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Nordic Council of Ministers  
Nordic Council

# The Dynamic Nordic Region

Looking back at the past year in the Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers

# 2004





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*The photographs in this annual report were taken during the Session of the Nordic Council in Stockholm in early November 2004. The annual Session brings together parliamentarians, ministers, journalists, civil servants and international guests for three days of hectic and intense activity, meetings and debate. Personal exchanges of opinions and ideas are an integral part of the Nordic democratic process.*



### **The Dynamic Nordic Region**

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### **Nordic co-operation**

Nordic co-operation, one of the oldest and most wide-ranging regional partnerships in the world, involves Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands. Co-operation reinforces the sense of Nordic community, while respecting national differences and similarities, makes it possible to uphold Nordic interests in the world at large and promotes positive relations between neighbouring peoples.

Co-operation was formalised in 1952 when the Nordic Council was set up as a forum for parliamentarians and governments. The Helsinki Treaty of 1962 has formed the framework for Nordic partnership ever since. The Nordic Council of Ministers was set up in 1971 as the formal forum for co-operation between the governments of the Nordic countries and the political leadership of the autonomous areas, i.e. the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands.

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The year 2004 was an eventful one in Europe. Changes to the political map of the continent have made an impact on Nordic co-operation, which has become increasingly inclusive in the last 15 years, especially in relation to the Baltic States and Russia. Ten new countries joined the EU on 1 May 2004 and, with Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland among the new members, Russia is now the only non-EU country around the Baltic Sea.

The Nordic Region is not only a dynamic region but also a competitive one, compared with EU and world averages. But the pace of change is rapid, and it takes a great deal of dedicated effort to maintain such a leading position. In 2004, particularly important steps were taken in the research and innovation sector to improve the competitiveness of the Nordic economies. The work being done to promote freedom of movement also helps to make the Nordic Region more attractive, both to individuals and to companies.

There is intense discussion among MPs on the Nordic Council about which new forms of co-operation would be most beneficial, not just for the Nordic Region but also for the whole of North Europe. Ministers from the three Baltic States, and sometimes from Poland too, are frequently involved in the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers in many sectors. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania even became co-owners of the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) on 1 January 2005. The Nordic Council of Ministers also adopted new strategies for co-operation with North-West Russia and with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 2004, in an attempt to keep up with the rapid pace of change in the world surrounding the Nordic Region.

The North Atlantic binds together the countries of the western part of the Nordic Region. During the Icelandic Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2004, new contacts were forged with the Region's neighbours to the west, maintaining the Nordic tradition of looking outwards, towards our neighbours in the east and the west.

The purpose of this report is to provide a short review of some of the high points of Nordic co-operation in 2004. Further information is available on the Nordic website [www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org).

*Frida Nokken,  
Director of the Nordic Council*

*Per Unckel,  
Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers*



# The Nordic Region and international co-operation

## **Nordic co-operation in a North European context**

Following a recommendation by the Nordic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers has produced an annual report of its activities in a European context, which focuses on activities for which the Nordic Council of Ministers is directly responsible.

The report shows the increasing extent to which the Nordic Council of Ministers now considers European issues to be an integral part of its activities. This is evident, for example, in Nordic collaboration within the EU/EEA, close relationships with the Baltic States and in continued close co-operation with North-West Russia. Co-operation with Poland has become increasingly significant and the Nordic Council of Ministers has established itself as an important player in the EU's Northern Dimension.

The Baltic and the area covered by the EU's Northern Dimension have become very much the core of co-operation between the Nordic Council of Ministers and other international and regional bodies. One of the main reasons for this was, of course, the enlargement of the EU in 2004, as a result of which Russia is now the only non-EU member around the Baltic Sea. EU enlargement also made the need for closer co-operation with countries on the eastern border of the EU an even more pressing issue. The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation underlined the importance of closer co-operation with the European Commission by meeting in Brussels in May 2004. During their stay they held talks with Commissioner Verheugen about future EU policy towards its neighbours and the potential for co-operation on this issue between the EU and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Nordic Council of Ministers also reaffirmed its commitment to the EU's Northern Dimension.

As far as relations with regional organisations are concerned, one of the main priorities in 2004 has been to seize opportunities for closer interaction, especially with the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The Nordic Council of Ministers also maintains close dialogue with the Barents Council and the Arctic Council. One of the common denominators for project activity in the Barents and Arctic regions is sustainable development.







***The Northern Dimension***

*The Nordic Council of Ministers has published two reports about its work on the Northern Dimension:*

***Submission of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Preparation for the New Northern Dimension Action Plan 2004–2006, published in March 2003, and The Nordic Council of Ministers' Implementation of the Second Action Plan for the Northern Dimension 2004–2006, published in April 2004.***



In December 2004, the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation adopted new guidelines for the Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The ambition behind the new guidelines was to encourage closer co-operation and strengthen solidarity between the eight countries.

Co-operation with the Baltic States will be refined in areas where mutual benefits might be expected. As political co-operation has been stepped up and intensified, co-operation between the Nordic and Baltic authorities has normalised. Much of the work increasingly resembles regular co-operation between national authorities, that is to say, between equal players co-funding joint projects.

Closer contacts with North-West Russia were also forged in 2004. Existing networks of NGOs and official bodies were continued and expanded on various levels.

Nordic co-operation with North-West Russia is expected to progress and adapt to take into account the changes necessitated by the three Baltic States joining the EU. The previous Adjacent Areas Programme has now been replaced with a new programme, one that focuses on Russia in particular – in practice, on those parts that border the EU/EEA in the east, especially on the St Petersburg area and Kaliningrad.

In December, the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation adopted guidelines for the Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation with Russia. The guidelines stipulate priorities, forms of co-operation, the geographic area covered by the co-operation, the role of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Offices in North-West Russia and Kaliningrad, and the nature of co-operation between institutions.

The Nordic Council of Ministers also forged even closer contacts with Poland in 2004. Poland has many interests in common with the Nordic Council of Ministers, particularly as the country's location on the Baltic Sea means it shares a concern about the environmental and economic aspects of promoting the Baltic Sea Region as a region in growth.

Events in 2004 encouraged MPs throughout the Region to renew the debate about the most appropriate forms of co-operation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. At the Baltic Sea

Parliamentary Conference in Bergen at the end of August, the President of the Norwegian parliament, Jørgen Kosmo, impressed upon delegates the need for innovative thinking in the wake of EU enlargement. As things stand, official inter-parliamentary co-operation already exists in the Baltic Sea Region, the Arctic, the Barents Region, and in the Nordic Region.

'In my opinion, we ought to streamline and co-ordinate inter-parliamentary co-operation in North Europe. A "parliamentary partnership for North Europe" is what we need,' Kosmo said.

MPs from the countries around the Baltic Sea, as well as from Norway and Iceland, have now embarked on a series of more detailed discussions about improving co-operation. The aim is to avoid duplicating work or re-inventing the wheel.

In relation to the Barents Region, the Nordic Council has recommended that the Nordic Council of Ministers involves the indigenous peoples (the Saami) in any co-operation with the Barents Region in North-West Russia. In the Nordic Region, official bodies are being encouraged, for the benefit of the Saami, to identify barriers to cross-border freedom of movement, and to invest resources in removing them.

