

A stylized world map composed of a grid of grey dots, with several dots highlighted in red to represent specific countries or regions.

# European Security Policy

## Nordic and Northern Strategies

**GUNILLA HEROLF**  
June 2013

- This paper deals with the Nordic countries and European security. An essential issue in this regard concerns the existence of Nordic strategies for Europe and for the areas in the north and the extent to which such ideas are shared among the Nordic countries. Do these five sovereign countries, whose security choices differ so much, nevertheless unite around common perceptions of how to build security in their own and other regions?
- The Nordic countries are in many ways similar in their approaches to global, European and neighbourhood security. They have trust in the UN and put a high value on transatlantic relations and on issues such as the environment, peace and security. They see comprehensive approaches as preferable, but are also willing to pursue hard security tasks when needed and they work across institutional and other borderlines in their Baltic Sea regional cooperation.
- However, their different choices as regards the EU and NATO have a strong impact on their cooperation. While the recent surge of cooperation among the five, mainly based on the need for cost savings and efficiency, is much supported, there are limits with regard to how close it can get when a connection can be seen with territorial defence.
- In sum, the Nordic countries have not presented any joint strategies globally for Europe or for their neighbourhood even though much cooperation among them has taken place on all levels, based on their common ideas, values and interests. New developments in terms of threats and within the organizations, however, point to diminished emphasis on institutional borderlines. All in all, this signals further possibilities for Nordic cooperation to develop along the lines that politicians and the public in the north would wish it to do.





## Content

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Historical Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Global Views and Policies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>The Nordics and Europe</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Northern, Baltic and Arctic Policies</b> .....	<b>6</b>
New Nordic-Baltic Cooperation .....	6
Arctic Area .....	7
Nordic Cooperation .....	7
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>10</b>



## Introduction

The Nordic countries, in contrast to most other geographical clusters of countries, form a well-defined and recognized group: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.<sup>1</sup> Their history is largely common or closely interlinked and also today, although they are five sovereign countries, their culture, religion and values unite them to a high degree.<sup>2</sup> Their languages also form a uniting factor, although the Finnish language, as well as the languages of the Inuit population of Greenland and the Sami population in northern Finland, Norway and Sweden have other roots. All of them are small in terms of population and, in combination with their geographical location on the outskirts of Europe, their influence on European developments has been limited. They are often dealt with as a unit by other countries.

As regards security – the theme of this paper – the Nordic countries differ more from each other than they do in other areas. The fact that during the Cold War Denmark, Iceland and Norway were members of NATO, whereas Finland and Sweden were non-aligned, effectively prevented security cooperation between them. The fall of the Berlin Wall did not lead to any new Nordic NATO members. Instead, the EU became the institutional centre of the new developments: Finland and Sweden became members, and later on Iceland became a candidate state. To add to this complicated pattern Denmark opted out of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), whereas Norway joined in.

The paper initially describes some historical developments and main areas of Nordic cooperation. The following section presents Nordic views on global issues, as well as on the UN, NATO and the United States. Thereafter the paper describes the approaches of the five countries to European security issues, including the neighbourhoods of the EU and the EU itself. The fourth section deals with Nordic policies towards Northern Europe: the Baltic Sea Region, the Arctic and cooperation among the five countries. The concluding part brings together the previous

sections in an analysis of the degree to which there is a Nordic policy or strategy towards Europe and the north, or rather five different sets of ideas.

## Historical Background

Nordic cooperation is of early origin. The period of the Kalmar Union (1397–1523) was, however, the only one during which the whole Nordic geographical area was under the same political leadership. The following period, from the dissolution of the Kalmar Union to 1814, saw a Nordic region divided between, on one hand, Denmark, Iceland and Norway and, on the other, Sweden and Finland, the latter lost to Russia in 1809. Denmark and Sweden, the dominating powers, were during most of this long period involved in fierce competition, including wars. The last of these took place in 1814, when Sweden, which had been part of the winning coalition against Napoleon, conquered Norway after agreement among the victors and after a short war. Denmark, being on the losing side, retained only Iceland.

