



# Seniors and Climate Issues

For the Benefit of Both

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# Foreword

Iceland holds the chairmanship of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2023 and, on the occasion of that chairmanship, the Ministry of the Environment, Energy, and Climate initiated a Nordic project with the main goal of mapping and strengthening the work of older people in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues. The idea was based on the knowledge that groups of seniors in Sweden had been active in this field and the belief that this activity could be further promoted by connecting more groups in all the Nordic countries, including Iceland.

In recent years, the proportion of seniors in the population of the Nordic countries has been increasing, along with the rising average age and relatively low birth rate. People of retirement age tend to have more free time and are better off financially than younger people. In addition, older people are now generally in better health than their peers were a few decades ago, and these people also have a lot of experience and knowledge that can undoubtedly be useful in the climate debate. The active participation of older people in activities of this kind serves to enrich their own lives and, at the same time, improve the living conditions of future generations. The experience and knowledge of older people are resources that societies miss out on by not utilising.

The Ministry of the Environment, Energy, and Climate is, naturally, the Ministry of Climate Issues in Iceland. However, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour Market deals with the affairs of the elderly, so it was decided that the ministries would work together on the project. The majority of the funding was supplied by the Nordic Council of Ministers, in connection with Iceland's chairmanship programme.

The project in question is the first Nordic project in this field. The project contributes to the vision of the Nordic Council of Ministers for the year 2030, in particular, to follow up on a green initiative in the Nordic region and to promote social sustainability in the Nordic countries. Simultaneously, the project contributes to the Nordic countries attaining the twelve main goals that the Nordic Council of Ministers has set for the period 2021–2024.

The project was completed in 2023 and was divided into three phases. First, a summary of the parties, collaboration, and projects of seniors in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues was prepared; second, a seminar on seniors and climate issues was staged; and third, a final report was composed, including basic information from the first phase, highlights from the seminar and recommendations to the authorities in the Nordic countries on how to support the collaboration of seniors on climate action. That report is presented here.

Environice oversaw the implementation of the project according to a contract with the Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Climate, as well as in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour Market, and other parties.

Hvanneyri, November 2023

Stefán Gíslason, Managing Director of Environice

# Summary

In recent years, the proportion of seniors in the population of the Nordic countries has been increasing, along with rising average age and relatively low birth rate. People of retirement age tend to have more free time and are better off financially than younger people, and, in addition, older people are now generally in better health than their peers were a few decades ago. These people also have a lot of experience and knowledge that can undoubtedly be useful in the climate debate. The active participation of older people in activities of this kind serves to enrich their own lives and, at the same time, improve the living conditions of future generations. This experience and knowledge are resources that societies miss out on by not utilising.

Iceland holds the chairmanship of the Nordic Council of Ministers 2023, and on that occasion, the Ministry of the Environment, Energy, and Climate, in co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour Market, initiated a Nordic project with the main goal of mapping and strengthening the work of older people in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues. The idea was based on the knowledge that groups of seniors in Sweden had been active in this field and the belief that this activity could be further promoted by connecting more groups in all the Nordic countries, including Iceland. Environice consulting in Iceland was contracted to co-ordinate the project.

## The project

The project in question is the first Nordic project in this field. The objectives can be summarised as follows:

1. Map existing activities and networks in each country.
2. Offer a Nordic platform for the exchange of ideas and inspiration.
3. Explore how Nordic co-operation can be strengthened and maintained.
4. Give recommendations to the Nordic governments on why and how they should support groups of older people who engage in climate issues.
5. Contribute to longer lasting physical and psychological health.

The project started in March 2023 and consisted of three phases or work packages. The first phase was the mapping phase, where climate related groups and activities of seniors in each of the Nordic countries were identified. A preliminary report with these findings was published as a working paper in the beginning of July.<sup>[1]</sup> In short,

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1. Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir and Stefán Gíslason (2023).

it showed that groups of older people, focusing on climate issues, are already active in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. Many of these emphasise the role of grandparents towards their grandchildren, as reflected in the names of some of groups. One group in each country is active within the recent and growing network of *European Grandparents for Climate*.

## The workshop

The second phase was a workshop on seniors and climate issues, held in Reykjavík 27–28 September 2023. All identified groups from phase 1 were invited to present their work during the workshop and to participate in panels and group discussions. The workshop was also open for everybody, free of charge. Most of the groups accepted the invitation and sent their representatives, either to participate in person or online. However, due to the location of the workshop, a few potential participants were unable to participate in person, as Iceland cannot easily be visited without travelling by flight with substantial GHG-emissions.

In total, the workshop attracted 41 participants, apart from those participating online. The president of Iceland, Mr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, honoured the event by giving a speech at the opening of the workshop. After that, the agenda consisted of several keynotes, panel discussions and group work. At the end of the workshop, participants were invited to a bus trip to the most geologically active Reykjanes peninsula.

Seniors from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, and The Faroe Islands attended the workshop, in addition to a keynote speaker from the Swiss group *Klimaseniorinnen*, who have taken their government to the European Court of Human Rights for failing to fulfil its positive obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, since the state is not doing everything in its power to prevent a global temperature rise of more than 1.5°C and thereby also failing to effectively protect elderly women in Switzerland.

Notably, workshop participants from Iceland and The Faroe Islands, where no climate-related groups of older people have yet been established, showed a lot of interest in the work already taken place in the other four countries. After the seminar, informal meetings have been held to prepare a possible establishment of such groups in both countries.

It was clear from the workshop, that participation in climate-related activities has given an added meaning to the daily life of many elderly individuals, as it makes sense to them to fight for the world to be a better place for their grandchildren and for coming generations in general, not least when they can use their education for that purpose. The older people are inspired by the younger generations' climate struggle. Several of the participants believed that it is important to be visible in protests, but also to work behind the scenes in collaboration with politicians to



change laws and regulations. In the end, the participants agreed that there is a good basis for a Nordic network for older climate activists.

## The findings

The third phase of the project included compiling a report with basic information, a summary from the seminar, and recommendations to the authorities in the Nordic countries about what they could do to support the work of seniors in the field of climate issues. That report is presented here.

The main messages from the project can be summarised as follows:

1. The number of older people in the Nordics is growing. As of writing, approximately 15–23% of the population is over 65 years old, and a large generation is now approaching retirement age. This generation is likely to change what retirement looks like. The life expectancy of these groups is greater than that of previous generations, their level of education is higher, and their health is presumably better than that of many previous generations. These groups' needs for activity and successful aging will be different than before and the ability to use new technologies in communication will be much more important than it has been. In addition to this, people at this age tend to have more free time and are better off financially than younger people.
2. Older people's voluntary work on climate issues is beneficial for themselves, because it has the potential to keep them active and, thus, improve their physical and mental health. This will, presumably, entail lower health care costs.
3. Older people's voluntary work on climate issues is beneficial for national authorities, as this group is a valuable source of knowledge and experiences, that governments can gain from in their climate-related policy development and decision-making. This resource can even be translated into monetary terms, as knowledge, in general terms, is neither unlimited nor free of charge.
4. Older people's voluntary work on climate issues is beneficial for the climate, as it is likely to contribute to lower GHG-emission and less need for adaptive actions in the years to come. Better climate is, in fact, a synonym for better living conditions for future generations. This contribution is likely to lower climate-related public expenditure in the near future.
5. The points above are the main reasons why the governments should support older people's voluntary work on climate issues.

## The recommendations

The main recommendations from the workshop and, thus, the main results from this project are as follows:

The governments of the Nordic countries should support older people's voluntary work on climate issues in the following ways:

1. On the national level:
  - a. Provide financial support to these groups, such as that received by BKA in Norway, to assist them in co-ordination of their work on the national level and to enable them to co-operate with their colleagues in other Nordic countries and outside the Nordic area.
  - b. Invite climate-related groups of older people to dialogue / consultations, such as in the preparation of public climate policies, climate mitigation plans, laws, and regulations.
  - c. Strengthen education for sustainability for all generations by strengthening and fostering inter-generational links, especially between older people and the youth.
  - d. Provide venues for activities, meetings, and demonstrations, organised by climate-related groups of older people.
2. On the Nordic level:
  - a. Invite climate-related groups of older people to Nordic meetings and seminars, in order to benefit from their knowledge and experience and to give them a voice in the discussion.
  - b. Organise annual Nordic climate conferences in order to create a platform for new contacts and spreading of knowledge and ideas.
  - c. Provide financial support to build a base for consistent sharing of information, such as through a Nordic webpage, webinars, etc.
  - d. Support Nordic co-ordination of efforts, involving climate-related groups of older people in all the Nordic countries.
  - e. Identify opportunities for international outreach to preserve the status of the Nordic countries as forerunners in older people's work on climate-related issues.
  - f. Consider establishing a "Nordic council for seniors and the climate".

# Oversigt

I de senere år er andelen af ældre i befolkningen i de nordiske lande steget, samtidig med at gennemsnitsalderen er steget, og fødselstallet har været relativt lavt. Personer i pensionsalderen har ofte mere fritid og er bedre stillet økonomisk end yngre personer. Derudover har de ældre nu generelt et bedre helbred, end deres jævnaldrende havde for et par årtier siden. De ældre har også en masse erfaring og viden, som uden tvivl kan være nyttig i klimadebatten. Ældres aktive deltagelse i aktiviteter af denne art er med til at berige deres eget liv og samtidig forbedre levevilkårene for kommende generationer. Denne erfaring og viden er ressourcer, som samfundet går glip af, hvis de ikke udnyttes.

Island har formandskabet for Nordisk Ministerråd i 2023, og i den anledning igangsatte Miljø-, Energi- og Klimaministeriet i samarbejde med Social- og Beskæftigelsesministeriet et nordisk projekt med det hovedformål at kortlægge og styrke ældres arbejde med klimaproblemer i de nordiske lande. Ideen var baseret på viden om, at grupper af seniorer i Sverige havde været aktive på dette område, og troen på, at denne aktivitet kunne fremmes yderligere ved at forbinde flere grupper i alle de nordiske lande, herunder Island. Environice i Island blev ansat til at koordinere projektet.

## Projektet

Det pågældende projekt er det første nordiske projekt på dette område. Målsætningerne kan opsummeres som følger:

1. Kortlægge eksisterende aktiviteter og netværk i hvert land.
2. Tilbyde en nordisk platform for udveksling af ideer og inspiration.
3. Undersøge, hvordan det nordiske samarbejde kan styrkes og vedligeholdes.
4. Give anbefalinger til de nordiske regeringer om, hvorfor og hvordan de bør støtte grupper af ældre, der engagerer sig i klimaproblemer.
5. Bidrage til længerevarende fysisk og psykisk sundhed.

Projektet startede i marts 2023 og bestod af tre faser eller arbejdsplaner. Den første fase var kortlægningsfasen, hvor klimarelaterede grupper og aktiviteter blandt seniorer i hvert af de nordiske lande blev identificeret. I begyndelsen af juli blev en foreløbig rapport med disse resultater publiceret som et arbejdspapir.<sup>[2]</sup> Kort sagt viste den, at grupper af ældre, der fokuserer på klimaproblemer, allerede er aktive i Norge, Sverige, Finland og Danmark. Mange af disse understreger

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2. Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir og Stefán Gíslason (2023).

bedsteforældrenes rolle over for deres børnebørn, hvilket afspejles i navnene på nogle af grupperne. En gruppe i hvert land er aktiv i det nye og voksende netværk af *European Grandparents for Climate* (europæiske bedsteforældre for klimaet).

