



## REPORT FOR THE MEETING OF NORDIC PRIME MINISTERS ON 28 OCTOBER 2008

Store Strandstræde 18  
DK-1255 Copenhagen K  
Tel +45 3396 0200  
Fax +45 3396 0202  
www.norden.org

### Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Status of the 14 globalisation initiatives
- Appendix 2 Draft budget 2009 for the globalisation initiatives
- Appendix 3 Report by the ministers for cooperation on the freedom of movement work
- Appendix 4 Report for the Nordic prime ministers on the work in the Freedom of Movement Forum, by the chairman of the forum and by the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers

21 October 2008  
08-02413-5

### Report on the status of Nordic globalisation work

#### *Background*

The meeting of prime ministers in June 2007 in Punkaharju, Finland, can be regarded as the beginning of renewed Nordic cooperation to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation. The press release issued by the meeting contains a number of specific joint Nordic globalisation initiatives intended to support and underpin the achievement of these new overall objectives. The initiatives are to pave the way for a more skilled, visible and thriving Nordic region. The Globalisation Forum in Riksgränsen 2008 lent further support to the Nordic globalisation process.

A total of 14 specific globalisation initiatives have been launched as a direct result of the prime ministers' meeting in Punkaharju. The specific initiatives constitute the cornerstone of and starting point for Nordic globalisation work and must be regarded as a tool for supporting the changes in the overall priorities in Nordic cooperation implied by Nordic globalisation work.

The 14 specific globalisation initiatives are well underway and include:

1. Globalisation Forum	8. Freedom of movement in the Nordic region
2. Nordic excellence in research	9. Overall plan for the development of the Nordic research and innovation area (NORIA)
3. Innovation representation in Asia	10. Plan for the furtherance of higher education in the Nordic countries
4. New Nordic Innovation Prize	11. Project plan for excellent training for young people and adults
5. Joint Nordic EnergyExpo	12. Illustration of the consequences of climate change on the natural resources of the Nordic region
6. World Exposition in Shanghai 2010	13. Development and profiling of the Nordic region as a centre for creative industries
7. Nordic commitment as input to climate negotiations	14. Harmonisation of the Nordic electricity market

## Results

Many elements of Nordic cooperation are already performing in line with the prime ministers' overall priorities announced in Punkaharju in June 2007, confirmed at the meeting of the Nordic prime ministers in Riksgränsen and most recently at their meeting in June 2008. Moreover, a host of new activities have been launched which are not part of the 14 initiatives stated above.

One such initiative is the cooperation undertaken with the Baltic States. As announced in Punkaharju in June 2007: 'More profound cooperation with the Baltic States reinforces the competitiveness of the entire Baltic Sea region and increases opportunities to utilise globalisation.' The Nordic ministers for cooperation have just presented a proposal by the Nordic Council of Ministers to the Nordic Council during the 2008 session, addressing the cooperation between the Nordic Council of Ministers and the three Baltic States. The themes highlighted by the Nordic prime ministers as having received special priority form a significant basis of cooperation. In addition, the Nordic Council of Ministers has presented a proposal for the cooperation with North-West Russia, also based on issues impacting on the utilisation of the possibilities offered by globalisation.

Work on the 14 globalisation initiatives has generally progressed well, and various specific results have been achieved since the prime ministers' meeting in June 2008.

*I.* Agreement has now been reached on the forms of the Nordic *Excellence in Research Programme*, and the Nordic ministers for education are set to reach a decision in principle about the launch of the programme on 28 October 2008. The programme, which covers the period 2009-2013 with total public funding of SEK 480.8 million, is to consist of the thematic sub-programmes effect studies and adaptation to climate change, the interaction of climate change with ice, snow and glaciers, nanotechnology and energy efficiency, integration of large-scale wind power, sustainable bioenergy and carbon capture and storage (CCS). Public funding consists of funding in the form of funds from the Nordic Council of Ministers, the member countries and the Nordic institutions of NordForsk, the Nordic Innovation Centre and Nordic Energy Research. Furthermore, efforts are being made to involve both the business sector and the EU in the programme funding.

*II.* The joint Nordic *EnergyExpo* will be in the form of the exposition and conference Nordic Climate Solutions in Copenhagen on 25-26 November 2008, to be opened by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt.

*III.* The first Nordic *Globalisation Forum* took place in Riksgränsen in April this year, and the preparations for the 2009 forum in Iceland on 26-27 February are in progress.

*IV.* As regards the *Innovation Prize*, the Nordic Council of Ministers submitted a proposal to the Nordic Council prior to the 2008 session. The purpose of the prize is to provide a specific and positive reward for innovation, i.e. a new technology, product, process or organisation with commercial success in a market or of value to a broader group or society in general. The prize could be presented in connection with the annual Globalisation Forum and should not be monetary, but a work of art produced by an artist from the country holding the presidency.

*V.* By October 2008, the *Freedom of Movement Forum* has held five meetings and decided to focus on four areas. So far, the Freedom of Movement Forum has, with the assistance of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat, analysed twenty specific obstacles to freedom of movement and written nine letters to the relevant ministers with a description of the current problems and proposals for measures to solve them. A report on the work of the Freedom of Movement Forum by its chairman and the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers will be submitted to the Nordic prime ministers.

*VI.* The ministers for trade, energy and regional policies decided at their meeting on 29-30 September to strengthen the joint *Nordic innovation*

*initiatives in Asia*. The initiative aims at co-funding Nordic cooperation on innovation initiatives and projects between Nordic representations in Asia.

VII. The *Nordic initiative prior to the climate negotiations in 2009* has two elements. The first and biggest element is the establishment of a Nordic COP15 working group to help prepare analyses, accounts, reports, proposals, workshops and side events and to hold meetings that can foster success in the international climate negotiations. The second element is a range of information projects that will help render the impact of climate change in the Arctic visible.

Also the *other initiatives* are well underway and showing steady progress.

Appendix 1 presents the 14 globalisation initiatives in more detail. Appendix 2 presents the draft budget for initiatives in 2009. Appendix 3 contains the report by the ministers for cooperation on the freedom of movement work, and appendix 4 contains a report for the Nordic prime ministers on the work in the Freedom of Movement Forum by the chairman of the forum and by the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The initiatives mentioned above are embedded in the countries and the autonomous territories, the relevant councils of ministers and institutions. The Nordic Council has been invited to monitor the work, and dialogue has been ongoing.

The Nordic ministers for cooperation coordinate the work, make decisions in principle and allocate budget funds. The relevant councils of ministers are responsible for developing and implementing initiatives. In the majority of cases, the initiatives fall under several councils of ministers. A fact-finding mission has been initiated to enhance cross-sector working methods in both the Nordic Council of Ministers and its Secretariat.

# APPENDIX 1

## **The 14 globalisation initiatives launched as a direct result of the prime ministers' meeting in Punkaharju**

### ***1. Globalisation Forum***

The forum will form the basis for recommending specific proposals for joint initiatives in the subject fields prioritised by the prime ministers. The objective of the forum is to provide the Nordic prime ministers and other participants with inspiration and useful ideas that address the possibilities and challenges of globalisation.

The first Nordic Globalisation Forum took place in Riksgränsen on 8-9 April 2008 under the title 'A competitive Nordic region in a globalised world'. The forum gave inspiration to and stimulated a debate about the possibilities and challenges of globalisation and included participants from the Nordic Council, the autonomous territories, the business sector, the education and research sector, NGOs and citizens' organisations and the public administration.

The preliminary work for the 2009 forum started after the summer. The forum will be held on 26-27 February in Iceland and focus on current global challenges facing the Nordic countries. A range of different background documents are being prepared prior to the meeting, including an updated Nordic globalisation barometer and a basis report concerning the innovative skills of the Nordic countries. Iceland's prime minister is responsible for the forum's overall planning and together with the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat will perform the work on the forum. The prime ministers of the other countries will also be involved in the work on the 2009 forum. A continuing dialogue will be held with the Nordic Council in the planning phase.

### ***2. Nordic excellence in research***

The objective is to develop an overall initiative to promote Nordic excellence in research, first in the areas of climate, energy and the environment and then of research in welfare and health. The work on area 1 (climate, energy and the environment) is underway, while area 2 (health and welfare) will be launched later based on the experience gained from the programme work in area 1.

A programme team with representatives from the Nordic institutions NordForsk, the Nordic Innovation Centre (NICe) and Nordic Energy Research (NEF) has worked on the climate, energy and environment programme under the management of Professor Peter Lund from the Helsinki University of Technology, who was appointed by the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Programme development is in the hands of a steering committee under the management of Lena Gustafsson, First Deputy Director General, Vinnova (Sweden).

The steering committee submitted a draft programme to the Nordic Council of Ministers on 25 March 2008.

The draft programme was then submitted for comment to the Council of Ministers for Education and Research (MR-U), the Committee of Senior Officials for Trade, Energy and Regional Policies (EK-NER) and the Council of Ministers for the Environment (MR-M). In addition, the Council of Ministers for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MR-FJLS) and the boards of NordForsk, NICe and NEF have submitted their comments. Other councils of ministers and relevant institutions and cooperation bodies have been informed of the draft.