Despite the dramatic character of the events of 1814, cooperation and closeness became a strong feature of the mid-1800s among the cultural elites of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the latter two countries now forming a union.<sup>3</sup> Nordic culture and old Nordic history were idealized but hopes for stronger cohesion were thwarted by the meagre support that Denmark received in the war against Prussia in 1864. In spite of this reminder of the limits of Nordic closeness, cooperation continued among the Nordic countries leading, among other things, to a form of monetary union between 1875 and 1914. From 1917, when Finland became a sovereign country, it became part of Nordic cooperation as well.

The strongest dividing issue, which for many years prohibited Nordic security cooperation, was the difference in choices taken in the late 1940s. The Swedish proposal for a military alliance among the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, was rejected by the other two countries, which saw the need for a stronger military alliance than what the small Nordic countries could offer each other. Denmark and Norway consequently joined NATO and Iceland, now a sovereign coun-

1. To this should be added the autonomous regions of Greenland and the Faroes (Denmark), Svalbard (Norway) and the Åland Islands (Finland). »Scandinavian« is sometimes erroneously used synonymously with »Nordic«. However, since it is named after the Scandes, the mountain ridge which forms the border between Norway and Sweden, Scandinavia, comprises only Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

2. Due to the large number of refugees and immigrants that compose part of the population of some of the Nordic countries, this homogeneity is now less significant than previously.

3. Finland, forming part of Russia, was not able to take part in this movement. The union between Sweden and Norway lasted between 1814 and 1905.

try, did the same. Finland was again in a special situation being prevented by the Second World War peace agreement on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) with the Soviet Union, to enter into cooperation with others. For Finland, non-alignment was the only choice and this was also the position finally taken by Sweden. While this was not the solution first sought, it was one that contributed to stability in the area. On the whole, the Nordic area, despite the strategic character of the region, was a quiet corner of Europe, one reason being that, in contrast to further south, NATO and the Warsaw Pact did not have a common border, except for a short stretch of land in northern Norway.

Nordic cooperation is highly valued by the Nordic politicians and also among the population. Therefore, even though security cooperation was not possible, starting in the early 1950s, a series of measures were taken, such as the establishment of a passport union, a common labour/employment market, welfare agreements, communal voting rights and eligibility and a Nordic-language convention. The Nordic Council, established in 1952 (Finland joined in 1955) is primarily a forum for inter-parliamentary cooperation, whereas the Nordic Council of Ministers (established in 1971) is an organization for intergovernmental cooperation.

The end of the Cold War led to a totally new situation for all the Nordic countries. The Finnish–Soviet FCMA Treaty could now be abolished and, like Sweden, Finland applied for membership of the then European Community. Both also joined NATO's Partnership for Peace in 1994. The complex pattern now became even more so: Denmark, while a member of the EU and NATO, prioritizes the latter by standing outside the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and is also less involved in Nordic cooperation. Norway, although a member of NATO only, takes part in the CSDP as well.

## Global Views and Policies

The Nordic countries, while small in terms of population, often have a distinctly global agenda. Among the prominent issues on their agendas are commitment to development aid,<sup>4</sup> concern for the environment and a

4. Luxembourg, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands (in this order) are the only countries surpassing the UN official goal of devoting

focus on peace and security. The Nordic Council has been much engaged in the issues of globalization and climate (Nordic Council 2013).

One reflection of the Nordic interest in peace and security is the trust in and support for the United Nations.<sup>5</sup> Nordic countries have also been eager to take part as mediators in conflicts and to fill high positions in the UN, as well as forming part of the Security Council and participating in peacekeeping operations under the UN. The Nordic countries have cooperated with each other also within the framework of the United Nations.

The Nordic countries can all be labelled Atlanticists. Finland and Sweden, while non-aligned, stand out as more inclined to cooperate with NATO and to rely on NATO assets than do some of the NATO member states. Denmark's particularly close relationship to NATO is also reflected in the fact that a Dane, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, is Secretary General of NATO. Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden all participate in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, Danish forces in the troublesome south province of Helmand (Danish Ministry of Defence 2013). Sweden, as the only non-NATO country, is responsible for one Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), which also includes Finnish troops, whereas Norway is responsible for another. The Nordic closeness to NATO is also evident in the quick response to NATO's operation *Unified Protector* in Libya in 2011. Norway and Denmark took part in the attacks on ground targets, whereas Sweden was responsible for around 30 per cent of the reconnaissance pictures. The discussions in Sweden did not concern whether Sweden should participate at all, but whether it should take a more active part (NATO Review 2013).