### **Dialogue with Russian MPs about the EU's Northern Dimension**

The Northern Dimension, and more particularly the role of the parliamentarians within it, was the main theme when politicians from the Nordic Region, the Baltic States and Russia met for the Nordic Council theme conference in Helsinki in April. They discussed both the content and the implementation of the Northern Dimension. To underline the fact that this work is the joint responsibility of all the countries in North Europe, Russian speakers took part in almost every session. One conclusion reached at the conference was that co-operation with Russia was needed in a wide range of sectors, especially if positive progress towards democracy was to be maintained.

The President of the Council, Gabriel Romanus, emphasised the importance of imbuing the Northern Dimension with political substance and tangible content. During the conference, calls were also made for permanent funding as a means of bolstering the Dimension. The chairperson of the Council of Ministers at the time, Siv Friðleifsdóttir, stressed that 20 per cent of the Council of Ministers' budget was devoted to projects in the Baltic States and North-West Russia. She underlined the fact that co-operation must promote democracy, stability and economic growth in times of change. Russian delegates told the conference that, so far, too few results had been achieved and not enough of the effects of the Northern Dimension Action Plan had been felt in Russia.

Before the conference, Gabriel Romanus and two ex-Presidents of the Nordic Council, Inge Lønning and Outi Ojala, had already called for closer co-operation to combat the trafficking of women. Among the measures they proposed were preventative social work in the women's home countries, and the better protection of witnesses.

Patsy Sörensen MEP pointed out that the measures adopted have to be co-ordinated, preventative work is needed, victims have to be protected and those responsible brought to justice. Kristiina Luth of the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs stressed that there was a risk that EU membership and the ensuing open borders would make Estonia an attractive transit country for the trafficking of women from Moldavia and Belarus, but she added that membership also brought benefits such as closer co-operation between politicians and law enforcement agencies.

Alexander Morozov of the World Bank's Russian Department painted a relatively rosy picture of a country approaching the status of full market economy. Russia is, however, increasingly dependent on oil exports. Igor Yurgens of the Russian Union of Industrialists pointed out that Russian companies are often subjected to supervisory visits from a variety of authorities more than twice a month, and that this served to make conditions for the business community both difficult and unpredictable.





# Nordic co-operation

## **Nordic Resources: The Icelandic Presidency**

The title of the programme for the Icelandic Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers 2004 was *Nordic Resources*. The chief Nordic resource is people, so the overall aim of the Icelandic Presidency was to increase and improve the use of human resources in a way that would reinforce the Nordic Region's international competitiveness. The three main themes of the Presidency were democracy, culture and nature. More than 30 conferences and seminars were held on these themes, most of them in Iceland.







Siv Friðleifsdóttir served as Minister of Nordic Co-operation for the first eight months of 2004. She invested a great deal of time and energy in close working relationships with the Baltic Sea countries but also took the time to look west.

‘The Icelandic Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers prioritised policy towards our neighbours in the North Atlantic. Icelanders, the Faroese, Greenlanders and Norwegians have a great deal in common with the inhabitants of Canada’s north-east coasts, and with the Scots and Irish. In particular, we have a joint responsibility to keep the wide-open expanse of the North Atlantic clean and healthy, and to protect the rich fish stocks. We also have a mutual interest in combating pollution from the industrial countries,’ she said.

Valgerður Sverrisdóttir officially took over as Minister for Nordic Co-operation after a Cabinet reshuffle in September. A couple of weeks previously, she had hosted meetings organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers in Akureyri for the Ministers of Trade, Consumer Affairs and Energy.

When appointed Minister for Nordic Co-operation, she said: ‘Nordic co-operation is particularly important to the people of Iceland and we have always considered it one of our top priorities. Even though EU enlargement has changed the political face of Europe, co-operation with the Nordic countries remains as close as ever.’

Flemming Hansen, who doubles as Minister of Transport and Minister for Nordic Co-operation, presented the Danish programme for the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers 2005 at the meeting of Ministers for Nordic Co-operation in Reykjavik in December 2004. The overall themes of the programme titled *The Nordic Region in a New Era: Knowledge, Dynamism and Co-operation* are: knowledge and innovation; freedom of movement in the Nordic Region; and the effectiveness of Nordic co-operation. The programme aims to generate a new dynamic by mapping out clear political priorities.

## In the Region – in the world

The main responsibility of the 87 MPs from the five Nordic countries and three autonomous areas serving on the Nordic Council is to generate and encourage debate about measures to improve the Nordic Region for the benefit of its citizens, and to make a Nordic mark on the global map, especially in Europe.

The Nordic Council forged even closer contacts with North-West Russia and consolidated its co-operation with the Baltic Assembly in 2004. As well as participating in each other’s Sessions and consultations between the Presidia, meetings are also held at committee level. The Nordic Council Environment Committee, the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Parliamentary Assembly co-hosted a conference on European energy policy in December.

The Council has proposed a joint Nordic/Baltic Master’s programme in design, business development and management and, at the behest of the Centre Group on the Nordic Council, funding has been discussed for networks of clubs, societies and associations in the Baltic States.

A further important milestone in international co-operation was reached when the Nordic Council was granted observer status on the British-Irish Interparliamentary Body in 2004.

Internal Nordic issues continued to account for much of the Council’s work in 2004. Efforts to promote freedom of movement continued and bioethics was another recurring theme. Also on the Council agenda for 2004 were measures for dealing with organised crime, terrorism, trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region and the issue of wolves and other beasts of prey, including how best to protect them.



### **Robust Nordic policy**

‘Our policies are no longer an internal Nordic matter. We interact as much as possible with the EU and with the rest of Europe. It is in our own best interests to work together,’ said Gabriel Romanus, President of the Nordic Council 2004.

‘The party groups have assumed greater importance in the Council. Policies are now more meticulously prepared in advance and are more result-oriented,’ Romanus noted.

Romanus emphasises the importance of Nordic co-operation with its neighbours to the east and of environmental issues in and around the Baltic Sea, the Barents Sea and the Arctic. Welfare issues are also close to his heart.

‘How do we protect and, more importantly, refine, the Nordic welfare model? It faces major difficulties, both internal problems and external threats.’ Romanus sees Nordic co-operation as a way of making greater progress than the individual countries are capable of on their own.

At the Session in November 2004, the Icelandic Social Democrat MP Rannveig Guðmundsdóttir was unanimously elected President of the Nordic Council 2005. Fellow Icelander Jónína Bjartmarz of the Centre Group was elected Vice-President. At committee level, the only change at the top was that the Finnish Conservative Hanna-Leena Hemming was appointed Vice-Chairperson of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

### **Invigorating Session full of new features**

Several new features were introduced at the 2004 Session. Relevant Ministers attended a special debate about alcohol policy, and international guests, previously restricted to making welcoming speeches during the opening ceremony, were permitted to speak during general and theme debates. Several of the Russian guests and the Latvian President of the Baltic Assembly, Janis Reirs, were among those who took advantage of this new opportunity.





The Session does not just consist of plenary meetings – formal and informal meetings are also held outside the main hall. Contacts are forged for the future, and input into debates is planned. Regular features include the Presidium's meetings with the Nordic Prime Ministers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and committee meetings with other ministers.

The presence of a large number of foreign guests also provided an opportunity to discuss the future of co-operation. During meetings with the Federation Council, the State Duma and the Parliamentary Assembly of North-West Russia, the Russians requested more tangible partnerships, for example, in promoting enterprise and local autonomy, and in providing greater opportunities for young Russians to study in the Nordic countries. The Presidia of the Nordic Council and Baltic Assembly agreed to try to involve the national parliamentary

committees in their joint work. One proposal to emerge from discussions between MPs from the EU, Russia, the Baltic States and the Nordic Region was a parliamentary forum for the Northern Dimension.

