

Feedback from OPEN HOUSE case studies: towards a refined methodology

More than 67 case studies in 35 European countries have been evaluated with the OPEN HOUSE assessment methodology. A detailed feedback was gathered with the help of a feedback tool allowing an automatic analysis of the assessors' comments.

This feedback was then presented during a workshop in Paris where external experts were invited to discuss improvements to be included in the methodology.



Photo of the expert workshop in Paris, 30th January 2013

Conclusions of the workshops were taken in account by the OPEN HOUSE Consortium in order to develop the final version of the assessment methodology.

An updated set of indicators, sub-indicators, benchmarks and weights will compose this refined version due to be released publicly at the end of July 2013.

OPEN HOUSE 'Benchmarking and mainstreaming building sustainability across the EU based on transparency and openness (open source and availability) from model to implementation'

EC funded project, 7th FP
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Coordinator: Acciona Infraestructuras, s.a.

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Focus on the development of LCA benchmarks based on the case studies

Due to the tremendous improvements regarding energy-efficiency in the last few years, also the environmental impacts and embodied energy of the materials used in a building become more and more important. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) as a methodology enables architects and designer to optimize the environmental impacts of their building, not only in early design stages, but also in advanced planning stages. Especially for the interpretation of the environmental impacts, LCA benchmarks for buildings are essential. The building LCA benchmarks not only serve as a basis for the OPEN HOUSE rating, but also enable users to quality-check their LCA model and investigate fields of improvement. Therefore within the OPEN HOUSE project, European LCA benchmarks based on the implemented case studies were developed and an approach was also developed to define how to use national LCA benchmarks. These national benchmarks allow a LCA rating in a national context, which is matching the overall OPEN HOUSE rating approach.

Different local circumstances (e.g. legal frameworks, climate zones, etc.) made it important to have national LCA benchmarks and a rating based on a national level. Due to the fact that the number of case studies per country was very small and therefore valid national LCA benchmarks could not be developed in a consistent and significant way, LCA benchmarks were set up on a European level and the approach of creating future LCA benchmark was described (see Figure 1).

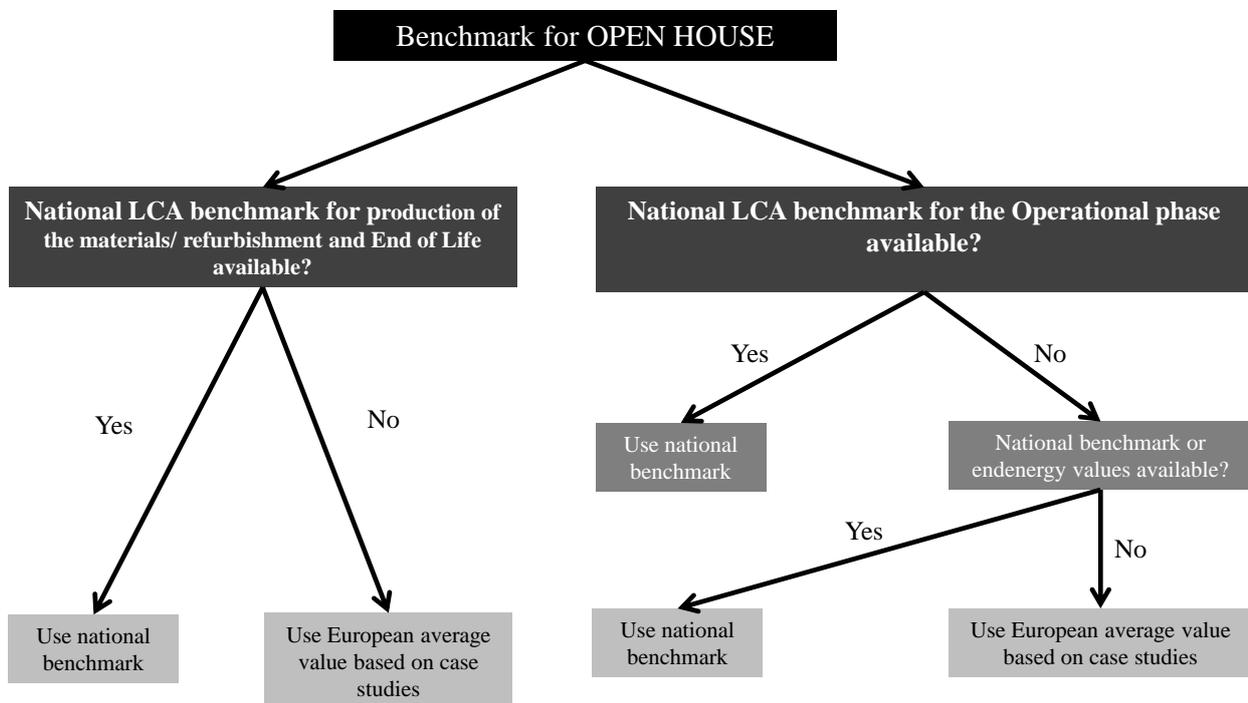


Figure 1: Setting of benchmarks in OPEN HOUSE

As a result, OPEN HOUSE provides LCA practitioners and architects with LCA benchmarks for buildings on a European level. The benchmarks are based on a decent number of case studies, but will have to be validated and improved by an increasing number of future case studies both on a European level as well as on a national level.

OPEN HOUSE weighting concept: a transparent and collaborative process

One major concern in OPEN HOUSE is transparency and openness. The OPEN HOUSE consortium wanted to reflect this in the development of a weighting system taking into account local priorities. Therefore, each indicator is weighted on the basis of a transparent methodology evaluating its impact in terms of extent, intensity and duration. The weight of an indicator is then adjusted to match with local priorities, thanks to public and expert opinion, existing national schemes and public authorities' input.