The United States has acted as a partner to the Nordic countries also outside the framework of NATO. During the first turbulent period after the end of the Cold War the Nordic countries and the United States acted in close collaboration for the safety and the stability of the Baltic Sea region. The Northern Europe Initiative (NEI), for

0.7 per cent per capita of Gross National Income to development aid (Statistics Norway 2013).

5. According to Eurobarometer, 75 per cent of the population in Iceland trusts the UN, whereas this is true for 72 per cent in Finland and 71 per cent in Denmark and Sweden. This can be compared to the EU average, which is only 44 per cent. Norway, as neither member nor candidate state of the EU, was not included in the survey. All indications are that Norway, if included, would be on a par with the other Nordic countries (Eurobarometer 2012: T43).

which the purpose was to integrate Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania among the western democracies, was one expression of this. It was later succeeded by the Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe (e-PINE), including the USA, the five Nordic and the three Baltic countries in discussions related to a wider area and dealing with cooperative security, healthy societies and vibrant economies (U.S. Department of State). While the results of this new initiative have not been substantial, cooperation as such is considered valuable.

Last but not least, while for the moment no military threat is perceived among the Nordic countries, the awareness exists that in such a case the only power that would have the capability to help would be the United States through NATO.

## The Nordics and Europe

Nordic perception of the EU has focused mainly on what the EU can accomplish. The EU as a concept has consequently been of less interest. This means that the previously prominent German vision of forming a federalist union was seen by most people as either not compatible with their ideas of retaining as much sovereignty as possible or as an idea for the future.

Nor have the Atlanticist Nordics appreciated the French idea of a *Europe des patries*, a Europe of sovereign countries, in which countries unite in a strong external policy. The concept of the EU as a global actor did not take on a more serious character for the Nordic countries until globalization became an international phenomenon. The extraordinary economic growth of new international actors such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) led to the prospect of Europe being left behind, not able to sustain its welfare systems. The Nordic view, like that of many other countries, is that Europe needs to give added emphasis to research and development and to modernize its business sector. Nordic people, however, differ from most other countries of the European Union in their trust that globalization can entail increased possibilities for economic development.<sup>6</sup>

6. While in the EU as a whole 51 per cent of the population saw globalization as positive, the relevant figure for Denmark was 79 per cent, Sweden 77 per cent, Finland 70 per cent and Iceland 67 per cent. The Netherlands (74 per cent) and Germany (67 per cent) also scored high (Eurobarometer 2012: T82). All indications are that Norway, if included, would rank very high.

As mentioned above, security and stability in general has been an area in which the Nordic countries have taken much interest. During the first part of the post-Cold War period a considerable focus for the Nordic countries was their close neighbourhood (see next section). When the Baltic countries acceded to the EU and NATO in 2004, the period of strong Nordic engagement was over and the focus now turned to the somewhat more distant neighbourhood. The initiative of Eastern Partnership (EaP) was taken by Poland and Sweden in 2008 and accepted by the European Union in 2009, although with substantial dilution of its emphasis on free movement and free trade principles. These initiatives are well compatible with the Nordic view on security in which the countries endorse the comprehensive approach, in which development aid, civil crisis management and other areas of non-military character are included.

The Nordic support for military activities is high as well when such activities are undertaken under a UN mandate. With the exception of Iceland they have all participated in a range of peace-keeping operations within the UN, EU and NATO, often in close cooperation with each other. They have twice set up a battle group (led by Sweden) with the serious intent of using it. During the Swedish EU presidency of 2009 Sweden sought to change the rules for battle group engagement in order to end the present stalemate of not using them, but to no avail. The small exception was when the Swedish airplanes that were part of the Nordic battle group of 2011, participated in the Libya operation the same year.