During the foreign policy debate, the Left-wing Socialist and Green Group on the Nordic Council called for the establishment of a Nordic peace policy unit to conduct research into defence and security policy. The group also called for closer Nordic co-operation in international forums such as the WTO, the World Bank and the UN Security Council, and for defence and security policy to play a more prominent role in Nordic co-operation. The Nordic Ministers of Foreign Affairs announced that they intended to prioritise Nordic/African co-operation, for example, in order to meet the 'Millennium Development Goals' for the eradication of extreme poverty and famine. They also reported back on the wide-ranging



Nordic co-operation on development aid and on plans to include the Baltic States in Nordic diplomat training.

The establishment of new networks for men and health-care reforms are just two examples of the measures taken to promote gender equality in the Nordic Region in 2004. It was agreed that the equality perspective should also cover violence, prostitution and trafficking.

### **The Nordic Youth Council – the future of Nordic co-operation**

One of the proposals put forward by the Nordic Youth Council (UNR) in 2004 was to send Nordic election observers to Belarus. The UNR also called for better diet and health information for school students, and the prioritisation of young people by the health services. Other UNR proposals included the greater provision of teaching about Nordic languages and culture in comprehensive schools in the Region, a permanent UNR Secretariat, the expansion of *Nordjobb* and more training in entrepreneurship for young people. The UNR also rejected the introduction of fees at Nordic universities.

The UNR meets for its own Session during the Nordic Council Session. There, young Nordic political activists discuss relevant, topical aspects of Nordic co-operation. The participants represent the youth wings of the Nordic parties as well as a number of umbrella organisations. The UNR plans to develop contacts with political youth organisations in the Baltic States. The Nordic Council is the main source of funding for the work of the UNR, and the Council facilitated the establishment of the UNR's own Secretariat early in 2004. The annual Session elects the UNR Presidium, which meets five or six times a year, usually at the same time as meetings of the Nordic Council Presidium and committees are held. Andrés Jónsson of the Icelandic Social Democratic youth organisation was elected President at the annual Session.

### **Democracy in the Nordic Region**

Although faith in democracy remains intact, the gulf between citizens and politicians is growing larger throughout the Nordic Region. People are less willing to vote, get involved in politics, accept politically responsible posts and join political parties, but more willing to get involved in alternative channels such as single-

issue campaigns, ad hoc movements, demonstrations and petitions.

Fluctuations in electoral turnout need not necessarily be a sign that democracy is in danger. When political processes let the people down, however, the effect of this cannot be directly balanced out by other forms of participation, as the political arena is the arena from which society derives its legitimacy. If that legitimacy is lacking, then it also constitutes a threat to other forms of democratic expression. Inherent in this view is the understanding that conflicts may occasionally emerge between political democracy in the narrow sense, and other forms of participation.

These issues have been discussed by the Democracy Committee, which was set up in early 2004 by the Nordic Ministers for Nordic Co-operation as part of the Icelandic Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. In addition to the question of changes to the pattern of political participation, the committee has also discussed the scope of democracy in terms of local autonomy, including the relationship between state and local authorities and the ways in which IT increases and limits the democratic opportunities open to the individual. The *Democracy Committee Report* and the anthology *Democracy and Involvement: Paradoxes in the Nordic Democracies*, written by 14 researchers, civil servants and journalists, was published in February 2005.

### **Supporting the Nordic perspective at national level**

A conference at the beginning of the year about quality in Nordic schools agreed to call for instruments to measure the quality of Nordic schools and improve the interaction between home and school. This conference organised by the Nordic Council brought together more than 100 politicians from the Nordic countries and the devolved parliaments in the autonomous areas. As well as being an interesting conference about a particular issue, it was also a prime example of co-operation and support for the Nordic perspective at national parliamentary level. The issue of improved national backing was one of the subjects on the agenda when the Nordic Council met for talks with the Speakers of the Nordic parliaments in 2004.

# Fiercer competition in Europe

## Pioneers of European co-operation

The enlargement of the European Union will lead not only to closer co-operation but also to fiercer competition. This competition, together with the increasingly globalised nature of the economy, presents new challenges for the Nordic countries, which aim to be at the very forefront of progress and turn these changes to their advantage.

- *A new Nordic civil registration agreement was signed November 1, making the procedure for receiving a new civil registration number when moving to another Nordic country easy and fast. The Nordic certificate of change of address is no longer needed, so identity papers can be issued more quickly in the new country.*
- *Other examples of progress include the new senior secondary school agreement, which recognises vocational study programmes and a new Reykjavík Declaration, which guarantees mutual recognition of higher education qualifications.*
- *In the Øresund Region an on-line Job Centre was set up to make it easier to find jobs and staff.*

This is why the Nordic Council of Ministers places such importance on the removal of barriers to cross-border freedom of movement. Former Danish Prime Minister Poul Schlüter is the Nordic Ministers for Nordic Co-operation's special envoy for freedom of movement. His objectives are to make sure citizens do not get caught between the different Nordic bureaucracies and to make it easy for people to live, work or study in other Nordic countries. Tangible results have already been achieved and it is now considerably easier to move between Nordic countries. One improvement is the new Nordic civil registration agreement, which makes it easier and a great deal quicker to issue a new civil registration to someone moving from one Nordic country to another.

## The business perspective

Nordic businesses also encounter obstacles when they operate across Nordic borders. If the Region is to remain one of the most innovative business regions in the world, then the remaining obstacles to full cross-border freedom of movement must be removed.

According to the report *Obstacles to Cross-border Business in the Nordic Region – a Survey and Specific Examples*, written by the Nordic Innovation Centre on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers, a great deal remains to be done. The report reveals that companies in the Nordic countries encounter serious barriers to cross-border freedom of movement when they choose to be active in a Nordic country other than their own. These barriers include lack of information about rules and regulations, difficulties in gaining approval for products and in labelling them, and differences in specific excise duties or VAT rates.



The Nordic Ministers of Trade and Industry are already tackling the problem of lack of information and setting up an information portal to make it easier for companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, to source the right information. The special envoy, Poul Schlüter, is also tackling specific issues, particularly the problems encountered by smaller Nordic companies, and will raise their concerns at political level with the Nordic Council of Ministers in an attempt to solve them. This will be one of the biggest tasks facing Nordic politicians in the next few years.

### **Facing up to the future**

In June 2004, the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to create the Nordic Research and Innovation Area (NORIA), with the idea that co-operation will make the Nordic countries more competitive both within the EU and globally.

Gustav Björkstrand of Åbo Akademi University presented his *White Book* on research and innovation in the Nordic Region in late 2003. This has now been followed by the new *Innovation Book*, which concentrates more closely on business. These two publications constitute the twin pillars of NORIA.

*Nordic Strengths, National Benefits and Global Excellence*, the 'Innovation Book' published by the Nordic Ministers of Business and Industry, contains a programme for Nordic collaboration on innovation policy until 2010. The book concludes that the Nordic Region has the potential to become one of the world's leading research and innovation regions. If Nordic companies are to cope with competition from Asia – where wage levels are one-tenth of those in the Nordic countries – they will have to invest in service, design and marketing, not just in high technology. The Nordic Innovation Centre is responsible for the implementation of the innovation policy.





