

## Deliverable 9.1: Communication plan

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### Renewables-Grid-Initiative

#### Contact



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The European Commission provides a multitude of guidance documents for the development of communication strategies. This draft is mainly based on recommendations from the publications “SAVE Dissemination Guide”<sup>1</sup> and “Communicating EU Research & Innovation”<sup>2</sup>.

## 1. Objectives

Communication objectives are closely linked to the objectives of the overall project, which are defined as:

- a) Improve local public acceptance for grids by applying best practices in participation and transparency
- b) Speed-up permitting procedures by engaging with appropriate target groups to reach new/improved methods while respecting environmental protection standards
- c) Support implementation of improved permitting procedures for “projects of common interest” (PCIs) by developing improved guidelines

Deriving from goals a) and b), results the need to disseminate best practices in improving public acceptance and speeding-up permitting procedures while respecting environmental protection standards. In order to achieve goal c), experiences gained during the project will have to be communicated to actors responsible for the implementation of PCIs. Public awareness is achieved by media outreach and public engagement.

Possible communications objectives include (1) creating awareness, (2) imparting knowledge, (3) projecting an image, (4) shaping attitudes, (5) stimulating a want or desire. The goal of our communication activities must therefore be a change in attitudes and opinion of key actors contributing to the implementation of grid development towards

- approaches which are likely to achieve higher level of public acceptance

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/files/implementation/doc/save\\_dissemination\\_guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/files/implementation/doc/save_dissemination_guide_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/communicating-research\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/communicating-research_en.pdf)

- approaches which are likely to speed up permitting procedures
- approaches which respect high level of environmental protection

This goal can be achieved in three steps:

- Experiences gained in the project are well-known by target groups of the project (TSOs, civil society, NGOs, public authorities, policy makers)
- Target groups see value of experiences and change their own practices accordingly
- Target groups take influence/contribute to better implementation of grid development projects (especially PCIs) in terms of public acceptance, duration, and environmental protection.

## 2. Audience/Target groups

There are three different types of target groups:

1. End-users: End users are TSOs and NGOs, which should adapt their action according to findings from our project.
2. Decision-makers: Decision-makers (public authorities and policy makers) should provide changes in the legislative or procedural framework necessary for the implementation of BESTGRID findings.
3. Supporters: Supporters are our alliances, which will help us achieving the goals and influencing end-users and decision-makers.

Concerning the geographical scope, communication activities will have two main focuses: firstly, the countries in which pilot projects will be implemented (Germany, Belgium, UK) and secondly, countries where Projects of Common Interest (as defined in the recently introduced EU Energy Infrastructure Regulation<sup>3</sup>) will be realised (to be decided end of September 2013). Given that countries in Central and Eastern Europe do not have as much experience, the corridors 3 and 4 of the Energy Infrastructure

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<sup>3</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:115:0039:0075:EN:PDF>

Regulation (North-South electricity interconnections in Central Eastern and South Eastern Europe; Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan in electricity) will be in the centre of consideration.

However, there is additionally a clear expectation that the BESTGRID project impacts beyond its direct sphere of action – communication should therefore also seize “European” communication opportunities and strongly involve the “Brussels audience”.

## 2.1 Overview

EU = end user; DM = decision-maker; S = supporter

<b>Actors</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Conditions</b>	<b>Priority (tbd)</b>
TSOs	EU	Contact persons must be identified, continuously informed; involved in best practice exchange	
Environmental NGOs (national and local)	EU	Contact persons must be identified, continuously informed; involved in best practice exchange; in particular contact of participating NGOs to their partners on local level or in other European countries relevant	
Permitting authorities (national and regional)	EU	Permitting authorities need to be informed of the project, see the value of it and cooperate at pilot projects. Permitting authorities in other countries need to implement best practices	
Nature conservation and environmental authorities (national and regionals)	EU	Authorities need to be informed of the project, see the value of it and cooperate at pilot projects	

Regulators	DM	Regulators need to be informed about the results and regulatory preconditions that have been identified in the pilot projects.	
ACER	DM	ACER needs to be informed about the results and regulatory preconditions that have been identified in the pilot projects.	
ENTSO-E	DM, EU	ENTSO-E needs to be informed about progress, can serve as platform to distribute findings to its members. Should be involved in best practice exchange.	
EC, DG Ener	DM	Should be informed about legislative preconditions for successful implementation that have been identified in the pilot projects	
EC, DG Env	DM	Should be informed about legislative preconditions for successful implementation that have been identified in the pilot projects	
ITRE Committee of EP	DM	Should be informed about legislative preconditions for successful implementation that have been identified in the pilot projects	
National governments (Ministries of environment, energy, economics)	DM	Should be informed about legislative preconditions for successful implementation that have been identified in the pilot projects	
National parliaments (committees dealing with energy	DM	Should be informed about legislative preconditions for successful implementation that have been identified	

infrastructure)		in the pilot projects	
Media (online and print, European, national, regional in relation to pilot projects)	S	Need to be convinced of the newsworthiness of new approaches and cooperation; contact persons need to be identified, regularly informed;	
Affected people:(people affected by grid expansion and general public)	S, EU	Should recognise that TSOs and NGOs are trying new approaches; should get involved in pilot projects; should support political recommendations	
Friends of the Supergrid	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	
Europacable	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	
ABB, Siemens etc.	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	
EUROSOLAR	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	
EUWEA	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	
EPIA	S	Should be regularly informed, so that they support political recommendations; promote the added value of the project	

A more thorough stakeholder list and analysis will be developed by the Consortium. It will be used to ensure the targeting of all communication activities and will be updated regularly.

