



WHAT ARE THE NEIGHBOURS DOING?

Strategic Disability Policy in the Nordic region



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Nordic Centre for
Welfare and Social Issues



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STRATEGIC DISABILITY POLICY

THE NORDIC COUNTRIES as well as Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland are working on inclusion of and participation for persons with disabilities - in similar, yet different, way. The strategic work for increased participation and an inclusive society is also linked to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The work within the field is sufficiently similar that it is possible to draw lessons from the work being done in neighbouring countries, yet so different that it is also possible to obtain new perspectives on one's own country's policy and strategy. This makes it exciting to see what the neighbours are doing.

Throughout 2016, evaluations of current strategies are underway in several parts of the Nordic region. At the same time intensive efforts are being made in the design of future strategies and/or action plans for disability policy.

In co-operation between the Council of Nordic Cooperation on Disability, National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), the Finnish National Council on Disability (VANE) and Vammaisfoorumi/Disability Forum, the seminar "Disability Policies and the Impact of the UNCRPD in the Nordic Region" is being organised. The seminar will be held in Helsinki 9-10 March 2016 and is an activity within the Finnish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues has also previously worked with the theme of disability policy strategies in the Nordic region. This occurs via, among other things, the project Disability Policies in the Nordic countries (2012-2013), as well as via administering a network concerning disability policy coordination (2011-2012) and the booklet on the subject matter of Nordic Disability Policy (2010).

Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Council

The Nordic Council of Ministers is the Nordic governments' official cooperation body. The Ministers for Co-operation (MR-SAM) coordinate the overall work. There is also a Council of Ministers for ten different policy areas. The Nordic Council is the official cooperation body for the parliaments of the Nordic countries.

The Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues

The Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues (NVC) is an institution under the Nordic Council of Ministers for Social Affairs and Health. NVC is working with the relevant social welfare issues within social welfare politics, disabilities, labour inclusion, alcohol and drug issues, and social welfare technology. This is accomplished by developing concrete proposals which are then presented to politicians and public officials, compiling research findings as well as organising Nordic and international conferences.

The Council of Nordic Cooperation on Disability

The Council of Nordic Cooperation on Disability is an advisory body to the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Council consists of sixteen members from all five Nordic countries as well as Åland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. One-half of them are appointed by their national governments and the other half by disability organisations at the national level. The Council's mandate runs until June 2017. The Secretariat for the Disabilities Council is part of the Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues.

THIS IS HOW STRATEGIC DISABILITY POLICY IS ORGANISED IN THE NORDIC REGION

An important principle of disability politics is that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are being involved in the processes and decisions that affect them. Consultation with authorities and municipalities, both structured and ad hoc, occur to varying degrees but in a similar manner throughout the Nordic countries. The text below focuses on the basic facts of the strategic work at the national level.

DENMARK

National strategy or action plan: “Disability Policy Action Plan 2013 - A society for all”

Primary areas: Citizenship and Participation, Education, Employment, Increased knowledge and more effectivity, Context and quality, and Innovative solutions, new technology and increased availability.

Coordinating Ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interior/Social- og Indenrigsministeriet

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interior/Social- og Indenrigsministeriet

Date range: 2013 -

Most recent follow-up review: Disability Policy Action Plan, status 2014 – A society for all

Contact person at the Ministry: Nanna Julie Jørgensen, najj@sm.dk

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: Danish disability organisations

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government:

The Danish Disability Council/Det Centrale Handicapråd. The Council advises the national government, the Danish Parliament and others surrounding issues affecting the disability field. It is a forum for dialogue between key stakeholders such as disability organisations, governmental authorities, associations of local government in the field. The Council has a secretariat.

FINLAND

National strategy or action plan: Finland’s Disability Policy Programme VAMPO, 2010-2015 “A strong basis for participation and equality”.

Primary areas: 122 concrete measures are included in the programme within 14 substantive areas: An independent life, Participation and involvement in civic affairs, Built Environment, Transport Services, Education and studying, Work, Health and medical care and rehabilitation, Social protection, Legal protection, Security & Integrity, Culture and recreation, Discrimination against persons with disabilities, Strengthening the knowledge base, Ensuring sustainable resources for the disability policy, and International cooperation.

Coordinating Ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: VANE – The National Council on Disability leads the review and follow-up, and together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health produced a follow-up report based for the National Institute for Health and Welfare THL - (Terveyden ja Hyvinvoinnin Laitos) for 2012-2015 based on a mandate.

Date range: 2010-2015 Its final assessment is to be made in 2016.

Contact person at the Ministry: Eveliina Pöyhönen eveliina.poyhonen@stm.fi, Merja Heikkonen at VANE, merja.heikkonen@stm.fi

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: The Finnish Disability Forum/ Vammaisfoorumi ry

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government: VANE – The National Council on Disability has the task of promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and cooperation between disability organisations and governmental authorities. Its members consist of disability organisations, governmental authorities, associations of local authorities and representatives of the private sector. The Council has a secretariat in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

FAROE ISLANDS

National strategy or action plan: The Faroe Islands does not yet have any strategy for the disability area but has developed disability policy objectives, “Sáttmáli sameindu tjóða um rættindi hjá einstaklingum, ið bera brek”. The Ministry of Social Affairs has an important role in the developments in the field of disability issues, including cross-sectoral cooperation. Each department has its own responsibility for the disability perspective in the policies for their respective areas.