In a joint statement issued in November 2004, the Nordic ministers responsible for research, trade and industry said:

‘We have reached agreement that Nordic co-operation on research and innovation will be the remit of the Nordic Research Board and the Nordic Innovation Centre. They will work together – and it must be done in co-operation – to facilitate the transformation of research results into actual products, services and economic development. This collaboration will provide the Nordic Region with a further advantage. Together, they will build the Nordic Research and Innovation Area.’

The ministers responsible for research, trade and industry will meet once a year in a forum designed to provide NORIA with new impulses.

### **The Nordic Research Board and the Nordic Innovation Centre**

‘Nordic research and innovation must relate to the Europe Research Area, which the EU launched during the Danish Presidency of the Union. The EU target is to spend three per cent of GDP on research. But even if each of the Nordic countries were to reach that target, they are so small that co-operation would still be to their mutual advantage,’ the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers, Per Unckel, said at a seminar during the Nordic Council Session.

At the Session he also launched the new Nordic Research Board, which started work on 1 January 2005. The Nordic Research Board will play the main role in realising the vision of the Nordic Region as a leading and integrated research region. The national research councils, the universities and other research funding bodies will play key roles in the Nordic Research Board.

The aim is to promote research of the highest international quality, so that the Nordic countries will be better equipped to cope with competition for European research funding.

Nordic research co-operation has already led to investment in Nordic centres of excellence in sectors in which the Nordic countries do particularly well. In 2004, for example, three centres of excellence in molecular medicine were named. These conduct research into

areas such as Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, heart diseases, migraine, epilepsy and cancer.

### **Nordic institutions in new frameworks**

The Nordic Region benefits from co-operation in research. An example of this can be found at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) where the University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen Business School and Lund University have decided to work more closely across the Øresund, and to build up a Nordic network. NIAS will also forge permanent links with China.

At a ceremony October 6, the Rectors of the three institutions signed an agreement to assume responsibility for NIAS, which has been ‘owned’ by the Nordic Council of Ministers since 1967. NIAS’ new role represents an important step towards improving Nordic expertise in one of the most important growth regions in the world.

The frameworks within which several Nordic institutions operate have been changed. For example, responsibility for the Scandinavian Institute of Maritime Law has been transferred to the University of Oslo; responsibility for the Nordic Saami Institute to the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research; and responsibility for the Nordic Volcanological Institute to the University of Iceland.

The Nordic Folk Academy has been replaced by a new, more network-based approach to adult learning. The Nordic countries lead the pack in adult and continuing education. In Denmark, which has the best record in the Nordic Region, more than half of people over 25 have undertaken some form of training or education in the last year. The corresponding figure for the EU is less than a third.

### **Open Source is the future**

The Nordic Council has urged the Nordic countries to adopt a common IT policy. The main protagonist has been Raymond Robertsen, chairperson of the Nordic Council Business and Industry Committee.

Robertsen has also spoken out in favour of free competition in the IT market. The Nordic Council asked the Nordic Council of Ministers to establish a skills centre for Open Source software in 2004.

Robertsen called for a centre of excellence, but the Council of Ministers opted for a network. During the Session in Stockholm, Robertsen pointed out that Open Source would dominate in the near future, and reminded the Council that the Nordic countries had been the first to introduce GSM telephones.

### IT co-operation expanded

Since 2001, the Council of the Baltic Sea States has headed up IT co-operation under the auspices of the Northern eDimension (NeD). This initiative directs attention towards the special potential of the North European region and towards the challenges the region faces in the field of IT and the knowledge society. NeD was launched by the Council of the Baltic Sea States in collaboration with the EU, within the framework of the Northern Dimension. The Nordic Council of Ministers will now conduct a more systematic review of Nordic IT co-operation to identify areas where it might be suitable to include the Baltic States.

### Baltic Innovation Network

The Nordic Council of Ministers has invited all Baltic Sea states to come together to discuss innovation policy, and has also invited Germany and Russia to take part. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland have all agreed so far. The idea is that the countries should stop viewing one another as competitors, and instead work together to deal with international competition.

A working party has been asked to present policy recommendations to the meeting of Ministers of Trade and Industry to be held in summer 2005 about how best to promote the spirit of enterprise, especially in small, innovative companies.