The Nordic Council of Ministers received the final draft on 29 May. The draft programme covers the key action areas and their scientific content, instruments for cooperation, organisation and programme funding. In brief, the draft is a recommendation to launch a strong Nordic excellence in research programme in the fields of energy, climate and the environment with initial focus on climate-relevant problems, innovation and solution models and a strong link to the business sector in terms of co-funding and choice of key action areas. The strategic scope of the programme comprises the entire chain from causes through consequences to solutions.

The chairmen of EK-U, EK-N and EK-E agreed in late May to and obtained the support of the Nordic Committee for Cooperation and the ministers for cooperation (MR-SAM) for a further preparation process of the Excellence in Research Programme based first on national preparation and then coordination at Nordic level. EK-U serves as an arena for the continued process.

In September 2008, the countries – with the support of an ad hoc group for research issues – reached consensus on the central components of the Excellence in Research Programme, its themes, funding and organisation. The proposal for 'Guidelines for continued design and implementation of the excellence in the research initiative' has been approved by the EK-U following consultation with EK-NE.

The programme covers the period 2009-2013 and will be made up of the following thematic sub-programmes:

- Effect studies and adaptation to climate change
- Interaction of climate change with ice, snow and glaciers
- Nanotechnology and energy efficiency
- Integration of large-scale wind power
- Sustainable bioenergy
- Carbon capture and storage (CCS)

The Excellence in Research Programme has obtained total public funding in the amount of DKK 480.8 million over a five-year period. The public funding consists of funding in the form of funds from the Nordic Council of Ministers, the member countries and the Nordic institutions of NordForsk, the Nordic Innovation Centre and Nordic Energy Research. Furthermore, efforts are being made to involve both the business sector and the EU in the programme funding.

The Council of Ministers for Education and Research (MR-U) intends to make a decision in principle on the launch of the programme on 28 October 2008 and aims at holding the first meeting of the programme board in December 2008.

### ***3. Innovation representation in Asia***

Global competition requires having access to the world's best and most advanced knowledge – wherever located. This makes it more relevant now than ever for the Nordic countries to align themselves with international research environments and growth areas. Cooperation to render the Nordic competences and technology visible should therefore be strengthened.

The Council of Ministers for Trade, Energy and Regional Policies (MR-NER) had a report prepared by a working and reference group consisting of key persons from the Nordic innovation-funded organisations, including organisations represented in Asia.

Against this backdrop, MR-NER decided at its meeting on 29-30 September 2008 to complete activities to strengthen joint Nordic innovation activities in Asia.

The initiative is to co-finance Nordic cooperation on innovation initiatives and projects between Nordic representations located in Asia. Priority is given to themes linked to other globalisation initiatives such as activities thematically covered by the Excellence in Research Programme and projects on competitiveness, creativity, trademarks and design. The programme aims at motivating the Nordic representations in Asia to identify areas for joint activities.

Part of this programme is earmarked for pilot projects to test and develop concepts for a Nordic centre for open innovation in Asia. The pilot projects will be evaluated and create knowledge for developing a more consolidated basis for decisions regarding a potential centre after a period of two years.

#### **4. New Nordic Innovation Prize**

The ministers for trade, energy and regional policies resolved on 29-30 September to establish a Nordic innovation prize. The prize is being presented at the 2008 session of the Nordic Council of Ministers as a proposal submitted by the council. Creating a more competitive Nordic region requires continual renewal. To render role models visible, an innovation prize is being established to provide a specific and positive reward for innovation, i.e. a new technology, product, process or organisation with commercial success in a market or of value to a broader group or society in general. Furthermore, innovation must have the ambition or potential to be an international success.

The prize will be awarded in three categories:

- *Energy, environment, climate*  
including technologies, products and services promoting the environment or being in keeping with sustainable development.
- *Health*  
including gene technology and biotechnology, medicine development, E-health, Living Labs, telemedicine, etc.
- *Service innovation and innovation processes*  
including new services, new ways of organising businesses, new forms of cooperation simplifying and improving everyday life for people and organisations.

Several themes have been selected to appeal broadly to the business sector and the public sector.

The prize can be awarded to companies, public authorities, non-profit organisations or private individuals playing an active role in the Nordic countries or the autonomous territories. A Nordic jury made up of national representatives and international experts will select the winners in the individual categories.

The country holding the presidency is responsible for planning the presentation of the prize, expected to take place in connection with the annual Globalisation Forum, and for ensuring that the prize is a work of art produced by a national artist from the country holding the presidency.

#### **5. Joint Nordic EnergyExpo**

*Nordic Climate Solutions on 25-26 November 2008 and joint display window*

In May 2008, the Nordic Council of Ministers partnered up with the think tank Monday Morning regarding the event 'Nordic Climate Solutions'. Nordic Climate Solutions is an exhibition and a conference to be held on 25-26 November 2008 to promote Nordic environmental and energy technology solutions and brand the Nordic region as a sustainable region. Sweden's Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, will open the conference. The Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies has appointed a steering

committee with representatives from all countries and autonomous territories.

In close collaboration with Nordic Energy Research (NEF), the Nordic Innovation Centre (NICE) has set up a project secretariat to coordinate activities. Relevant institutions, including the Nordic Investment Bank, the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), NordForsk and Nordregio, have been invited to submit proposals for participation in both the exhibition and the conference.

Efforts are being made to have international delegations attend the conference. A delegation from China will attend, and efforts are being made jointly with the export councils of Denmark, Iceland and Sweden, Finpro of Finland and Innovation Norway to have a delegation from Russia as well.

The Nordic Council of Ministers is setting up a web portal as a display window for authorities, professionals and institutions engaged in energy issues on a daily basis. The purpose of the portal is to display the Nordic positions of strength in terms of renewable energy. The display window is a showcase for technologies, institutional structures, policies and instruments, which combined make the Nordic region a global pioneer in the field. The project called for tenders in the summer of 2008, and a consultant has now been found.

## ***6. World Exposition in Shanghai 2010***

The Nordic commissioners general for Expo 2010 met in late February 2008 and expressed their interest in and support for joint Nordic activities for the world exposition in Shanghai in 2010. The Nordic Committee for Cooperation (NSK) discussed the matter in February and the Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies considered the matter in April 2008.

In the course of the summer of 2008, a survey was conducted among the Chinese about their perception and knowledge of the Nordic countries. The survey revealed a positive and uniform picture of the Nordic countries – particularly as regards quality of life and welfare – and was presented to the Nordic commissioners general at their meeting in September.

The survey revealed a highly uniform perception of the Nordic countries and their areas of strength in relation to, for example, the environment and welfare, and can be used for developing joint-Nordic activities. A discussion about proposals related to tourism, the environment/energy and welfare is currently taking place.

The Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers meets regularly with the commissioners general.

The Nordic ministers for trade pointed out at their meeting on 29-30 September 2008 their desire for visible joint Nordic activities to display Nordic positions of strengths in areas like tourism and energy/environment.

## ***7. Nordic commitment as input to climate negotiations***

This Nordic initiative consists of two elements. The first and biggest element is the appointment of a Nordic COP15 working group. The second element is a line of information projects that will bring the impact of climate change in the Arctic to light.

The COP15 group is charged with preparing and helping complete activities such as reports, projects, meetings and conferences to pave the way for successful international climate negotiations. Five areas have been singled out as particularly important to address in a future climate agreement:

- A shared vision, including a long-term global target for emission reduction.

- Extended national and international activities to reduce climate change such as measures to reduce emissions, programmes to reduce emissions from deforestation in developing countries.
- Increased adaptation measures, for instance through international cooperation on adaptation measures in particularly exposed developing countries, risk management strategies and risk reduction, including insurance solutions.
- Increased activities for technology development and transfer to reduce emissions and for climate adaptation.
- Increased activities to fulfil the need for funding and investment to support measures to reduce emissions and for adaptation and technology transfer.

The work of the COP15 group is based partly on the Bali Action Plan and partly on a memorandum prepared at the request of the Committee of Senior Officials for the Environment (EK-M) by Harald Dovland with focus on eight fields:

- Measurable, verifiable and reportable activities
- Sector-based approaches
- Sinks and prevention of deforestation
- International transports
- Adaptation
- Technology
- Funding
- Long-term goals

Rendering visible Arctic climate change and its global impact and consequences can help muster positive support for climate work and achieve a good outcome of the negotiations at the climate conference in Copenhagen in 2009. This will be possible by contributing to the following activities:

- production of one or two short films that make the impact of Arctic climate change apparent;
- establishment of a travelling exhibition with pictures of the indigenous populations and Arctic nature and other vulnerable regions in connection with the COP15 conference in Copenhagen;
- organisation of an exhibition to raise visitors' awareness of and insight into the vulnerability of the unique nature and the changed living conditions in Greenland caused by global climate change; and
- envelopment of the Kulturhuset building in Nordatlantens Brygge, Copenhagen, in fabrics and materials that make it resemble an iceberg as a sculptural and thought-provoking monument for climate change in the North.

In the context of knowledge, a Nordic package of measures will be introduced at the climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009, including measures targeted at children and young people in the Nordic countries and the Baltic States, Nordic Master, Nordplus announcement in 2009, profiling of the Excellence in Research Programme in terms of the climate summit and a list of Nordic climate research initiatives.

In addition, the Nordic Council of Ministers and Greenland organised an Arctic conference in Ilulissat, Greenland, in September 2008. The conference was broadly attended by the EU member states and institutions as well as by representatives from Canada, the USA, Russia, China and Korea. Various NGOs also attended the conference as did representatives of the indigenous populations, researchers, experts and the Nordic governments.

