures and presented through attractive and illustrative (graphs, tables) materials. The best channels to use to reach this target group are 1) in person, i.e. through meetings with representatives of this target group, 2) informational events and campaigns, and 3) professional online platforms such as the PassREg website.

Connections to experts in this target group typically already exist in FRs. In ARs connections sometimes exists but often need to be established as part of the PassREg project. Networks often exist in the form of economic chambers but connections will need to be established as part of the PassREg project. In all regions there is a great potential in communicating with this target group, especially by providing information on economic aspects and attractive financing models to financiers. The main challenges lie in this target group’s conservative attitude towards new models. Their general lack of expertise and thus misjudgement of the risk factors and investment opportunities, paired with low demand from clients, results in little interest in offering differentiated services for investments in energy efficiency. The awareness level for PassREg concepts is generally rather low in all regions and will need to be improved as part of the PassREg project.

3. Evaluation of the dissemination strategy – tracking of success indicators

The effectiveness of the measures described above and their impact on the aforementioned target groups will be evaluated mid-term and at the project’s end. The success of the dissemination strategy in terms of increased awareness of PassREg solutions among key actors and increased accessibility and exchange of existing solutions within the project regions will be measured based on a target-actual comparison with regard to the target outcomes defined prior to the project’s beginning. These target outcomes are as follows:

By the project’s end,

- each of the regional PassREg networks must have grown by 25 members
- in each region 50 local politicians and investors must have been informed about opportunities and advances of NZEB
- regional dissemination events must have been visited by 100 persons per region

- information material must have been accessed 20,000 times
- the set of solutions must have been accessed 10,000 times on PassREg website / Passipedia

The following tracking tools and activities will be used to evaluate these success indicators:

1. Online tracking:
 - Member tracking on PassREg website
 - Tracking of downloads / links on the PassREg website and Passipedia
2. Event-based tracking
 - List of participants of regional events (quantitative)
 - Event evaluation sheets (qualitative)
 - Tracking of printed material distributed

The mid-term evaluation of the dissemination strategy will serve as an indication as to whether the target outcomes will likely be achieved by the project's end. Should the target-actual comparison suggest that the target outcomes will not be achieved, the key weak points must be identified and analysed, and adequate measures must be taken to improve the impact of the dissemination strategy and to allow for the achievement of the target outcomes by the project's end.

Appendix 1 – Event schedule

See excel document *Event Details* for timeline of all international and regional events as per the PassREg work programme as well as other related events planned by individual partners.