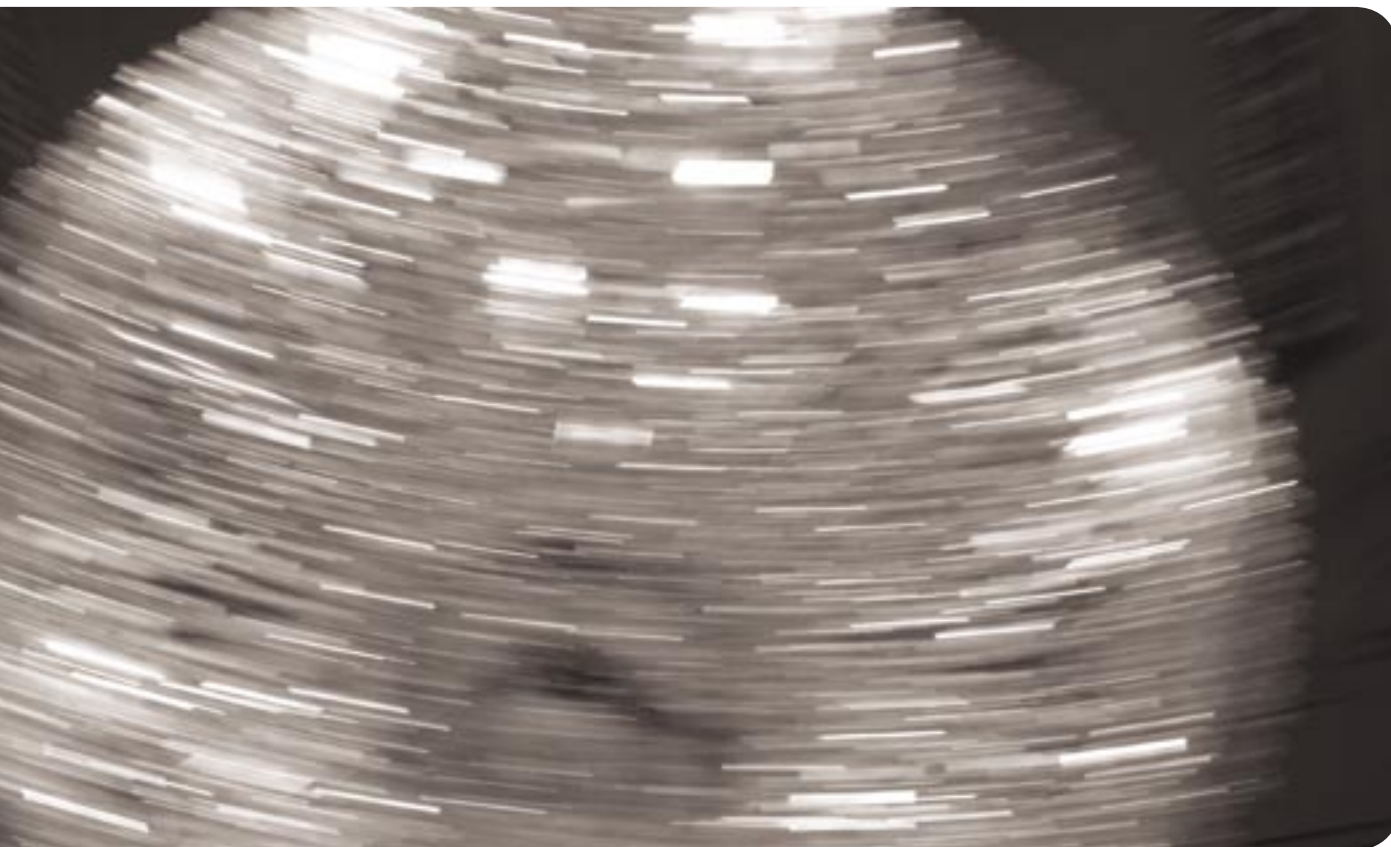
### The new Nordplus family

The *Nordplus* exchange and networking programme was resurrected in a new format on 1 January 2004, with a budget of DKK 80 million. The five members of the *Nordplus Family* are *Nordplus*, *Nordplus Junior*, *Nordplus Sprog* (Language), *Nordplus Voksen* (Adult) and *Nordplus Nabo* (Neighbour). The programmes target different groups so, for example, *Nordplus Nabo*

is designed to promote network co-operation between the Nordic Region, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and North-West Russia.

The Nordic and Baltic Ministers of Education met in spring 2004 to talk about collaboration. As a result, a joint contact group was set up to look at, for example, the potential to expand the *Nordplus* exchange and networking programme. Both sets of politicians also took the opportunity to reiterate their commitment to research as a top priority.

The Nordic Council of Ministers has also set up a contact group to develop research and education partnerships between the Nordic Region and North-West Russia.



## Nordic culture

### Scandinavian design for a European audience

The exhibition *Scandinavian Design Beyond the Myth* was one of the most important Nordic cultural initiatives of 2004. It opened in Berlin in autumn 2003 and, by the time its run ends in 2006, it will have visited Milan, Ghent, Prague, Budapest, Riga, Glasgow, Copenhagen and Gothenburg. *Scandinavian Design Beyond the Myth* traces the history of Nordic design from about 1930 up to contemporary industrial design. It was planned primarily for a European audience, and more than three million visits have been made to the web version to date.

The exhibition emerged from Nordic co-operation on design and from the latest research. When the exhibition visited Prague, the Council of Ministers also organised a seminar about regional co-operation in the EU.

The Nordic Council Session requested that the Council of Ministers investigate the potential for establishing a Nordic centre of excellence for design research. The Council of Ministers was also charged with looking into the potential for a Nordic-Baltic Master's programme for design, enterprise and management.

### Cultural project with the West Balkans

A series of 40 cultural projects involving the Balkan countries was started in 2004 and continues in 2005. The projects aim to build networks between the Nordic Region and the Balkans, and they cover an area that includes Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Albania. Nordic cultural institutions are responsible for most of the work involved. The Balkan Ministers of Culture are scheduled to meet with their Nordic counterparts in Copenhagen in March 2005 to sign a declaration about future cultural co-operation and to discuss whether Nordic cultural co-operation might serve as a model for the Balkans.

## Nordic computer games in tough market

‘One of the central elements of the Icelandic programme for the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2004 was the desire to encourage distinctly Nordic and creatively diverse computer games for children and young people,’ the Icelandic Minister of Culture and Education, Þorgerður K. Gunnarsdóttir, said when she presented a study of the Nordic games market for children and young people at the conference *Nordic Game Potential* at the Malmö Fair in November.

Erik Robertsson, who conducted the *Nordic Electronic Games* study for the Nordic Council of Ministers, explained that despite the fact that the Nordic Region was the sixth biggest market in the world for digital games, only five per cent of games matched a broad definition of ‘Nordic’ and only one per cent met the narrower definition of being in a Nordic language and produced in the Region. *Nordic Game Potential* and *Nordic Electronic Games* are seen as comprising the first stage in attempts by the Nordic Ministers of Culture to draw up a joint Nordic media programme, which will guarantee the production and sale of distinctly Nordic computer games.

## Nordic Prizes 2004

### *Kari Hotakainen – winner of the Nordic Council Literature Prize*

The Finnish author Kari Hotakainen was awarded the Nordic Council Literature Prize 2004 for his novel *Juoksuhaudantie (The Trench Road)*, described by the adjudication committee as a ‘socially critical, structurally aware novel’.

*The Trench Road* depicts the dissolution of the Nordic welfare state, and parodies and comments ironically on the present in general, and traditional male roles in particular.

### *Nordic Music Prize to Icelandic opera composer*

The opera composer Haukur Tómasson was awarded the Nordic Council Music Prize 2004 for the opera *Gudrun’s 4th Song*, based on the Icelandic Edda sagas.

An experiment in sound and light with cascades of water streaming through walls, the work was first performed in Copenhagen in 1996 at the bottom of a dry dock in a disused military base.

### *New Film Prize inaugurated*

The Nordic Council has inaugurated the Nordic Film Prize, which is to be split equally among the screen-writer, director and producer of the winning film. The annual prize will be presented for the first time in 2005.

The criteria are that the film must reflect Nordic cultural heritage and display artistic originality.

### *Nature and Environment Prize goes to Baltic coalition*

Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), Sweden, was awarded the Nordic Council Nature and Environment Prize 2004. The theme this year was the protection of the Nordic marine environment. The jury said the award went to CCB for 'the model way in which the organisation has brought environmental organisations from the Nordic Region, the Baltic States and elsewhere together into a single network. This has made it possible for the Coalition to draw attention to, and influence public attitudes to one of the biggest environmental issues facing the Nordic Region, i.e. the threat to the marine environment in the Baltic Sea.'

CCB is a politically independent, non-profit-making network with 27 member organisations in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and Germany.

The prize winners receive DKK 350,000 each at the Nordic Council Session.



*Nordic Council prizewinners 2004. From left: Valdur Lahtvee and Gunnar Norén from Coalition Clean Baltic, Haukur Tómasson and Kari Hotakainen.*



# Sustainable development

## **New strategy for sustainable development**

In 2005, indicators will be put in place to make it possible to quantify sustainable development, and the Nordic Council of Ministers has revised its whole strategy in this area.

The previous strategy attracted considerable international interest, but it is hoped that the revised strategy will help the Nordic countries to define political targets for practice and progress in sustainable development, and enable them to remain at the forefront of global co-operation.

For the first time, the social aspects of sustainable development were included in Nordic strategy in 2004. Particular attention was paid to pensions and the provision of high quality welfare services. Steps will be taken to ensure gender equality at work and to see to that the labour market takes due consideration of the needs and demands of family life. Support will be offered to people worn down by their jobs and it will be easier for people with disabilities to enter the labour market.

The new strategy also calls for equal access for all to the benefits of good health and well-being, and for training in sustainable development.

In the economic sphere, efforts to sever the connection between growth and damage to the environment will continue. The Nordic Region needs to show leadership in order to live up to the targets set at the Johannesburg

Summit, so it needs to make changes in its patterns of production and consumption.

The Nordic Council has asked the Council of Ministers to commission a project to increase the market penetration of organic food.

## **Greater efforts to prevent oil spills in the Baltic Sea**

The Maritime Accident Response Information System (MARIS) database for use in the event of crises in the Baltic Sea was completed and became operational in 2004.

