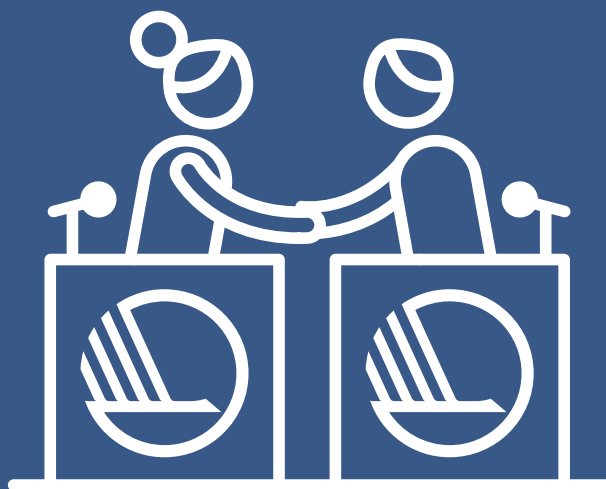


Co-operation Programme
for the **Ministers of**
Co-operation (MR-SAM)
2025–2030



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Foreword



Jessica Rosencrantz, Minister for Nordic Co-operation and Karen Ellemann, Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers

The vision of a Nordic Region which is the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030 is what gives shape to the activities of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation (MR-SAM) have overarching responsibility for the co-ordination of work relating to this vision, and they also have a special responsibility to promote cross-sector co-operation, to raise Nordic affairs internally within their governments and to monitor the overall performance of the Council of Ministers.

The Nordic co-operation programme for the MR-SAM 2025–2030 establishes a clear trajectory for the work to be carried out over the coming years. Through clear political priorities in the spirit of the vision, the ambition is to bolster initiatives and programmes within the Council that can contribute towards the delivery of Nordic solutions, to generate new and in-demand knowledge, and to further develop and strengthen the platforms that exist for Nordic co-operation.

Special importance is attached to measures that seek to boost mobility and integration across borders, in part through a stronger mandate for work that addresses border obstacles and through improved information initiatives. It should be simple for our citizens to live, study, work and run businesses within and beyond their borders all across the Nordic Region. Greater integration benefits both citizens and businesses, and thus also our nations at large. The removal of border obstacles is particularly important to increasing growth and competitiveness, which in turn are prerequisites to ensuring our welfare and the green transition both today and in the future.

A strong civil society is an important cornerstone of the Nordic co-operation model. Between now and 2030, special efforts will be made to improve the opportunities of Nordic civil-society organisations to exchange experiences and to pursue cross-Nordic activities. An important component of this work will comprise support for the opportunities of children and young people to have their democratic voices heard.

The co-operation programme is being adopted in a time of considerable global challenges in which crisis follows crisis, and the future is perceived as being highly uncertain by many. Seldom before has it been more important to have robust co-operation in place across Nordic borders, and to work jointly for a sustainable future.

We, the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation, continue to fix our attention on the continuation of good co-operation with our neighbours in the Baltic, the Arctic and the North Atlantic, and this is clearly reflected in the priorities of the programme.

A central objective is also to ensure the right conditions for well-functioning communication initiatives within the area of Nordic co-operation, both within and beyond the borders of the Nordic Region. It is crucial that we continue to look outward and forward in order to develop and secure our region ahead of the future.



Jessica Rosencrantz
Minister for Nordic Co-operation



Karen Ellemann
Secretary General of the Nordic Council
of Ministers

Introduction

The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation (MR-SAM) have overarching responsibility for co-ordinating the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The MR-SAM also establish the political priorities for a series of programmes and activities which are financed through the framework of the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation. The vision of a Nordic Region which is the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030, as well as the three strategic priorities for a green, competitive and socially sustainable Nordic Region, are what give direction to all work undertaken by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

As a part of the overarching responsibility of the MR-SAM, the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation adopt decisions on the following, among other things:

- Overarching political priorities for Nordic co-operation and the follow-up of its outcomes
- Budget allocation for the sector frameworks of the Nordic Council of Ministers and budgetary conditions for the Council's budget
- Political priorities and distribution of budget funds to the MR-SAM financial framework

As a part of their overarching responsibility, the MR-SAM also makes secretarial support available to the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Secretariat and the Nordic institutions are important tools for realising the objectives of the vision. The Secretariat provides expertise and input relevant to the work at hand, namely by drafting and implementing adopted policy in the Councils of Ministers and the Committees of Senior Officials. These institutions constitute an important tool for the implementation of adopted initiatives.

The Secretariat and the institutions are to take responsibility for ensuring correct and suitable administration of public Nordic funds, as well as an objective and results-based approach that generates measurable outcomes.

The communication activities of the Secretariat and the institutions are central in order to spread information about the outcomes of the progress made through Nordic co-operation to attain the vision, both internally within the Nordic Region and externally to the wider world.