As for cooperation within the military sphere the difference in choices of security affiliation among the Nordic countries unavoidably affects their policies within Europe. As a consequence, their views do not come out as a Nordic strategy but as policies and initiatives pursued within their respective organisations. This does not mean that the policies are contradictory – quite often they are parallel, such as in the two operations to counter piracy outside the Somalian coast: Sweden and Finland take part in the EU's Atalanta operation, whereas Denmark participates in the NATO operation Ocean Shield. Norway participates in both: the frigate, which has previously taken part in Atalanta, will be part of Ocean Shield between June and December 2013.

As regards the European Union, cooperation among the Nordic countries has been particularly close between Fin-

land and Sweden, which have taken a number of joint initiatives. Their interest in this area is further demonstrated by the fact that former supreme commanders Gustav Hägglund (Finland) and Håkan Syrén (Sweden) have headed the EU's Military Committee.

NATO cooperation, in contrast to that of the EU, has included all Nordic countries. While in the case of military threats in Europe the situations of Denmark, Norway and Iceland would differ from those of Finland or Sweden, in peacetime the difference in affiliation is less obvious. Both Finland and Sweden regularly participate in NATO exercises, being invited as members of the Partnership for Peace (PFF). For example, in 2012 Sweden participated in 42 exercises together with NATO, 13 of them taking place in Sweden (Fokus 2012). Iceland has a particular position, being a member of NATO but without any military forces (albeit with a strong coast guard) and for a couple of years has been without the American presence serving as a deterrent.

The present division of institutional affiliation is not likely to change. As regards the issue of NATO membership, according to the latest opinion polls in Finland only 18 per cent favour joining the organisation, whereas 71 per cent are against it (Advisory Board of Defence Information 2012). In Sweden, according to a recent poll, 32 per cent are positive about joining NATO, while 40 per cent prefer continued non-alignment (Svenska Dagbladet 2013). A similar situation prevails in Norway in relation to the EU: in a poll published in July 2012, 17.2 per cent were positive towards joining the EU, whereas 74.8 per cent were negative (Aftenposten 2012).

## Northern, Baltic and Arctic Policies

A crucial moment for Nordic cooperation was when the borderline in the Baltic Sea disappeared. Efforts in the Baltic Sea region became a highly prioritized effort in which all Nordic countries were involved. Starting while Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were still part of the Soviet Union, the activities took place in a variety of settings. Organizations were formed such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS, established 1992), the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation (BEAC, 1993) and the Arctic Council (1996). Above all, however, cooperation was pursued through an overlapping net of projects, agreements and support at all levels of society, including both

the private and the public spheres. While for the Baltic countries only NATO and the European Community/Union could offer what they most needed – hard security and economic integration into Western Europe, respectively – the Nordic countries supplied useful support during this first period of freedom. The gain for the Nordic countries was substantial as well, since they now had democratic and stable countries on or close to their borders. Attempts to include Russia failed, however. While a member of the CBSS, Russia was not willing to engage in regional cooperation, seeing the need for Moscow to keep firm control over it.

Nordic cooperation during this period was good, but there was also a certain amount of competition among their various proposals. The Danish CBSS, the Swedish Baltic Sea Region Initiative (BSRI) and the Finnish Northern Initiative all had their periods of flourishing in the midst of other initiatives and activities. The Nordic ambitions were, however, never detrimental since they increased the efforts to help the Baltic states.

As mentioned above, Nordic-Baltic cooperation changed in character and intensity as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, through their accession in 2004 to the EU and NATO, no longer had the same need for it. At the same time, there was for the Nordic countries – as well as for Europe as a whole – a new focus on the wider European neighbourhood. While this engagement continues we can now see a new focus on the immediate neighbourhood areas, for which the engagement has three focal points.