Oil spills and sensitive marine environments are not a good combination, and the Baltic Sea was classified a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area in 2004. Oil tankers and heavy marine traffic increase the risk of accidents and pollution. As far back as 1993, the Nordic Council of Ministers commissioned a project to improve the emergency provisions for dealing with oil spills in the sea. The surveillance system, which covers the whole of the Baltic Sea, was completed in 2004.

MARIS is designed to supplement national measures so that, in the event of an accident at sea, an immediate overall view of the most exposed and vulnerable areas can be gained. The joint project was run by HELCOM (the Helsinki Commission) and SYKE (the Finnish Environment Institute). MARIS is designed for use by





local authorities in every country around the Baltic. In the event of a spill, it will instantly provide information about the threat to the ecosystem, as well as local responses to the emergency.

The Finnish Minister for Nordic Co-operation, Jan-Erik Enestam, introduced the new tool at the Session in Stockholm.

MARIS is available to anybody with an interest in the Baltic environment at [www.helcom.fi](http://www.helcom.fi).

## Energy and the climate

The stability of electricity supply and the growth of the Nordic electricity market came into focus in 2004.

The Nordic Council has recommended that the Nordic Council of Ministers strives to improve harmonisation of the framework conditions for the Nordic electricity network, and to ensure companies work together to guarantee energy supplies.

At their annual meeting in Iceland, the Energy Ministers issued a joint declaration, which aimed to turn into

a reality the vision of an integrated Nordic electricity market, efficiently trading energy with the rest of the world. The needs for harmonisation and a joint model for investment in the network were also discussed at a special meeting attended by the Nordic Council Environment and Natural Resources Committee and the Energy Ministers.

The Nordic Council organised a major energy conference in Oslo in autumn 2004, which was attended by MPs from all Nordic, Baltic and Benelux countries. The agenda included the stability of energy supply and the future of nuclear power in the Nordic Region.

One of the priorities of Nordic energy co-operation is to prepare the Baltic Sea Region to be a 'testing ground' for the Kyoto protocol's flexible mechanisms.

A significant step forward was made with the signing of the Testing Ground Agreement (TGA) at the meeting of ministers in September 2003. A €10 million investment fund has been set up for climate projects in the Baltic Sea, and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) will administer the fund. Russian ratification of the Kyoto protocol now provides an opportunity for joint implementation of the TGA.

## Historic chemicals reform

New EU chemicals legislation (REACH) was passed in 2004 and the Nordic input was clear. REACH, first proposed by the EU Commission in 1993, is controversial and will have a significant affect on the European chemicals industry. The Nordic Council of Ministers was actively involved in the debate in the EU and, for example, conducted cost analyses.

The previous legislation was deemed to provide insufficient protection for people and the environment. The new reform aims to keep track of the many chemical materials that have only proven to be hazardous after years of use.

The Nordic environmental impact study, which was presented at a Nordic seminar in Brussels in autumn 2004, was well received and injected new life into the REACH debate. Once the directive has been passed, the Nordic Region will continue to pursue the original intention of the reform, that is, to protect people and the environment from hazardous chemical substances.

## The right to genetic resources

In 2004 the Nordic Council of Ministers for Fisheries, Agriculture, Forestry and Food decided that property rights do apply to genetic resources.

Property rights are of major importance to the materials in the Nordic Gene Bank, which celebrated its silver jubilee in 2004. The gene bank is one of more than 30 institutions funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Nordic Council of Ministers marked World Foods Day 2004 by organising a 'Big Apple Day' in Copenhagen, notable for the 142 types of Nordic apples and 24 types of pears at Store Strandstræde in Nyhavn, supplied by the Council of Ministers' Environment and Resources Department and the Nordic Gene Bank.

## Recommended diet – healthy food

'Eat healthy and live better' would be an apt title for the nutrition guidelines recently revised by Nordic researchers. The new Nordic diet recommendations, which now also include physical activity, were adopted by the Nordic Ministers of Agriculture and Food in autumn 2004.

The recommendations are promoted actively in schools and a book explaining the recommendations is one of the Council of Ministers' bestsellers. The new recommendations will be published in English early in 2005. National recommendations are also published on the Internet.

## Importance of the West Nordic Region

Despite contending with huge distances and poor communications, which often leave local populations isolated, the West Nordic Region is very much a dynamic partner in Nordic co-operation. Marine resources, fisheries and environmental issues are crucial to the future of the West Nordic Region.

When discussing a West Nordic transport analysis commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers at an autumn gathering in the Åland Islands, members of the Nordic Council pointed out that a better traffic infrastructure for both sea and air was needed in the West Nordic Region.

The report concluded that the west coast of Greenland needs better air links to Iceland, that it is too expensive to travel in the West Nordic Region and that the Faroe Islands ought to have a third weekly air route to Iceland. It also discussed how the best possible marine traffic infrastructure would help forge closer contacts between the people of the West Nordic Region.

Together with the Council of Ministers report *The West Nordic Region in Nordic Co-operation*, the analysis was discussed at the Nordic Council Session in Stockholm in autumn 2004.

'I have had the pleasure of taking part in Arctic parliamentary co-operation, where I have witnessed just how much benefit the people of the Arctic have derived from the use of IT in teaching,' the Swedish MP Runar Patriksson reported.

'How can the population of the West Nordic Region benefit from that experience? Well, for example, in the same way as when broadband links were established between Norway and Finland to help the people of Tornedalen learn Saami from teachers at the Saami University College in Kautokeino. I believe this is something we can learn from and adapt for use in the West Nordic Region, the USA, Canada and Russia,' he told the Session.

# Challenges facing the welfare state

## How is Nordic welfare doing?

The Nordic welfare model faces important challenges. The ageing population increases the cost of care and pensions, but the smaller working population makes it difficult to cope with these costs.

A new book from the Nordic Council and the Council of Ministers called *How is Nordic Welfare Doing?* combines current Nordic expertise with innovative thinking about this threat to the future of the Region's welfare societies. Eleven writers – politicians, researchers and journalists – from the five Nordic countries and Greenland have contributed their personal thoughts, research results and ideas, and it is hoped that the book will attract attention and stimulate debate in the Nordic countries.

