



D2.1

STRONGER COMBINED

COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION PLAN

Abstract

This document outlines the communication and dissemination activities that will be carried out by the STRONGER COMBINED project partners. It includes a social media publication strategy and possible advertisement of events to certain target groups and/or experts. In addition, it sets out what has already been achieved and provides an outline of what is planned for the next period.

Approval Status

	NAME AND SURNAME	ROLE IN THE PROJECT	PARTNER
AUTHOR(S)	Philippe Martens Maka De Lameillieure	WP2 Lead Researcher Authorized Signatory	AMS AMS
REVIEWED BY			
APPROVED BY			

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines the communication and dissemination activities that will be carried out by the STRONGER COMBINED project partners. In addition, it sets out what has already been achieved and provides an outline of what is planned for the next period.

The main activities related to dissemination and communication will centre around three key audiences and stakeholders:

1. Travellers in rural areas (current frequent travellers, in particular vulnerable individuals that suffer exclusion (elderly, disabled and underprivileged), and potential traveller groups that today do not extensively use public transport, primarily business travellers and tourists.)
2. Municipalities and regional public authorities
3. Public & private mobility service developers & providers

Per each target group, an overview is given of all dissemination/communication opportunities identified through traditional communication channels such as event attendance (e.g. conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.), project publications (e.g. public project output releases, conference papers, etc.), project presentations (e.g. to local stakeholders, etc.), complemented also by online activities based around the project website, and through the main social platforms (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook).

The dissemination and communication activities have been designed to build and maximize awareness of the STRONGER COMBINED project ambitions and achievements, to stimulate engagement from the public and professional stakeholders in a two-way exchange and to get appreciation for the project contribution to the Interreg North Sea Region, supported by European Union regional development funding.

All communication and dissemination activities have been clustered in Work Package 2 (WP2) – Dissemination and Communication, which is led by Antwerp Management School. All partner organizations in the STRONGER COMBINED project take part in WP2 meetings to ensure continued progress is made. Each partner contributes to the set up and execution of the activities, in function of its own domain of expertise.

The dissemination and communication plan has to be considered under a continuous evolution: some of the identified activities and channels can be updated in the course of the project. However, the activities will be approached and structured as outlined in this deliverable. This initial plan will serve as a guidance throughout the whole project.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 DEFINITION: DISSEMINATION VS COMMUNICATION AND EXPLOITATION

According to the Interreg NSR aims, it is more and more important to maximize the take up of the new knowledge developed within a project, so as to create a path for commercial purposes, policy making and new research lines.

It's in this perspective that the STRONGER COMBINED Consortium intends to follow the EU definition of dissemination and communication.

Therefore:

Dissemination is sharing research results with potential users - peers in the research field, industry, other commercial players and policymakers). These will then feed into **exploitation** (using results for commercial purposes or in public policymaking).

Communication is the promotion of the action by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in a strategic and effective manner and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.

2.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the dissemination and communication plan is to install and maximize the awareness of the STRONGER COMBINED project and its results produced during the project. One general objective is to maximize readiness for the target groups to take up and scale up combined mobility. This will be achieved through the exchange of experiences, needs and preferences within the consortium and external organisations. Communication and dissemination actions will help to collect inputs and information and to disseminate the project's results, findings, models to relevant private and public organisations EU-wide to allow replication and transferability.

All consortium members will be involved in two types of activities: dissemination and communication. Per both these activities a detailed initial plan has been prepared and will be described in the following sections.

The STRONGER COMBINED dissemination plan aims at spreading the results of the project within the STRONGER COMBINED stakeholder, expert and scientific community as well as among its practitioners: research institutions, municipalities, public (transport) authorities, (public & private) mobility service providers, etc. This means that dissemination has a double option: it can be internal to the Consortium and external to it. The achieved results will be initially presented to other researchers and practitioners internal to the organizations involved in the STRONGER COMBINED project and then to the external communities addressed by the project activities and to the stakeholders and practitioners who could benefit from STRONGER COMBINED's results.

In addition, it must be ensured that dissemination activities and materials are extensively spread within

the 'open access' and related knowledge centres, widely announced via appropriate channels and fully grasped by the targeted stakeholders.

Promoting the STRONGER COMBINED project, on the other hand, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange with dedicated target groups and a broader multitude of media and non-expert audiences is captured within **the communication plan**. This plan should cover the creation of appreciation and goodwill as well towards EU-funded projects in general and therefore it is directed in addition to the overall EU society and its public opinion.