The co-operation programme for the MR-SAM describes the part of the Ministers' area of responsibility which concerns political priorities and objectives for the 2025–2030 period, divided into three overarching goals. In accordance with these goals, the Ministers for Co-operation have a special mission and responsibility to ensure the co-ordinated implementation and communication of the vision, to work for greater intra-Nordic integration, and to safeguard the Nordic perspective both regionally and internationally.

Work within these three overarching areas is undertaken via a series of different programmes and activities, such as initiatives to provide information about Nordic co-operation to citizens and businesses in the Nordic Region, for example, to offer support to civil-society actors or through collaboration with actors in areas adjacent to the Nordic Region.

The Ministers for Cooperation are also tasked with ensuring that the cross-boundary perspectives of sustainable development, equality and children and young people are also observed, and that these permeate the work undertaken within the Nordic Council of Ministers.

In the process of drafting goals, milestones, programme formulations and activities, the Nordic Council has been given the opportunity to provide input and proposals for priorities at both the objective and milestone level, as well as the programme level and activity level, up to the political decision to adopt the co-operation programme.

Civil society and other relevant actors such as the business community and the parties that make up the labour market have, where relevant, been consulted and involved at various levels, with a special focus on the concrete design of activities within the programmes financed by the MR-SAM.

The co-operation programme is the governing document for all programme activities under the MR-SAM. The co-operation programme was approved by the MR-SAM in September 2024 and applies through until 31 December 2030.

The co-operation programme takes its starting point from the Nordic Council of Ministers' mission to contribute towards the realisation of the vision of a Nordic Region which is the most sustainable and integrated region in the world by 2030.

Our Vision 2030



A **competitive** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote green growth in the Nordic Region based on knowledge, innovation, mobility, and digital integration.



A **green** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote a green transition of our societies and work towards carbon neutrality and a sustainable, circular, and bio-based economy.

The Nordic Region will become the most sustainable and integrated region in the world



A **socially sustainable** Nordic Region

Together, we will promote an inclusive, equal, and interconnected region with shared values and strengthened cultural exchanges and welfare.

All activities in the Nordic Council of Ministers will contribute to fulfilling our vision that the Nordic Region will be the world's most sustainable and integrated region in 2030.

The co-operation programme describes how the sector will work with the three strategic priority areas.

Political Priorities

The MR-SAM have a special responsibility to contribute towards highlighting the vision, the three strategic priorities and other Nordic affairs nationally and within the Nordic Region, and to ensure that this work is followed up on. The MR-SAM strive towards achieving a stronger and more ambitious level of co-operation by contributing towards the delivery of Nordic solutions, new and in-demand expertise and platforms for Nordic collaboration.

The Nordic Region has taken strides towards becoming a more sustainable and integrated region; however, there remains work to be done in order to attain the ambitious overall goal that has been set. Within the Nordic Region, there exists considerable unrealised potential and huge opportunities for integration and mobility in regard to working, studying, starting a business or moving to another Nordic nation. Work to address mobility and border obstacles is especially important in enabling greater levels of growth, competitiveness and cohesion. There is a need for more focused collaboration between relevant parties in order to attain this goal.

This work concerns several policy areas and through cross-sectoral collaboration, it is possible to create the right conditions to put border obstacles and mobility on the political agenda. Cross-sectoral collaboration and projects are also being pursued across sectors such as Digitalisation, Regional Policies, Business, Labour, Education, and Health and social affairs, with a focus on creating the right conditions for increased mobility. At the national level, there is a need to strengthen the Nordic perspective within relevant policy areas.

In order to strengthen Nordic integration, it is necessary that there be relevant information available for Nordic citizens who wish to live, work or study in another Nordic country. Example initiatives in this area include the support provided by the Nordic Council of Ministers for information targeting citizens and businesses. At present, this takes the form of, among other things, cross-regional information services and Info Norden. These initiatives provide Nordic citizens with cross-border information and guidance in their own language and in English, and they also enable the reporting of border obstacles.

Civil society is an important cornerstone of Nordic co-operation at the grassroots level. Nordic integration benefits when the civil societies in the Nordic Region forge closer links with one another. The Nordic Council of Ministers provides support to civil society in the Nordic Region. It does this, among other ways, through MR-SAM initiatives relating to support for civil-society organisations and network support.

There is a clear need to bolster the work being undertaken to support civil society through expanded opportunities for associations and other relevant groups to apply for support for Nordic activities.

The rights and perspectives of children and young people occupy a central role within Nordic co-operation, and the MR-SAM work to secure specially earmarked financial support for this area, and to ensure that children and young people are given the opportunity to influence decisions that affect them.

In the current geopolitical situation, stronger Nordic co-operation around societal security, including civil preparedness and resilience, will be crucial to a sustainable Nordic Region. This work is being undertaken at several levels, both within and beyond the frameworks of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Co-operation around security of supply is relevant in several sectors.

The MR-SAM have a mandate to contribute towards the effective communication and provisioning of Nordic perspectives within their governments in this area, and to monitor the work undertaken within the Councils of Ministers and in other relevant fora.