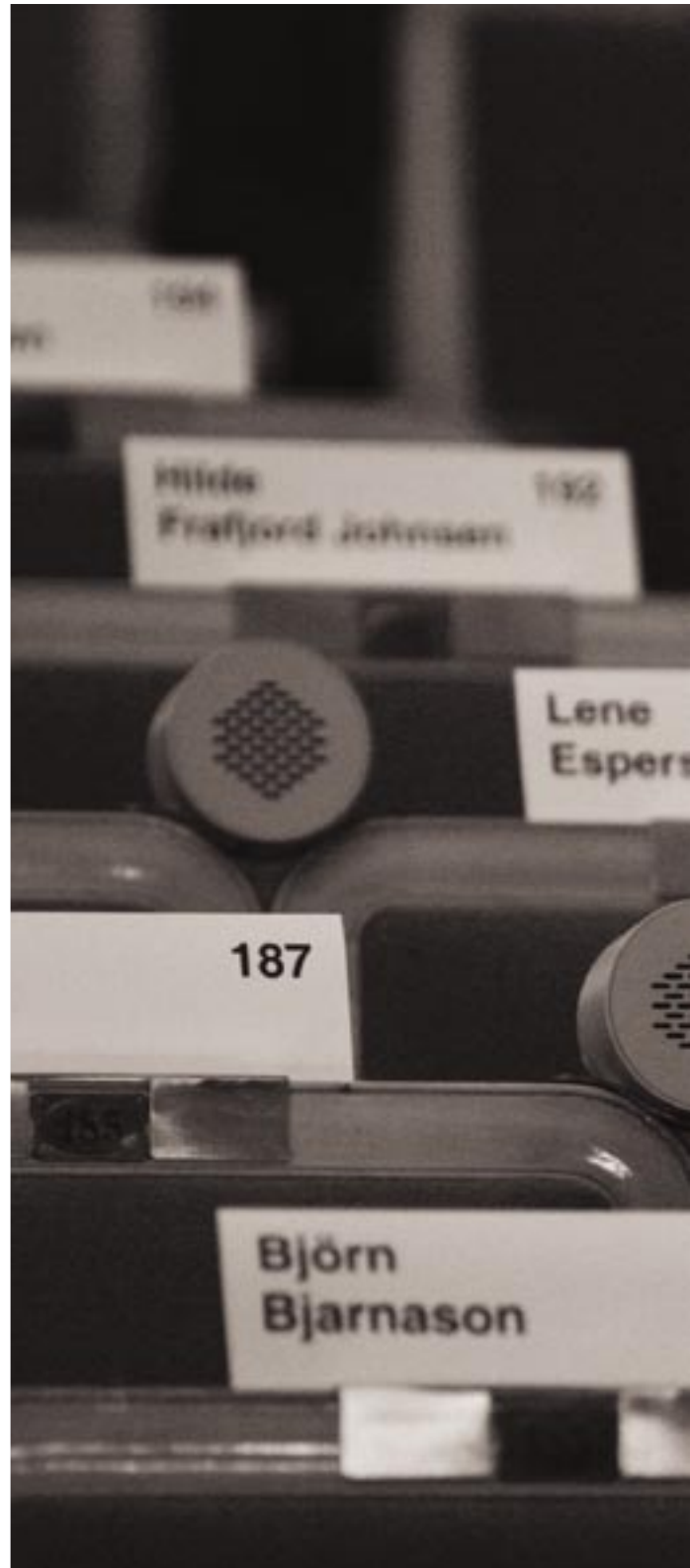
During the first six months of 2005, the book will be presented at a series of meetings and seminars around the Nordic Region, which are to be organised in collaboration with the Nordic Information Offices in the different countries and with Nordic Region in Focus.

## Alcohol policy – a Nordic dilemma

The Nordic Prime Ministers discussed alcohol policy at their meeting in Iceland in August 2004, and asked the Ministers of Health and Social Affairs to draw up guidelines for joint interventions on alcohol policy in international fora. They also held an extraordinary meeting on the subject at the Nordic Council of Ministers in Copenhagen in October.

They have agreed to work more closely together on alcohol policy. Although there will still be differences between the alcohol policies of each of the Nordic countries, the ministers have approved a joint strategy to set a Nordic agenda for alcohol policy in the EU, WHO, etc.

At a packed press conference after the October meeting, the Danish Minister of the Interior and Health, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, talked about the dilemma





***From the Alcohol Policy Statement***

*In relation to the EU/EEA, the priorities of the Nordic Ministers of Health and Social Affairs are:*

- *to follow up on the proactive and tangible investments being made in public health by the EU*
- *to halve the quotas for importing alcohol*
- *to support the decision of the Ministers of Finance about alcohol duties*
- *to make it clear that any increase in the minimum levels of duties on alcohol should be substantial.*

facing the Nordic Region: that, on the one hand, politicians would like to reduce alcohol consumption for health reasons, while on the other hand, price cuts have made alcohol more easily available. Dagfinn Høybråten, the Norwegian Minister of Health, stressed that it is precisely because the outside world influences the Region that the Nordic countries need to stand together and make an impact in international forums, especially in the EU, where the policies of the individual Nordic countries are under pressure because of increases in cross-border trade.

On several occasions during the year, the President of the Nordic Council in 2004, Gabriel Romanus, spoke out in favour of a more closely co-ordinated Nordic alcohol policy. A special panel debate about alcohol policy was staged at the Nordic Council Session a couple of weeks after the meeting of the Ministers of Health and Social Affairs. Romanus welcomed the debate and expressed the hope that other EU countries would listen to the Nordic points of view. During the debate, Margareta Israelsson, a Swedish Social Democrat MP, supported the call to halve quotas for importing duty-free alcohol and said that Sweden should now concentrate on preventative measures.

## **Action against encroaching sexualisation**

In summer 2004, the Nordic Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union called for a campaign to remove porn channels from hotel rooms. This was one result of a letter campaign by the Nordic Council which, at its June meeting, sent letters to industries including hotels, petrol stations and newsagents, urging them to curb the sexualisation of everyday life, especially that which affects children.

A quick visit to the Kristiansand newsagents during the meeting allowed some of the Council members to confirm the importance of the campaign.

'Some newsagents are more interested in profit than in protecting children and adults from pornographic images,' said Arne Lyngstad, the chairperson of the Citizens Committee and one of the main movers behind the campaign.

The campaign encouraged schools and other bodies in the Nordic Region to install porn filters on PCs used by pupils, requested Nordic TV stations to avoid programmes and adverts with sexual and pornographic

content between 6 am and 9 pm, asked hotels to guarantee that porn channels could always be blocked and urged newsagents to cover up pornographic images.

A Google search for the word 'sex' in March 2004 gave 252 million hits, 'porno' returned 86 million hits and the Swedish word 'porr' 185,000, according to the book *Sex Industry on the Net* by two Swedish researchers from Malmö University who have analysed Swedish net sexuality. One of the researchers took part in a conference organised by the Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Research (NIKK) as part of a major Nordic study of young people, gender and pornography commissioned by the Nordic Ministers for Gender Equality. The survey's most important task was to listen to the opinions of the young people themselves.

### Telecoms operators charge too much

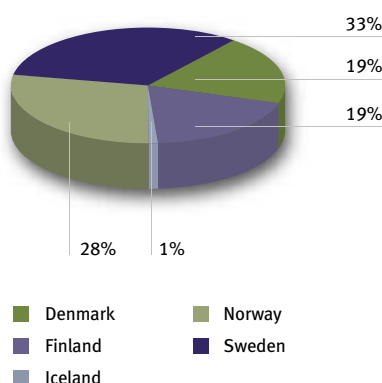
The Nordic Council of Ministers attracted a lot of attention in 2004 when the Nordic Monopoly Commissions published their report, which concluded that there was a lack of competition on price in the telecoms market. The report also asserted that Nordic telecoms operators charged prices that did not correspond to their costs.

The head of the Danish Commission, Finn Lauritzen, thought that customers should complain more if they wanted to see results. All the Nordic Monopoly Commissions have written to the telecoms operators, asking them to account for their pricing practices.



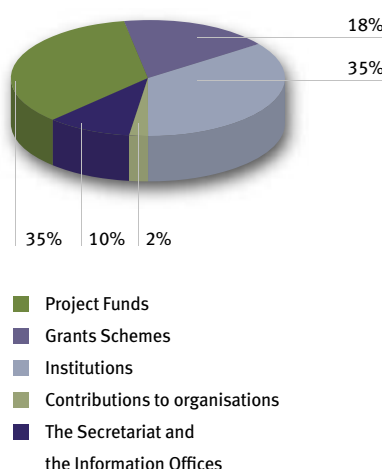
# Facts about the Nordic Council of Ministers and Nordic Council

**Nordic Council of Ministers**  
**National Budget Contributions 2004**



The Nordic Council of Ministers' budget was DKK 817.5 million in 2004. The amount paid by each country is calculated according to a norm based on national GDP. The autonomous areas do not contribute to the funding of the Nordic Council of Ministers' activities.