Coordinating Ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs

Contact person at the Ministry of Social Affairs: Doris Bjarkhamar, doris.bjarkhamar@amr.fo, and Súsanna Nordendal, susanna.nordendal@amr.fo

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: Meginfelag teirra Brekaðu i Føroyum, MBF

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government: Union for the Handicapped/Ráðið fyri brekað

GREENLAND

National strategy or action plan: Greenland has no strategy or action plan for disability policy as of yet. However, the disability area is specifically mentioned in the Coalition Agreement 2014-2018, and all four municipalities have their own disability policy.

Coordinating Ministry: Ministry of Family, Gender Equality and Social Affairs/Ministry for Familie, Ligestilling og Sociale Anliggender/Ilaqutariinnermut Naligiissitaanermut Isumaginninnermullu Naalakkersuisoqarfik.

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: IPIS – a national resource with responsibility for disability issues.

Contact person at the Ministry: Kirsten Olesen, kiol@nanog.gl

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: There is no umbrella organisation in Greenland, however there are a number of nationwide associations, such as Kalaallit Nunaanni Innarluutillit Piginnaanikitsut Kattuffiat, KNIPK, which is a nationwide association for people with various types of disabilities.

ICELAND

National strategy or action plan: “Plan of Action on Disabled Persons’ Affairs until 2014”/”Pingsályktun um framkvæmdaáætlun í málefnum fatlaðs fólks”

Primary areas: Accessibility, Work, Social Protection/Independent Life, Health, Representation and Public Awareness Campaigns, Human Rights, Education and Participation.

Coordinating Ministry: Ministry of Welfare /Velferðarráðuneyti

Date range: 2012-2016

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: Ministry of Welfare /Velferðarráðuneyti

Contact person at the Ministry: Þor Þorarinsson, thor.thorarinsson@vel.is

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: Öryrkjabandalag Íslands (ÖBI) and Proskahjálp

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the the national government: The organisations involved in individual projects and mandates.

NORWAY

National strategy or action plan: Norway has chosen to have several strategies within more specific areas, rather than one overall plan of action. What has been most recently decided is described in the “Action Plan for Universal Design 2015-2019”.

Primary areas: ICT, Social welfare technology and everyday technology, Construction and facilities, Planning and outdoor spaces, Transport and Multisectoral measures.

Coordinating department: Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: The Delta Centre at Bufdir – The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Contact person at the department: Olav Rand Bringa, olav-rand.bringa@bld.dep.no

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People/Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon (FFO) and Cooperation Forum of Disability Organizations/Samarbeidsforumet av funksjonshemmedes organisasjoner (SAFO)

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government: There is an agreement-linked cooperation based on that consultation is to occur at various levels with the disability rights organisations. The organisations are to be given the opportunity to have consultations with political leaders, public officials and civil servants at different ministries well as in investigations, working groups, hearings and specific projects relating to people with disabilities.

SWEDEN

National strategy or action plan: “A strategy for implementing disability policy, 2011-2016”

Primary areas: Labour market policy, Educational policy, Social welfare policy, Public health policy, Increased physical accessibility, Transport policy, IT policy, Culture, media and sport, Law and the judicial system, the Swedish Migration Agency, and Consumer Policy

Coordinating department: The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs/Socialdepartementet

Date range: 2011-2016

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: The Swedish Agency for Participation/ Myndigheten för delaktighet

Most recent follow-up review: “Comprehensive review of disability policy - What does the situation look like in 2015?”

Contact person at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs: Lars Nilsson, lars.x.nilsson@regeringskansliet.se

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: The Swedish Disability Federation/Handikappförbunden (HSO) and Equally Unique/ Lika Unika

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government: The Disability Issues Representative Council A cabinet minister is the chairman of the delegation; members are representatives from the disability organisations. Ministers and civil servants from other ministries/departments participate in the meetings, depending upon the subject matter.

ÅLAND

National Strategy and Action Plan: “An accessible Åland - action programme for the Åland Provincial Government’s disability policy, 2013-2016”

Primary areas: The measures which the provincial government plans are based in these departments: Department for Finance, Department for Administrative Affairs, Department for Trade and Industry, Department for Education and Culture, Department for Social Affairs, Health and Environment, Department for Transport and Communication, and the efforts of the Åland Labour Market and Training Agency/Ålands arbetsmarknads- och studieservicemyndighet (AMS).

Coordinating department: Department for Social Affairs, Health and Environment

Date range: 2013-2016

Public authority/party with specific responsibilities: Government of Åland

Most recent follow-up review: “From Words to Action – 2013 Follow-up review”

Contact person at the Government of Åland: Gunilla Lindqvist, gunilla.lindqvist@regeringen.ax

Umbrella organisation for disability organisations: Åland Federation of Disability Associations

Disability organisations national consultation/co-operation with the national government: Åland Provincial Government’s Disability Council. The Council consists of representatives of disability organisations, the Provincial Government of Åland, Association of Local Authorities on Åland, and the City of Mariehamn. The Council shall work to ensure that the interests of people are accommodated, including among other things by being an advisory body on issues relating to legislation, education and training, employment, traffic, construction, and other environmental planning in the province.

You will find updated information and useful links on: www.nordicwelfare.org/funkpol



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