## Seminar

Den anden fase var et seminar om seniorer og klimaproblemer, som blev afholdt i Reykjavík den 27. –28. september 2023. Alle identificerede grupper fra fase 1 blev inviteret til at præsentere deres arbejde under seminaret og til at deltage i paneler og gruppediskussioner. Seminaret var åbent for alle og var gratis. De fleste af grupperne tog imod invitationen og sendte deres repræsentanter enten for at deltage personligt eller online. På grund af seminarets placering kunne nogle få potentielle deltagere dog ikke deltage personligt, da Island ikke er let at besøge uden at rejse med fly med deraf følgende betydelige drivhusgasudledninger.

I alt tiltrak seminaret 41 deltagere ud over dem, der deltog online. Den islandske præsident, Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, hædrede arrangementet ved at holde en tale ved seminarets åbning. Derefter bestod dagsordenen af flere hovedtalere, paneldiskussioner og gruppearbejde. Efter seminaret blev deltagerne inviteret på en bustur til den mest geologisk aktive halvø, Reykjanes.

Seniorer fra Norge, Sverige, Finland, Danmark, Island og Færøerne deltog i seminaret, foruden en hovedtaler fra den schweiziske gruppe *Klimaseniorinnen*, som har indbragt deres regering for Den Europæiske Menneskerettighedsdomstol for ikke at opfylde sine positive forpligtelser i henhold til Den Europæiske Menneskerettighedskonvention, da staten ikke gør alt, hvad der står i dens magt, for at forhindre en global temperaturstigning på mere end 1,5 °C og dermed heller ikke effektivt beskytter ældre kvinder i Schweiz.

Især deltagerne fra Island og Færøerne, hvor der endnu ikke er etableret klimarelaterede grupper af ældre, viste stor interesse for det arbejde, der allerede er foregået i de fire andre lande. Efter seminaret har der været afholdt uformelle møder for at forberede en eventuel etablering af sådanne grupper i begge lande.

Det fremgik tydeligt af seminaret, at deltagelse i klimarelaterede aktiviteter har givet en ekstra mening til mange ældres hverdag. Det giver mening for dem at kæmpe for, at verden bliver et bedre sted for deres børnebørn og for kommende generationer generelt, ikke mindst når de kan bruge deres uddannelse til det formål. De ældre bliver inspireret af de yngre generationers klimakamp. Flere af deltagerne mente, at det er vigtigt at være synlig i protester, men også at arbejde bag kulisserne i samarbejde med politikere for at ændre love og regulativer. Til sidst blev deltagerne enige om, at der er et godt grundlag for et nordisk netværk for ældre klimaaktivister.

## Resultat

Projektets tredje fase omfattede udarbejdelse af en rapport med basisinformation, et resumé fra seminaret og anbefalinger til myndighederne i de nordiske lande om, hvad de kunne gøre for at understøtte seniorernes arbejde på klimaområdet. Rapporten præsenteres her.

Projektets vigtigste budskaber kan opsummeres som følger:

1. Antallet af ældre i Norden er stigende. I skrivende stund er ca. 15–23 % af befolkningen over 65 år, og en stor generation nærmer sig nu pensionsalderen. Denne generation vil sandsynligvis forandre synet på pensionisttilværelsen. Den forventede levetid for disse grupper er højere end for tidligere generationer, deres uddannelsesniveau er højere, og deres helbred er formodentlig bedre end for mange tidligere generationer. Disse gruppers behov for aktivitet og vellykket aldring vil være anderledes end tidligere, og evnen til at bruge nye teknologier i kommunikationen vil blive meget vigtigere, end den har været. Derudover har personer i denne alder ofte mere fritid og er bedre stillet økonomisk end yngre personer.
2. Ældres frivillige arbejde med klimaproblemer er gavnligt for dem selv, fordi det har potentiale til at holde dem aktive og dermed forbedre deres fysiske og mentale sundhed. Det vil formodentlig medføre lavere sundhedsudgifter.
3. Ældres frivillige arbejde med klimaproblemer er gavnligt for nationale myndigheder, da denne gruppe er en værdifuld kilde til viden og erfaringer, som regeringer kan drage nytte af i deres udvikling af klimarelaterede politikker og beslutningstagning. Denne ressource kan endda konverteres til pengepolitiske betingelser, da viden generelt hverken er ubegrænset eller gratis.
4. Ældres frivillige arbejde med klimaproblemer er gavnligt for klimaet, da det sandsynligvis vil bidrage til lavere udledning af drivhusgasser og mindre behov for tilpasningstiltag i de kommende år. Et bedre klima er faktisk synonymt med bedre levevilkår for fremtidige generationer. Dette bidrag vil sandsynligvis sænke de klimarelaterede offentlige udgifter i den nærmeste fremtid.
5. Ovenstående punkter er de vigtigste grunde til, at regeringerne bør støtte ældres frivillige arbejde med klimaproblemer.

## Anbefalinger

De vigtigste anbefalinger fra seminaret og dermed de vigtigste resultater fra dette projekt er som følger:

Regeringerne i de nordiske lande bør støtte ældres frivillige arbejde med klimaproblemer på følgende måder:

1. På nationalt niveau:
  - a. Give økonomisk støtte til disse grupper, ligesom den, BKA i Norge modtager, for at hjælpe dem med at koordinere deres arbejde på nationalt niveau og for at gøre det muligt for dem at samarbejde med deres kolleger i andre nordiske lande og uden for Norden.
  - b. Invitere klimarelaterede grupper af ældre til dialog/høringer, f.eks. i forbindelse med udarbejdelsen af offentlige klimapolitikker, planer for afhjælpning af klimaproblemer, love og regulativer.
  - c. Styrke uddannelse i bæredygtighed for alle generationer ved at styrke og fremme forbindelsen mellem generationer, især mellem ældre og unge.
  - d. Tilbyde lokaler til aktiviteter, møder og udstillinger organiseret af klimarelaterede grupper af ældre.
2. På nordisk niveau:
  - a. Invitere klimarelaterede grupper af ældre til nordiske møder og seminarer for at drage nytte af deres viden og erfaring og for at give dem en stemme i diskussionen.
  - b. Arrangere årlige nordiske klimakonferencer for at oprette en platform for nye kontakter og spredning af viden og ideer.
  - c. Give økonomisk støtte til at opbygge en base for ensartet deling af oplysninger, f.eks. gennem en nordisk webside, webinarer osv.
  - d. Støtte nordisk koordinering af indsatser, der involverer klimarelaterede grupper af ældre i de nordiske lande.
  - e. Identificere muligheder for internationalt opsøgende arbejde for at bevare de nordiske landes status som frontløbere inden for ældres arbejde med klimarelaterede problemer.
  - f. Overveje at etablere et "Nordisk råd for seniorer og klimaet".

# 1. Introduction

A large percentage of the population are part of generations that are now nearing retirement age, and this is likely to change what retirement looks like. The life expectancy of these groups is greater than that of any generation that came before them, they are more likely to have completed further education, and they are likely to be in better health than previous generations. These groups will have a greater need for active and successful aging than we have seen before, and the ability to adopt new communication technology will be far greater and of more significance in the future.

A large proportion of volunteers consists of people of retirement age, as people in that age group tend to have more free time and are better off financially than younger people. In the past few decades, the number of older volunteers has also increased significantly due to the increased life expectancy and improving health of the older generations. The latest figures from Vive, a welfare research and analysis centre in Denmark, show an increase of 28% for people aged 67 and over and a 43% increase for people aged 77 and over in terms of their participation in voluntary work compared to 20 years ago.<sup>[3]</sup> A large number of these volunteers are in good financial standing, with an extensive education and in relatively good health. People over the age of 65 are generally much healthier, more resourceful, and more active now than people their age were 20 years ago, especially in their first years after leaving the labour market. Simultaneously, society's ideas about old age have changed. The idea that you should be of utility, not just to yourself and your family, but also to society, has become more widely spread since the 1990s. This is reflected in the greater involvement of pensioners in voluntary work.

Volunteers are involved in various projects, but in recent years, these groups have become increasingly more involved in the discussion about climate issues. To some extent, this work is inspired by the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, but what has been primarily driving people to participate in projects in this field is the ever-deteriorating future prospects in light of the lack of progress in the fight to reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to human activities on Earth. You will find climate activists in all age brackets, but in recent times older people have become increasingly prominent in this arena, not least in the Nordic countries and other Western European countries.

In light of the development that has been described here, the Icelandic government decided to highlight the work of seniors on climate issues during Iceland's chairmanship of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2023. The title of the project was

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3. De Frivilliges Hus (2022.)

*“Äldre folk och klimat Nyttä för båda två” (Seniors and Climate Issues – For the Benefit of Both)*, which refers, on the one hand, to the enormous human resources and extensive knowledge that are presented in healthy people of retirement age, and on the other hand, to the potential positive contribution of this group to the climate debate—for the benefit of future generations.

As discussed above, the project in question was part of Iceland's chairmanship programme in the Nordic Council of Ministers, and was therefore, by its very nature, primarily financed by the Council of Ministers. The Ministry of the Environment, Energy, and Climate was managing the project on behalf of Iceland in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Labour Market. The University of the Third Age (u3a) was consulted in the preparation of the project, and the consulting company Environice was brought in to lead the project and oversee the implementation of its individual components.

According to the project brief, the project in question aimed to strengthen cooperation between groups of seniors in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues. The project included all the countries and regions that are members of the Nordic Council of Ministers, i.e. the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) and the three autonomous regions (Åland, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland.) Although, it was not possible to ensure the full involvement of the Åland Islands and Greenland in the project. The project's objective was to involve more older people in climate issues by creating a Nordic platform for the exchange of ideas, networking, inspiration, and inspiring role models, while promoting the permanent physical and mental health of the participants.

The project was divided into three phases or work components:

1. Compiling an overview of parties, collaborations, and projects of seniors in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues.
2. Preparing, convening, and leading a seminar on seniors and climate issues.
3. Compiling a report with basic information, a summary from the seminar, and recommendations to the authorities in the Nordic countries about what they could do to support the work of seniors in the field of climate issues.

The report published here contains the results of the project, but a working document (interim report) had been published previously with the key conclusions from the first work component.<sup>[4]</sup> Information presented there has been incorporated into this report.

The structure of the present report is that Section 2 gives an overview of the collaboration of seniors in the Nordic region in the field of climate change (in fact an improved version of the interim report;) Section 3 contains a brief discussion of the European network being developed by senior climate groups on the continent;

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4. Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir and Stefán Gíslason (2023.)



Section 4 reports on the project seminar that was held in Reykjavík on September 27th–28th in 2023; and the main conclusions are summarised in Section 5. This includes recommendations to the authorities in the Nordic countries about what they could do to support the work of seniors in the field of climate issues. At the end of the report there is a bibliography, as well as an appendix containing a list of those who participated in the seminar.

## 2. Collaboration of seniors the field of climate issues

This section contains a summary of the main groups of seniors in the Nordic countries who have taken climate issues to heart, both formal organisations and informal grassroots movements. The summary is broadly the same as the one that was included in the interim report of the first work component.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 2.1 Norway

About 5.5 million people live in Norway, of which 18.1% are aged 65 and over according to figures from 2021.<sup>[6]</sup> Norwegians are increasingly concerned about climate change, according to a survey for the University of Bergen. The survey has been conducted regularly since 2013, and for the first time in ten years, over 50% of participants aged 63 and over claimed to be "concerned" or "very concerned" about climate change. The results of the survey show that concerns have increased the most among people over sixty.<sup>[7]</sup>

#### 2.1.1 Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (BKA)

*Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (BKA)* is a very large and active organisation that had a total of 6,870 members in January 2023. The organisation was established in 2006 and has grown year by year since then. Members pay membership fees to cover the salaries of staff members that supply general maintenance and organise educational efforts and events.<sup>[8]</sup> In Norway, environmental protection organisations receive funding from the state, if they have 5,000 or more paid members. This means that *BKA* now receives an annual contribution from the Norwegian state.