### 3. Messages

#### *Main message of the project*

Implementing grid development projects is necessary to integrate renewables and combat climate change while respecting and responding to local concerns in a suitable manner.

#### *Message for end-users (TSOs/NGOs)*

We are gaining experiences which will be useful for your own activities in grid development and providing guidance for the implementation of best practices, specifically in engaging with external stakeholders that might have major concerns about the project,

#### *Message for decision-makers (authorities, policy makers)*

You can contribute to implementing the project and make an impact in your community. It will lead to faster integration of renewable energies and thus help achieving the 20-20-20 goals (or equivalent national goals – to be defined).

#### *Message for supporters*

You can gain from a faster and more environmentally friendly grid because [to be defined]

#### *Narrative*

Two groups that traditionally had differing interests in grid development projects, NGOs and TSOs, are taking the step to work together in designing and testing new approaches in four pilot projects. This cooperation will involve cooperation with representatives of NGOs on the ground, which will last throughout the project.

This unique cooperation will produce findings useful for other grid development projects. To ensure the transferability, the projects will be monitored by an international research institute. Results and findings will be scrutinised for transferability by a further TSO in a different surrounding.

#### *Characteristics of our brand*

Innovative, fresh, new, green, energy, technical, open-minded, easy to contact, transparent



## 4. Medium and means

In a first step, branding of the project, including a logo, colour and font scheme and templates for word and power point will be developed by RGI (in cooperation with graphic designer).

RGI will be leading all of the proposed communication activities – partners will be asked to give input and support activities.

Communication tools	Short description	Target groups	Timeframe	Evaluation
Project flyer	The project flyer will give a short description of the project, its partners, objectives, and added value. It will be printed and available online. Distribution: in outreach activities, workshops, through partners	All	First draft: August Final version: December	Number of downloads, number of issues distributed
External website	The external website will consist of four main elements: a) description of the project and partners; b) description and continuous showcasing of pilot projects, incl. pictures and info materials (towards the end: short video clip); c) Publications; d) discussion forum which will be used for the exchange of best practices	All	Finalised: end of September	Piwik

Internal Website	<p>The internal area of the website will only be accessible for project partners. Documents can be shared, a calendar will be integrated which will indicate milestones and upcoming events/ meetings.</p> <p>An internal blog will be established, making the exchange of experiences between project partners possible and easy. Every partner can write short texts about recent developments.</p>	Project partners	Finalised: end of June	Piwik
Internal project updates	<p>In order to keep everyone informed about ongoing BESTGRID activities and the progress of the pilot projects, RGI will send a short update to all partners approx. every second months. For this, partners will be asked to send relevant information to RGI beforehand.</p>	Project partners	First update: September; then every 2 <sup>nd</sup> months	Feedback from project partners
Newsletters	<p>A comprehensive BESTGRID newsletter format will be developed by RGI, Germanwatch and BirdLife Europe.</p> <p>At least five mailings will be sent out. RGI will use its existing network and beyond this identify relevant recipients to set up the mailing list (based on input from partners). BirdLife Europe and Germanwatch will use their already existing newsletter formats to additionally inform about the project. BirdLife Europe will also disseminate the update via its widely read 'BirdLife Europe Community' blog, and if appropriate may extend its mailings to interested environmental authorities.</p>	All	<p>Template: finalized in October</p> <p>First Mailout: January 2014</p>	Number of subscribers; clicks on links (e.g. with bitly)

Twitter Channel	A twitter channel will be established and administered by RGI. It will be used to announce project milestones, events, etc. Partners will inform RGI about important activities that should be tweetet.	All	Established towards end of 2013	Number of followers, tweets, retweets.
Advisory Board	The Advisory Board will help present results to key decision-makers. Participants of the Group will serve as door-opener to other policy makers. A site visit of the Advisory Group to one or more of the pilot projects will be aimed for.	DM	Established in September	Number of meetings, short interviews
Media relations	A set of material will be developed, including background information on the pilot projects and the project partners. A press release will be published at different milestones, before the first public workshops or at the end of the project (all in all at least 3 press releases). Furthermore, media representatives will be invited to every workshop. It is the aim to create a network of journalists interested in the subject and in regularly writing about it in different member states. At the second public workshop, a background discussion with a core group of media representatives will be held. Media relations will also include and build on existing networks of participating partners. All project partners will have to contribute to this task by providing relevant media contacts and giving input to press releases where appropriate..	All	Mailing list: collected in August;  Press kit: first version in October	Media monitoring