## New Nordic-Baltic Cooperation

One of these focal points is the renewed Nordic-Baltic surge of cooperation, initiated by the Baltic countries. Like the previous one, this cooperation complements EU and NATO cooperation and is an example of the variable geometry characterizing Europe today, as the organizations become larger and give less leadership. Baltic countries now seek increased political economic and energy security through cooperation with countries perceived as stable, well-organized and sharing their values (Lithuania Tribune 2011). This informal cooperation goes under the name of Nordic-Baltic 8 (NB8). There is, however, also today an EU connection in the cooperation around the Baltic Sea, such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region of 2009. The background of this initiative was the



combination of environmental degradation and uneven economic development, problems seen as best addressed through cooperation and further integration (European Council 2009).

### Arctic Area

Another area attracting much interest today is the Arctic. This began in the early 1990s through the establishment of BEAC and the Arctic Council, for which environmental issues, together with quality of life and social and cultural development for the Arctic people, are important. The renewed interest is strongly related to the way in which the melting of the Arctic ice will be leading to new trade routes and thereby growing activity and to the growing demand for natural resources in the area. Norway and Denmark/Greenland are coastal states bordering on the Arctic Ocean, with legal interests in the north, whereas Iceland has economic and political interests in the area. As for Finland and Sweden the interests are commercial. While all Nordic countries discuss issues related to the High North, Norway, due to its geographical position, has the strongest emphasis on this area, describing it as Norway's most important strategic foreign policy priority (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011: 9). The Danish Arctic Strategy also underlines the importance of the area, including its mineral resources, and voices Danish concerns about future stability in the region (Governments of Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands 2011: 10).

### Nordic Cooperation

The third focal point is cooperation among the Nordic countries themselves. As a result of the upheavals in 1989 the taboo on foreign policy, security and defence issues was gone. Cooperation among the Nordic five was, however, overshadowed by the important task of Nordic-Baltic cooperation. Instead, the surge of Nordic interest for increased cooperation that came about some years ago can be related mainly to the need to make do with reduced means for military defence. In 2007, Norwegian and Swedish supreme commanders took the initiative for deepened cooperation and in 2008 Finland joined, the new declaration covering as many as 140 joint projects (Swedish Defence Forces 2008). Another important step was taken in November 2009

when Nordic defence ministers signed the agreement for Nordic Defence Cooperation, NORDEFECO, whose main aim is to »strengthen the participating states' national defence, explore common synergies and facilitate efficient common solutions« (NORDEFECO).

The Stoltenberg report has been an important central point for discussions on Nordic cooperation. When former Norwegian foreign and defence minister Thorvald Stoltenberg launched his report on closer Nordic cooperation in February 2009, a task given to him by the Nordic foreign ministers, his proposals immediately became the subject of much interest. His ideas centred on projects of various character, such as a common stabilization force that also included state-building civilian components, defence-industrial cooperation, common procurement, common training and exercises, surveillance and a Nordic solidarity declaration (Stoltenberg 2009).

The background of all these activities is that the Nordic countries, most of which have a large territory combined with a small population, in addition face growing costs and diminishing defence budgets. They are therefore in an increasingly problematic situation when acting on their own to procure weapons and fulfil the requested tasks within international missions and territorial defence.

The idea of improving this situation through Nordic defence cooperation has received much political as well as public support. Furthermore, the similarities among the countries, as well as their political and geographical closeness create a good basis for cooperation. A further incentive has been that coordination would make the Nordic countries the fourth biggest actor on the European market. Despite all these positive factors and the fact that a number of successful projects have been initiated and completed, a number of hurdles have obstructed the expected cost savings/efficiency gains. Joint development seldom gives the expected savings, since decision-making processes become more complicated and participants sometimes prefer to share the work evenly among themselves rather than in the optimal way. Different specifications and sometimes demands for off-set purchases add even more to the costs. In addition, countries do not always need the same system at the same time and the procedures for replacing weapons systems vary (Janzon et al. 2013).

Overall, Nordic cooperation has grown in numbers and intensity during the past few years, but it is still heavily dominated by Finland, Norway and Sweden; Denmark has taken a more distanced attitude. The Baltic countries have shown great interest and have now been included in some cooperation, whereas Iceland takes part on the political level.