*BKA* has 17 local groups in Norway from Alta and Tromsø in northern Norway, in Bergen on the west coast and down to Kristiansand in the south. These groups are very active and have set up information booths around the country, where group members reach out to people, provide them with information and seek out new members.

*BKA* have a very clear strategy and by collecting a membership fee the organisation can put money into marketing and the various issues they want to support. Among

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5. Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir and Stefán Gíslason (2023.)

6. Trading Economics (2021.)

7. Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (2022.)

8. Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (2023.)

other things, the organisation wants to promote a lifestyle that leads to lower greenhouse gas emissions. The organisation wants the Norwegian government to guarantee that the citizens will be involved in the solution to the climate crisis (as stated in Article 12 of the Paris Agreement,) that the use of fossil fuels will be reduced, and that all oil and gas exploration off the coast of Norway will be stopped and production halted. On the organisation's website, you can find educational materials about environmental and climate issues, information about subgroups of the organisation from around Norway and reports from the annual and national board meetings that have been held.

*BKA* is part of a European network of seniors involved in climate issues (see below.)

### 2.1.2 Norges naturvernforbund

The Norwegian nature conservation association *Norges naturvernforbund* operates a youth group for the younger members of the association, but currently there is no work being done that targets the association's oldest members. Nonetheless, seniors play a prominent role within the association, as older people tend to have more free time to devote to voluntary work.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 2.2 Sweden

Sweden has a population of approximately 10.2 million, of which 20.2% are 65 years old and over, according to figures from the year 2022.<sup>[10]</sup> Swedes are very aware of climate issues and have increasing concerns about climate change and its consequences. Two out of three residents of Sweden are of the opinion that politicians need to do more to limit climate change, and more than half of the population feel that a cap needs to be placed on total greenhouse gas emissions in Sweden. The concerns of older residents (65–79 years old) have seen a notable increase in recent years, but around 63% of them say they think about climate change and the effects of greenhouse gas emissions at least once a week.<sup>[11]</sup>

Many environmental and climate groups are active in Sweden and many such groups have been founded in the last year.<sup>[12]</sup> Climate change awareness seems to be rising steadily, among both younger and older Swedes, this is likely partially due to the influence of Greta Thunberg. What started as a one-person strike in 2018 has today developed into *Fridays for Future*, a global social movement focusing on climate issues and climate action. Many of these groups share the same ideology and meet on Fridays to protest climate change and government inaction.

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9. Naturvernforbundet (2023.)  
10. Knoema (2022d.)  
11. Gustaf Lind (2022.)  
12. Sofie Björck (2022.)

### 2.2.1 Gretas Gamlingar

Gretas Gamlingar is an environmental protection organisation of seniors, with 1,300–2,500 members. The name of the organisation refers to Greta Thunberg and its members wish to emphasise the shared priorities in climate issues for people of all ages. The organisation participates in a variety of activities to raise awareness of the climate crisis and to fight for improvements. Gretas Gamlingar are involved in *Fridays for Future*, where they meet once a week and protest the inaction of politicians on climate issues.<sup>[13]</sup>

### 2.2.2 Grandparents for Future

The Swedish organisation *Grandparents for Future* was initially founded as a Facebook group but, as of December 2018, had around 850 members. The group is informal and has no board, a registry of its members or independent funding. Members host a range of events, both online and in the real world, including "coaching", demonstrations, miscellaneous lectures, and educational efforts. The group believes that the words *grandpa* and *grandma* have a special value to underline the responsibility older generations have for the world that their descendants will inherit and inhabit. People can take full part in the organisation, regardless of whether they have grandchildren of their own. *Grandparents for Future* support Greta Thunberg and *Fridays for Future*.<sup>[14]</sup>

### 2.2.3 Grand Panthers

*Grand Panthers* are an organisation that protests climate inaction once a month. The organisation does not have a single leader, instead people take turns leading on a rotating basis. Since the organisation does not have a permit to protest, people protest individually or in small groups. Group members attempt to meet with politicians as often as possible to share their concerns about climate issues. They share a network with *KlimatSverige*, *Fridays for Future*, *Klimatsvaret* and *Våra barns klimat*, which are all organisations that advocate for climate action. *Grand Panthers* is also part of a European network of seniors asserting themselves on this issue (see below.)<sup>[15]</sup>

### 2.2.4 Grandmas for Future

*Grandmas for Future* has approximately 20 members in Katrineholm, in Södermanland, southwest of Stockholm. Members of the group feel that striking for the climate is important due to inaction on behalf of the political establishment to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. They think it's wonderful that there are strikes all over the world, but they also want to show the same effort at home in

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13. Gretas Gamlingar (2023.)  
14. Grandparents for Future (2023.)  
15. Grand Panthers (2022.)

Katrineholm. They focus on protesting in their hometown, in order to reduce the carbon footprint of long journeys.<sup>[16]</sup>

## 2.3 Finland

Finland has a population of over 5.5 million, of which 23.3% are aged 65 and over, according to figures from 2022.<sup>[17]</sup> In a climate survey conducted by the European Investment Bank in 2021, it was found that 73% of Finns aged 65 and over believe that climate change and its consequences are humanity's biggest challenge in the 21st century. Approximately 49% of respondents believed that they were more concerned about the climate situation than the country's government.

Furthermore, 49% believed that the country will fail to reduce its carbon emissions by 95% by 2050,<sup>[18]</sup> in accordance with the parameters of the Paris Agreement.<sup>[19]</sup> Around 70% of those who participated in the survey said they were in favour of stricter measures by the government to induce changes in people's behaviour (7% more than in a similar survey the previous year.)<sup>[20]</sup>

### 2.3.1 Ilmastoisovanhemmat

*Ilmastoisovanhemmat* (e. Grandparents for Future) is an organisation that monitors climate action within Finland and internationally. This is a formal organisation with an appointed board and a chairman, secretary, interpreters, etc. The organisation's purpose is to work to reduce climate change and protect biodiversity, as well as to promote an ethical, eco-friendly, and equal society. They also want to support the activities of children and young people and promote intergenerational justice.

*Ilmastoisovanhemmat* disseminate information on climate change, initiate community discussions, organise protests and events of various kinds, and collaborate with other organisations and parties that aim for the same goals. The organisation runs a blog and has a book club that meets online every month and discusses the book of the month, which always deals with environmental issues. The organisation also organises various kinds of protests where they have signs in six languages. Among other things, they meet and protests every Friday outside the Finnish Parliament. The organisation publishes an international newsletter in English, at least three times a year, with coverage of what similar organisations in Europe are doing. The organisation encourages politicians to make positive legal changes on climate issues and is very active on the major social media platforms. A great deal of effort has been put into international cooperation and raising awareness in other countries.<sup>[21]</sup> In line with that, *Ilmastoisovanhemmat* is part of a European network of seniors actively engaging with climate issues (see below.)

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16. Grandmas for Future (2022.)

17. Knomea (2022b.)

18. European Investment Bank (2021.)

19. Ympäristöministeriö (á.á..)

20. European Investment Bank (2021.)

21. Ilmastoisovanhemmat (2023.)

### 2.3.2 Aktivistimummot

*Aktivistimummot* (e. Activist Grannies) is a network of Finnish grandmothers (and some grandfathers) whose goal is to fight climate change and protect nature, with the aim of building a better future for their own grandchildren and other grandchildren of the planet. This is not a public organisation, it has no membership registers, charges no membership fees and operates entirely on a voluntary basis.

A few grandmothers got together in 2019 and founded *Aktivistimummot*. A growing, multidisciplinary group of grandmothers is working towards the goal of the group and the specific sub-themes (#wisdom and #hope) defined by the founding grandmothers. The group organises various events and puts a lot of focus on education on the group's website, Facebook page, and Twitter. A leadership group of fifteen to twenty people organises and coordinates the group's activities. The group has thousands of followers on Facebook. The group's website states that they consider themselves "*lucky to be living in a country with the best education in the world and therefore also the most educated grandmothers in the world*".<sup>[22]</sup>

## 2.4 Denmark

Denmark has a population of approximately 5.8 million, of which 20.5% are aged 65 and over, according to figures from 2022.<sup>[23]</sup> Sustainability seems to be very important to older generations of Danes. In a survey of over 1,000 Danes aged 60 and over, it was found that over 60% are very interested in climate issues and sustainability and would like to contribute to reducing pollution. About 76% of respondents were concerned about the impact of climate change on future generations.<sup>[24]</sup>

### 2.4.1 Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion

*Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion* is a grassroot and activist movement, which brings together mature people aged 50+, who are concerned about the kind of world they are leaving for future generations. The movement seeks to spread the word about the right climate decisions and pressure politicians to take responsibility and push for a quick and effective green transition. The group meets regularly in nine cities across Denmark, where they gather to protest climate change, as well as take part in courses and educational efforts on climate issues and stage various events.<sup>[25]</sup>

### 2.4.2 Sammen om verdensmål

*Sammen om verdensmål* is a project of 30 libraries in Denmark that aims to

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22. Aktivistimummot (2023.)

23. Knoema (2022a.)

24. Line Marie Sommer (2021.)

25. Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion (2023.)

engage people over 60 to work for the benefit of the United Nations' Global Sustainable Development Goals. The project is financed by the VELUX FONDEN, was launched in February 2021 and will conclude in December 2023. Activities are offered at selected libraries where residents can help develop ideas and solutions in their own town that fall under the Sustainable Development Goals. The aim of the activity is for the participants to become active participants in creating a local impact, based around the Sustainable Development Goals. The project is also designed to increase the well-being and quality of life of the target group, where people can use their own talents in new company, while the project is intended to promote the active and community-creating role of people aged 60 and over.<sup>[26]</sup> The project has received a lot of positive attention in Denmark and two detailed manuals have been written for library staff on how to involve people in different types of projects for the benefit of the Sustainable Development Goals. Both manuals can easily be used by people outside the libraries.

## 2.5 Iceland

The population of Iceland in 2022 was approximately 388,000, according to Statistics Iceland. Of these, 15.3% were aged 65 and over.<sup>[27]</sup> This group is gradually becoming more prominent in the climate debate. In Gallup's Environmental Survey in 2022, participants were asked whether they were very, somewhat, slightly, or not concerned about global warming. About 73% of respondents aged 67 and over said they were very or somewhat concerned about global warming, and 47% said they were concerned about the consequences that climate change could have on them and their families. In comparison, 79% of respondents in the age group 30–44 said they were very or somewhat concerned about global warming, and 62% in that age group said they were very concerned about the consequences that climate change could have on them and their families. Furthermore, 56% of people aged 67 and over said they were willing to change their behaviour very much or quite a lot in order to reduce their impact on the environment and climate.<sup>[28]</sup> From these results it is evident that a large proportion of older people in Iceland is aware of climate change and considers the impacts they themselves can have and what the future of their families may look like.

There are no organisations or groups for seniors active in Iceland, dedicated to climate change, but a special environmental group was recently established within U3A in Iceland (University of the Third Age) that deals with climate and other environmental issues. Climate issues are also a topic of conversation in other groups of seniors.

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26. Sammen om verdensmål (2021.)  
27. Knoema (2022c.)  
28. GALLUP (2022.)