Workshops	<p>A key tool to increase awareness, share the results of the BESTRID project and to exchange best practices will be a series of five large international and public workshops. The workshops will be designed as full-day events and will include a networking dinner. They will thereby provide an important opportunity for building networks within and between TSOs, public authorities, policy makers and NGOs, which are all working on the topic on public acceptance and better permitting procedures in grid development. High quality external speakers, such as relevant national policy makers will be invited to give a keynote speech.</p>	All	First workshop: May 2014	Analysis of participants
Outreach activities	<p>In order to ensure that all relevant stakeholders of the grid development in Europe are aware of the BESTGRID projects and to increase engagement of relevant stakeholders, RGI will continuously monitor relevant on-going activities on EU level and on member states level. RGI will present the BESTGRID project and its result at least at 10 international conferences. RGI will furthermore engage in bilateral meetings with stakeholders on a member state level. These meetings will aim to present the results of the BESTGRID project and to encourage the implementation of the lessons learned in other EU member states. The meetings will be coordinated with the outreach activities of BirdLife Europe and Germanwatch (meetings/roundtables with relevant stakeholders and NGOs trainings in work packages 7 and 8). Ideally, also TSO partners should engage in such outreach activities and report those back to RGI for the common project reporting</p>	DM, supporters	Continuous	Number of meetings and presentations

Guidebook on nature	One of the main outputs of the project will be the Guidelines "Grid development for renewables and nature: a practical guide" developed by BirdLife. It will be a key tool to communicate the results and will thus be distributed through all available channels.	EU	2015	Number of downloads, number of issues distributed
Guidebook on transparency and participation	One of the main outputs of the project will be the Guidelines on transparency and participation developed by Germanwatch It will be a key tool to communicate the results and will thus be distributed through all available channels.	EU	2015	Number of downloads, number of issues distributed
Policy brief	At the end of the project, partners will agree on recommendations for political decision-makers. A policy brief will be formulated and handed over to key decision-makers at the final conference.	DM	2015	Number of downloads, assessment of political reaction

## 5. Partners' actions

Only RGI has dedicated hours for dissemination measures foreseen in WP9. Thus, activities of other partners are voluntary and deliverables may not depend on their tasks.

However, BESTGRID partners have a great interest in communicating about BESTGRID and its progress themselves. In the following section, useful measures of partners are thus set out. Partners can choose themselves which measures suit their own communication the most. All dissemination activities from partners will be reported to RGI and taken into account for the mid-term and final evaluation of WP9.

Partners should consider all channels normally used for internal and external communication activities. Communication measures could include:

- Include page or section about BESTGRID on own website; include link to BESTGRID website
- Make announcement of BESTGRID workshops on own website
- Include BESTGRID project updates in own publications, such as newsletters, magazines, blog, social media
- This can include e.g. interviews with pilot project managers or NGO representatives; op-eds from partner representatives; features about pilot project progress
- Present findings of BESTGRID at international workshops or conferences
- Internal communication
- Make an internal briefing of colleagues about the project and ask them to include it in their talks and presentations
- Include description and continuously updated information in employee magazine, intranet or other internal communication channels
- Media work: approach media contacts, make regular media briefings, include BESTGRID in own press releases
- Consider BESTGRID in advocacy work
- Disseminate BESTGRID products, such as flyer, guidebooks and policy brief

## 6. Evaluation

Evaluation of the communication measures will be done regularly. A comprehensive update needs to be compiled after the first half of the project.

Impacts are defined in the Annex I of the BESTGRID agreement as follows:

- Broad public awareness on BESTGRID project across Europe (>200 people from each pilot country sign up to newsletter, on average 50 people from each other EU country sign up for newsletter; >1000 website visitors per year, at more than 20% from non-pilot-project countries)
- Insights presented to relevant audience in 10 international conferences and via at least 10 bilateral meetings with relevant policy makers/EU institutions (EC, ENTSO-E)

- ENTSO-E promotes application of BESTGRID results at 5 public information events
- Key stakeholders wish to apply BESTGRID results to PCIs (at least 10 inquiries of key actors wishing to apply the results in the reshaping of national procedures for PCIs)

Means of monitoring will include:

- Website monitoring tool, e.g. Piwik
- Distribution of flyer
- Distribution of guidebooks
- List and analysis of outreach activities (all partners to report back to RGI)
- Newsletter: including clicks on hyperlinks (e.g. via bitly)
- Short interviews with advisory group
- Short questionnaire to project team
- Evaluation of participants at workshops
- Online survey
- Response/feedback from target audiences
- How our respective partner organisations have been involved – extent, results
- Media response analysis (important: partners need to include BESTGRID in media monitoring!)