



CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION IN THE NORDIC REGION

## **11 PROJECTS THAT HAVE CHANGED THEIR REGION**

## CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION PROVIDES NORDIC BENEFIT



You are now holding the first general presentation of concrete cross-border projects that have been part-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers. This collection of examples is intended to give an idea of the breadth of the work and to highlight a number of successful projects from recent years. However, the projects presented are only a selection of the many cross-border co-operation projects and joint activities that have been implemented with Nordic support over the past three decades.

The cross-border co-operation has its origins and is strongly anchored in regional and local actors, who have seen a natural need for and benefits from co-operating with their counter-partners across the Nordic region's land and sea borders. From very early on, in the 1970s, the Nordic Council of Ministers began supporting this work. The cross-border co-operation was viewed as a concrete form of Nordic co-operation, close to the people. It represents a positive complement to state-level co-operation, between ministries and public authorities, and to the collaboration that is conducted by non-governmental organisations. It is in the border regions that Nordic relations are made tangible in day-to-day life. This is where we encounter similarities and differences in regulations, languages and traditions, and this is where the problems that these cause can be identified – and often resolved – and the opportunities for co-operation that emerge can be utilised. Cross-border co-operation also underlines the fact that the Nordic region is a large geographical area, with varying challenges and opportunities. It offers a

regional dimension and makes the large-scale Nordic projects tangible.

Nowadays, most Nordic cross-border committees receive support for their activities from the Nordic Council of Ministers. This publication is based on the situation in 2010, when eleven committees were receiving support. Each committee has its own history, profile, organisational form, etc., which has been described in a separate publication.

In this publication, the focus is not on the organisations, but rather on the content and the results of the co-operation. We have selected eleven projects, one from each committee, with the aim of highlighting the co-operation within those areas that the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) has specifically prioritised in its cross-border strategy. These are projects that help to develop the competitiveness of the business sector, identify and resolve cross-border obstacles, produce sustainable environmental and energy solutions, and develop infrastructure in the affected cross-border regions.

I hope that the publication will be an eye-opener and a useful source of information for anyone who “doesn't really know what the cross-border committees do”. We aim to provide anyone who is wondering about the benefits of Nordic co-operation with a series of tangible examples of successful initiatives that have produced good results. We also hope that this publication will act as a source of inspiration for anyone involved in Nordic cross-border co-operation, and that it can be used in an international context, as a display of the Nordic way of co-operating across borders.

HARRY EKSTAM

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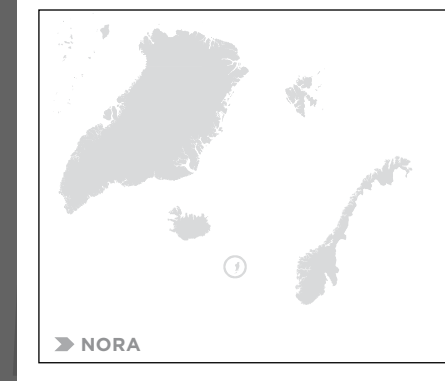


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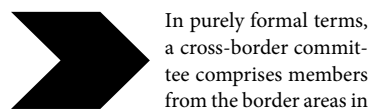


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# WELCOME TO OUR NORDIC CROSS-BORDER COMMITTEES

A cross-border committee is an extension of the type of set-up that people have always used – a practical collaboration on and a common view of a region, its inhabitants and businesses. The major differences are that the co-operation within the cross-border committees crosses a national border, has a clear organisation, and that the work is targeted at both national decision-makers and the region's inhabitants.



In purely formal terms, a cross-border committee comprises members from the border areas in two or more countries, working to increase co-operation in the cross-border region for the benefit of all. The members are usually municipalities and regions, although national and private players can also be included.

The eleven cross-border committees presented in this publication all received financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2010, although they differ from each other in many ways. Some are located in metropolitan regions, while others are in very peripheral areas. Some cover a very large area, whereas others focus their activities in municipalities situated close to the national border. Some extend into two countries, while others cover three or even more. These geographic differences provide different conditions for the activities, and as they are also structured very differently in purely organisational terms, each cross-border committee has its own specific priorities and areas of focus.

In this context, it is also worth mentioning that the cross-border committees' priorities and the composition of their membership – and hence their geographic scope – change from time to time, and that as a consequence they are not fixed units.

However, their activities in the border regions also mean that there are a number of similarities as regards the conditions and themes for their work. First and foremost, the main purpose of all the cross-border committees is to contribute to increased growth and development in their own particular border region. This developmental approach is founded on an expectation that dynamic and well-integrated regions can hold onto and attract companies and



citizens, that larger regions have better resources for growth and development, and that each region has the potential to develop further.

As a result, all the border regions also have the same task, i.e. to break down both actual and mental border obstacles in their region, and to encourage their member organisations, business partners, inhabitants, politicians, companies, etc., to look beyond the national borders when addressing the development potential of the region.

