



CPMR NORTH SEA COMMISSION

Smart Regions Group

Workshop on Migrants, Inclusion and the Workforce – and 2nd meeting of the group

Aberdeen, 1-3 November 2017

The meeting, which was hosted by Aberdeen City, started with a reception at the Town House in the evening of 1 November, with Cllr John Reynolds as host.

On 2 November, Lord Provost Barney Crockett hosted a formal dinner at the Town House.

The workshop commenced on 2 November at 10.00 at the Aberdeen Beach Ballroom and was chaired by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, Barney Crockett, who is also Chair of the Smart Regions Group.

Slides from the presentations will be available.

Attendees:

Lord Provost Barney Crockett	Chair	Aberdeen City, Scotland
Cllr. Birgitta Adolfsson	Vice-Chair	Västra Götaland Region, Sweden
Mr Geir Sør-Reime	Advisor	Rogaland County Council, Norway
Ms Laura Paterson		Aberdeen City, Scotland
Mr Graig Elliot		Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Cllr Iris Walker		Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Cllr Anders Wegen		Buskerud County Council, Norway
Mr Trond Myrland		Buskerud County Council, Norway
Ms Irma Ganibegovic		North Sea Commission Secretariat
Ms Karen Greve Somerset		North Denmark Region
Cllr Sofie Margrethe Selvikvåg		Rogaland County Council, Norway
Mr Olle Jonäng		Västra Götaland Region, Sweden
Cllr Beate Johnsen		Vest-Agder County Council, Norway
Ms Eva Bergh		Vest-Agder County Council, Norway
Mr Jon Halvard Eide		Vest-Agder County Council, Norway
Ms Siv Hemsett		Vest-Agder County Council, Norway

Guest speakers

Mr Dave Black	Grampian Regional Equalities Council, Scotland
Ms Katie MacLean	Refugee Resettlement Team, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Ms Suzy Prosser	Refugee Resettlement Team,

Rev Hugh Wallace
Ms Zahra Moini

Aberdeenshire, Scotland
Newhills Paris Church, Scotland
Norwegian Centre for Multicultural
Value Creation

Ms Barbro Gardeus
Mr Ahmed Salawda

Red Cross, Tjörn, Sweden
Palestinian refugee in Sweden

The workshop opened with a reflection on the New Scots partnership in Aberdeen by the Rev. Hugh Wallace, focusing on the humanitarian response to refugees in the city.

Then, Dave Black from the Grampian Regional Equalities Council informed about their project to engage with ethnic minorities in the Aberdeen area on employability and employment issues.

This was followed up by a presentation by Katie MacLean and Suzy Prosser from Aberdeenshire Council on Aberdeenshire's approach to employability within the New Scots' (refugees) resettlement context.

There was also a presentation by Zarah Moini from the Norwegian Centre for Multicultural Value Creation on how this centre facilitates innovative start-ups with first generation migrants.

Then, the workshop moved to Inverurie in Aberdeenshire, to meet the Amal project, a migrant-initiated project building on the skills, knowledge and expertise of Syrian New Scots, working towards better integration for everyone.

The workshop continued the following day with Ahmed Salawda, a refugee from Palestine telling his story and how he became involved in helping other refugees through a Red Cross project in the municipality of Tjörn in Sweden. Additional information on this project was given by Barbro Gärdeus from the Red Cross on Tjörn.

Thereafter, Eva Bergh from Vest-Agder in Norway talked about how to get migrants into the workforce, focusing on primary and upper-secondary education strategies and practices.

Geir Sør-Reime, the advisor of the group, presented five research reports from the Nordic Council of Minister on migrant participation in the workplace.

Finally, Irma Ganibegovic from the North Sea Commission Secretariat informed about the recent work of the CPMR Task Force on Migrant Management, and all North Sea Commission member regions were encouraged to participate in the work of this group.

2nd Meeting of the Smart Regions Group, Town House, Aberdeen, 3 November

Attendees had presented themselves at the opening of the workshop.

1. Report on the Nordic Culture Camp, Mors,

Karen Greve Somerset from North Denmark region reported from the Nordic Culture Camp, linked to the Culture Summit on Mors. The Culture Camp attracted 20 young artists from 14 different nationalities, who spent a week working together on different projects with the common theme 'To open up'.

2. Report on Brexit

The Chair, Lord Provost Barney Crockett, presented some views and facts about the current situation regard to Brexit.

He suggested three main possible post-Brexit situations:

1. Free trade continues, UK take control over immigration – probably a good solution, but probably too attractive also for other EU members, and therefore probably unlikely
2. No agreement, currently most likely
3. A long transition period, also a good solution, but not very likely now

What is quite clear is that UK participation in things like the North Sea Commission will continue, and hopefully, Brexit will attract more UK regions to join the North Sea Commission.

3. Future meetings

The 3rd meeting of the group will be held in Aalborg 18 January 2018, followed by a joint meeting/workshop with the Marine Resources Group 19 January 2018. The theme of the workshop will be Blue Growth related to marine bio-resources. It was suggested that the Smart Regions Group meeting could focus on marine/maritime tourism.

The Strategic Group (Chair, Vice-Chairs, Advisor etc.) will discuss this further at a meeting in Aberdeen 30 November.

During the ABM in Fredrikstad 13-15 June 2018, the Smart Regions Group will organise a meeting and workshop on circular economy (or on digital economy, the theme not chosen for Fredrikstad will be the theme for the Autumn 2018 meeting).