**Nordic Council of Ministers**  
**Budget Categories**



## The Nordic Council of Ministers

The Nordic Council of Ministers is the formal forum for co-operation between the governments, although informal consultations and exchanges of information also play a significant role.

The role of the Council of Ministers is to reinforce co-operation and the mutual Nordic sense of identity, and to promote Nordic interests abroad. All multilateral decisions are taken unanimously.

Separate councils exist for each sector in which the governments work together. The ultimate responsibility for co-operation lies with the Prime Ministers but, in practice, it is co-ordinated by the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation and their representatives on the Nordic Committee for Co-operation. Most councils of ministers meet several times a year. Committees of senior officials and the secretariat prepare the agendas for meetings, and follow up on issues and decisions.

### *The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation as per 2 December 2004*

Valgerður Sverrisdóttir, Iceland (Siv Friðleifsdóttir until 15 September)  
Flemming Hansen, Denmark  
Jan-Erik Enestam, Finland  
Jógvan við Keldu, Faroe Islands  
Josef Motzfeldt, Greenland  
Berit Andnor, Sweden  
Svein Ludvigsen, Norway  
Lars Selander, Åland Islands

## The Nordic Council

The Nordic Council is a political forum for parliamentarians and governments. It holds an annual Session, at which MPs meet with Nordic ministers. The Presidium and five standing committees look after the work of the Council for the rest of the year.

The Council acts in a proactive capacity, advises ministers about the direction Nordic co-operation should take and monitors whether governments implement the decisions that have been taken. The Council identifies annual political priorities, including the environment, defence and security, culture, sustainable development, children and young people, and consumer affairs.

#### *Presidium of the Nordic Council as per 2 December 2004*

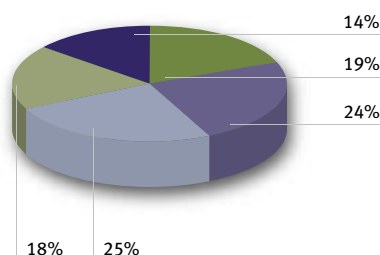
Gabriel Romanus, President, the Centre Group, Sweden  
 Anita Johansson, Vice-President, the Social Democratic Group, Sweden  
 Jónína Bjartmarz, the Centre Group, Iceland  
 Berit Brørby, the Social Democratic Group, Norway  
 Rannveig Guðmundsdóttir, the Social Democratic Group, Iceland  
 Jens Christian Larsen, the Centre Group, Denmark  
 Inge Lønning, the Conservative Group, Norway  
 Pehr Löf, the Centre Group, Finland  
 Outi Ojala, the Left-wing Socialist and Green Group, Finland  
 Kent Olsson, the Conservative Group, Sweden  
 Martin Saarikangas, the Conservative Group, Finland  
 Jan Sahl, the Centre Group, Norway  
 Ole Stavad, the Social Democratic Group, Denmark

#### *Proposals processed by the Nordic Council in 2004*

- Nordic tax office
- Open Source software
- Open standards/Open Source in national IT strategies
- Nordic electricity transmission net
- Nordic tax conference
- Conference on the future of in-shore fishing in the Nordic Region
- Organic agriculture in the Nordic Region
- Nordic design and co-operation between culture and business
- Nordic cross-border regional co-operation
- Regulations for the Nordic Council Film Prize
- Co-operation with the indigenous peoples in the Barents Region
- Nordic-Baltic Labour Market Conference 2005
- Principles of gender equality in the Nordic Council
- Programme for the Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation in the labour market and working environment sectors 2005–2008
- Strategy for Nordic education, training and research co-operation 2005–2007
- Co-operation programme for consumer affairs 2005–2010
- Nordic innovation policy co-operation programme 2005–2010
- Evaluation of 'Nordic Networks for Adult Learning' and funding of adult education organisations
- The Nordic Council of Ministers' budget 2005
- The Council of Ministers' co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania 2006–2008
- The Council of Ministers' co-operation with North-West Russia 2006–2008

#### **Nordic Council of Ministers**

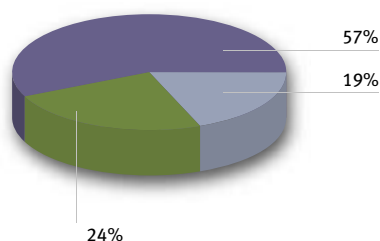
##### **Budget per Main Activity**



- Culture
- Education, research policy and IT
- The environment, resources and the Adjacent Area
- Welfare & business policy
- Secretariat and other joint activities

#### **The Nordic Council**

##### **Costs 2004**



- Council bodies
- The Council Secretariat
- Transfers

The DKK 30.6 million spent on council bodies in 2004 covered the Presidium, the committees and joint responsibilities. The council secretariat is responsible for administration and information. Transfers are made to fund party activities, the Nordic Youth Council and grants to journalists.

# Information and publishing

## Information

The Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers publish a joint website at **[www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org)**. Although most of the texts on the website are in a Scandinavian language (Norwegian, Swedish or Danish), many of them are also translated into Finnish, Icelandic and English.

Nordic news stories are published in brief on the website every weekday, and news stories are also sent by e-mail to thousands of subscribers throughout the world. The news items are published in Scandinavian languages, Finnish, Icelandic and English.

The web magazine *AnalysNorden* containing political analyses from the Nordic countries is published in Scandinavian languages, Finnish and Icelandic on [www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org) once a month.

*Top of Europe*, an e-mail newsletter about the Nordic Region and Nordic co-operation, is published once a month in English and Russian. It has approximately 3,000 subscribers, mainly in and around the Nordic Region.

The Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers also publish fact sheets in several languages, containing brief descriptions of official Nordic bodies. These are available in print and as PDF files.

*Further information about publications is available at **[www.norden.org/publikationer](http://www.norden.org/publikationer)** where you can also search for and order publications. You can also subscribe to the e-mail service **News about Publications**, which provides information about new publications.*

## Publishing

The Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers publish between 150 and 200 reports and books every year, dealing with virtually every sector covered by Nordic co-operation.

Here is a small selection of some of the latest books published by the Nordic Council and Council of Ministers:

- **Historic Coastal Culture – a Contemporary Resource**  
How to protect Nordic coastal culture and use it as a means of promoting development, based on the notion that conservation and development are not necessarily opposites.
- **Nordic Statistical Yearbook 2004**  
Easy-to-comprehend comparative statistics illustrating similarities and differences between the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) and the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands.
- **How is Nordic Welfare Doing?**  
The Nordic Council and Council of Ministers bring together the thoughts of 11 writers about the challenges facing the Nordic welfare model and how to tackle them.
- **Nordic Campaign against Trafficking in Women**  
A description of the campaign in the Nordic and Baltic area that was launched by the Nordic and Baltic governments in 2002.
- **The Nordic Region has a Contribution to Make**  
Senior secondary school students debate Nordic identity and the position of the Nordic Region in the new Europe. Five winners of the Nordic Council Literature Prize interpret what it means to be Nordic, European and a citizen of the world.





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Nordic Council

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