### 2.5.1 University of the Third Age (U3A)

*The University of the Third Age (U3A)* in Iceland is an independent, non-profit organisation that can be traced to the preparation and participation of Ingibjörg Rannveig Guðlaugsdóttir to take part in the *World U3A* international conference in Chitrakoot, India in 2010. The organisation in Iceland (U3A Reykjavík) was founded in 2012 and has around 1,300 members today. In accordance with its Articles of Association, the organisation intends to promote members' access to a diverse range of education without it being classified as formal schooling. The organisation also wants to promote activity and increased awareness among members, and society at large, about the importance of the third age, the opportunities it contains and the human resources that it contains. The education is mostly based on peer education where members of the organisation share knowledge, experience, and skills. The organisation intends to achieve its purpose, i.e. by organising and managing lectures, trips, and visits, as well as by fostering connections with others inside and outside the U3A movement worldwide.<sup>[29]</sup>

A special environmental group was established within U3A Reykjavík in the fall of 2022 and has held quite a few meetings since then. The environmental group maintains an active Facebook page and has staged two seminars to date. The subject of one of them was Iceland's nature and its protection in times of climate change, and the other was on biodiversity and sustainability. The goal of the environmental group is to educate and inform people about threats to Iceland's nature and its terrestrial ecosystems, freshwater ecosystems, oceanic ecosystems and geosites; as well as to draw attention to ways we can protect the environment and nature and take actions that can improve the environment and combat climate change. Members are also encouraged to actively engage with environmental issues, and the group publishes words of encouragement and advice on how to lead a more environmentally sustainable way of life.

While *U3A Reykjavík* has not applied itself specifically to climate issues, the above shows how climate issues are interwoven in various ways into the activities of the organisation's environmental group.

### 2.5.2 The National Federation of Senior Citizens

*The National Federation of Senior Citizens* ("*Landssamband eldri borgara*", *LEB*) is an independent umbrella organisation that includes 55 senior citizen associations in Iceland, with a total of around 30,000 members. The organisation promotes the collaboration of senior citizen associations and that for such associations to be active in all Icelandic municipalities.<sup>[30]</sup> *LEB* has not focused specifically on environmental issues, but the organisation participated in an environmental project

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29. University of the Third Age

30. The National Federation of Senior Citizens (2021.)



in 2019, that received funding from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and smaller grants from other parties. This campaign was in the form of three trailers that were shown on television, on websites, and on web media. The trailers encouraged people to reduce the use of single-use plastic bags, not to dispose of medical products in the trash or the drain, and to go out and pick up litter.

While preparing this summary, several senior citizen associations affiliated with *LEB* were contacted nationwide to investigate whether environmental issues had been a specific focus of their agenda. None of the member associations that were contacted stated that they had focused on environmental issues as a specific subject category, except for one association, where several speakers had been hired to give presentations on environmental issues, and the new chairman intended to make climate and environmental issues a greater priority.

### 2.5.3 Friends of Icelandic Nature

*Friends of Icelandic Nature* (“*Vinir Íslenskrar náttúru*”, *VÍN*) is a non-profit organisation.<sup>[31]</sup> The purpose of the organisation is to discuss current nature conservation issues in Iceland, with a special emphasis on the harmful effects of invasive and alien species, as well as to formulate proposals for improvements. The organisation stages meetings, organises actions for nature conservation, and disseminates information to the public, through mass media and on its website, about the negative effects of alien species on the ecosystem and the aesthetics of Icelandic nature. The organisation also provides consultation on plans, such as proposed amendments and drafts of regulations relating to nature conservation. The organisation promotes the provision of accurate and reliable information, such as regarding carbon sequestration and carbon units. Furthermore, the organisation emphasises the use of international certification systems in carbon sequestration, with recognised conditions and criteria that simultaneously take Icelandic conditions into account. The organisation is not exclusively for older people, but many its founding members and columnist for the *Friends of Icelandic Nature* are university-educated retirees.

## 2.6 Faeroe Islands

The Faroe Islands have a population of approximately 54,000, of which 17.9% are aged 65 and over, according to figures from 2021.<sup>[32]</sup> When preparing this summary, no information was available about senior organisations on climate issues in the Faroe Islands. The association of senior citizens (*Landsfelag Pensjónista*) was contacted, where it was confirmed that none of their groups had climate issues on their agenda. Certainly, there are older people who are active in environmental

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31. Friends of Icelandic Nature (2022.)

32. The Global Economy (2021.)

issues within nature conservation organisations, but these are not special organisations or groups for the age group in question here.

The Faroe Islands Nature and Environment Association (*Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag*) has so far not catered specifically to this age group, but in relation to the project in question, it became clear that the organisation is very interested in creating such a group.

Representatives of both organisations (*Landsfelag Pensjónista* and *Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag*) took an active part in a seminar held in Reykjavík in September 2023, within the framework of the project being discussed in this report, (see Section 4.) Email communication following the seminar, revealed that preparations had begun for the establishment of "Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion" in the Faroe Islands.<sup>[33]</sup>

## 2.7 Greenland

Greenland has a population of approximately 56,000, of which approximately 9.8% are aged 65 and over, according to figures from 2023.<sup>[34]</sup> In connection with the project in question, the National Association of Seniors in Greenland was contacted, as well as officials in Greenland who handle Nordic cooperation on the topic of environmental and social issues. Despite the help of those parties, no evidence was found that Greenlanders of retirement age had formed groups around climate issues.

## 2.8 Åland

Over 30,000 people live in Åland. Although data about the age division of that region is not available, one may estimate that the percentage of the population that is 65 and over is similar to that of the other Nordic countries. Åland has long been ahead of its time in environmental matters. In 2018, the Åland government set a goal of a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, in comparison to 2005<sup>[35]</sup>. The Åland government has also set an aim to become sustainable by 2051, largely with the help of wind turbines and hydrogen-powered ferries. When preparing this summary, no information was found about senior organisations on climate issues in Åland. The senior association in Maríuhöfn, the capital of the Åland, was contacted but no conclusion was reached.

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33. Information from Landsfelag Pensjónista, dated 6 October, 2023.

34. Statista (2023.)

35. Medium (2020.)

# 3. The European Network

Seniors have founded or joined climate organisations worldwide, that aim to influence policymakers, both regionally and nationally. In 2019, the European Union adopted the European Green Deal, which includes the goal of Europe reaching Net Zero by 2050. As a result, several senior citizen climate organisations in Europe decided to create a cooperation network focused on the implementation of the Green Deal by disseminating information, knowledge, and methods, and supporting climate action across Europe. The cooperation network is self-organised and independent of political forces and ties together several climate protection organisations in the countries involved.<sup>[36]</sup> Thus, the Danish organisation *Besteforældrenes Klimaaktion*, the Swedish organisation *Grand Panthers*, the Finnish organisation *Ilmastoisovanhemmat*, and the Norwegian organisation *Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon* are all part of this European network. There are also organisations from other countries on the European continent and Great Britain. The organisation has held digital meetings and publishes a joint newsletter four times a year. The Norwegian organisation is currently working on setting up a website for the network to create a joint digital platform for these organisations. The website is expected to be ready at the end of 2023.

In the following months, likely in the spring of 2024; a conference will be staged in Strasbourg, France; where members of the European network from all over Europe will meet and collaborate on organising a meeting with the Commission or the President of the EU.

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36. European Grandparents for Climate (2023.)

# 4. A Seminar on Seniors and Climate Issues – Helping Both

## 4.1 Preparing the Seminar

As noted in the foreword of this report, the project being discussed here is divided into three steps or work components:

1. Compiling an overview of parties, collaborations, and projects of seniors in the Nordic countries in the field of climate issues.
2. Preparing, convening, and leading a seminar on seniors and climate issues.
3. Compiling a report with basic information, a summary from the seminar, and recommendations to the authorities in the Nordic countries about what they could do to support the work of seniors in the field of climate issues.

The aforementioned seminar was held in Reykjavík on September 27th and 28th of 2023. Representatives of all the organisation and groups discussed in Section 2 of this report were invited to the seminar — specifically, approximately two participants from each of the Nordic countries and one from outside the Nordic countries – to either give lectures or take part in panel discussions. The aim of the seminar was to create a platform to share the experiences of older people regarding climate matters and generate a dialogue about how the governments of the Nordic countries can support the work of Nordic seniors regarding climate issues.

The selection of participants and panellists focused on individuals with experience in the establishment of organisations of seniors who were active in climate issues or individuals who have participated in the work of such organisations or groups. This selection was intended to promote the sharing and gathering of useful information and experience from others, which could later be incorporated into local actions after returning home. Since long journeys to the seminar were considered to be at odds with the topic of discussion, people were also invited to watch the proceedings live. The seminar was in English, to enable equal language access to as many participants as possible, and every attempt was made to prioritise the Nordic Swan Ecolabel certification when purchasing products and services in connection with the seminar.

During the preparation for the seminar, it became clear that many members of groups and associations of older climate activists in the Nordic countries did not consider air travel an option, least of all to participate in a seminar on climate issues. Following that, the possibility of moving the seminar to Copenhagen was

discussed, so that as many participants as possible could travel by land or by ferry to the site of the seminar. Since Iceland was chairing the project, it was not considered appropriate to stage the seminar in another country, and, despite everything, many of the prospective participants were eager to visit Iceland. Many of the participants who attended it in person, also stated that they felt that streaming could never entirely replace an in-person event, as the coffee breaks and impromptu conversations and discussions outside of the meeting agenda, often proved to be the most valuable parts of these events.

Participants in the seminar were 41 in total, not counting those who participated in the event remotely. Mr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, the president of Iceland, honoured the assembly by addressing the guests at the opening of the event. After that, several presentations, panel discussions and group work were on the agenda. The seminar lasted from noon on Wednesday to noon on Thursday, and at the end of it, participants were invited to a guided tour of the Reykjanes peninsula, where they were able to explore the various types of geological activity in the area.

The agenda of the seminar, a list of all the participating organisations and a list of the individuals that participated in the seminar can be found in appendices.



**Image 1.** The President of Iceland addresses a seminar on seniors and climate issues in Reykjavík, on September 27<sup>th</sup> 2023. (Photo: Stefán Gíslason.)

## 4.2 Key takeaways from the lectures and panel discussions

The speakers at the seminar all gave a brief introduction to the organisations and groups they work with and gave a review of each group's history, projects, and methodology. What follows is a summary of each lecture in chronological order according to the agenda.

### 4.2.1 Elisabeth Stern, Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz

Title of the presentation:

***The Organization's Court Case Against Switzerland on the Impact of Climate Change on Human Rights***

Elisabeth Stern is an active participant in the organisation *Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz*. She used teleconferencing equipment to participate in the seminar, as the women of this organisation refrain from flying and travel only by public transport to reduce their carbon footprint. The organisation is entirely a women's organisation, as studies show that women are generally less to blame for climate change than men but suffer more from the consequences. In total, the women in *Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz* are now around 2,450. Elisabeth said that the average temperature in Switzerland was already 2.2 degrees higher than before the industrial revolution, and that in the last 20 years heat waves had been more frequent in Switzerland than before. Around 1,000 people had already died in Switzerland due to heat waves, and that group contained more women than men. *Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz* was created on the basis of these facts. In 2016, the organisation sued the Swiss authorities for inaction on climate issues, which the organisation saw as a breach of the government's duty to protect the lives, homes, and families of Swiss citizens. After the case had been dismissed three times from the Swiss courts, *Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz* decided to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights. The court agreed to take the case for material processing, and it is expected that a decision may be made by the end of the year.