One example is the cooperation between the air bases of Bodö (Norway), Kallax (Sweden) and Rovaniemi (Finland), which has expanded over the past few years and now takes place on a weekly basis. This and other types of increased cooperation, however, have also had the consequence that cooperation comes closer to the point at which the participants must consider the fact that two of the air forces belong to non-aligned states whereas the third one is part of NATO and its Article 5 obligations (Reuterdaahl and Ring 2013).

Stoltenberg refers in his report to this problem when he speaks about the process of proceeding integration, leading to a situation in which countries have specialized to a degree that they are dependent on each other. Such a development requires a declaration of solidarity in order for countries to be sure to have access to resources. Stoltenberg further argues that in this declaration countries should clarify in binding terms how they would respond if a Nordic country was subject to an external attack. However, he also makes clear that such cooperation would only complement, not replace the existing foreign and security policy allegiances.

Such a declaration would, however, unavoidably have great consequences for NATO. Actually, this kind of problem has already emerged in the case of Nordic surveillance over Iceland. In this case NATO has reacted against the possibility that Finnish and Swedish planes would carry weapons since this would confuse the role of a non-NATO country towards a NATO member.

Another important aspect to consider in Nordic defence cooperation is that regionalization must not lead others to believe that Nordic countries are capable and willing to defend themselves on their own. While agreeing to take much responsibility for the stability of the region, they would not on their own be able to stand up to a full-scale military attack. Preferably, in the view of some people, Nordic military cooperation should have some link to EU/NATO in order to avoid such a misunderstanding.

The question then is how far Nordic integration can go. One example of this can be seen in the Nordic declaration of solidarity of 2011, which was received by many with some disappointment for not going far enough:

The Ministers emphasized a strong community of values between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Efforts to promote democracy, international law including human rights, gender equality and sustainable development are integral parts of the foreign policy of the Nordic countries. On the basis of common interest and geographical proximity it is natural for the Nordic countries to cooperate in meeting the challenges in the area of foreign and security policy in a spirit of solidarity. In this context Ministers discussed potential risks inter alia natural and man-made disasters, cyber and terrorist attacks. Should a Nordic country be affected, the others will, upon request from that country, assist with relevant means. The intensified Nordic cooperation will be undertaken fully in line with each country's security and defense policy and complement existing European and Euro-Atlantic cooperation. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2009)

While this text might initially be seen as a good step forward, a closer look shows that it adds little in terms of responsibility. The area of »natural and man-made disasters, cyber and terrorist attacks«, is already covered by the Lisbon Treaty's Article 222. In order to make the limitations fully clear the declaration ends with the sentence commonly used in Nordic contexts pointing to Nordic cooperation as subordinated to institutional choices. This is hardly to be criticized – rather, it is unavoidable since any promise by Norway, Denmark or Iceland would have been a promise on behalf of other NATO members – it simply shows the formal limitations of Nordic cooperation.<sup>7</sup>

7. A non-aligned country, on the other hand, may freely make promises, since this does not involve other countries. Sweden's unilateral solidarity clause, saying that Sweden will not remain passive if another EU state or Nordic country is attacked, is a big undertaking (Bildt 2013). However, being made by a country that has over a number of years made substantial cuts in its defence forces it is in no way comparable to a NATO obligation. Rather it should be seen in the context of the development in Europe in which the security of one state affects all others and it is therefore in the interests of other European countries to help in whatever way they can.

## Conclusion

The Nordic countries' policies, like those of other countries, are formed by their own capabilities and limitations, external inputs, effects of institutional cooperation and, not least, their own values, goals and ambitions.

The Nordic countries are in several ways in a favourable situation. They have no conflicts with other countries and – with the exception of Iceland, which was hard hit by the financial crisis – they have managed well during troubled years. In terms of security they belong to the organizations that they have chosen themselves – non-aligned Finland and Sweden could join NATO whenever they wish, just as Norway would be welcomed in the EU. Furthermore, Finland and Sweden have changed their doctrines in order to increase their freedom of action in this field, while Norway in the same way has joined the EU's CSDP.