While dissemination and communication activities have different objectives, different audiences to address and different channels or tools to leverage, some overlaps will be inevitable.

In the following, we have tried to split the dissemination and communication of the STRONGER COMBINED project to a maximum: the audiences and activities for both the dissemination and communication plan have been listed, as well as the rationale behind the selection of the most appropriate channels.

However, some of the activities overlap and therefore they could be easily identified as communication and dissemination at the same time.

2.3 GENERAL APPROACH

In the following, the general approach that has been taken for developing the dissemination and communication plan is described.

This approach is two-fold. Firstly, the homogenous partner organisations are developing transnationally relevant cooperation platforms for PTAs and third parties. Input from WP6 will ensure that conclusions made on technical integration, service design, and cooperation platforms are disseminated and taken up in the consortium. Secondly, the first-mover beneficiaries will involve external organisations (public authorities, PTAs and private mobility providers) in the activities and disseminate their deliverables and support in transfer and replication.

The initial activities have involved all the partners, who have:

- Identified the main objectives for the dissemination and communication;
- Identified the target per each objective;
- Identified the channels to use in order to reach the selected target.

Then the partners, each per their own expertise and country, have also started listing some potential stakeholders.

Subsequently, the partners have focused on the protocol to follow in order to ensure timely publication of dissemination and communication activities, the protection of IP and also of the confidential data gathered during the testing sessions with customers of the end users.

2.4 TASKS OF THE PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

All the partners within the consortium support the dissemination and communication of STRONGER COMBINED. They all contribute in line with their origin of expertise. The more research-oriented partners will primarily contribute more to the dissemination plan. The public service-oriented partners of the STRONGER COMBINED Consortium mainly contribute to the communication plan. They will also be the main driver behind the creation of promotional tools and material. AMS is responsible for the overall lead of the work package. All project partners are geographically spread in the North Sea Region and are well-embedded within their national networks so that dissemination/communication can be widely leveraged throughout the North Sea Region.

3 THE STRONGER COMBINED WEBSITE AS THE MAIN CHANNEL FOR INCREASING AWARENESS

The core and most critical channel in the entire communication plan is the project webspace/ website (<https://northsearegion.eu/stronger-combined>). It is a full featured platform where all information and news related to STRONGER COMBINED will be captured. It is also the first channel to interact with the target audience, from which various other tools and channels will be derived.

3.1 LAUNCH OF THE PROJECT WEBSITE

The draft version of the STRONGER COMBINED website was published online in April 2019, after the project Kick-off meeting (26-27 March 2019, Karlstad), through the project webspace which is linked to the Interreg NSR program website and online monitoring system. As a result, information about the project including a short description of the project, the budget and contact details of the Lead Beneficiary, was transferred directly from the project application to the project webspace. Likewise, an overview of the main project outputs reflected in activity reports will be automatically shown on the webspace.

AMS will update the STRONGER COMBINED website every 2 months during the first 24 months and every month during the last 12 months of the project.

AMS will take responsibility to coordinate the collection of newsflashes and messages and all project partners are expected to announce the project's progress, the events and conferences that will be attended in the form of short articles, white papers, visuals, etc.

All partners will install links from their corporate websites to the STRONGER COMBINED website.

3.2 SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE WEBSITE

The website is divided into several webpages, each of them devoted to one particular aspect of the project, including general information about the project, project related news, events during the project, contact details, links to other projects or related websites and the output library with the deliverables published or to publish during the project activities.

Figure 1 presents the homepage of the project website, where the initial project info is presented.



Figure 1 STRONGER COMBINED project – Homepage website

Figure 2 pictures in detail the right main navigation menu of the home page.

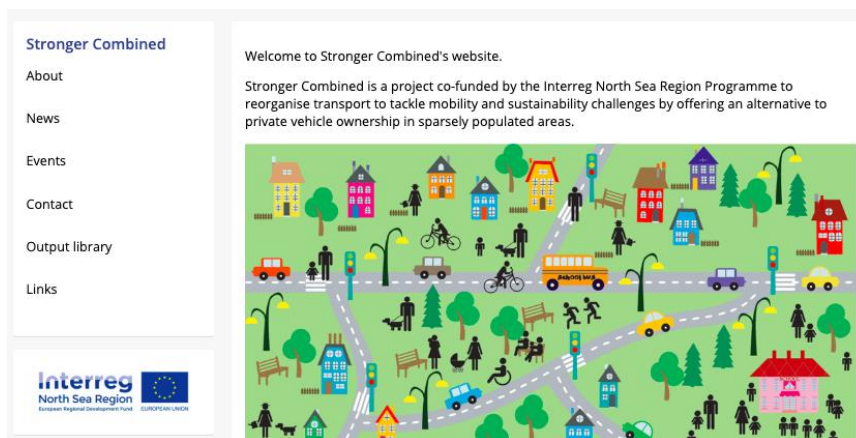


Figure 2_ STRONGER COMBINED project – Homepage main navigation menu in detail

Figure 3 pictures in detail the bottom social media menu bar of the home page, allowing for links to access the social network pages of the STRONGER COMBINED project (§4.2.1)

