Communication Strategy 2019 to 2021
The digital version of Communication Strategy for the Nordic Council of Ministers 2019 to 2021 is available on the NordPub App, along with:

- COMMUNICATION PLANNING communications tool
- Guidelines for social media
- Strategy for the international branding and positioning of the Nordic Region

The design manual is available here
Danish version: design.norden.org
English version: design-en.norden.org
Communication Strategy 2019 to 2021

5 Preface
7 Introduction
9 Vision and values
11 Purpose
13 Communication objectives and target groups
15 Measurable communication objectives
16 Communication tools and channels
19 Nordic publications
21 Co-ordination of communication activities
The communication strategy will serve as guidance for all those working within the Nordic Council of Ministers' communications network.
The population of the Nordic Region has a very positive impression of Nordic co-operation. In the Ett värdefullt samarbete opinion poll in 2017, more than 90 per cent of respondents said that co-operation is either important or very important. Only one per cent of respondents think that Nordic co-operation is not at all important. Global developments have influenced attitudes towards the Nordic Region. For many, the region and Nordic co-operation are more important than ever before now that security and stability in the rest of the world have waned. According to the opinion poll, democracy, transparency, and human dignity are the most typical Nordic values.

An obligation is born out of the trust of the Nordic population. In order to live up to their expectations, political co-operation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland must continue to result in concrete benefits for the region and its inhabitants, as well as make all those concerned in the region aware of this co-operation and provide them with information about it. Consequently, communication activities are a central and strategic building block in Nordic co-operation and a responsive link between politics and society.

This communication strategy replaces the strategy for the period 2015 to 2018. It will serve as a framework and as guidance for all those working within the Nordic Council of Ministers’ communications network.
The communication strategy is general in nature and is designed to guide and steer communication activities within the Nordic network, consisting of: the Secretariat to the Nordic Council of Ministers; the Nordic Council of Ministers’ institutions and co-operation agencies; and the Nordic Council of Ministers’ offices in the Baltic countries and Russia.

The strategy is supplemented with separate communication strategies or plans for the council of ministers’ institutions and co-operation agencies and for its offices in the Baltic countries and Russia, as well as for the various councils of ministers. Separate communication plans are also made for individual projects and programmes. All strategies and plans relating to political co-operation are drawn up in line with the general guidelines defined here for communication activities both within the Nordic Region and outside the Nordic Region.

The strategy for the international branding and positioning of the Nordic Region (Appendix 1) defines the framework for efforts relating to the branding of the Nordic Region.

Communication is a central element of all of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ activities. Specifically, this means that sufficient resources in terms of both finances and time must be set aside for communication activities within the units and agencies requiring communication. The communications department of the Secretariat to the Nordic Council of Ministers provides strategic advice and is responsible for all communication initiatives related to activities linked to the Secretariat. This includes the production of news items and press material, as well as factual content, digital content, publications, and event production.

In addition, the communications department works closely with the communications units of the various ministries in the Nordic countries, especially those of the country holding the presidency of the council of ministers. The head of communications at the Secretariat to the Nordic Council of Ministers is responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring this strategy.
Openness, trust, innovation, compassion, an express belief in the equal value of all people, and the sustainable management of nature are the guiding values of communication activities.
Communication within the Nordic Council of Ministers is based on the vision of the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation – Together we are stronger – and its four cornerstones:

- Freedom of movement
- Innovation
- Visibility
- International engagement

The fundamental Nordic perspective and Nordic values highlighted in the Strategy for the international branding of the Nordic Region serve as a basis for communication on co-operation.

Openness, trust, innovation, compassion, an express belief in the equal value of all people, and the sustainable management of nature are the guiding values of communication activities.
Communication shall reflect sustainability, equality, accessibility, and gender neutrality, as well as take into account a children’s and young people’s perspective.
The Nordic Council of Ministers is a transparent and open organisation whose policies are shaped by events and developments in society. Communication must show that policies and actions are being followed and reflect sustainability, equality, accessibility, and gender neutrality, as well as take into account a children's and young people's perspective. If fundamental Nordic values change, so should communication. The benefits of co-operation for the Nordic Region and its inhabitants must permeate communication.

The strategy will create a framework for communication that is identifiable, cohesive, and consistent when seen from the outside, despite conveying content that spans a very broad field. The objective is to support the coordination of communication activities between all parts of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ communication network so as to maximise the strategic results of communication initiatives.

In addition, the strategy will define the purpose and role of communication for those in Nordic co-operation who do not work with communication on a daily basis.
The Nordic Council of Ministers must be a proactive and flexible organisation. Interactivity is at the heart of this strategy.
Communication objectives and target groups

All of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ communication activities aim to create visibility and legitimacy for the political co-operation conducted by the council of ministers and its results. The support and involvement of the Nordic countries and the funding of co-operation require an understanding of and insight into Nordic co-operation. The role of communication initiatives is to demonstrate how co-operation is creating real returns for those living in the Nordic Region as well as for the region’s public sector and businesses. Similarly, communication anchors Nordic co-operation and puts it in context.