### 4.2.2 Erik Elvers, Gretas gamlingar

Title of the presentation:

***Greta's Oldies, Sweden***

*Gretas gamlingar* is the collaboration network that was the inspiration for this project. It was launched in 2019 with Greta Thunberg as a role model. Shortly after Greta's first protest in August 2018, a group of senior citizens gathered in Gotland and protested the same thing, i.e. the government's inaction on climate issues, thus neglecting to protect and treat the planet well. These protests spread all over Sweden, and so the collaboration network *Gretas gamlingar* was born. However, the participants are not only protesting the inaction due to concern for the young,

but also for the elderly, as climate change has a major negative impact on and leads to deaths in that age group. That is why this is a common interest of all generations. The collaboration network consists of 10–15 independent groups from all over Sweden. Great emphasis is placed on what the participants can do as individuals, because "*no one can do everything alone, but we can all do something together*". The members of *Gretas gamlingar* meet weekly in groups and had, amongst other things, discussions with political parties for the local elections in 2022. Representatives of all the groups then meet annually. The network also protests weekly outside the Swedish Parliament, along with *WWF*, *Greenpeace*, *Naturskyddsföreningen* and senior citizens associations. Members of *Gretas gamlingar* have also talked to grocery stores in their hometowns about reducing food waste and focusing on increasing the availability of ecological and locally produced products. They have received positive responses both from supermarkets and politicians, as well as from a large number of participants in the weekly meetings. In the lecture it was stated that older people could help younger people in protests, as older people had more time than younger people, and had experience that they could pass on.

#### **4.2.3 Helena Kääriäinen, Aktivistimummot**

Title of the presentation:

##### ***The Nordic/Global Health Consequences of the Climate/Environment Crisis***

Just like *Gretas gamlingar*, *Aktivistimummot*, or *Activist Grandmothers*, draw inspiration from Greta Thunberg. The group was founded in 2020, received a lot of attention from the beginning, and now has around 10,000 members. Members are spread all over Finland, but the group does participate in protests whenever possible. Helena is an expert in medical genetics and rare diseases and worked until recently as a professor of genetics at the universities of Helsinki and Turku. In her speech she said that climate change has both direct and indirect effects on health. Besides that, the Western healthcare system has an extremely large carbon footprint, as there is a lot of disposable tools and packaging, and these items are often purchased from abroad where they are cheapest and transported long distances with associated carbon footprint. Climate is related to public health in various ways, e.g. the increased use of public transport can simultaneously help to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, and improve the health of the population, in addition to less pollution resulting from emissions and particles from car tires. Likewise, lowering the temperature in houses, and especially bedrooms, is good for the environment and simultaneously good for people's health, as studies indicate that it is healthier for the body to sleep at 20 degrees than 24 degrees. Climate change also has a direct impact through the increased rate and spread of tropical diseases due to rising temperatures. More rain could reduce the quality of drinking water and increase the risk of mold in houses due to humidity, which in turn can lead to respiratory diseases. There are more examples of the connection between climate change and health that could be mentioned. For instance, the decreasing

snow cover in Finland seems to be reflected in the number of depression cases, but in recent years there has been less snow, which makes the winter much darker than otherwise. The average temperature, which is now usually around the freezing point in winter, means that roads and paths are more slippery than before, which again means that many more people break bones or are injured on the slippery ice than in the past when the ground was usually frozen in winter. More frequent heat waves in the summer have also led to more people buying air conditioning for their homes, which of course leads to increased electricity consumption. The rising sea level will lead to more people fleeing to the Nordic countries in the future, and this will lead to an increase in the frequency of diseases that are otherwise not common in these areas.



**Image 2.** Helena Kääriäinen, a medical doctor, discussed the effects of climate change on people's health. (Photo: Stefán Gíslason.)



#### **4.2.4 Birna Sigurjónsdóttir and Þóra Ellen Þórhallsdóttir, U3A**

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Be Active Through Life-Long Learning***

As previously stated, there is no active group or organisation of senior citizens in Iceland specifically dedicated to climate issues. However, a special environmental group operates within *U3A Reykjavík*. In September 2022, *U3A Reykjavík* had 1,300 members and a lot of effort is put into weekly lectures and education on various issues. All lectures are also streamed and are available online for a full week afterwards. The aim of *U3A Reykjavík's* environmental group is to educate and inform about things that threaten Iceland's nature, both geological formations and the ecosystems of land, fresh water, and sea. At the same time, attention is drawn to ways to protect the environment and nature and promote actions that improve the environment and prevent climate change. Þóra Ellen's talk mainly discussed land use in Iceland. Many biologists are concerned about forestry as it is practiced today, where there is a lot of invasive tree species being planted without much thought about site selection. There is also a noticeable trend of foreign buyers purchasing large plots of land in many parts of the country.

#### **4.2.5 Beate L. Samuelsen, Landsfelag Pensjónista**

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Relevant Older People Activities in the Faroe Islands***

As previously stated, there is no active group or organisation of senior citizens in the Faroe Islands specifically dedicated to climate issues. Nevertheless, three representatives of senior citizens in the Faroe Islands participated in the seminar in order to gain knowledge and prepare for the possible establishment of such an organisation when they returned home.

*Landsfelag Pensjónista* is a senior citizens association in the Faroe Islands. It is a non-political umbrella organisation for 16 smaller senior citizens associations. As an example of the development of environmental issues in the Faroe Islands, the sorting of waste was mentioned, but 50 years ago almost all waste was thrown into the sea. In the presentation, it was stated that environmental issues were not specifically addressed by *Landsfelag Pensjónista*, but there was a good chance that this would change after receiving the knowledge that the Faroese group would take home from the seminar. The Faroese people's environmental awareness has increased, and people are showing greater interest in environmental issues.

#### **4.2.6 Andrew P. Kroglund, Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (BKA)**

Title of the presentation:

##### ***How the Norwegian Grandparents' Climate Campaign Work Nationally, and Interact Internationally***

In Norway, there are few but large groups of senior citizens working on climate issues. Andrew's presentation stated that since the establishment of *BKA* in 2006, the number of members has increased to over 6,800 members, which guarantees them an annual subsidy from the state. It is important for organisations of this type not to be afraid to criticise the government, even if they have provided the organisation with financial support. The organisation is responsible for telling the community about what is happening, and at the same time influencing politicians to make decision-making easier for them. The organisation's main issue is to stop further oil drilling off the coast of Norway. It is important to be both visible on the streets, and to work behind the scenes with politicians to change the law. It is also very important to work with other organisations, both in Norway and internationally, because such organisations are stronger together. An official collaboration network helps promote the work and make it visible. *Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon* wear a uniform when they are out on the streets (a red hat,) they are guided by positivity, and know from experience that this yields much more than constant coverage of the negative consequences of climate change.

#### **4.2.7 Kira Gilling Hansen, Sammen om verdensmål**

Title of the presentation:

***Libraries as Platform for Citizen Involvement and Sustainability. United to reach the global goals***

Kira spoke about activities that have been offered at selected libraries around Denmark, where residents can help develop ideas and solutions in their hometown to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Among the main ideas that have been worked on are repair cafés, sewing machine lessons, and the reuse of tools and furniture. A total of 36 libraries have joined the project and several hundred people are active in them. Two to three employees from each library have received training and participate in various sustainable and community-creating projects. All the libraries continue to use the Sustainable Development Goals as a basis for their work and have been joined by several new collaborators. Participant feedback and survey responses indicate an increased sense of well-being among those who have participated in the project, probably because they are contributing to something that benefits both people and the planet. A lesson that can be learned from the project is that three factors are more important than others to increase the well-being and activity of senior citizens in projects like this:

1. Focus on people's basic psychological needs.
2. Offer practical ways to actively promote sustainability.
3. Integrate nature into the activities to strengthen people's relationship with nature.

The project ends in December 2023.

#### 4.2.8 Bengt Sundbaum & Lena Hammarbäck, Grandparents for Future

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Voluntary Work & Social Media***

Bengt is a former teacher and Lena is a retired psychologist – and both are members of *Grandparents for Future* in Sweden. In their talk, they said that the current government of Sweden is substantially lowering public contributions towards climate issues and that Sweden's climate goals would not be met.

The presentation stated that seniors (65+) make up 17% of all volunteers in Sweden. Social media has both advantages and disadvantages in this type of work when older people are involved. According to a survey conducted in 2022, 43% of Swedes aged 65–74 are active on social media, which presumably means that messages on social media only reach part of the age group. About 90% of Stockholm's 69–79-year-old residents use the internet, but only 50% of those that are 80+.

All communication between *Grandparents for Future* takes place in the organisation's Facebook group. Disadvantages of this include that everything is in Facebook's hands and that Facebook could remove anything that goes against the rules of the medium. In addition, online trolls could interfere with the activities. Since the group does not have a democratically elected board, a lot of responsibility rests on the administrators of the site - and since the group is informal, it is not entitled to any subsidies from the state.

The main advantages of social media in these kinds of activities lie in how easy it is to keep in touch and inform the group about what is happening in different parts of the country. They also mentioned that this arrangement gave a good sense of solidarity. When people constantly see the names of other members of the group, they don't feel alone, but feel like a part of a group. Another advantage is how easy it is to share photos, as this is a very important part of the activities. The group can also easily work with other organisations, such as with young environmentalists. Finally, it should be mentioned that this arrangement allows for space to use the time in the interest of climate issues, instead of having to put a lot of effort into bureaucracy and formalities.

#### 4.2.9 Matti Nummelin, Ilmastoisovanhemmat

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Grandparents for Future***

Matti Nummelin has a doctorate in ecology and has worked as an assistant professor in environmental sciences at the universities of Helsinki and Turku, as well as working on international collaborations and consultations with governments. He was, for example, involved in the negotiations in the run-up to the 2015 Paris Agreement. Matti is the current secretary of *Ilmastoisovanhemmat*, an organi-

sation that holds protests outside the Finnish Parliament every Friday. There, the members of the organisation have signs in approximately six languages, in order to appeal to tourists as well. The presentation stated that members are spread all over Finland, and therefore must rely on technology to reach everyone. The organisation has a reading group that meets monthly online and discusses two books, either environment or climate related. This group has been very popular. The organisation issues declarations and sends letters to the government, and that work is also all done online. It was said that the newly elected government of Finland places little emphasis on climate issues, and even denies climate change. According to recent opinion polls, Finns are less interested in climate issues than before. In 2019, 83% of Finns said it was important to reduce climate change, but in 2023, only 72% of Finns shared that opinion.



**Image 3.** Matti Nummelin, doctor of ecology and member of Ilmastoisovanhemmat. (Photo Stefán Gíslason.)

#### 4.2.10 Anne Grethe Hansen, Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion

Title of the presentation:

##### ***How Do We Reach New Members?***

Anne Grethe discussed the foundation of the organisation and how it is visible on the streets of Danish cities, both through education and protests. As a grassroots movement, *Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion* has neither a board nor a chairman. It is therefore the active members who decide and get to shape what the movement stands for, and what initiatives are taken. The organisation tries to attract people by adapting communication channels to people's personal values and pointing out the possibilities for creating a better future, instead of emphasising the negative and difficult. The organisation is focused on being visible and holding demonstrations and offering education in city centres, where it is likely that people will pass by and notice them. They are also very active on social media and have a good relationship with the media when hosting events. The organisation itself has not worked systematically to add many members, since in their opinion it is more important to get the right people than to get many new members to the group.

#### 4.2.11 Hjálmar W. Árnason, Friends of Icelandic Nature

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Older People in Nature Conservation***

As previously mentioned, there are no active groups or organisations of seniors in Iceland specifically dedicated to climate issues. However, many older people are active in nature conservation, e.g. within the organisation *Friends of Icelandic nature* (VÍN). VÍN's objective is to increase public awareness of biodiversity in Iceland. Initially, the organisation had 41 members, but two years later they are now around 80. VÍN's main focus from the start has been forestry, specifically the importance of it being practiced responsibly so that it does not harm biodiversity. To a certain extent, they are at war with trees, not that VÍN has anything against trees, but the organisation emphasises that Icelanders set a policy where certain land is reserved and protected for future generations. Farmers all over the country are now starting to plant trees everywhere due to financial support from the government, and forestry is becoming a business because of the alleged possibility of income from the sale of carbon units. Companies have begun to encourage and pay for the planting of trees, without checking whether the respective tree species are compatible with the existing nature. Invasive species are even being used. VÍN points out that this aimless forestry can go against Iceland's international obligations, including obligations for the protection of peat and moorlands which are the habitat of birds. With growing forestry, these areas are now widely encroached upon, and bird populations, for which Iceland has a special responsibility, are in decline as a result. It was said that many members of the organisation were "older", but they had a "young spirit, a fighting spirit because we have responsibilities to the future and our children and grandchildren".