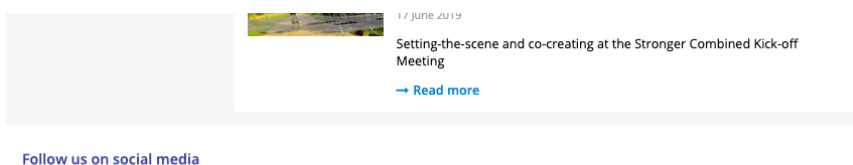


Figure 3 - STRONGER COMBINED project – Homepage bottom social media navigation menu in detail

The website will be the core means for the dissemination and communication activities, since it will be the place where all the information and activities will be published (News, events, output and so on).

4 COMMUNICATION PLAN

This section of the report describes the plan for communication activities. We have defined **Communication** as the promotion of the STRONGER COMBINED project and its results to a broader multitude of media and non-academic or non-research-related audiences.

In this part, we present the objectives and audiences to target in section 4.1, the channels that are planned in section 4.2, the protocol we want to put in place for data collection and publishing in section 4.3 and the metrics that will be used to assess performance of the communication activities in section 4.4.

4.1 OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION

The objectives of the communication of the STRONGER COMBINED project are:

1. **Reach out to private third-party service developers to promote business opportunities for cooperation over development of smart services connected to the public transport system's ability to gather a critical mass of potential customers/user.**

Project Detailed Objective:

Promotion of data accessibility for service development

Target Groups:

- Higher education and research
- Infrastructure and (public) service providers
- Large private enterprises
- SMEs

2. **Communicate and increase the capacity of public authorities, including transport providers and their sectoral agencies and other expert networks, to take up and apply combined mobility solutions and service models in their regional or local setting.**

Project Detailed Objective:

Cooperation platforms for PTAs and public and private service providers

Target Groups:

- Infrastructure and (public) service providers
- Local public authority
- Regional public authority
- Sectoral agency

4.2 TARGET AUDIENCE & CONTACTS FOR COMMUNICATION

Based on the objectives described above, a number of groups have been identified as important target

audiences for communication activities. The groups and some key accompanying contacts per geographic region are listed in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Target groups for COMMUNICATION with a non-exhaustive list of contacts per consortium country

TARGET GROUPS	NO contacts	SE contacts	DK contacts	UK contacts	DE contacts	NL contacts	BE contacts
Higher education and research	-	-	-	-	-	-	- UHasselt - UA - LUCA arts -...
Infrastructure and (public) service providers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Large private enterprises	--	--	-	-	-	-	- FORD GENK -
SMEs	--	--	-	-	-	-	-
Local public authority	--	--	-	-	-	-	-
Regional public authority	--	--	-	-	-	-	-
Sectoral agency	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

4.3 COMMUNICATION PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND CHANNELS

News blogposts and infographic publications

A series of 40 news blogposts and 40 infographic publications are planned, to be published regularly, alongside with the updates of the website: 4 posts each 2 months from M5-M24) and 3 to 4 posts monthly in the last 12 months (M25-M36). AMS will take responsibility to coordinate the collection of blogposts. Each project partner will provide input for at least 3 to 4 blogposts and 3 to 4 infographics. AMS will provide copywriting for the blogposts and graphic design for the infographic publications. Each project partner is responsible for distributing the news blogpost and infographic publications to their respective country contacts.

Social networks

Based on proven success in response levels and the ease to multiply diffusion of news and to stay in touch with relevant communities, Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/StrongerCombined/>) (<http://www.linkedin.com/company/strongercombined>), and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/StrongerCombin1>) accounts have been created as of M5 and by the end of M6 they are all operating. The website (as mentioned in §3) will have links referring to these social network accounts and alongside with updates of the site, the social network accounts will be updated as well. Similarly, to distributing the news posts, all project partners will ‘advertise’ these social network accounts.