The international co-operation of the Nordic Council of Ministers also contributes towards delivering on the Vision 2030. In co-operation with the Council's office in the Baltic Region, other partners in adjacent areas to the Nordic Region and in other, select parts of the world, common Nordic initiatives and projects which build on Nordic values are being assembled. These collaborative initiatives serve to strengthen the region's voice internationally.

When the Nordic Region collaborates and presents itself as a single, unified region, the Nordic nations are able to attain greater visibility and impact internationally. The profiling of the Nordic Region as a single, unified region within international projects in which Nordic embassies and the private sector collaborate creates the right conditions for synergies for a long-term competitive Nordic Region.

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It should be simple for our citizens to live, study, work and run businesses within and beyond their borders all across the Nordic Region.

Goals and Sub-goals

The MR-SAM have adopted decisions on goals and sub-goals for the work to be undertaken in the 2025–2030 period. The political priorities and the correct and effective administration of Nordic public funds are governing for all activities within the Nordic co-operation policy area. This means that initiatives are to be developed on the basis of these goals, and that their activities, outcomes and effects must bring about the desired change.

Goal 1: The work of the Nordic Council of Ministers must contribute towards the attainment of our Vision 2030



The MR-SAM contribute towards the delivery of Nordic solutions that are able to concretely help to solve the challenges of the Nordic region, of up-to-date and in-demand expertise that can be used for policy development, and of platforms for Nordic collaboration that can help knit the region's actors yet closer together.

Sub-goal 1.1: The Vision is a driving force for the Council's work.

The work undertaken by the sectors in relation to the co-operation programme and the work plans is to be co-ordinated and followed up on. This is achieved in part by supporting and encouraging collaboration across sectors and subject areas, and by following up on development in the Nordic Region towards becoming a sustainable and integrated region through Nordic statistics and indicators. Integration of cross-cutting perspectives is to be further developed.

Sub-goal 1.2: The work of the Council of Ministers must contribute towards a more resilient and sustainable region.

Stronger Nordic co-operation around societal security, including civil crisis preparedness, security of supply and resilience, is encouraged within the various different sectors of the Council of Ministers. The sectors and other relevant collaboration projects are followed up and reported on at the Nordic level on a continuous basis.

Sub-goal 1.3: The added value and outcomes of Nordic co-operation and the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers must be clear to both the relevant governments and the public.

The communication initiatives undertaken both within and beyond the Nordic Region are to be expanded with focus placed on the goals of the vision. Dialogue at the Nordic level and the Nordic perspectives nationally and at the governmental level are to be secured and expanded.

Goal 2: Strengthen integration and mobility between the Nordic nations



Sub-goal 2.1: It should be simpler and more attractive for people to live, study, work and run businesses in another Nordic country.

Work to promote mobility and address border obstacles is to be focused around major issues of decisive importance for intra-Nordic integration. At the same time, political anchoring and collaboration with national departments and authorities, as well as regional actors and the business community, is to be strengthened. Information initiatives targeting citizens and businesses are to be consolidated and strengthened to make it easier for the recipient to find the correct information. Knowledge of Nordic languages is to be strengthened through targeted initiatives.

Sub-goal 2.2: Greater collaboration and knowledge exchange for actors from within civil society in the Nordic Region.

Collaboration with civil society is to be strengthened through support for exchange and Nordic activities for civil-society organisations.

Sub-goal 2.3: Greater inclusion of children and young people in the Nordic Region.

In order for the Nordic Region to be both inclusive and sustainable, initiatives will be needed that ensure all children and young people are able to develop, shape their own lives and exert real influence over community development on equal terms.

Goal 3: Nordic perspectives must be secured both regionally and internationally



The MR-SAM contribute towards boosting knowledge of Nordic values, experiences and solutions by providing support for common Nordic initiatives, both within areas adjacent to the Nordic Region and globally.

**Sub-goal 3.1:
Strong regional co-
operation and
knowledge
exchange with
central actors
nationally,
regionally and
internationally.**

Through project activities, knowledge exchange and strong collaborative relationships within the areas adjacent to the Nordic Region, as well as other select parts of the world to a certain extent, the goals of the vision are to be promoted beyond the confines of the Nordic Region.

**Sub-goal 3.2:
Nordic values and
solutions are to be
profiled in countries
outside of the
Nordic Region.**

As a model region on the global stage within the green transition, social sustainability and competitiveness, the Nordic nations contribute towards boosting knowledge of Nordic values, experiences and solutions at the international level. The embassies of the Nordic nations constitute a central and important platform in the work to promote the voice of the Nordic Region globally.

Evaluating the Co-operation Programme

The co-operation programme applies for the 2025–2030 period, however this period is divided up into two, three-year work plans for 2025–2027 and 2028–2030 respectively.

An evaluation will be performed in the middle of the period, on the basis of which the Council of Ministers may choose to make adjustments to the programmes. This shall also give them an opportunity to receive feedback on how the work plan for the final period should be formulated.

Outcomes at the project level will be reported on continuously to the Nordic Committee for Co-operation (NSK) / the MR-SAM. In addition, there will also be an on-going evaluation at the discretion of the Secretary General and the Council of Ministers.

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