#### 4.2.12 Ólavur Poulsen, *Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag*

Title of the presentation:

##### ***Older people and the Climate on the Faroe Islands***

*Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag* was established in 1978. The Faroe Islands are now, according to Ólavur, at the top of the list of countries with the highest emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> per inhabitant. In particular, emissions from the fishing fleet are very high, but also due to the heating of homes. The energy transition in the Faroe Islands has been very slow. Oil has been used there for a very long time, but the share of environmentally friendly energy from hydropower plants and wind turbines is gradually increasing. Due to the small size of the islands, however, it is difficult to store energy from renewable energy sources. Ólavur said in his presentation that during Covid it had become clear that humanity could stand together and make big changes in a short period of time. Older people can do a lot to prevent climate change, such as reducing consumption, choosing used items and using products for as long as possible, being curious and increasing their knowledge of what could be useful in the fight against climate change. It is important to protest before the government makes the wrong decisions, as well as to inform and ask about the "wrong" or "strange" things we notice. People should join climate organisations and vote for politicians who actually fight climate change.

#### 4.2.13 Bente Bakke, *Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon (BKA)*

Title of the presentation:

##### ***The Work Locally***

Bente Bakke is a former member of the Norwegian Parliament and currently sits on the board of *BKA*. She is 80 years old and was, as far as we know, the oldest participant in the seminar. In her presentation, she stated that members of *BKA* use uniforms to catch people's attention and stand out from the crowd. They walk around wearing red hats and billboards and sing "climate songs". The organisation was originally founded in 2006, but when Bente joined it in 2010, she bought one share in the Norwegian oil company *Statoil*, now *Equinor*. This gave her the right to participate in the company's General Meeting and submit proposals. This year, four members of *BKA* presented proposals at the *Equinor* General Meeting, but the representatives of the state, which holds 67% of the votes at the General Meeting, have traditionally ensured that their proposals were rejected. Bente said that this year the Norwegian government had announced 139 new areas for oil and gas exploration, most of them in the Barents Sea, which is contrary to the encouragement of Antônio Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, who has said that all countries must stop oil exploration.

Bente Bakke stated that *BKA* had always collected membership fees, which she was convinced was their greatest strength. It would be impossible to finance all the activities without the membership fees, whether domestically and locally, as well as

to have assessments done and reports written on important issues. As previously mentioned, environmental protection organisations in Norway with more than 5,000 paying members receive economic support from the government. This year, this amounted to a total of NOK 2,056,000 for *BKA*.



**Image 4.** Bente Bakke, former Member of Parliament and current board member of *BKA* in Norway. (Photo Stefán Gíslason.)

#### 4.2.14 Panel Discussions

A panel discussion was held at the seminar after every third lecture with the participation of three relevant lecturers. Questions were collected using the app *Slido* and taken directly from the audience.

Many questions, and most discussions in the panels, were about the establishment of organisations/groups of older climate activists in the Nordic countries, the criteria for establishment, the size of the organisations, the subjects and target groups of such groups. It was stated that in order to be able to establish an organisation in a country where there was none, there had to be interest. A certain number of people would be needed to be able to divide duties and all groups would have to have a purpose and a goal. Preparation for the establishment of an

organisation of this kind often takes a long time before it is possible to get into actions. Currently, there are relatively more senior citizens in the world than before, this group contains a lot of educated people who are still in full health and want to contribute, in addition to the fact that people in general have become more aware about environmental issues than before. It was noted that the varied numbers of individuals in this type of organisation offer different opportunities. Large organizations are important to be able to work on large-scale issues, but it is also important to have smaller groups in the local environment, who could act in a more visible way, each in their own place. Both sizes serve an important purpose. The participants were asked to consider whether there were any disadvantages to such a limited age group being involved in climate issues. In relation to that, it was said that a great strength can be found in working with people of the same age, people then have more in common than otherwise and are therefore more likely to be active than they would be in a mixed group. Also, older people have it in common that they have a lot of free time. This time is a resource that younger people in the labour market do not have.

The subjects of organisations such as the ones in question here were discussed, i.e. whether it would be better to focus on a very limited subject, like *Friends of Icelandic Nature*, who focus solely on forestry in Iceland, or would a broader approach be more appropriate? The majority believed it would be best to have just a few main goals, but that a wider field could be covered with smaller subgroups or establishments. When there aren't too many main goals, the message is clearer. "*If you wage many wars at the same time, you will lose them all. That is why it is important to sharpen the focus, because if you are a small army, you cannot go to all wars*", as one participant put it.

The pros and cons of Nordic collaboration in this field were discussed. The participants agreed that collaboration is important in all environmental work. This is evident in the development of climate issues, but ever since Rio 1992 – and at all climate conferences since then – great emphasis has been placed on bringing people together and forming international collaboration networks. If it can be said that certain organisations are a part of a Nordic movement or collaboration network, it can sound stronger than an organisation that stands alone. By the same token, participation in such collaboration presumably leads to the organisation receiving more attention than otherwise, both in general and in the media.

The participants emphasised the importance of the media and its responsibility and opportunities to raise awareness of issues and communicate to the public. For this reason, it is important to take actions that capture the attention of the media, as well as to have good relations with the media to facilitate access.

In the panel discussions, a question arose about the effect of party politics on voluntary work such as this, i.e. whether it is possible to work together in organisations or groups on climate issues but disagree on politics. Most of the



organisations that were represented in the seminar work independently of political forces. Organisations of this type are often considered rather left-wing, but the participants pointed out that there could be great strength in having right-wing individuals on board, because it could give rise to different points of view and a different approach to the same issues. The diversity of political views within the group could also mean that individuals within the group can raise issues and get an audience with representatives of different political forces. A similar discussion arose regarding whether seniors with a background in environmental issues were more likely to participate in voluntary work in this field than people with no such background. It was stated that it is always beneficial to have a good grasp of the facts, and that in this way the work can become more concise and effective than otherwise, but at the same time there is also strength in having a different background. It is also important to work together across generations.

### **4.3 Group work**

At the end of both seminar days, there was group work to address specific topics and answer specific questions. An effort was made to divide the participants into groups in such a way that diversity within each group would be as great as possible, both in terms of ethnicity and gender. There were six groups, and they were rearranged between days, so that the same people did not sit together on both days. One group leader was assigned to lead the work in each group and effort was made to organise things so that no group leader would have the same people both days. The group division can be found in the appendix.

The groups worked according to a predetermined structure, which was the same for both days. Since the seminar schedule was tight, only 30–45 minutes were given to group work each day, and therefore the group leaders had a challenging task in time management. In the group work on the first day, the focus was on the collaboration of seniors in the Nordic countries in climate matters, and on the second day, draft recommendations were made to the government on how to support seniors in the Nordic countries who are fighting climate change. After the participants in the group work had written down their own ideas about the subjects individually, an attempt was made to reach a consensus within each group as to which were the three best ideas of the group. The main result of each group consisted of that three-item list.



**Image 5.** All participants in the seminar gathered outside the meeting place in Reykjavík. (Photo Nauthóll.)

### **4.3.1 Collaboration of seniors in the Nordic countries**

The main ideas and results of the groups are as follows.

1. A collaboration network of organisations and groups of seniors in the Nordic countries dedicated to climate issues needs to be established, even if the working practices of the groups are very different. Groups and organisations are always stronger together.
2. The existence of a collaborative network opens the possibility of maintaining contact through active email communication and remote meetings. In this way, joint webinars could also be offered.
3. One of the strengths of a collaborative network lies in the fact that if uniform procedures are adopted, everyone can say that "this is the arrangement in all the Nordic countries".
4. A collaboration network would be an opportunity for the Nordic countries to be pioneers on a global scale, as there are no other examples of such collaboration.

5. Cooperation in a collaboration network could provide incentives for other groups and organisations.
6. In a collaboration network, it is possible to develop joint co-Nordic statements to parliamentarians in individual countries.
7. The idea of a collaboration network could be expanded even further, and in the future, it could be extended to other countries, such as the United States. Thus, connections could be formed for collaboration in the future, and this could be reflected in the media.
8. A collaboration network could be the basis for joint actions that would be timed at the same time in all the countries. Such projects would be suitable for capturing the attention of the media, and thus could have a greater influence on political decisions than individual actions.
9. It would be desirable to have a joint Nordic website (or a "joint Nordic knowledge bank" as it was phrased in one of the groups.) There, it would be possible to enter information about projects and create a platform to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas from the work of individual groups and organisations. Not everyone needs to reinvent the wheel.
10. On a joint website, it would also be possible to publish and share published material from groups and organisations in the Nordic countries, such as reports and proposals to the government.
11. A pan-Nordic newsletter published on the website could act as an incentive for other organisations and groups. A list of contacts and organisations could also be available there, so that it would be easier to get in touch with people.
12. The Nordic Council of Ministers could perhaps maintain a special website dedicated to this issue.
13. The Nordic Council of Ministers should financially support the joint meeting of senior climate activists in the Nordic countries and all of Europe in Oslo next year.
14. A Nordic climate forum could be held regularly, even annually, with a special emphasis on the participation of seniors.
15. Regular seminars could be streamed on specific projects to share information.
16. A Nordic Environment Day could be held with organised excursions, camping trips or nature experiences, with or without the participation of children. This would promote solidarity and team spirit and give older people the opportunity to participate in diverse environmental activities.

### 4.3.2 Recommendations to Nordic governments

The following recommendations to the governments in the Nordic countries are based on the results of the groups.

1. Recommendations to governments at the national level:
  - a. Provide financial support to climate-related groups of senior citizens, such as *BKA* in Norway receives, to facilitate their coordination of their work at the national level and enable them to cooperate with their colleagues in other Nordic countries and outside the Nordic countries.
  - b. Invite these groups to a discussion/consultation, such as in the preparation of public climate policies, climate plans, laws, and regulations.
  - c. Promote education for sustainability for all generations by promoting and supporting connections between generations, especially between older people and young people.
  - d. Create or provide a platform for events, meetings, and protests by seniors' climate-related groups.
2. Recommendations to the Nordic Council of Ministers:
  - a. Invite seniors' climate-related groups to Nordic meetings and courses to benefit from their knowledge and experience and give them a voice in the discussion.
  - b. Organise annual Nordic climate conferences in order to create a platform for new connections and the spreading of knowledge and ideas.
  - c. Provide financial support to build a foundation for uniform sharing of information, such as through a Nordic website, webinars, etc.
  - d. Support the coordination of projects at the Nordic level with the participation of seniors' climate-related groups in all the Nordic countries.
  - e. Identify opportunities to make the climate work of Nordic groups of seniors visible outside the Nordic countries in order to strengthen and preserve the position of the Nordic countries as pioneers in this field.
  - f. Consider the creation of a "Nordic Council for Seniors and Climate Issues".

# 5. Main results, discussion and conclusion

The main results of the project in question consist of the recommendations to the government stated in the section above (Section 4.3.2) regarding why and how they should support the voluntary work of senior climate activists, and how Nordic cooperation in these matters can be strengthened and maintained.