Presentations of White Papers on combined mobility

As of M13, all WP2 partners will give each 4 to 5 presentations (50 in total) of White Papers on combined mobility in tailored face-to-face meetings with (national/regional/local) decision-makers associated to public transport sector to increase the ability of making knowledge-based decisions. AMS will coordinate and provide templates for the presentations.

Promotional material

During M6, a Stronger Combined project poster was created and edited by means of the NSRP Online Monitoring System and distributed to all project beneficiaries.

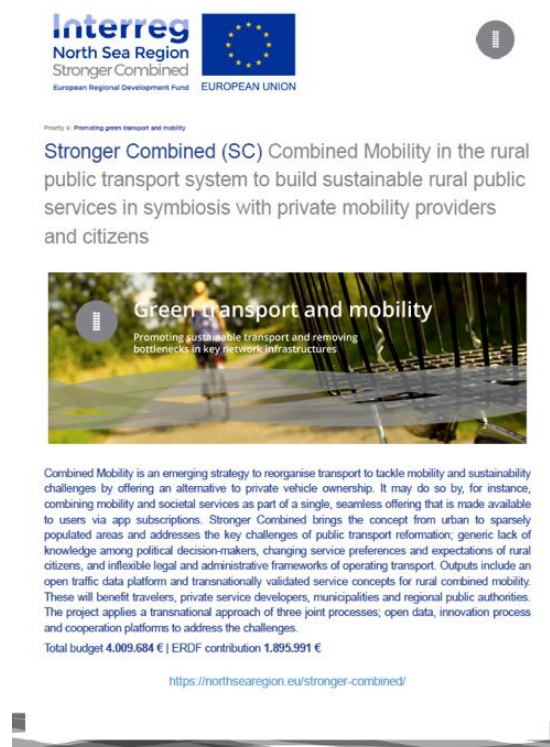


Figure 4 - STRONGER COMBINED project poster

According to Interreg NSR Publicity Requirements, all beneficiaries must put this poster (minimum A3 size) at a location visible to the public.

As of M13, an initial kit with promotional material will be available on- and off-line to all partners. It will contain the following basic material:

- A project flyer
- A project presentation template

Starting from M19, and in preparation of all the events that will be organized, also outside the WP2, as for instance WP3, WP4 and WP5, the kit will be enriched with new and updated material during the course of the project, such as:

- A roll-up poster
- Project banner to be used in conferences, roadshows, etc...

4.4 PROTOCOL FOR COMMUNICATION

The procedure for publishing info on the social networks will be very light, since it is not possible to wait for a long period (that is needed in order to inform a very high number of people and waiting for their consensus).

In general, the info published will be coherent with the activities performed during the relevant period. AMS will be in charge of receiving and publishing all this info. All beneficiaries will actively support AMS.

Each quarter AMS will analyse the published news and info and to understand what was effective and what not and to improve the strategy for the next month.

4.5 COMMUNICATION EVALUATION, DELIVERABLES AND PERFORMANCE METRICS

The success of each communication activity proposed will be measured by tracking over time, starting with a tracking of the website traffic as of M6. The tracking will be quarterly and whenever new channels get activated, it will be enriched. The tracking strategy will be further refined between M11 and M23, but following performance metrics and target have been defined in the project application:

Table 2 - Performance metrics relevant for the dissemination activities

ACTIVITY	PERFORMANCE METRIC - DELIVERABLE	TARGET
Dissemination Event	Meeting presentation and list of Attendees at seminar at 25 events and 3 study visit programmes	28
Dissemination Event	Number of participants at 25 dissemination events	1350

Exchange of information Workshop with other NSR funded projects	Minutes of meeting and list of attendees (target 25) and short report on findings and results between the project and other NSR funded projects (target 4)	29
Exchange of information Workshop with other NSR funded projects	Number of participants at 25 joint workshops	700

5 DISSEMINATION PLAN

This section of the report describes the plan for dissemination activities. In this section, we present: the objectives of dissemination in section 5.1; the target audience for dissemination in section 5.2; the planned activities for dissemination in section 5.3; and the metrics that will be used to assess performance of the scientific dissemination activities in section 5.4.