The conference is aimed at helping raise awareness of how the different EU policies influence the Arctic region. Moreover, the conference is aimed at strengthening international involvement in developing the Arctic areas and coordinating the various initiatives.

## **8. Freedom of movement in the Nordic region**

In a dialogue with the national central administrations and the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat, the Freedom of Movement Forum will draw up specific draft solutions to eliminate border obstacles in the Nordic region.

In addition to its chairman Ole Norrback and the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the forum consists of one representative for each Nordic country, appointed by the countries, and one for the Aland Islands.

As of October 2008, the Freedom of Movement Forum has held five meetings and decided to focus on the following four areas:

- Preventive national legislative work aimed to hinder the emergence of new obstacles. This includes joint Nordic coordination on implementing EU directives and interpreting decisions by the European Court of Justice/the EFTA Court.
- Social insurance issues (children and the family, pensions, etc.).
- Direct and indirect taxes, particularly from a cross-border perspective, and moving vehicles.
- Business sector issues – especially problems related to the construction sector (standards and educational requirements/recognition of professional qualifications).

The members of the Freedom of Movement Forum also cooperate in pairs to solve bilateral problems.

So far, the Freedom of Movement Forum has, with the assistance of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat, analysed twenty obstacles to free movement and written nine letters to the relevant ministers, describing the current problems and proposing measures to solve them.

To provide a basis for overcoming particularly difficult obstacles and demonstrate the need for more joint Nordic coordination, the forum has also decided to initiate two analyses in 2008. The analyses address the consequences of different national rules on voluntary early retirement pension and the advantages of coordinated Nordic implementation of EU directives.

At the Nordic Council of Ministers' 2008 session, the ministers of cooperation will present their report on the freedom of movement work in the Nordic Council of Ministers; see appendix 3.

In keeping with the mandate for the Freedom of Movement Forum, the forum reports through its chairman and the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers once a year to the Nordic prime ministers on the progress of its work; see appendix 4.

## **9. Overall plan for the development of the Nordic research and innovation area (NORIA)**

The objective is to strengthen the Nordic countries' global competitiveness by enhancing the development of the Nordic research and innovation area.

The project falls into three sub-areas:

- Joint working group between the Committee of Senior Officials for Education and Research (EK-U) and the Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies (EK-NE)
- Coordination of select national research programmes
- Dialogue with research-funding organisations

The Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers invited all major public research financiers in the Nordic region to join in a dialogue on the

overall globalisation initiative on 5 September 2008. This dialogue has helped improve project progress. The work to coordinate national research programmes in climate, energy and environmental issues takes place within the framework of the Excellence in Research Programme, but the work within eScience has also been enhanced, and a NORIA network been established. On 1 October, a seminar took place on stronger synergies between the Nordic research and innovation area and the European Research Area (ERA).

The ministers for trade, energy and regional policies decided in September 2007 to increase cooperation between the Nordic innovation players. February 2008 saw the introduction of a process in which leading innovation players from the Nordic countries, representatives of the Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies, the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Innovation Centre will identify relevant areas of cooperation and efficient cooperation models in the field of innovation and coordinate national innovation programmes. Also, work is being performed to establish a research programme on user-driven innovation.

The long-term strategic development work takes place through a series of seminars for representatives of the Committee of Senior Officials for Education and Research (EK-U) and the Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies (EK-NE). The work also includes strategies and specific proposals for how best to profile the Nordic research and innovation area – in the national, Nordic, European and global arenas. The first seminar is being planned.

#### ***10. Plan for the furtherance of higher education in the Nordic countries***

The project aims to strengthen the cooperation between the Nordic seats of learning and profile the Nordic region as an attractive region for education.

The project has three different aspects:

- Profiling
- Strengthening synergies of existing tools
- Nordic Master Programme

In the context of the profiling aspect, the objective is for this pilot project to be completed in 2009 and for the experience and results gained to be used as a basis for decisions about continued profiling initiatives over the coming years. A direct announcement for the Nordic organisations responsible for profiling higher education must be completed and reported in 2009. This work should also be seen in the light of the profiling of the Nordic research and innovation area (NORIA) and the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers' overall profiling work.

In terms of strengthening synergies, the project will, for example, consider 'Commercialisation and entrepreneurship at the Nordic seats of learning'. Moreover, the synergies between other Nordic instruments need to be followed up so that the existing tools can be better utilised. The study has been launched and will be ready in November/December 2008.

The Nordic seats of learning gave the first announcement of the Nordic Master Programme, which occurred in 2007, a very positive reception. The six winners are in the process of developing the programme. NOQA, (Nordic Organisation for Quality Assurance), a voluntary cooperation between the Nordic quality assurance bodies within the framework of a major quality assurance project, has performed the first quality assurance. What is more, a discussion about the next announcement is taking place to determine whether the actual announcement text should highlight the subjects (e.g. adaptation to climate change) identified by the prime ministers as being of particular importance.

## **11. Project plan for excellent training for young people and adults**

The overall project objective is to increase the number of young people completing an education after basic general education and increase Nordic knowledge of how best to plan literacy teaching for adults.

Through the project, efforts are being made to focus on knowledge retrieval and distribution in the area and to launch various initiatives to promote an adjusted educational offer for young people and adults and to increase the number of people completing their educations compared to today.

### Status

- Study and exchange of experience in the work to increase the number of people completing higher education (education for young people): The study will be completed in late October 2008. The study provided a basis for a thematic discussion at the meeting of the Council of Ministers for Education and Research (MR-U) in the autumn of 2008. A conference on the results will be held in Lund in November 2008. Additional progress follow-up will be discussed after the meeting of MR-U and the conference in November.
- Development work on entrepreneurship: Nordic experts met in August 2008. The European Commission will hold a round table on entrepreneurship on 4 November 2008. The Nordic and Baltic countries will be invited to attend. The Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications will organise the round table. Additional follow-up will be discussed after the meeting.
- Effect study of teaching adults reading: Mandate for study prepared and announcement expected to be completed in December 2008.
- Establishment of a learning and dialogue forum. The purpose is to exchange ideas and experience as well as raise awareness of/profile the themes discussed: To be completed in 2009 and 2010.

## **12. Illustration of the consequences of climate change on the natural resources of the Nordic region**

### *Background*

The objective is to illustrate the impact of climate change on natural resources in terms of the primary industries of agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food and how the Nordic countries can best prepare themselves for the ramifications within these industries.

The overall objectives are a Nordic knowledge base on how climate change affects the prevalence and utilisation of natural resources and food production. The knowledge base aims at developing an adaptation policy in the relevant areas both nationally and at Nordic level. The sub-objectives are: 1) To develop a programme for the impact of climate change on natural resources and food. 2) To initiate, complete and communicate knowledge of projects and activities related to the production and value chains in the industries. 3) To develop projects within the framework and objective and prepare recommendations based on project results.

### *Working group*

A working group has been appointed, which presented a draft programme on 15 October, which will be submitted for consultation to the relevant councils of ministers/committees of senior officials and relevant Nordic cooperation institutions. The purpose is to ensure general cross-sector cohesion between the draft programme and related Nordic activities. The final draft programme will be prepared on the basis of the consultation and should be in place before the end of the year.

Frøydis Vold of the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food chairs the working group. Before the end of the year, the working group must present a

draft programme and a proposal for programme administration. For instance, the working group is responsible for coordinating the activities in terms of the Excellence in Research Programme.

The themes of the draft programme are expected to have the following headings:

- Effects and measures, production systems – milk production and grain
- Effects and measures, production systems – production, prevalence and sustainable utilisation of the principal commercial fish stocks in the Nordic waters
- Carbon capture and sustainable production of biomass based on woods, wetlands and agricultural areas
- *Cross-sector themes:*
- Food and health: Prevalence of plant, animal and fish diseases as well as zoonoses from a climate perspective
- Protection, adaptation and use of genetic resources in different climate scenarios (both terrestrial and aquatic)
- *Primary industries in the Arctic: the impact of climate change on traditional commercial activities, industry development and settlement*

### ***13. Development and profiling of the Nordic region as a centre for creative industries***

A cross-sector working group (KreaNord) with representatives from both the business and cultural sectors was established in June 2008. A broad reference group has been linked to it, consisting of Nordic creative players. They held a successful kick-off seminar in September 2008.

KreaNord is based on the Nordic green paper on creative industries (published by the Nordic Innovation Centre), and the work falls into four areas:

- network activities
- policy recommendations
- development initiatives
- profiling activities

Furthermore, the existing Nordic Computer Game Programme is supplemented by a globalisation initiative focusing on digital distribution and consumer information.

Future activities include the creation of a web-based platform for Nordic creative industries promoting network and cluster cooperation and acting as a showcase for Nordic work. The continuation of the Nordic kick-off seminar will be arranged in Tallinn in March 2009 with participation by other Baltic Sea countries. The goal is also to profile the Nordic region on a joint Nordic basis in connection with the European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009.

The working group is in the process of preparing proposals for development initiatives that would be important to complete at Nordic level. The councils of ministers/committees of senior officials for culture and trade are to discuss and decide on these activities in early 2009. The Nordic ministers for culture will consider a draft globalisation strategy at their meeting on 29 October 2008.