In the presentations and discussions at the project's seminar (cf. Section 4,) it was evident how much seniors actually have to offer in terms of climate issues, as these people have a lot of accumulated knowledge and experience, plus they generally have more free time and are better off financially than younger volunteers. By involving seniors in voluntary work in climate matters, people's quality of life is also being improved, both mentally and physically. The physical side is strengthened in all kinds of projects, including protests, and people feel better mentally if they use their time to do something that makes the world a better place for future generations. In this work, people can also make use of their education, even if they are retired. All of this contributes to the improvement of the public health of seniors, and thus helps to reduce costs in the healthcare system.

The participants in the seminar agreed that there is a basis for a Nordic collaboration network for older climate activists. The groups could learn a lot from each other, and in addition, groups and organisations are always stronger together than individually. It can be assumed that it is very motivating for people in groups and organisations of this type to have the opportunity to get to know the work of others in a similar field. Among other things therefore, a Nordic collaboration network could be very suitable to support this work. It could offer online meetings and courses, and ways to keep in touch and carry out joint projects.

The project as a whole, and the seminar in particular, created a platform for networking. It ignited conversations about new cooperation possibilities, and the participants were inspired by each other. Email communication following the seminar, revealed that preparations has begun for the establishment of "Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion" in the Faroe Islands.<sup>[37]</sup> A group of seniors in Iceland has also met to discuss the possible establishment of a formal or informal organisation for that purpose, and to that end have received a presentation from the project manager of the project in question.

In all the groups that operated at the project's seminar, the opinion was expressed that the governments should see older people as a resource and not as a burden.

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37. Information from Landsfelag Pensjonista, dated 6 October, 2023.

The utilisation of this important resource would be beneficial, both for the governments and seniors in the Nordic countries.

It is interesting to note the difference in the focus of seniors' organisations in the Nordic countries, but the different environs, size, and location of the countries presumably have a great influence on which issues are considered the most important in each country. There is also a significant difference in the size of groups and organisations, but this difference seems largely independent of the population of the country in question. In Sweden, for example, there are more small groups than in Norway, where large organisations are at the forefront.

Even though little information was found about the climate work of seniors in Greenland and Åland, it may well be that some such activity exists in these areas. The reason for the lack of such organisations or groups could be due to those being sparsely populated areas or having a small population. It is clear that the participation of representatives from the Faroe Islands in the seminar described in this report has encouraged further collaboration of seniors in the Faroe Islands in the field of climate issues. The same can be said about Iceland, where discussions of this nature continued after the seminar.

The most important messages of the project can be summarised as follows:

1. The number of older people in the Nordic countries is increasing. Currently, around 15–23% of the Nordic nations are over 65 years old, and a large generation is approaching retirement age. This generation will likely change what retirement looks like. The life expectancy of these groups is higher than that of previous generations, their level of education is higher, and their health is arguably better than that of many previous generations. The needs of these groups for activity and successful aging will be different than before, and the ability to use new technologies in communication will be greater than ever. In addition to this, people of this age generally have more free time and are better off financially than younger people.
2. Senior climate volunteer work is beneficial in its own right, because participation in such work keeps people active and thereby improves their physical and mental health. This will presumably result in lower costs for the healthcare system.
3. The volunteer work of seniors in climate matters is advantageous for the government of the relevant country, as this group is a valuable source of knowledge and experience that the government can use in climate-related policy formulation and decision-making. This resource can even be translated into money, since knowledge is generally neither unlimited nor free.
4. Senior climate volunteer work is beneficial for the climate, as it is likely to contribute to lower greenhouse gas emissions and a reduced need for adaptation actions in the years to come. A better climate and a better standard of living for future generations are actually synonymous. It is likely

that this powerful work of seniors in climate matters will lead to lower expenses than otherwise in the coming years and decades.

5. The points above are the main reasons why the government should support the voluntary work of seniors in climate matters.

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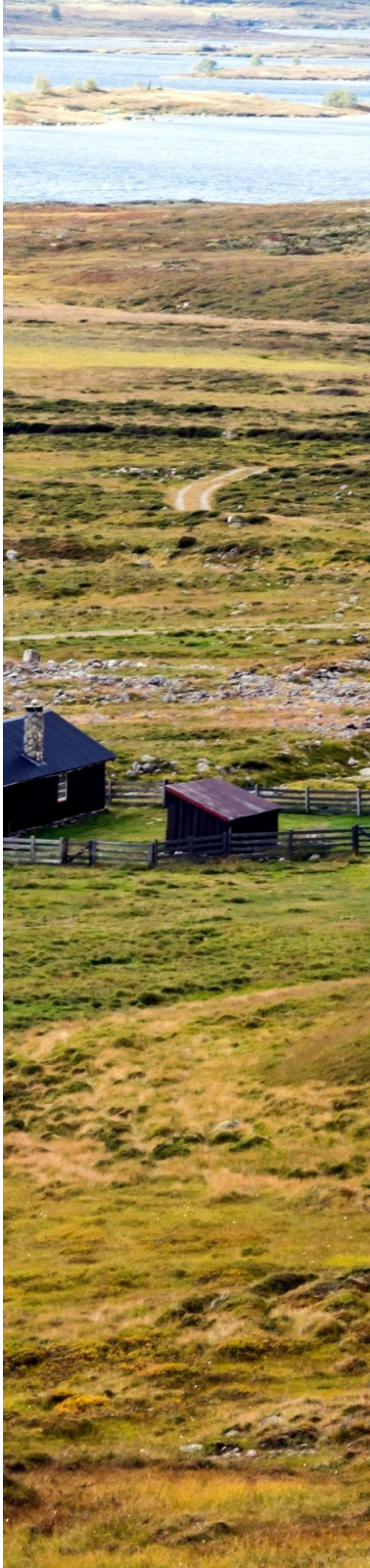
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# Appendix

## Seminar program



### Seminar program 27th of September

**12:00-13:00**

LUNCH

**13:00-13:15**

WELCOME SPEECH - GUÐNI TH. JÓHANNESSON  
PRESIDENT OF ICELAND

**13:15-13:25**

WELCOME SPEECH - MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT,  
ENERGY AND CLIMATE

**13:25-13:45**

KLIMASENIORINNEN SWEIZ - ELISABETH STERN  
THE ORGANIZATION'S COURT CASE AGAINST  
SWITZERLAND ON THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON  
HUMAN RIGHTS

**13:45-14:05**

BREAK

**14:05-14:20**

GRETAS GAMLINGAR - ERIK ELVERS  
HOW IT ALL STARTED AND EXPERIENCE

**14:20-14:35**

AKTIVISTIMUMMOT - HELENA KÄÄRIÄINE  
THE NORDIC/GLOBAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF  
CLIMATE/ENVIRONMENT CRISIS

**14:35-14:50**

U3A - BIRNA SIGURJÓNSDÓTTIR & ÞÓRA ELLEN  
ÞÓRHALLSDÓTTIR  
WORK ON CLIMATE/ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND  
EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

**14:50-15:00**

PANEL - GRETAS GAML., AKTIVISTIMUMMOT & U3A

**15:00-15:20**

BREAK

**15:20-15:35**

LANDSSAMBAND PENSJÓNISTA - BEATE L. SAMUELSEN  
RELEVANT OLDER PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES IN THE FAROE  
ISLANDS

**15:35-15:50**

BESTEFØRELDRENE'S KLIMAOKSJON - ANDREW P. KROGLUND  
THE ORGANIZATION'S WORK NATIONALLY & THE EUROPEAN  
NETWORK

**15:50-16:05**

LIBRARIES AS PLATFORM FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT  
AND SUSTAINABILITY - KIRA GILLING HANSEN  
THE NATIONAL PROJECT MANAGER WILL PRESENT THE  
IDEA AND RESULT FROM THE NATIONAL PROJECT

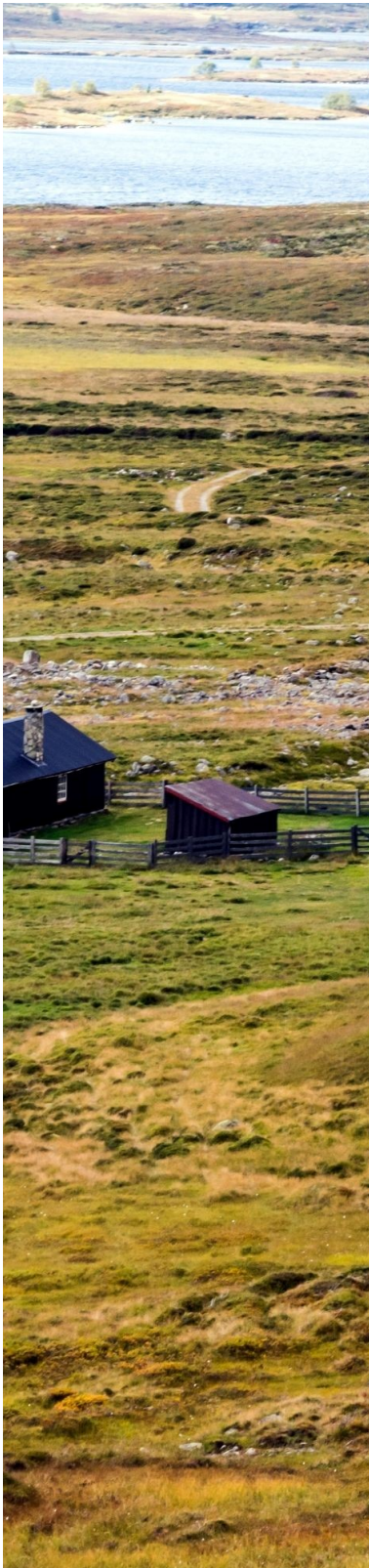
**16:05-16:15**

PANEL - LANDSSAMBAND PENSJÓNISTA, BKA NORGE &  
SAMMEN OM VERDENSMÅL

**16:15-17:00**

GROUP WORK

SEMINAR LOCATION: NAUTHÓLL, NAUTHÓLSVEGI 106, 101 REYKJAVÍK



## Seminar program 28th of September

**9:00-9:30**

BREAKFAST

**9:30-9:45**

**GRANDPARENTS FOR FUTURE - BENGT SUNDBAUM & LENA HAMMARBACK**  
VOLUNTARY WORK & SOCIAL MEDIA

**9:45-10:00**

**ILMASTOISOVANHEMMAT - MATTI NUMMELIN**  
CAN TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY BE AN ADVANTAGE IN  
VOLUNTARY WORK?