Despite these changes, which have permitted flexible cooperation, it is still a fact that the Nordic countries are divided by their choices in a way which makes it impossible for these five countries to form a group of their own and unite in presenting security strategies. Still, it is also true that Nordic countries share a long range of values, views and goals for how they would like to see the world, Europe and their neighbourhood develop. For such ideas, NATO is the relevant organization for Denmark, Iceland and Norway in which to put forward their ideas or strategies for Europe or any subregion and the same goes for Finland and Sweden vis-à-vis the EU.

While this set-up also prevents close cooperation among the Nordic countries themselves, this consequence is accepted since the common view has always been that Nordic cooperation is less important than the security choices taken by the countries individually.

Nevertheless, there is room for Nordic cooperation and pursuance of their goals and ambitions. The Nordic countries have cooperated with each other within the UN, NATO and the EU in various types of tasks. In this way they have been able to forward their common ideas related to issues such as the environment, climate change and comprehensive security, as well as military issues.

A distinctly Nordic view was also discernible in the way cooperation was pursued in their Baltic neighbour-

hood, especially during its first phase until 2004. This cooperation, often described as »messy«, due to its purposefully unhierarchical character, took place without any appointed leader (although Denmark, Finland and Sweden all tried to put their imprint on it), and no specific organization (a number of them were involved), with widely overlapping projects, covering the whole societal spectrum.

Nordic cooperation among the five is of several different kinds. The traditional Nordic cooperation aimed at making free mobility possible, among other things, stems from closeness and can be characterized as a bottom-up approach. For the newest surge of cooperation, the need for better use of money and increased efficiency has been the trigger. Whereas Nordic similarities and cultural affinity are a good basis for making it work, the strong political support comes from this need to economize. For the immediate neighbourhood we also see the differences in geopolitical situation which give Finland and Sweden a Baltic focus, whereas Norway, Denmark/Greenland and Iceland have strong interests in the Arctic areas.

Finally, the new developments within cooperation, in which both Finland and Sweden take part in NATO military exercises, mark a new thinking. They signal a realization that if the worst comes to the worst it does not matter who is non-aligned and who is a NATO member. We know little about the potential scenarios but undoubtedly the threats facing Europe will be met together, regardless of whether a country is a member of one or the other organization. This is not where the borderlines run in terms of values.