#### **14. Harmonisation of the Nordic electricity market**

Harmonisation of the Nordic electricity market must ensure an open and more efficient and sustainable electricity market with a high degree of security of supply. Since 1995 and until today, the Nordic electricity market has developed from being four national markets into being one joint Nordic market (Iceland does not take part in the cooperation). Still, further harmonisation is required, in part to meet the joint targets set by the EU in terms of the climate and energy.

The meeting of energy ministers in 2007 had the development of the Nordic electricity market high on the agenda once again: *'The development towards a borderless Nordic electricity market must be accelerated. Grid investments must be raised and further harmonisation of rules must be given priority in order for market players and backbone companies to promote cross-border trading and the establishment of new players.'* In this connection, the committee of senior officials was asked to find out if and how a Nordic system operator could be established.

At their meeting in Umeå on 29-30 September 2008, the energy ministers ascertained that the study completed since the previous meeting of ministers in 2007 has shown the establishment of a Nordic system operator (and thus separate ownership and operation of the backbone network) to be an unsuitable solution to promoting the Nordic perspective at present, facilitating the market integration or improving competition in the electricity market.

The ministers agreed to an action plan with four specific initiatives to encourage the development of a borderless Nordic electricity market in a more targeted and efficient manner.

The national supervisory and system operator authorities play a given role in the work to implement the action plan and are raising the ambitions in the cooperation regardless of the future organisational form.

## APPENDIX 2

### Draft budget 2009 for the globalisation initiatives, which is going through the budget procedure in the Nordic Council

Below follows the Nordic Council of Ministers' proposal for the globalisation initiatives in 2009 to be adopted as part of the 2009 budget by the ministers for cooperation in the session.

In accordance with the press release issued by the prime ministers, the 2009 budget allocates DKK 60 million for funding the globalisation initiatives aimed at supporting the overall priorities of globalisation work. The funds will be used for implementing the proposals contained in the prime ministers' announcement and the Secretary General's proposal for specification of June 2007. The individual specialist councils of ministers can submit input for new initiatives within the overall priorities and applicable budget framework.

		Budget 2009	Budget 2008
<b>Sum</b>	<b>Globalisation initiatives</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>61,620</b>
5-2000-1	Globalisation pool*	0	57,512
5-2020-1	Globalisation Forum	4,000	4,108
5-2025-1	Nordic Excellence in Research	15,500	0
5-2030-1	Innovation representation in Asia	1,100	0
5-2035-1	Innovation prize for Nordic quality	1,000	0
5-2040-1	Joint EnergyExpo	4,500	0
5-2045-1	World exposition in Shanghai 2010	2,000	0
5-2050-1	Nordic input to climate negotiations	4,000	0
5-2055-1	Freedom of movement in the Nordic region	2,000	0
5-2060-1	NORIA	4,000	0
5-2065-1	Plan to further higher education in the Nordic region	9,000	0
5-2070-1	Project plan for excellent training of young people and adults	3,700	0
5-2075-1	Impact of climate change on primary industries	5,800	0
5-2080-1	Profiling of the Nordic region as a centre for creative industries	3,400	0
<b>By category</b>		<b>60,000</b>	<b>61,620</b>
	Project funds	60,000	61,620

\* Of which DKK 5.3 million yet to be allocated.

The 2008 budget contained a total pool of DKK 61.6 million to follow up the prime ministers' press release and the Secretary General's input. The funds were allocated to the Globalisation Forum and a total globalisation pool. This approach was used because the globalisation initiatives at the time of adopting the 2008 budget were not sufficiently far in the process to include the initiatives in the budget. The specialist councils of ministers, the ministers for cooperation and the Secretariat have now made enough progress to specify the initiatives includable in the budget at item level.

The Nordic Council considered the proposal submitted by the Nordic Council of Ministers in September-October. The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers agreed to a compromise, which will influence the spending of the globalisation funds from 2008 as part of the compromise means that in 2009 an amount of DKK 2 million will be spent on cultural globalisation initiatives,

funded by unspent 2008 globalisation funds. An unallocated pool of DKK 5.3 million exists from 2008, of which DKK 2 million will now be spent on cultural globalisation initiatives. Hence, the compromise has no impact on the total amount of funds spent on globalisation in 2008 and 2009 combined.

## APPENDIX 3

### Report by the ministers for cooperation on the freedom of movement work, 2008 session

#### 1. Background and special activities

Twenty-nine specific border obstacles were eliminated between 1 January 2003 and 16 September 2008.

Moreover, in recent years, a host of different projects/activities have been launched or completed, helping facilitate the movement of people and companies by making the necessary information more easily accessible.

#### 2008

In 2008, eight obstacles were dismantled, and the year also saw further improvement in five areas. Moreover, freedom of movement has been promoted through new information activities/projects.

*The following has been solved in 2008:*

1. Danish driving instructors working in Denmark, but residing in Sweden can now renew their licences as driving instructors in Denmark.
2. People with a Swedish coordination number, but residing in another Nordic country are now included in the Swedish Population Address Register of addresses in Sweden, making it easier for them to open an account or become a bank customer, etc. In future, it will also be possible for certain groups of non-registered people to obtain a Swedish civil registration number.
3. Icelandic distance learners can now obtain parents' allowance although they are residing in another Nordic country.
4. It is now possible for people residing in a Nordic country other than Norway to obtain unemployment benefits in the country of residence after the Norwegian rehabilitation period (activity support) in Norway as a change in interpretation/new practice means that working periods in both countries can now be combined according to the EC rules.
5. People who have worked in Denmark but resided in Sweden, are on long-term sick leave or parental leave and have been given a notice of dismissal can now obtain Swedish unemployment benefits.
6. Unemployed persons residing in Sweden can now take on part-time work in Denmark while receiving supplementary unemployment benefits from Denmark.
7. Danish citizens residing in Denmark may now drive a company car registered in Sweden in Denmark, using it for both professional and private purposes.
8. The Scandinavian governments have decided to allocate funds for compiling annual cross-border statistics as a basis for improving local and regional planning in the border regions between the countries.

In terms of information, a social insurance portal has been introduced, offering guidance at different stages in life and in connection with moving, commuting or studying in another Nordic country. [www.nordsoc.org](http://www.nordsoc.org) is administered by the Nordic social services authorities.

#### *New organisation to eliminate border obstacles in the Nordic region*

A large number of border obstacles still need to be eliminated. In the autumn of 2007, the Nordic ministers for cooperation established a separate Freedom of Movement Forum, which since the beginning of 2008 has been charged with encouraging the work to eliminate border obstacles. In connection with the Nordic Council 2007 session, the Nordic prime ministers appointed Finnish ambassador Ole Norrback as chairman of the Freedom of Movement Forum. The ministers for cooperation of the countries then appointed the national representatives. These are:

Bjarne Mørk Eidem (Norway), Ole Stavad (Denmark), Lars Erik Häggman (Finland), Guðríður Sigurðardóttir (Iceland), Pia Kinhult (Sweden) and Gunnar Westerholm (Åland Islands).

The forum will prepare specific draft solutions in dialogue with the countries and report annually to the prime ministers on the progress of its work. So far, 49 letters have been forwarded to the responsible ministries, the European Commission, etc. Several ministers and parliamentarians have been called upon and various analytical work has been launched. Further information about the activities of the Freedom of Movement Forum is available in the separate report by the forum.

## **2. Results achieved in 2008**

### **2.1 Social affairs and health**

#### *Convention on Social Assistance and Social Services*

The Nordic convention has now been revised. The revised convention now has an article on involved local authorities having to cooperate and establish how to distribute the costs of supporting a person that moves to a local authority area in another country, but who due to functional impairment needs social assistance or social services. The revised convention also includes a new article stating that the social authorities in the local authorities involved must help establish the right to transportation services for functionally impaired people having lived in another Nordic country for some time.

#### *Parents' allowance for Icelandic distance learners*

Distance learners studying at an Icelandic university (or another school), but residing in another Nordic country can now receive Icelandic parents' allowance provided they meet other applicable requirements.

### **2.2 Education**

#### *Agreement on Nordic Educational Community at Upper Secondary School Level*

Under the agreement, which took effect on 27 March 2008, the Nordic countries are under an obligation to make education at upper secondary school level (including vocational schools) available on identical terms to students from other Nordic countries. Further information about the agreement is available at

[http://www.norden.org/avtal/utbildning/sk/index.asp?lang=.](http://www.norden.org/avtal/utbildning/sk/index.asp?lang=)

## **2.3 Finance**

### *New rules for people working in the airline industry*

The new protocol on amendment of the Nordic double taxation treaty signed in April 2008 contains an amendment facilitating the taxation of people working in the airline industry. It concerns flying personnel who used to be taxed in the country of residence on income from international flights, while the country of work has been entitled to tax income from national flights. The new protocol taxes all income from work performed on board an aircraft (both national and international flights) only in the country of residence. The protocol is yet to enter into force. The new rules cannot be applied until 1 January 2009.

## **2.4 Trade**

### *More uniform requirements for trucks on certain stretches*

The Nordic countries have different requirements applying to the length of trucks, which has made cross-border transport and trading more difficult. Since July 2008, the length of trucks permitted to use selected roads in, for instance, the Nordland county in Norway has been increased to 25 metres. This will facilitate commercial transports between parts of northern Norway and northern Sweden, Finland and the Baltic States where 25-m trucks are common. The scheme will be assessed after a number of years.