Furthermore, it is essential that communication address those living in the region and their needs and views. The Nordic Council of Ministers must be a proactive and flexible organisation. Interactivity is a central element in a communication landscape where social media is playing an increasingly important role.

Information and services that facilitate mobility and freedom of movement within the region, and which support the countries’ shared values, are key elements of communication.

The target groups for communication are those living in the Nordic Region, politicians in governments and parliaments, civil servants, business representatives, and those in the public sector.

The primary target group is those within the Nordic Region, and the secondary group is those outside the region. Political communication targeted at those outside the region must highlight Nordic values, the results of Nordic co-operation, and how Nordic solutions can be applied by others.
Quantitative communication indicators include webpage view counts, number of followers, reach, and influence on social media.
Communication initiatives can be evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively.

Quantitative assessments are made regularly, on an annual basis and in conjunction with major individual communication initiatives.

Quantitative communication indicators include webpage view counts, number of followers, reach and influence on social media, number of downloads of reports, and visibility in traditional media.

The qualitative assessment of communication activities will best be carried out by way of a familiarity survey at the end of the period of this strategy in 2021, preferably in combination with an opinion poll on Nordic co-operation.
Communication takes place in the form of text, images, and video, as well as attendance at relevant events.

This strategy document does not govern the details of operational communication activities. For this, the communication tool COMMUNICATION PLANNING (Appendix 2) has been drafted.

COMMUNICATION PLANNING is intended for all parts of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ communication network. The tool defines seven key steps in the planning and operationalisation of strategic communication initiatives and serves as a practical backbone for all communication planning within Nordic co-operation. COMMUNICATION PLANNING supports both communication advisors and employees of the Secretariat’s specialist departments.

The communication channels used are Norden.org and social media in the form of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, at least during the launch phase of the strategy period. New relevant channels may be added during the strategy period.

The head of communications at the Secretariat is responsible for the publishing of all content on Norden.org. Other employees in the communication network cannot publish content on Norden.org without the prior approval of the head of communications.

The Nordic Council of Ministers’ communications department is responsible for all content published on Norden.org, as well as for all publishing decisions. Sectoral priorities are planned in consultation with the Secretariat’s specialist departments, which are also responsible for providing the communications department with up-to-date information for Norden.org.
Responsibility for other content on Norden.org may be delegated to other units, including the Secretariat’s specialist departments.

The publication of text, images, and video on social media is based on principles corresponding to good publishing practice and complies with the adopted Guidelines for social media (Appendix 3). The official Nordic channels on social media are managed by the unit for digital media in the communications department of the Secretariat to the council of ministers.

Communication channels are chosen based on an analysis and assessment of the target group’s composition and the aims of the communication initiative.

The Design Manual (Appendix 4) defines the design language of all communication products within Nordic co-operation and provides clear guidelines on the use of the official logo of Nordic co-operation, the Swan.
The objective is that all publications produced during the strategy period be platform neutral so that they can be read on mobile devices.
The planning, layout, and publication of publications with Nordic content form part of communication activities. The publications unit of the communications department is responsible for this. The head of communications at the Secretariat is the publisher.

With the exception of publications defined as working papers, all publications within the context of Nordic co-operation follow the guidelines for visual expression as stated in the Design Manual (Appendix 4) for Nordic co-operation.

Nordic publications are primarily digital and are printed only in exceptional cases. The objective is that all publications produced during the strategy period be platform neutral so that they can be read on mobile devices. Accessibility is a key factor in the planning of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ publications.

The size of printed versions must be minimised.
Co-ordination of communication activities

The Nordic communication network includes communication advisors from the Secretariat to the council of ministers, its institutions and co-operation agencies, as well as the Baltic and Russian offices. This strategy covers the entire network.

The network gathers twice a year for seminars that provide a basis for co-ordination and skills development and to share information. Shared focus areas for the entire network include the council of ministers’ annual presidency programme, strategic studies, and prime ministerial initiatives. Co-operation and the division of work regarding these are co-ordinated by the Nordic Council of Ministers’ head of communications as required.
Appendix

An appendix to the strategy brings together supplementary strategies as well as specific tools to support the strategy.

Strategy for the international branding and positioning of the Nordic Region (Appendix 1)

COMMUNICATION PLANNING (Appendix 2)

Design Manual (Appendix 3)
English version: design-en.norden.org
Danish version: design.norden.org

Guidelines for social media (Appendix 4)
The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers have the following official digital channels.

Facebook
Facebook.com/nordensk (Scandinavian)
Facebook.com/nordenis (Icelandic)
Facebook.com/pmnpmn (Finnish)
Facebook.com/nordenen (English)
Facebook.com/nrlitteraturpris (Nordic Council Literature Prize)
Facebook.com/sdnordic (Sustainable Development the Nordic Way)

Twitter
twitter.com/nordensk (Scandinavian)
twitter.com/nordenen (English)
twitter.com/nordenis (Icelandic)
twitter.com/nordenpub (Nordic publications)
twitter.com/Nordic_Climate
twitter.com/nordicfoodpol @nordicfoodpol

LinkedIn
The Nordic Council of Ministers and The Nordic Council or Nordisk Råd og Nordisk Ministerråd

Instagram
Nordisk Samarbejde @nordisksamarbejde