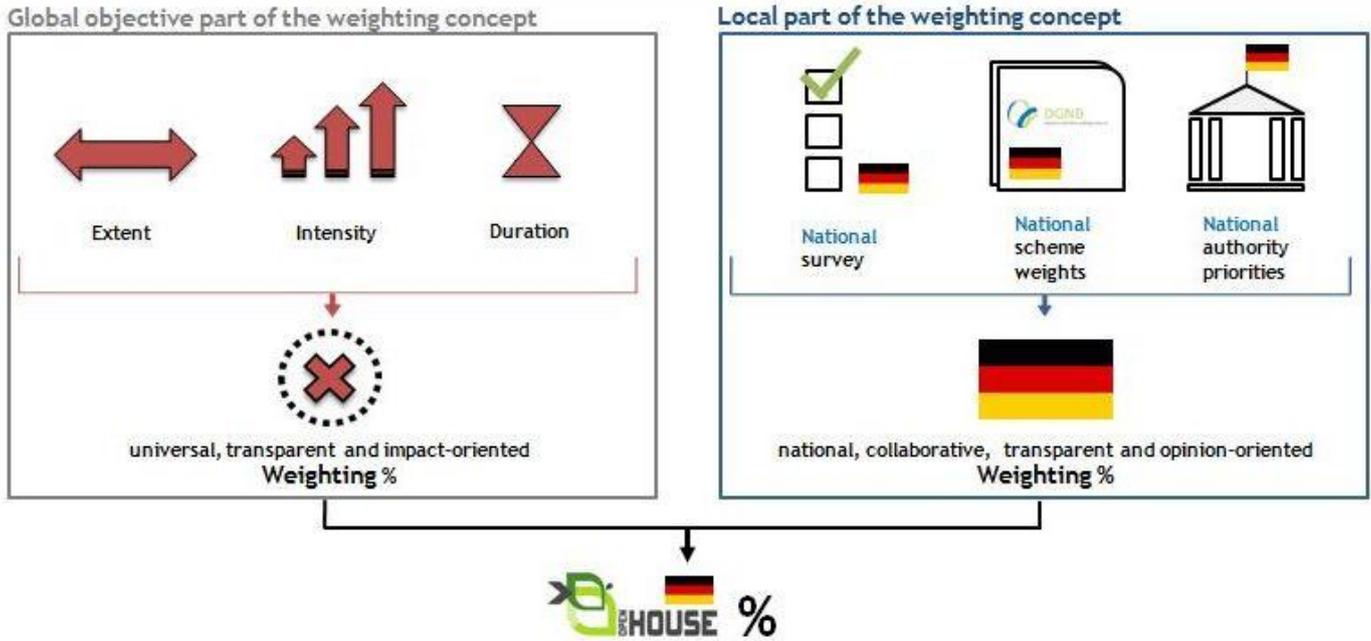


Figure 2: Example of weighting concept for OPEN HOUSE version Germany

Welcome to the OPEN HOUSE building sustainability assessment portal

The OPEN HOUSE portal offers an open-to-all and freely accessible European sustainability assessment system for buildings in design or operation. Do you want to evaluate the sustainability of your project? Register on the OPEN HOUSE online assessment tool:

<http://ohnew.building-21.net/>

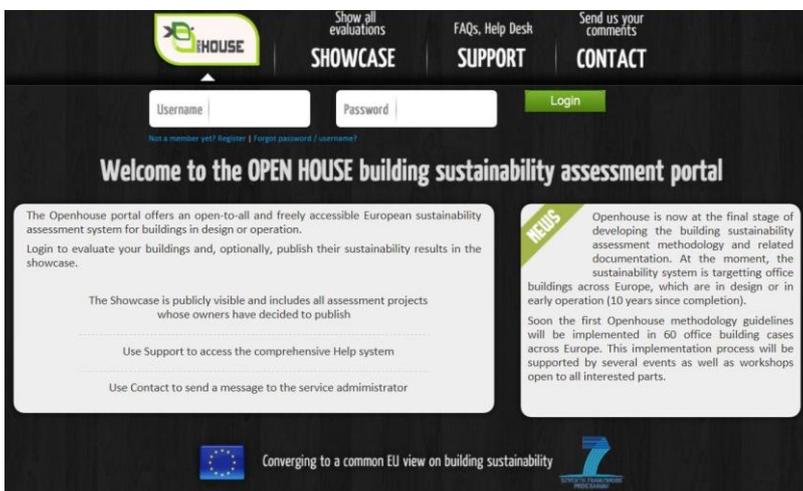


Figure 3: OPEN HOUSE building sustainability assessment portal

Meet us in the following forthcoming events:

Launch Event 25th July 2013, Brussels

The OPEN HOUSE project aims to merge existing methodologies for sustainability assessment of buildings towards a common view. With the aim of being widely adopted in Europe, the OPEN HOUSE methodology is developed in a fully transparent, collective and open process, with extensive communication and interaction between all stakeholders.

We would like to invite you to the launch event giving you a unique opportunity to learn about the **OPEN HOUSE methodology**, see how it embodies the principles of **transparency and openness**, hear how it has been **successfully applied** to 67 buildings and find out about the **resources** that are available to implement the methodology throughout the EU.

The workshop will be held at the hotel NH Atlanta Brussels

From 9.30 to 16.30

NH Atlanta Brussels

7 Boulevard Adolphe Max. 1000 Brussels (Belgium)

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nhatlanta@nh-hotels.com

<http://www.nh-hotels.com>

Registration

Participation in the workshop is free of charge. The number of participants is limited. Registrations will be accepted on the 'first come first served' basis. The workshop will be held in English. The organisers do not provide interpretation.

To register please fill in the attached registration form or write an email before **19th of July** to the contact person:

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