## **2.5 Food**

### *Joint keyhole labelling*

A joint Nordic label for food (green keyhole label) was negotiated in 2008. The label enables consumers – also across borders – to recognise healthy food while it also becomes easier for companies to deal with one and the same label in the Nordic region.

### *Exchange of experience in effective control*

In the context of food control, a Nordic control conference and a Nordic lawyers conference are held once a year to exchange experience between the countries and to reach a greater holistic view on how to improve food control. A Nordic holistic view/Nordic agreement will offer consumers greater safety and companies better conditions for dealing with uniform rules throughout the Nordic region.

## **2.6 Labour market**

### *Unemployment benefits after Norwegian rehabilitation*

A person who has been injured/is on long-term sick leave in Norway, but has resided in another Nordic country could not previously obtain unemployment benefits from his or her country of residence as the Norwegian rehabilitation period (activity period with support) was not classified as an insured period. This made it impossible to combine the insurance periods in Norway and the country of residence to obtain unemployment benefits. These rules have now been changed so the rehabilitation period counts as an insured period in Norway.

### *Commuters on long-term sick leave are eligible for unemployment benefits*

People who have worked in Denmark and been given notice of dismissal during parental leave or long-term sick leave were previously unable to join the Swedish unemployment fund after having recovered or their children had grown older. Sweden did not regard such a person as 'coming directly from a job abroad'. This problem has now been solved by classifying the sick leave/parental leave as 'time that may be ignored'.

### *Part-time work in Øresund possible*

Due to unclear rules, it has not previously been possible for unemployed people residing in Sweden to take on part-time work in Denmark, the opinion being that such people cannot obtain supplementary unemployment benefits from Denmark for the time they do not work. This has now been clarified and improved the conditions for part-time unemployed cross-border workers in the Øresund region.

## **2.7 Other areas**

### *Rescue services can enhance their cooperation*

It is now possible for the rescue services in the mountain region between Norway and Sweden to improve the coordination of cross-border resources. Rescue helicopters can now rescue people in the neighbouring country and radio communication options have been established between the Swedish and Norwegian systems for the purpose of communication in the terrain. The equipment has also been coordinated and joint GPS coordinates solved. The mountain rescue services should now be able to operate without border obstacles.

### *Swedish company car in Denmark*

Danish citizens residing in Denmark but working in Sweden have not previously been permitted to drive a Swedish company car in Denmark, neither for professional nor private purposes. A decision by the European Court of Justice has now made this possible.

### *Cross-border statistics*

The governments of Denmark, Norway and Sweden have decided once a year to compile cross-border statistics, showing commuter flows, residence, education, etc., in the regions between the countries. Until now, national statistics have not taken labour force movement, etc., to/from adjacent areas in the neighbouring countries into account, which has made it harder for border local authorities and border regions to plan their activities and investments. With the new cross-border statistics, planning also in the border regions will comprise factors applicable on or originating from the other side of the border.

## **2.8 Information improvements**

### *New Nordic social insurance portal*

On 2 June, the Nordic social affairs and health ministers launched a new Nordic social insurance portal – [www.nordsoc.org](http://www.nordsoc.org). For instance, the portal offers information about which national legislation governs a person in different situations.

### *New and extended web portal for Hello Norden*

The Nordic Council of Ministers' information services Hello Norden has renewed and improved its information portal for people in need of guidance regarding work, studies or relocating between the Nordic countries.

### *Seminars for handling officers of national authorities*

Nine information seminars have been held in 2008 for the purpose of training officers in and improving the handling of inter-Nordic issues in the areas of family benefits/social insurance, studies/education, international health care services, relocating and pensions. The seminars took place under the auspices of the Norden Associations, with funds coming from the Nordic Council of Ministers. Some 500 Nordic handling officers will have improved their Nordic competences in their professional areas before the end of the year thanks to these activities that benefit the mobile population in the Nordic region.

#### *Help with income tax returns across borders*

The Swedish tax authorities and the tax service SkatØresund have increased their cooperation to help commuters between Denmark and Sweden fill in their income tax returns. Similar activities have been undertaken for years in several Nordic border regions.

#### *Nordic database on border obstacles*

In the spring of 2008, a Nordic searchable and relatively public database on known border obstacles in the Nordic region was established. The database has both a public section and a more detailed section for an inner circle of users, e.g. the Nordic information services, cross-border committees, etc. The database was presented on 5 September 2008 and is available at <http://granshinder.norden.org>.

### **3. Initiatives launched**

#### **3.1 Social affairs and health**

##### *Working-life-oriented rehabilitation across national borders*

Over the years, some problems have been related to the possibility (or impossibility) of undergoing working-life-oriented rehabilitation in the country of residence if the country of work lies on the other side of the national border. A regional Norwegian-Swedish pilot project is taking place between Hedmark and Värmland, and a similar pilot project is taking place between Finland and Sweden in Tornedalen. Hopefully, the cooperation between Sweden and Finland can be extended throughout the countries in the autumn of 2008/spring of 2009. The purpose of the pilot projects is to lay down joint handling routines for rehabilitation issues for border workers. The routines are based on a joint interpretation of the coordination provisions of EC Regulation No. 1408/71. Talks are also taking place about similar cooperation between Denmark and Sweden in the Øresund region.

##### *Electronic prescription and prescription validity*

All Nordic countries are introducing electronic prescriptions to replace paper prescriptions. The Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S) has decided to attempt to implement a scheme where e-prescriptions can be used uniformly throughout the Nordic region. The Nordic eHälsogruppen will prepare an action plan for how to implement e-prescriptions in the Nordic countries. The plan is to be in place before the MR-S meeting in 2009.

##### *Cooperation between Nordic liaison bodies*

A number of so-called liaison bodies exist between the central social authorities in the Nordic region, which hold regular meetings. They discuss practice and the possibilities of improving practice and procedures at the same time as information is provided about changes in rules and legislation. The groups also discuss the interpretation of new EU decisions and other community law. This work benefits citizens by way of better procedures and higher quality in national handling of inter-Nordic issues. The principal liaison bodies focus on pensions, family benefits, governing law and rehabilitation.

##### *Review of the Nordic convention on social security*

The Nordic convention on social security is now reviewed for the purpose of adapting it to the new EC Regulation No. 883/2004 and the regulation implementing it, set to take effect in 2009. The Nordic convention supplements the EC regulation particularly in terms of third-country nationals and non-working people.

## 3.2 Education

### *Nordic Master Programme*

The six winning consortiums appointed in June continued their work in 2008. One purpose is to identify the type of border obstacles that may exist when several Nordic educational institutions cooperate across national borders. The autumn of 2008 saw the preparation of the first report on the border obstacles identified. These obstacles will be discussed at the MR-U meeting on 28 October 2008.

### *Identifying border obstacles in the field of education*

The Committee of Senior Officials for Education and Research decided in September 2006 to ask the advisory groups in the field of education – NSS, HÖGUT and SVL – to identify existing border obstacles in their future work plans and present proposals for measures to eliminate these obstacles. The results of the work will be described in annual reports. The work plans and annual reports are to be submitted to the committee. This will thus occur from 2007 onwards.

### *Mutual recognition of higher education in the Nordic countries*

In 2004, HÖGUT funded a project to promote the recognition of higher education in the Nordic countries. The authorities and organisations responsible for recognising higher education in the Nordic countries, the so-called ENIC/NARIC offices, were involved. The project aimed at dismantling border obstacles in higher education in the Nordic region by coordinating Nordic recognition efforts with regard to behaviour and methods and by examining future forms of cooperation that could develop Nordic cooperation in the context of recognition. In addition to the Nordic region, the project considers recognition between countries in the adjacent area and between the Nordic region and other countries/regions in the world.

The ENIC/NARIC network plays an important role with respect to reporting in relation to the Reykjavik Declaration, 'Nordic declaration on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education', signed in 2004. The Nordic Council of Ministers received the first report in late 2005, which pointed out that national differences regarding the structure of the educational systems and the practices, responsibility and tasks of the national offices make it difficult to paint a precise picture of the recognition of higher education in the Nordic region. The report concisely describes the most important experience and problems reported by the ENIC/NARIC offices in the Nordic countries. The main conclusion is that 'although national differences exist in terms of assessing foreign higher education, they do not create insurmountable problems of recognition'.

The main conclusions of the report are that we still need knowledge, competences and qualifications in the work to assess foreign higher education as well as solid knowledge about the Nordic systems of higher education. Universities and colleges also need to develop knowledge and methods for better handling the recognition tasks for which they are responsible. The recognition offices and other players at national levels also need improved (and more specific) knowledge about how the institutions perform their recognition tasks. Before the next round of reporting in 2008, the national ministries of education need to perform the specific task of examining the institutions' activities in this area and thus motivate the involvement of the seats of learning

HÖGUT has charged the ENIC/NARIC network with continuing its work in 2007-2009. The next report will be submitted to HÖGUT at the end of 2008.

### *Student grants in the Nordic region*

The work performed by the student grants group is being reworded and a new mandate will be decided in HÖGUT in November 2008.

### *Identifying problems in school cooperation*

The EK-U advisory group for school cooperation (NSS) is in the process of identifying border obstacles in the school area.