## Bibliography

- Advisory Board of Defence Information** (Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta) (2012): *Finns' Opinions on Foreign and Security policy, Defence and Security Issues*. Online available: [http://www.defmin.fi/files/2248/Survey\\_in\\_english\\_28\\_11\\_2012.pdf](http://www.defmin.fi/files/2248/Survey_in_english_28_11_2012.pdf) and [http://www.defmin.fi/files/2249/Statistics\\_in\\_english\\_netitiin\\_28\\_11\\_2012.pdf](http://www.defmin.fi/files/2249/Statistics_in_english_netitiin_28_11_2012.pdf), 18.06.2013.
- Aftenposten** (2013): *Høyrevelgerne deler ikke partiets syn på EU [Those who vote for the conservative party do not share the party's view on the EU]*. Online available: <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Hoyrevelgerne-deler-ikke-partiets-syn-pa-EU-6947739.html#.UYqj3Dtvmos>, 18.06.2013.
- Bildt, Carl** (2013): *Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs*. Government Offices of Sweden, Wednesday 13 February 2013.
- Danish Ministry of Defence** (2013): *Broad political agreement on the Danish Engagement in Afghanistan 2013–2014*. Online available: <http://www.fmn.dk/eng/news/Pages/BroadpoliticalagreementontheDanishengagementinAfghanistan2013-2014.aspx>, 18.06.2013.
- Eurobarometer** (2012): *Standard Eurobarometer 78, Public Opinion in the EU, Autumn 2012, Annex*, pp. T43 and T82.
- European Council** (2009): *Presidency Conclusions*, 15265/09, Brussels, 1 December 2009, points 35–36.
- Fokus** (2012): *NATO's sak är vår [NATO's case is ours]*. Online available: <http://www.fokus.se/2012/03/natos-sak-ar-var/>, 18.06.2013.
- Governments of Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands** (2011): *Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011–2020*, p. 10.
- Janzon, Bo et al.** (2013): *A Small State's Materiel Equipment Supply*. Online available: <http://secrab.eu/documents/Janzon%20B%20-%20A%20small%20state,%202013.pdf>, 18.06.2013. English version of Bo Janzon et al. (2013): *En småstats materielförsörjning*. In Gunilla Herolf and Bo Hultdt (eds) *På egen hand eller tillsammans? Sverige i det nya Europa*, Kungl Krigsvetenskapsakademien [*On Our Own or Together? Sweden in the New Europe*, The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences], Stockholm.
- Lithuania Tribune** (2009): *Baltoscandia is awakening, by Azubalis*. Online available: <http://www.lithuaniantribune.com/8205/baltoscandia-is-awakening-20118205/>, 18.06.2013.
- NATO Review** (2013): *Sweden: a special NATO partner*. Online available: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2013/Partnerships-NATO-2013/Sweden-partnerships/EN/index.htm>, 18.06.2013.
- NORDEFECO**, Nordic Defence Cooperation, <http://www.nordefco.org/The-basics-about-NORDEFECO>.
- Nordic Council** (2013): *Why the Nordic Council?* Online available: <http://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council/the-nordic-council/why-the-nordic-council>, 18.06.2013.
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (2011): *The High North. Visions and Strategies*. Meld. St.7 (2011–2012) Report to the Storting (white paper), 18 November 2011, p. 9.
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (2009): *The Nordic Declaration of Solidarity*. Online available: [http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/Nordisk%20samarbeid/The\\_Nordic\\_declaration\\_on\\_solidarity.pdf](http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/Nordisk%20samarbeid/The_Nordic_declaration_on_solidarity.pdf), 18.06.2013.
- Reuterdaahl, Jan and Stefan Ring** (2013): *Ett svenskt luftförsvar kräver nordiskt samarbete [Swedish Air Defence Necessitates Nordic Cooperation]*. In Gunilla Herolf and Bo Hultdt (eds) *På egen hand eller tillsammans? Sverige i det nya Europa*. Kungl Krigsvetenskapsakademien, [*On Our Own or Together? Sweden in the New Europe*, The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences], Stockholm.
- Statistics Norway** (2012): *Foreign aid expenditure in OECD countries, 2012*. Online available: <http://www.ssb.no/en/uhjelpoecd>, 13.06.2013.
- Stoltenberg, Thorvald** (2009): *Nordic Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy – Proposals presented at the extra ordinary meeting of Nordic foreign ministers in Oslo on 9 of February 2009*. Online available: <http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/nordicreport.pdf>, 18.06.2013.
- Svenska Dagbladet** (2013), »Svenskarna har mjuknat i NATO-frågan« [The Swedes have softened in regard to the NATO issue], 16 May 2013
- Swedish Defence Forces** (2008): *Nordic Supportive Defence Structures – Nordsup Progress Report*. Skr 23 200:63137, Försvarsmakten, Stockholm.
- U.S. Department of State**, Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/epine/c10621.htm>.



#### About the author

**Gunilla Herolf** is Vice President of the Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences.

#### Imprint

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung  
International Policy Analysis  
Hiroshimastraße 28 | 10785 Berlin | Germany

Responsible:  
Dr Ernst Hillebrand, Head, International Policy Analysis

Tel.: ++49-30-269-35-7745 | Fax: ++49-30-269-35-9248  
[www.fes.de/ipa](http://www.fes.de/ipa)

To order publications:  
[info.ipa@fes.de](mailto:info.ipa@fes.de)

International Policy Analysis (IPA) is the analysis unit of the International Dialogue department of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. In our publications and studies we address key topics of European and international politics, economics and society. Our aim is the development of policy recommendations and scenarios from a social democratic perspective.

This publication appears within the framework of the working line »European Foreign and Security Policy«, editor: Niels Annen, [Niels.Annen@fes.de](mailto:Niels.Annen@fes.de); editorial assistant: Nora Neye, [Nora.Neye@fes.de](mailto:Nora.Neye@fes.de).

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung or of the organization for which the author works.

This publication is printed on paper from sustainable forestry.



ISBN 978-3-86498-600-0