5.1 OBJECTIVES OF DISSEMINATION

Starting from the pivotal aim of the dissemination, that is to inform about the results achieved by the STRONGER COMBINED project, the following goal has been identified:

- 1. Disseminate and involve target groups and experts in innovation processes to design, prototype and test new user-oriented service design in combined mobility.**

Project Detailed Objective:

Iterative and user-driven service model design

Target Groups:

- General Public
- Infrastructure and (public) service provider
- Interest groups including NGOs
- Large private enterprises
- Local public authority
- National public authority
- Regional public authority
- SMEs

5.2 TARGET AUDIENCE FOR DISSEMINATION

Based on the objectives described above, a number of groups have been identified as important target audiences for dissemination activities. Further details on these target groups and national contacts are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Target groups for DISSEMINATION with a non-exhaustive list of contacts per consortium country

TARGET GROUPS	NO contacts	SE contacts	DK contacts	UK contacts	DE contacts	NL contacts	BE contacts
General Public	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infrastructure and (public) service providers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest groups including NGOs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Large private enterprises	-	-	-	-	-	-	- FORD GENK
SMEs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Local public authority	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
National public authority	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Regional public authority	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.3 DISSEMINATION PLANNED ACTIVITIES

1. Dissemination seminars at key conferences and events

As of M7, the consortium will attend exhibitions and conferences and take the opportunity to organize 25 event seminars (each WP2 partner 2 to 3 seminars) and 3 study visits to increase operational readiness to take up combined mobility solution from the project. AMS will coordinate and provide templates and raw material.

Table 4 provides an overview of the exhibitions, conferences and events to attend and planned activities on those events:

Table 4 - Planned SEMINARS & STUDY VISITS at Combined Mobility related Exhibitions, Conference & Events

	EVENT NAME	LOCATION	DATE	WHO?	PLANNED ACTIVITY
1	UITP 2019	Stockholm	*	*	Seminar
2	ITS 2020	Copenhagen	*	*	Study visit
3	WSG Germany	Germany	*	*	Seminar
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
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22					
23					
24					
25					

Meetings & Workshops on project lessons learnt and open data provision in relevant expert forums, including for private third-party service providers (all) and Joint workshops with other ongoing Interreg NSR funded projects

As of M25, public-private cooperation and activities will be discussed in R&D-oriented groups (e.g. innovative Norwegian PTA “Ruter”, Kompis, ITS Europe, UITP), 25 one-to-one meetings and 4

workshops at pilot sites. Workshops with G-Patra and e.g. SHARE-North and MOVE.

AMS will coordinate and provide templates and raw material.

Tables 5 & 6 provides an overview of the planned meetings & workshops:

Table 5 – Planned MEETINGS on project lessons learnt

	MEETING DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATE	WHO?	Nr of PARTICIPANTS
1	*	*	*	*	*
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
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23					
24					
25					

Table 6 – Planned WORKSHOPS with other ongoing Interreg projects.

	WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATE	WHO?	Nr of PARTICIPANTS
1	Joint workshop with MOVE	Aviemore	27 Sept 2019	HIT	
2	Joint workshop with G-Patra				
3	Joint workshop with SHARE-NORTH				
4	...				

5.4 DISSEMINATION EVALUATION, DELIVERABLES AND PERFORMANCE

An essential part of managing the performance of dissemination is defining performance metrics and regularly assessing performance against those metrics. Below we have listed the range of performance metrics relevant for the dissemination activities planned. The metrics will be evaluated in months 11, 23 and 35 in order to review performance, understand which activities have proved effective and which have not, and then use this information to make changes to the dissemination plans for the next 12 months.

Table 7 - Performance metrics relevant for the dissemination activities

ACTIVITY	PERFORMANCE METRIC - DELIVERABLE	TARGET
Dissemination Event	Meeting presentation and list of attendees at seminar at 25 events and 3 study visit programmes	28
Dissemination Event	Number of participants at 25 dissemination events	1350
Exchange of information Workshop with other NSR funded projects	Minutes of meeting and list of attendees (target 25) and short report on findings and results between the project and other NSR funded projects (target 4)	29
Exchange of information Workshop with other NSR funded projects	Number of participants at 25 joint workshops	700

6 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

For efficient internal communication to and between all consortium partners following systems & tools have been implemented in M3 to M6:

- OneDrive file repository system to share information & documents
- Contact list
- Stronger Combined Project Handbook

7 CONCLUSIONS

This communication and dissemination plan is a flexible and living plan.

Based on the defined target groups and objectives described, the strategy aims at maximizing the use of breakthrough developments in the project and all regular project deliverables to spread relevant news through a wide and diverse scope of channels. In doing so, dialogue and information exchange with the target groups as well as with relevant communities and a broader public will be stimulated so that the STRONGER COMBINED project development can constantly adapt to existing and future user needs.