### *Recognition of real competences*

In the field of 'Adult education', the advisory group under the EK-U (SVL) has addressed the problems of border obstacles by focusing on 'Recognition of real competences/validation'. Reports will be prepared and seminars on the subject will be held also in 2008.

Even the Nordplus Vuxen programme has set a priority of recognising and validating real competences focusing on the development of tools and methods for documenting competences acquired through formal as well as informal learning.

The SVL has not addressed any specific border obstacles in 2008, but has focused on validation.

## **3.3 Trade**

### *Improved services trading in the Nordic region*

In 2008, NICE has launched a project named 'Nordic platforms for better services trading'. The project aims at facilitating a more efficient market for services trading in the Nordic region and Europe. The idea is that the Nordic region should influence and follow up on EU policy and initiatives in the area of services and be a standard maker instead of a standard taker. Moreover, the work to harmonise the services sectors must focus on promoting innovation. Small and medium-sized enterprises need to take an active part in the process.

This year, the project has concentrated on identifying the measures that can best be initiated to achieve the goals. Three different measures were identified in 2008:

#### 1. Standardisation of services

The identification looks at which service sectors hold the greatest potential for Nordic initiatives for preparing joint standards to pave the way for direct comparability between similar services among the Nordic countries and thus enable the EU service directive to be realised.

#### 2. Joint certification schemes

The identification, which is unique in Europe, paints an overall picture of the 30 main certification schemes in the Nordic countries, the Baltic States, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. The identification will provide a basis that facilitates the introduction of international rather than national certification schemes. Furthermore, the identification will include an analysis attempting to measure the actual economic consequences of various certification schemes as well as the gains uniform standards will give customers and companies and the costs of different standards. This is important to get political focus on the problem.

#### 3. Health services

The health sector is highly important to both the public and private sectors in the Nordic region. The study looks at different trade barriers connected to health services, i.e. barriers to the free movement of patients and doctors and the establishment in the Nordic region for non-Nordic medical companies, etc. The potential for joint Nordic health services will also be assessed. The study is set to contribute important input to EU proposals for new rules. And it will provide useful input to the EU's work on proposals for new rules on free movement of health services.

The Nordic standardisation organisations participate actively in the project 'Nordic platforms for better services trading'. NICE, these organisations and the Nordic business sector will follow up the identification work in the form of a number of new projects in 2009.

### *Venture capital*

The Committee of Senior Officials for Trade and Energy Policies and the Committee of Senior Officials for Finance appointed a task force in the autumn of 2007 for the purpose of using analyses, model calculation and dialogues with key environments to further document whether intervention is required in the Nordic venture capital market on establishment of a venture capital fund. The results of the task force's work, which focused on funding in the start-up phase and the expansion phase, show that the market has failed in these segments in the Nordic region. This is described in the report 'Nordic risk capital market', ordered by Professor Marku Maulam, and the report also offers proposals for what the Nordic countries can do to improve the Nordic venture capital markets. The conclusions and proposals of the report will be elaborated within the framework of cooperation in both MR-NER and MR-FINANS in the autumn of 2008. Then, a decision, if any, will be made about joint Nordic cooperation on venture capital.

### *New Nordic business sector information on the Internet*

The Nordic Council of Ministers is in conjunction with Öresund Direkt and Grensetjänsten, among others, establishing a shared business sector information portal for primarily small and medium-sized enterprises wanting to recruit staff, set up business or import/export in a Nordic neighbouring country. Regionally in the Øresund region, the work will be completed in the autumn of 2008, and in 2009 for the entire Nordic region.

### *Projects on standardisation in the construction industry*

Seven projects of importance to the work on freedom of movement have been launched in the fields of construction work and environmental standards. The projects were initiated in September 2006 and have been running for two years. The projects aim at identifying and recommending rules in the fields of construction and environmental standardisation. The following sub-projects are running:

1. Nordic documentation for harmonised rock requirements.
2. Elimination of fire requirement barriers in the Nordic region.
3. Preparation of general guidelines for environmental assessment and CE labelling of Nordic construction articles in a European context.
4. Harmonisation of Nordic wood construction rules.

### *Standardisation project in the field of goods and services*

In addition to the projects mentioned above, three standardisation projects have been launched in the field of goods and services. They are:

1. Nordic horizontal standards for collecting environmental tests.
2. International standard for easy-to-open packaging.
3. Market harmonisation of information communication, especially for bioenergy materials.

All these identification projects will report their results in the autumn of 2008.

### *Authorisations for electricians and electrical contractors*

At the request of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Secretariat, NICE has identified the authorisation requirements in the electricity and the HVAC industries. The objective was to produce information about what regulations lead to inequality in these industries between the countries. On the basis of this identification, more intensive Nordic cooperation is recommended to prepare joint Nordic rules of establishment for the electricity industry, which can then provide a basis for jointly harmonising EU directives in the area. Such joint Nordic rules – and European rules in the longer run – should be of such a nature that they are suitable for supervision and approval through accreditation.

The Nordic trade ministers decided at their meeting on 29-30 September to send a letter to the Nordic ministers for education to encourage them to introduce schemes within a five-year period with automatic mutual recognition of the electrical contractors education programme and to harmonise education requirements for such educations in the Nordic region within a five-year period.

#### *Joint deposit system in the Nordic region*

In 2004, a study of the differences in the deposit systems for beverages packaging in the Nordic region, etc., was completed under the auspices of the National Board of Trade in Sweden. NICE will follow up this work to clarify the conditions for a joint deposit system in the Nordic region.

### **3.4 Labour market**

#### *Exchange of information about EC labour market directives*

Continued work is taking place regarding exchanging information about the interpretation of EC directives on health and safety at work and employment law and information between the Nordic countries about how they intend to implement these directives. The purpose of the coordination is to prevent the emergence of new Nordic obstacles to freedom of movement.

#### *Nordic standardisation group on, for instance, machines and personal protective equipment*

MR-A has allocated funds to the working group involved in Nordic standardisation in terms of applicable EC directives in the area. The standardisation work comprises a wide spectrum of areas, but particularly machines and personal protective equipment have recently been in focus.

### **3.5 Finance**

#### *Nordic assistance agreement (tax)*

The Nordic assistance agreement in the field of tax has now been negotiated. The agreement regulates payments between the authorities in the Nordic countries and issues of debt collection and information exchange between the countries. The countries are in the process of translating the agreement. The agreement is likely to be signed in Copenhagen in the spring of 2009 and can then enter into force as soon as all the countries have announced that they have amended their national rules in keeping with the revised agreement.

#### *Protocol on amendment to double taxation treaty signed*

As a result of the Nordic tax treaty group's work, the Nordic governments and the Faroe Islands signed a protocol on 4 April 2008 on amending the treaty to avoid double taxation of income and wealth. The protocol concerns changes in taxation of dividends from subsidiaries and in personal taxation of capital gains after relocation, and concerns people working on board aeroplanes and people receiving pension benefits or similar benefits from another Nordic country. The protocol is being considered by the national parliaments and cannot take effect until 1 January 2009.

According to the new protocol on the Nordic tax treaty, the general rule is to tax pension benefits, life annuities and social law benefits in both the paying country and the country of residence. When calculating tax, the country of residence must deduct the tax paid in the paying country. However, Finland and Sweden can temporarily apply the rule that pension benefits paid by other Nordic countries to inhabitants in Finland or Sweden are only taxed in the paying country. This will apply on the condition that the person resided in Finland or Sweden on 4 April 2008 and received such benefit.

### **3.6 Environment**

#### *Nordic environmental certification of small and medium-sized enterprises*

A project has been launched under the title 'Developing the Nordic cooperation between the established, less formal approaches to eco-management and eco-certification systems', and the objective is to harmonise existing environmental certification systems for small and medium-sized enterprises in the Nordic region.

#### *Rules on shipments of waste in the Nordic region*

EU Regulation No. 1013/2006 on 'shipments of waste' regulates shipments of waste in the Nordic region, etc. Under the regulation, shipments of hazardous and problematic waste, etc., must be approved by the authorities in both the exporting and importing countries. Two seminars have been arranged (September 2007 and September 2008) to bring Nordic officers together and increase the understanding of each other's procedures and problems. The seminars are set to help make the requirements easier to understand and more uniform.

#### *Cooperation on a joint market for electronic waste*

The project 'Improved WEEE recycling with escort memories' illustrated the possibilities of labelling electronic products and advantages with better, simpler and more efficient recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). Electrical and electronic equipment or parts thereof often contain hazardous and health-damaging materials that may hamper or limit recycling efficiency. Improved knowledge about EEE and WEEE can help foster the establishment of a joint market for such products/waste.

### **3.7 Energy**

#### *General*

The Nordic Council of Ministers wants to develop the Nordic electricity market towards a borderless market. The market has become increasingly borderless through gradual development over the past 15 years. In 2008, the following initiatives have been introduced to reduce the number of obstacles and to promote cross-border trading in the Nordic electricity market:

#### *Cost-benefit analysis*

In the spring of 2008, a cost-benefit analysis was made of a joint end-user market for electricity in the Nordic region. ECON and NordREG made the analysis at the request of the Nordic Electricity Market Group. The project will result in recommendations for how to establish such a market.

#### *Basis for joint investments in the electricity market*

In 2008/2009, the Electricity Market Group proposes a review of how the Nordic countries make investment decisions in the electricity market. The purpose is to look at the conditions for joint Nordic investments.

