
THE NETWORK OF NORDIC LANGUAGE COUNCILS

CHARLOTTA AF HÄLLSTRÖM-REIJONEN, EFNIL WEBINAR 24–25 MARCH 2021





IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- Scandinavianism and nordism in the 19th century
- Nordic meeting on orthography 1869
- Aim: to bring the Nordic languages and countries closer together



MEETINGS SINCE 1954

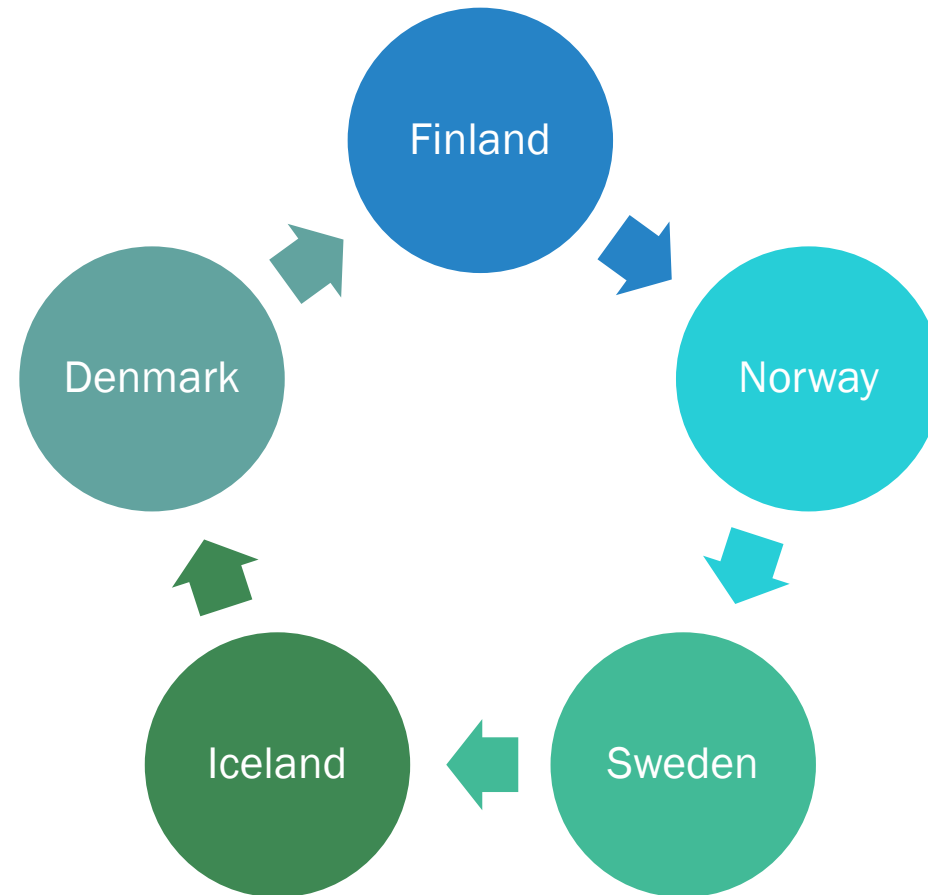
- Finland (Finnish & Swedish)
- Sweden
- Norway
- Denmark
- Iceland (1964-)
- The Faroe Islands (1974-)
- Greenland (1974-)
- Sápmi, the Sami region (1974-)



THE FOCUS HAS CHANGED: FROM DETAILS TO OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

- First era: terminology, neologisms, writing rules (uniting the Scandinavian or Nordic languages)
- Second era: language planning principles, good language comprehension between the Nordic countries
- Now: language policy, the role of English, languages in various domains, language technology

CIRCULATING PRESIDENCY



Nordic council of
ministers (NMR)

Nordic council of
ministers for
education and
research (MR-U)

Committee of
Senior Officials
for Education
and Research
(EK-U)

Network of
Nordic language
councils (NSN)



STRATEGY 2020–2024

- information exchange
- co-operation on language projects
- the goals in the Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy (2006, being revised)
- maintaining and developing the Nordic language community and the language understanding
- strengthening and cultivation of indigenous languages, national minority languages and sign languages
- a strengthened and more formalized contact with the Nordic Council of Ministers -
- a visible and attractive co-operation actor



STRATEGY 2020–2024, FOCUS AREAS

- language technology and lexicographic tools
- terminology and technical language
- plain language
- neologisms
- language policy (status planning)
- multilingualism

DECLARATION ON A NORDIC LANGUAGE POLICY, GOAL THAT ALL NORDIC RESIDENTS:

- can read and write the language or languages that are essential to society in the area where they live
- can communicate with one another, preferably in a Scandinavian language,
- have a basic knowledge of linguistic rights in the Nordic countries and the language situation in the Nordic countries
- have very good skills in at least one language of international importance and good skills in another foreign language
- have a general knowledge of what language is and how it works

FOUR ISSUES TO WORK WITH, MENTIONED IN THE LANGUAGE DECLARATION:

1. Language comprehension and language skills
2. The parallel use of languages
3. Multilingualism
4. The Nordic countries as a linguistic pioneering region

DEKLARATION OM
**nordisk
språkpolitik**

*Deklaration om nordisk språkpolitik
Kunngerð um norðurlenskan málpolitikk
Avannaamioqatigüt oqaatsinut politik
pílhugu nalumaarutaat
Pohjoismainen kielipoliittinen julistus
Yfirlýsing um málstefnu Norðurlanda
Deklarasjon om nordisk språkepolitikk
Davvirikkalaš giellapolitiikka julggastus
Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy*

DECLARATION ON A NORDIC LANGUAGE POLICY, 2006

<http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:700895/FULLTEXT01.pdf>



ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

- The use of Scandinavian languages is a cohesion factor – but also a source of linguistic inequality. – English in the future?
- Centre and periphery? “Big” and “small” languages?

A NORDIC FAMILY

