

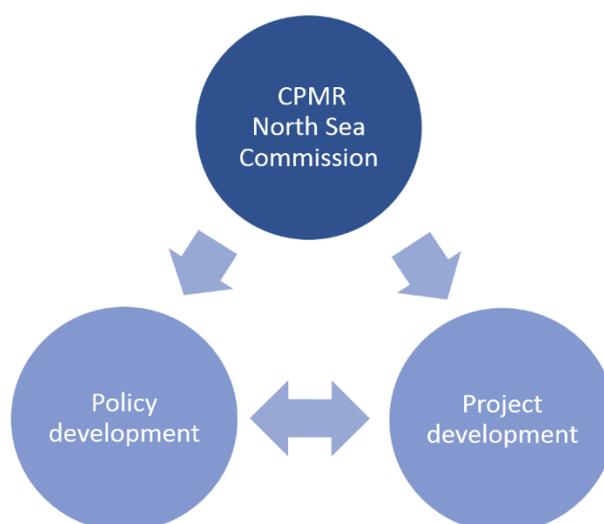
North Sea Commission Communication Strategy 2017-2019

The North Sea Commission (NSC) is a cooperation platform for regions around the North Sea, reflecting the needs, interests and expectations of its member regions. The NSC's mission is to further partnerships between regional authorities that face challenges and opportunities presented by the North Sea.

Objectives and aim

The main objectives of the North Sea Commission are:

- To promote and create awareness of the North Sea region as a major economic entity within Europe through political lobby work
- To be a platform for exchange of experience and for developing and obtaining funding for joint development initiatives



Communication is an essential part in fulfilling the main objectives. An evaluation of the North Sea Commission made in 2012, indicated that the NSC needs to strengthen its profile as a platform for policy development, lobbying and transnational project development and increase its visibility towards internal and external stakeholders.

This will be achieved through closer links and better communication between the North Sea Commission and internal and external stakeholders.

The purpose and aim of the Communication Strategy

The communication strategy serves as a roadmap, guiding the North Sea Commission to ensure a strategic communication that is effective and achieves desired results. The communication strategy is revised every other year, and attached to it is a communication activity plan that is revised every year.

The aim of the North Sea Commission's communication strategy is to support implementation of the North Sea Region 2020 strategy and other policy documents. This will be achieved by:

- **Member involvement:** Ensure that member regions are informed of the work done by the organization and that they are involved in relevant events and consultations,
- **Keeping a close contact with European policy makers and relevant stakeholders:** Make sure that relevant decision and policy makers at all levels are informed about NSC official strategies and policy positions,
- **Promoting projects and project results:** Communicate involvement in the North Sea region projects and the results and output.

Stakeholders

The North Sea Commission communicates and cooperates with a number of stakeholders, both internal and external, where the communication varies depending on stakeholder and objective.

Internal stakeholders

- **Member regions**
To ensure that the NSC represents the interests of member regions and keeps them well informed of its activities, the NSC needs to communicate with all members, irrespective of how involved they are in the NSC structures.
- **CPMR**
The NSC is a part of the CPMR, and should promote NSC interests and visibility in the overall work of the CPMR. In 2017 and 2018 focus will be on the Future of Europe discussions, Brexit and the work on EU post-2020 policies and programmes.

External stakeholders

- **Non-member regions around the North Sea**
The NSC has the ambition to increase the number of members, as this would strengthen the NSC's voice for the North Sea regions. During 2017-2019 the NSC will focus its efforts at recruiting new members from the United Kingdom and Belgium.

- **North Sea regional stakeholders**

In order to represent the entire North Sea Region, the NSC will maintain and develop close connections with regional stakeholders in academia, industry, governmental and non-governmental institutions.

- **North Sea Region Programme**

A close cooperation and good communication with the North Sea Region Programme is vital for the NSC's ambition to develop cooperation among members.

- **National state ministries and agencies**

NSC needs to lobby towards member states in order to achieve consensus on challenges and solutions for the North Sea Region.

- **EU institutions**

The NSC should communicate directly, and through the CPMR, with the institutions of the European Union. Important target groups are:

- Officers in relevant DG's of the European Commission
- Committee of Regions (CoR) members from the North Sea Region, and the North Sea-Channel Intergroup
- Members of the European Parliament from the North Sea region, relevant committees and the Intergroup on Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas.

Communication tools

Webpage

Central to all communication is a well-functioning website that can act as a cooperation and knowledge sharing platform for members and a source of relevant and up-to-date information for both internal and external stakeholders.

A new webpage has been launched in 2016. It will be updated on a regular basis with news about NSC activities such as thematic group meetings and Executive Committee meeting. The focus will be to make the webpage work as an amplifier that will reinforce the most important policy topics of the NSC. This will be done through news at the front page and making relevant documents accessible.

Social media

Social media, in this case Twitter, is a good tool for short updates that in relevant cases lead the reader to the webpage for more information. This gives the NSC the opportunity to be more visible with short messages on positions and statements. It's a way for the NSC to have a more informal



contact with member regions, MEP's and other stakeholders, and at the same time Twitter is a way to get an overview of events, views and current topics in the North Sea region and in Europe.

Newsletter

A newsletter will be sent out every other month to member regions and external stakeholders to reach those who do not actively follow the website.

Mailing lists

An essential part of good communication is contact lists that are updated on a regular basis. The Secretariat will, in cooperation with the thematic group advisors keep member lists updated, and also create a list with contact information to external stakeholders, such as EU institutions.

Events and meetings

The most effective way to communicate positions and statements is by meeting the stakeholders. Arranging and attending events, either at existing conferences or through separate events, and arranging bilateral meetings is an essential part of the NSC work.

Printed information

NSC communication will, for several reasons, mainly be digital, but there are occasions where printed material can be used as a complement, e.g. in connection with events, meetings and workshops.