#### *Cooperation on wind power in the Kvarken region*

A wind power project has been initiated in the Kvarken region to set up a cooperation network between energy companies, authorities and universities with a view to finding opportunities for cooperation in different areas: product development, education, coordination and business sector cooperation. Knowledge of and coordination relating to the way the countries support and fund alternative electricity generation methods facilitate and create conditions for enhanced cooperation. Wind power is a growing market where the education of wind power experts does not meet today's demands. The possibilities of organising education in the area need to be improved to guarantee future power generation. The current project is set to do this, for instance.

### **3.8 Legal cooperation**

#### *Review of Nordic inheritance convention*

The Nordic group of experts in family law has since the autumn of 2007 been reviewing the so-called Nordic inheritance convention from 1934 (specifies

which country's legislation in the Nordic region is to apply on death in certain situations). The review is scheduled for completion by 2009-2010.

### **3.9 Other areas**

#### *North Atlantic cooperation*

The Nordic Atlantic Cooperation (NORA) expects to embark on an OECD analysis of the NORA region in the course of 2009. According to plan, the analysis will focus on the areas where more detailed strategic cooperation between Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Coastal Norway will strengthen economic trends in the region by developing comparative advantages, tapping unexploited opportunities and fostering the cooperation between NORA members. The identification and elimination of regional border obstacles will be a natural starting point for an analysis with this focus. NORA's executive committee and OECD representatives met in December 2008 for the purpose of entering into a contract as from January 2009.

#### *Work to strengthen communication about Kvarken*

A traffic project known as the Kvarken Shortcut System has been initiated. The project aims at developing route E12 from the Norwegian coast via Umeå and Vasa in Kvarken to Russia into an efficient environment-friendly and smart communication link from a Nordic and European perspective. The development of the route also supports Kvarken traffic, which is a condition for all cross-border cooperation in the region. The Kvarken Council manages the project.

#### *Nordic-Baltic freedom of movement programme for public administration, trade and culture*

MR-SAM has decided to introduce the Nordic-Baltic freedom of movement programme in the field of public administration, trade and industry and culture 2009-2013. The draft programme is to be formally approved by MR-SAM and the Baltic governments in the end of 2008 for commencement in January 2009.

## **4. Cooperation with other organisations**

#### *Cooperation with the European Commission's Nordic SOLVIT team*

The Nordic Council of Ministers has set up cooperation with the European Commission's Secretary General of the single European market and particularly with its problem-solving network known as SOLVIT. Hopefully, more formalised cooperation between the Nordic Council of Ministers and SOLVIT will be in place in the autumn of 2008.

## APPENDIX 4

### **Report for the Nordic prime ministers on the work in the Freedom of Movement Forum, by the chairman of the forum and by the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers**

#### Introduction:

The Nordic prime ministers announced at their meeting in Punkaharju in June 2007 that it is important to endeavour to facilitate citizens' interaction in the Nordic countries in all possible ways. With this in mind, the Nordic ministers for cooperation established the Freedom of Movement Forum in October 2007. The ministers also decided that the forum should be managed by a specially appointed chairman and the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Ambassador Ole Norrback was appointed chairman of the forum. According to the mandate, the chairman is required to report annually to the prime ministers on the work undertaken in the forum together with the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The task is to identify border obstacles, rank them in order of priority and prepare specific proposals for how to eliminate them. We see an efficient Nordic domestic market with free movement of goods and labour as a key condition for solving the problems facing the Nordic countries due to globalisation and demographic trends. Overall, trade with other Nordic countries represents about 20% of the countries' foreign trade – and as much as up to 25% of some countries' exports. Exports between Nordic countries totalled more than EUR 71 billion in 2007. Even though the figures are not modest, analyses show that they can still be optimised by eliminating the obstacles to trade and movement between the Nordic countries.

We have held five meetings to date. The first year's meetings focused on defining our task and prioritising and on finding work methods to complete the task.

It was important to prioritise a number of main initiatives with a view to achieving results. Over the years, quite a large number of border obstacles have been described and documented, and it will not be possible for the Freedom of Movement Forum to follow up on all of them in the short term. However, the Nordic Council of Ministers has successively followed a number of additional subjects, following up on inquiries from citizens, companies and organisations.

Developing work methods has also been important. A key element in the work is to use our political network and mandate actively. We have done so by means of writing inquiries to ministers and holding a number of meetings with relevant players such as parliamentarians, ministers, senior officials and organisations.

We have seen great interest in our work on freedom of movement – especially among Northerners and among parliamentarians and ministers. We have also seen that considerable uncertainty surrounds what obstacles exist and how to get an overview of them. Often, ministries and government officials lack specific understanding of how rules and practice in one country constitute an obstacle for citizens in another Nordic country.

In our talks with ministers, we have seen accommodation and significant interest, but far too seldom a great will to act and put political weight behind

the governments' wish to remove the barriers to freedom of movement in the Nordic countries.

In our experience, Nordic cooperation is influenced by the fact that politicians must pay close attention to ensure that decisions are implemented at the administrative level. In our talks with parliamentarians, we have pointed out the importance of stressing that new bills must contain broader deliberations than strictly national ones and focus on the compulsory description of the relationship with EU law. In our opinion, new bills will pave the way for a broader and better-qualified basis for political decisions if they briefly describe how rules in the same area are in the other Nordic countries and deliberate on what obstacles a bill may pose to citizens in other countries. The parliamentarians themselves have indicated that they lack knowledge of the problems because the parliamentary work does not focus on this.

This being the case, we find it very positive that the presidency has had reports prepared on the problems that exist when Swedish rules apply: the Swedish Social Insurance Agency's report 'Analysis of the application of social insurance law in the Nordic region' on social security in general and the more detailed report from the Swedish Unemployment Insurance Board, 'Cross-border workers in the Nordic region' on unemployment benefits. The reports help attract attention to the border obstacles and ensure knowledge among the public and political decision-makers.

#### Priorities:

We have given priority to the following four areas:

1) First, new border obstacles must not arise.

This can be achieved by enhancing the cooperation between the Nordic countries in drafting new legislation. We will propose that the countries commit themselves to deciding whether new border obstacles can arise in connection with the drafting of new legislation. It is important to start from the Helsinki Treaty's basis in the preamble, according to which the Nordic countries aim at implementing uniform rules of law in as many respects as possible, and from the articles to the treaty stipulating that the drafting of legislation and other legal precepts must observe full equal treatment of citizens, achieve maximum agreement between the countries' legislation in private law and that mutual coordination must be achieved in all other legislative areas.

Moreover, we regard it as highly important that the Nordic governments and parliaments in terms of directive implementation pay attention to the difficulties that may arise as a result of introducing common rules. We have taken the initiative to have the Nordic Council of Ministers prepare an analysis of the advantages of close cooperation in implementing EC directives. We consider it a possibility that the Nordic countries prepare joint white papers on the implementation of, above all, EC directives.

Finally, it is important that the government officials in the Nordic countries that are EU member states focus on decisions by the EFTA Court when decisions by the European Court of Justice are discussed at civil servant level.

2) Second, we have decided to focus on social security.

One reason is that this area results in many inquiries from citizens to the authorities and another that this is an area in which citizens in the Nordic countries seriously risk being caught between the different national systems, and finally that the business sectors in the Nordic countries see many obstacles in terms of recruiting labour due to problems related to social security.

We have initiated an analysis of the biggest problem – the risk that pension benefit qualifying periods are lost on disability pension if a person has been covered by several countries' social security legislation and is not awarded the right to pension benefits from all countries where pension time has been accumulated. This entails a considerable risk of financial marginalisation and is a significant deviation from the Nordic countries' social security system structure.

Also, an analysis will be launched of work training for unemployed people and people on sick leave and of family benefits.

We have made a number of inquiries to ministries in social-security-related issues. The answers have not demonstrated any will to amend rules that can entail social security obstacles to citizens in the Nordic countries.

3) Third, we have chosen to address direct and indirect taxes – especially with a view to border problems.

One source of many inquiries is the big differences in the national rules on car registration and taxes. The differences cause commuters as well as people moving between the countries to run into problems.

Regional tax seminars will be arranged for the purpose of selecting the areas in which initiatives in the border regions seem most needed.

Moreover, the Nordic Council of Ministers will carry out a study of registration and tax policy of vehicles.

4) Fourth, we have decided to focus on the construction industry.

The area is characterised by the fact that the work being carried out is highly comparable. Poul Schlüter's report from 2005 stated that 'the Nordic construction market must be developed into a domestic market'. Based on large-scale mapping of the construction industry to be published in the autumn of 2008, we will conduct additional studies and make inquiries to the ministries to change the rules and practice that stand in the way of developing a single market in the construction industry.

#### Recommendations:

– As mentioned at the prime ministers' meeting at the Göta Canal, it should be pointed out that it takes active participation on the part of government members and officials to perform the task. The prime ministers must on behalf of their governments send clear political signals to the ministries' government officials.

We expect inquiries to ministers in future to be received with a greater understanding of the importance of eliminating border obstacles.

– We recommend that the prime ministers advocate the introduction by the country governments and parliaments of rules and procedures for how to prevent border obstacles from arising at national level – partly in connection with the passing of national legislation and partly through implementation of EC directives and interpretation of decisions by the European Court of Justice and the EFTA Court.