**10:00-10:15**

**BEDSTEFORÆLDRENE'S KLIMAAKTION - ANNE GRETHE HANSEN**  
HOW CAN WE REACH NEW MEMBERS?

**10:15-10:25**

**PANEL - GRANDPARENTS FOR FUTURE, ILMASTOISOVANHEMMAT & BKA DENMARK**

**10:25-10:45**

BREAK

**10:45-11:00**

**FRIENDS OF ICELANDIC NATURE - HJÁLMAR W. ÁRNASON**  
OLDER PEOPLE IN NATURE CONSERVATION

**11:00-11:15**

**FÆRØERNES NATUR- OG MILJØFORENING - ÓLAVUR POUlsen**  
OLDER PEOPLE AND THE CLIMATE ON THE FAROE ISLANDS

**11:15-11:30**

**BESTEFØRELDRENE'S KLIMAAKSJON - BENTE BAKKE**  
THE ORGANIZATIONS WORK LOCALLY, ADVANTAGES &  
DISADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

**11:30-11:40**

**PANEL - FRIENDS OF ICELANDIC NATURE, FÆRØERNES  
NATUR- OG MILJØFORENING & BKA NORGE**

**11:40-12:10**

GROUP WORK

**12:10-12:15**

CLOSING NOTES

**12:15-13:15**

LUNCH

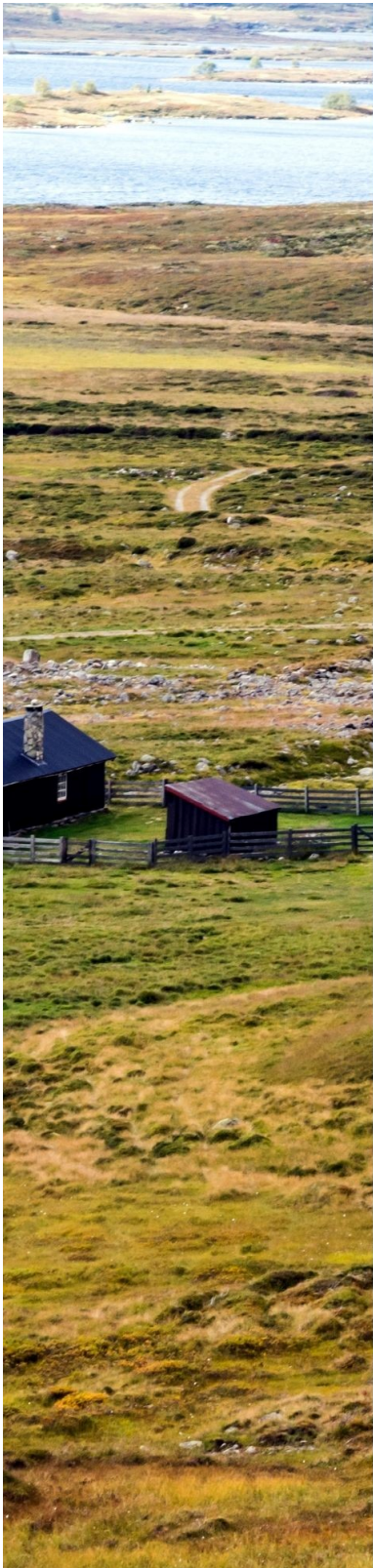
**13:30-19:00**

BUS TRIP

### REGISTRATION

KINDLY REGISTER TO THE SEMINAR FOLLOWING [THIS LINK](#) IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS CONTACT [STEFAN@ENVIRONICE.IS](mailto:STEFAN@ENVIRONICE.IS) OR [INGALOA@ENVIRONICE.IS](mailto:INGALOA@ENVIRONICE.IS)

**SEMINAR LOCATION: NAUTHÓLL, NAUTHÓLSVEGI 106, 101 REYKJAVÍK**



# Trip program

## SVARTSENGI POWER PLANT

THE POWER PLANT IN SVARTSENGI PRODUCES 190 MW OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY. THE POWER PLANT PROVIDES HOT WATER TO ALL OF THE SUBURBAN PENINSULA. SVARTSENGI COMMENCED ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION IN 1976 USING GEOTHERMAL ENERGY. IT WAS ICELAND'S FIRST POWER PLANT TO JOIN TOGETHER ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION AND ENERGY PRODUCTION FOR THE HEATING OF HOUSES.

## NATURE ATTRACTIONS

WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE SIGHTS IN THE REYKJANES PENINSULA, GEOTHERMAL HOT SPRINGS, A BRIDGE THAT CONNECTS EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA ON REYKJANES PENINSULA AND BEAUTIFUL OCEAN VIEWS.

## Seminar participants

<i>Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir</i>	<i>Environice</i>	<i>Iceland</i>
<i>Stefán Gíslason</i>	<i>Environice</i>	<i>Iceland</i>
Anne Grethe Hansen	Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion	Denmark
Emil Gilling Steen Svendsen		Denmark
Kira Gilling Hansen	Tænketanken Fremtidens Biblioteker - Projekt SAMMEN OM VERDENSMÅL	Denmark
Niels Malling	Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion	Denmark
Helena Kääriäinen	Aktivistimummot	Finland
Iiris Kalliola	Ilmastoisovanhemmat	Finland
Matti Nummelin	Ilmastoisovanhemmat	Finland
Beate Lindenskov Samuelsen	Landsfelag Pensjónista	Faroe Islands
Gunnleyg Durhuus	Landsfelag Pensjónista	Faroe Islands
Ólavur Poulsen	Vága Pensjónistafelag	Faroe Islands
Birna Sigurjónsdóttir	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Árni Bragason		Iceland
Berglind Indriðadóttir	Farsæl öldrun - Þekkingarmiðstöð	Iceland
Birna Sigurðardóttir	Félags og vinnumarkaðsráðuneytið	Iceland
Brynja Jóhannsdóttir	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Danfríður Skarphéðinsdóttir	Umhverfis-, orku og loftslagsráðuneytið	Iceland
Emma Eypórsdóttir	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Guðrún Andrésdóttir	Vinir íslenskrar náttúru & U3A	Iceland

Guðrún Ágústsdóttir	Samstarfsnefnd um málefni aldraðra/Félagsmálaráðuneytið	Iceland
Heiðrún Guðmundsdóttir		Iceland
Hjálmar W. Árnason	Vinir íslenskrar náttúru	Iceland
Ingibjörg Grétarsdóttir		Iceland
Jóhanna Bogadóttir		Iceland
Jónína Hólmfríður Pálsdóttir		Iceland
Jórunn Erla Eyfjörð	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Margrét Auðunsdóttir	Landvernd	Iceland
Margrét Loftsdóttir	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Ólöf Helga Þór	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Robert Magnus	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Sigríður Pétursdóttir		Iceland
Stefán Einarsson		Iceland
Tryggvi Felixson	Vinir Þjósárvera	Iceland
Valborg E. Baldvinsdóttir	U3A Reykjavík	Iceland
Þóra Ellen Þórhallsdóttir	Vinir íslenskrar náttúru & U3A	Iceland
Andrew Kroglund	Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon	Norway
Bente Marie Bakke	Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon	Norway
Bengt Sundbaum	Grandparents for Future	Sweden
Erik Johan Elvers	Gretas Gamlingar	Sweden
Lena Hammarbäck	Grandparents for Future	Sweden

## Participating organisations, webpages, and contacts

Organisation/Group	Homepage/Facebookpage	E-mail address
U3A	<a href="https://u3a.is/">https://u3a.is/</a>	<a href="mailto:u3areykjavik@gmail.com">u3areykjavik@gmail.com</a>
Vinir íslenskrar náttúru	<a href="https://natturuvinir.is/">https://natturuvinir.is/</a>	<a href="mailto:admin@natturuvinir.is">admin@natturuvinir.is</a>
Aktivistimummot	<a href="https://www.aktivistimummot.fi/">https://www.aktivistimummot.fi/</a>	<a href="mailto:seija.kurunmaki@kuule.fi">seija.kurunmaki@kuule.fi</a>
Ilmastoisovanhemmat	<a href="https://ilmastoisovanhemmat.fi/">https://ilmastoisovanhemmat.fi/</a>	<a href="mailto:ilmastoisovanhemmat@gmail.com">ilmastoisovanhemmat@gmail.com</a>
Grandparents for Future	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/680698432327315/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/680698432327315/</a>	<a href="mailto:bengtsundbaum@hotmail.com">bengtsundbaum@hotmail.com</a>
Gretas Gamlingar	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/gretasgamlingar/">https://www.facebook.com/gretasgamlingar/</a>	<a href="mailto:erik.elters@gmail.com">erik.elters@gmail.com</a>
Bedsteforældrenes Klimaaktion	<a href="https://bedsteforaeldrenesklimaaktion.dk/">https://bedsteforaeldrenesklimaaktion.dk/</a>	<a href="mailto:anneg@simnet.is">anneg@simnet.is</a> and <a href="mailto:mogensjorgensen@gmail.com">mogensjorgensen@gmail.com</a>
Sammen om verdensmål	<a href="https://www.xn--sammenomverdensml-orb.dk/">https://www.xn--sammenomverdensml-orb.dk/</a>	<a href="mailto:lhd@fremtidensbiblioteker.dk">lhd@fremtidensbiblioteker.dk</a>
Landsfelag pensjónista	<a href="https://eldri.fo/">https://eldri.fo/</a>	<a href="mailto:lp@eldri.fo">lp@eldri.fo</a>
Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag	<a href="https://www.fnu.fo/">https://www.fnu.fo/</a>	<a href="mailto:fnu@fnu.fo">fnu@fnu.fo</a>
Besteforeldrenes klimaaksjon	<a href="https://www.besteforeldreaksjonen.no/">https://www.besteforeldreaksjonen.no/</a>	<a href="mailto:post@besteforeldreaksjonen.no">post@besteforeldreaksjonen.no</a>
Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz	<a href="https://www.klimaseniorinnen.ch/">https://www.klimaseniorinnen.ch/</a>	<a href="mailto:info@klimaseniorinnen.ch">info@klimaseniorinnen.ch</a>



## Seminar groups

### Day 1

<b>Group 1 – Table leader Kira Gilling</b>	<b>Group 2 – Table leader Matti Nummelin</b>	<b>Group 3 – Table leader Andrew Kroglund</b>
Lena Hammarbäck	Ólavur Poulsen	Beate Lindenskov Samuelson
Bente Marie Bakke	Ólöf Helga Þór	Bengt Sundbaum
Robert Magnus	Guðrún Andrésdóttir	Gunnleyg Durhuus
Guðrún Ágústsdóttir	Emil Gilling Steen Svensen	Niels Malling
Valborg E. Baldvinsdóttir	Sigríður Pétursdóttir	Ingibjörg Grétarsdóttir
		Margrét Auðunsdóttir
<b>Group 4 – Table leader Erik Elvers</b>	<b>Group 5 – Table leader Birna Sigurðardóttir</b>	<b>Group 6 – Table leader Birna Sigurjónsdóttir</b>
Jórunn Erla Eyfjörð	Iiris Kalliola	Berglind Indriðadóttir
Anne Grethe Hansen	Helena Kääriäinen	Heiðrún Guðmundsdóttir
Brynja Jóhannsdóttir	Þóra Ellen Þórhallsdóttir	Emma Eypórsdóttir
Jónína Hólmfríður Pálsdóttir	Tryggvi Felixson	Árni Bragason
Danfríður Skarphéðinsdóttir	Stefán Einarsson	Margrét Loftsdóttir
	Jóhanna Bogadóttir	

## Day 2

<b>Group 1 – Table leader Kira Gilling</b>	<b>Group 2 – Table leader Matti Nummelin</b>	<b>Group 3 – Table leader Andrew Kroglund</b>
Anne Grethe Hansen	Lena Hammarbäck	Bente Marie Bakke
Gunnleyg Durhuus	Beate Lindenskov Samuelsen	Ólöf Helga Þór
Ólavur Poulsen	Jórunn Erla Eyfjörð	Brynja Jóhannsdóttir
Helena Kääriäinen	Iiris Kalliola	Margrét Loftsdóttir
Ingibjörg Grétarsdóttir	Berglind Indriðadóttir	Heiðrún Guðmundsdóttir
Árni Bragason		Jóhanna Bogadóttir
<b>Group 4 – Table leader Erik Elvers</b>	<b>Group 5 – Table leader Birna Sigurðardóttir</b>	<b>Group 6 – Table Leader Birna Sigurjónsdóttir</b>
Robert Magnus	Guðrún Ágústsdóttir	Valborg E. Baldvinsdóttir
Guðrún Andrésdóttir	Emil Gilling Steen Svensen	Tryggvi Felixson
Bengt Sundbaum	Niels Malling	Danfríður Skarphéðinsdóttir
Þóra Ellen Þórhallsdóttir	Jónína Hólmfríður Pálsdóttir	Hjálmar W. Árnason
Emma Eypórsdóttir	Sigríður Pétursdóttir	Stefán Einarsson
	Margrét Auðunsdóttir	

# About this publication

## Seniors and Climate Issues - For the Benefit of Both

*Stefán Gíslason and Ingibjörg Ólöf Benediktsdóttir*

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