– The prime ministers are recommended to declare that a solution should be found to the problem with people who accumulate pension time in several Nordic countries but cannot be awarded pension benefits from all the countries.

– The prime ministers are recommended to declare that work should be undertaken towards a Nordic domestic market for the construction industry where joint building standards apply and vocational training programmes from other Nordic countries are recognised automatically.

– We recommend that all countries like Sweden analyse what border obstacles may be caused by their own and other countries' legislation with an eye on ensuring a qualified basis for public debate and political decisions.

## **Appendix to the report for the prime ministers on the work of the Freedom of Movement Forum – status of specific measures:**

### **1) Inquiries submitted to ministers:**

#### Renewal of licence for driving instructors

People working as driving instructors in Denmark must renew their professional driving licences every five years. This requires registration with the National Registration Office in Denmark. This provision has particularly affected people working as driving instructors in Denmark but residing in Skåne. The Freedom of Movement Forum has sent a letter to the Danish Minister for Justice asking her to amend the executive order requiring residence in Denmark for renewal of driving licence.

Denmark has answered that there is no will to change the rule in question, but that dispensation will be granted in all cases.

#### Unemployment fund for graduate academics

In Denmark, graduate academics are entitled to membership of a Danish unemployment fund. However, this requires that they resided in Denmark prior to their education and not later than two weeks prior to completing their studies. The requirements risk discriminating against other Nordic/EU citizens having studied, possibly worked and resided in Denmark during their studies but not before. The Freedom of Movement Forum has therefore sent a letter to the relevant minister in Denmark and requested a change in the residence requirement.

The Danish Minister for Employment did not see any need to change the rules. It was stated that the rules exist to consider people with a special affiliation with Denmark.

#### Fathers' days in Norway

According to EU/EEA rules, working people are mainly governed by the social law in the country where they work. However, Norway departs from this fundamental principle in one respect. Men working in Norway and having children with women working in another (Nordic) country or residing in another (Nordic) country are not entitled to the special fathers' days normally reserved for fathers. In Norway, fathers' rights derive from the mothers' rights, meaning that mothers must be members of a Norwegian social security fund. Moreover, fathers' rights to parents' allowance in the same situation are conditional on the mother's being prevented from taking care of the child. Fathers have no individual rights. The Freedom of Movement Forum has sent a letter to the Norwegian Minister for Children and Equality to point out the unreasonable aspect of this scheme and requested a change in the applicable rules.

The ministry did not see any need to change the rules. The ministry stated that the costs of changing the rules are too high.

#### The Finnish four-month rule

Finland introduced a four-month rule prior to the latest EU enlargement. The rule means that one as an employee or employer from another EU/EEA member state must have a working relationship for at least four consecutive months in Finland to be entitled to residence-based social security such as maternity allowance, old-age pension, general family pension benefits, child benefits and rent allowance. This causes problems for, above all, the tourist trade in the North, which is in great need of extra staff from the Nordic

neighbouring countries during the summer and winter seasons. The Freedom of Movement Forum has sent a letter to the relevant minister in Finland and requested a change in the rules.

The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health answered that the rules will be reviewed, but that there are no current plans to change them.

#### Social security for Finnish students

Finnish students who study in another Nordic country and get long-term illnesses are not covered by the social security of any country. Finland and the other Nordic countries have different forms of security when a student is ill. In Finland, the security is based on the act on social security, but on the act on student grants in the other countries. Students who are ill and receiving grants in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland thus collect their grant during the sick period as student grants, and the task of actual social security is to guarantee working students' income-related sick pay. An ill non-working student is not considered in the social security of the countries. The Freedom of Movement Forum has sent a letter to the relevant Finnish minister with a proposal for alternative solutions to the problem.

The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health answered that there was no immediate need to change the rules, but that a committee was currently scrutinising the Finnish social security system and taking the issue into consideration.

## **2) The following issues are being examined:**

#### Voluntary early retirement pension after work in several Nordic countries

People who have worked in several Nordic countries during their working age risk in case of lost working capacity that an application for voluntary early retirement pay from the Nordic country(ies) in which they have worked will be refused as the rules for being awarded pension benefits differ significantly among the Nordic countries. This may lead to financial marginalisation as pension benefits are only payable at a fraction pension based on the periods of insurance and residence (accumulation period) in the individual countries.

If a Nordic citizen has worked in more than one Nordic country he or she will often encounter a situation in which he or she is not entitled to full pension, but only to a fraction pension, which under the circumstances can be strictly marginal.

The Freedom of Movement Forum has presented the problem and four possible solutions at Nordic senior official level without being accommodated. The problem has also been presented to the relevant Nordic ministers and was raised by the Nordic Council in 2003. So far, the ministers have not demonstrated any will to involve themselves in the problem.

The Freedom of Movement Forum considers the issue to be of fundamental importance as it is unreasonable that citizens of Nordic countries risk financial marginalisation because they have worked in several countries, and as it may have the actual effect of discouraging free movement of labour in the Nordic countries.

With a view to submitting a proposal for possible solutions, the Nordic Council of Ministers has in its capacity as secretariat to the Freedom of Movement Forum sent a letter to the European Commission to have an assessment of whether it would be compatible with EU law to enter into an agreement between the Nordic countries under which the country of residence compensates the person receiving voluntary early retirement pay for the accumulation period without a right to benefits for the purpose of ensuring that the person is not financially marginalised. Moreover, the Freedom of Movement Forum has asked the Nordic Council of Ministers to analyse the extent of the problem. The Nordic Council of Ministers has sent a letter to the relevant ministries about information and will have research institutions or analysis firms make an analysis of the involved people's living situations.

The Freedom of Movement Forum therefore regards the problem as the single biggest barrier to Nordic citizens moving between the Nordic countries. The

Freedom of Movement Forum recommends that the prime ministers involve themselves in the issue and send clear signals to the relevant ministers that the problems must be solved.

#### Model of the Aland Islands (deposit/customs/VAT)

Companies wanting to find markets in neighbouring countries in connection with fairs, for instance, or people wanting to bring machinery across borders to perform work must often deposit 35% of the value of the goods/machinery. This may sometimes cause the companies to run into liquidity problems. The Aland Islands has a practice of pro forma invoices and settlement without deposit requirements. The Freedom of Movement Forum has sent a letter to the tax/finance ministers to establish whether the model can be used throughout the Nordic region.

#### Mutual recognition of professional qualifications:

Some people practising a trade, e.g. people employed in the construction industry such as electrical engineers encounter problems when they are to perform work in other Nordic countries. With respect to a number of trades in the health area, authorisations from other countries are recognised directly, while vocational training programmes are governed by an EC directive stipulating a number of rules according to which member states with reference to public safety and health can, for instance, request practitioners of the trade from other countries to furnish documentation, tests, etc. In a Nordic context, the Freedom of Movement Forum regards it as obvious that the requirements of a number of vocational training programmes become the subject of coordination so that authorisations can be recognised directly in the Nordic countries. The councils of ministers have raised the issue and the ministers for economic and business affairs have shown a will to find a solution. The ministers for education will also be involved with a view to ensuring greater agreement between the vocational training programmes where possible.

#### Work training between Nordic countries:

A problem affecting unemployed people as well as people on sick leave who have worked in one Nordic country and subsequently receive benefits in case of illness from the latest country of work is that they cannot complete a period of work training in their previous country of work where their affiliation with the labour market may have been greatest or where they in some situations only have had a labour market affiliation with the country in question.

Compared to fully unemployed people, they receive unemployment benefits in their country of residence and are only entitled to labour market schemes in that country, while their affiliation with the labour market in some situations has only been with the former country of work. The Nordic Council of Ministers is looking into the issue at a number of authorities in the Nordic countries.

#### Right to schooling in the country of work:

The Nordic Council of Ministers is examining the practice in the countries of schooling in the country of work. Children of employees working and paying tax in a country where they often have their original affiliation can generally only receive schooling in their country of residence although the distance between the countries of work and residence can be very short. The Nordic Council of Ministers is looking into the issue by approaching a number of authorities.

### **3) Preventive measures in conjunction with national law**

Eliminating Nordic border obstacles while countries constantly create new ones through national law can be slightly trying.

The Citizens' and Consumer Rights Committee of the Nordic Council is of the opinion that the provisions of the Helsinki Treaty on legal cooperation are not sufficiently realised. That is one reason why many examples of border obstacles still exist and why the committee now wants to focus on the subject.

The Freedom of Movement Forum also considers focus on the emergence of potential border obstacles in the legislative process to be essential in preventing the emergence of future border obstacles. Like the consequences bills have for the environment and human rights, etc., how bills impact the possibility of moving freely within the Nordic region should also be examined. In conformity with this, it should be considered whether the responsible ministries/departments in the Nordic countries should prepare a joint white paper prior to the actual implementation of directives that may cause new border obstacles. In its capacity as secretariat to the Freedom of Movement Forum, the Nordic Council of Ministers will conduct a large-scale study of the process of implementing a number of directives, the aim being to obtain a clearer idea of the advantages and disadvantages that closer cooperation may entail.

### **4) Practical solution tools:**

#### **Nordic database on border obstacles**

A searchable database of all known border obstacles in the Nordic region has been established as has the embedding and coordination of all Nordic players working to identify and eliminate border obstacles in the Nordic region. The Freedom of Movement Forum launched the database on 5 October 2008.