The eleven cross-border committees share the fundamental principle of Nordic Added Value when it comes to Nordic cross-border co-operation. This principle means that the co-operation is expected to have a greater combined effect than would be achieved by a national action. This applies in particular to those activities that strengthen the Nordic identity and increase joint Nordic expertise and competitiveness.

## THREE CROSS-BORDER THEMES – THREE CHALLENGES

The cross-border committees that are supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, work on three central themes that are considered fundamental for achieving the aims: border statistics, border obstacles, as well as collaboration and the exchange of experiences between the cross-border committees.

### THE CHALLENGE OF BORDER STATISTICS

1 An increasingly transnational labour market has emerged over recent years, and with that increased cross-border commuting. As a result, there is now

also a demand for statistical information on the cross-border labour market. Local and regional labour markets along the Nordic land borders, with distribution effects across the borders, are creating a need for cross-border statistics regarding commuting patterns and other fundamental statistical measures, such as household incomes, which are not registered in the national databases.

National statistics have certain – often significant – deficiencies when it comes to creating a clearer picture of the cross-border regions. One general problem is that national statistics only register activities that take place within the national borders. A cross-border worker who is registered in Sweden, for example, will not have his or her Norwegian income recorded in the same register, which results in an excessively low level of household income.

Cross-border statistics are naturally important for the cross-border committees, as they show the actual situation in the region. This is therefore an obvious item on the cross-border committees' agendas. A number of different projects have compiled regional statistics, such as the establishment of the Örestat database in the Öresund region and a similar venture that presents statistics in the Västra Götaland-Østfold region. The matter has also been taken up within the Nordic Council of Ministers in its preparation of Nordic commuting maps.

The most recent initiative is the introduction of a joint Nordic database. During autumn 2008, the Nordic Council of Ministers commissioned the statistics agencies in Denmark, Norway and Sweden to design a Nordic statistical database – StatNord – with the aim of presenting cross-border statistics for migration and the labour market. The work of producing comparable statis-

tics from the three national frameworks commenced at the end of 2008, and the new database was launched on 30 November 2009. Since its launch, discussions have been held regarding the development of the database and the future financing of updating work – a process that the cross-border committees are naturally heavily involved in and are following with great interest.

### THE CHALLENGE OF LEGAL AND OTHER BORDER OBSTACLES

2 In its border obstacle database, the Nordic Council of Ministers defines a border obstacle as follows: "In this context, a border obstacle is any type of problem that restricts or renders more difficult the potential of people and companies/businesses to operate freely across the borders in the Nordic region". As the border obstacle database focuses on the legal obstacles, the definition is extended: "Only problems that are due to laws, the application of laws and EU regulations, or administrative application issued by authorities or similar, are viewed as border obstacles in this context. Obstacles that are due to incorrect or insufficient information/knowledge are not counted as border obstacles".

It is consequently clear that a border obstacle, according to this definition, must be understood as a legal obstacle that makes cross-border mobility more difficult. Legal border obstacles are usually related to the labour market, and arise when employees or companies want to operate across the national borders. Within the day-to-day work of the cross-border committees, however, it is obvious that these legal obstacles are not the only type of border obstacle that the committees are attempting to break down. On the contrary, there are a great many physical, functional and mental border obstacles that affect the potential for successful cross-border collaboration and that require other working methods in addition to simply amending the legislation. For example, there may be a need for cross-border infrastructure, greater knowledge of the neighbouring country's language, or a need for general knowledge about the neighbouring country's culture and population.

The breaking down of border obstacles is consequently a central area of work for



several cross-border committees, but as the legal border obstacles are an extremely complex issue, this work is conducted in collaboration with a series of other organisations. First and foremost, the cross-border committees co-operate with the Nordic Council of Ministers through its "Border obstacle database", which compiles all identified Nordic border obstacles, analyses the cause of the problem, and updates the problem's process and any solution. This information can be found at <http://granshinder.norden.org>.

The work on border obstacles is also coordinated with the "Border Obstacle Forum", a political working group established by the Nordic ministers for co-operation to resolve the problems associated with Nordic border obstacles. The cross-border committees also co-operate with two bilateral cross-border services, Grensetjänsten in Morokulien ([www.gtm.nu](http://www.gtm.nu)), which works on border obstacles between Sweden and Norway, and Øresund Direkt ([www.oresunddirekt.com](http://www.oresunddirekt.com)), which is an information service that communicates public information from the authorities to citizens and companies in the Öresund region, as well as tries to promote collaboration between authorities and officials in the region.

### THE CHALLENGE OF CO-OPERATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES BETWEEN THE CROSS-BORDER COMMITTEES

3 The cross-border committees presented in this publication represent only a proportion of all the cross-border collaborations in the Nordic region. Many more could be named, including Interreg co-operation projects and cross-border committees with neighbouring countries such as Russia, the Baltic States, Poland and Germany.

The cross-border committees we describe here, however, have the advantage that they have a forum for interaction thanks to their joint financial support from the Nordic Council of Ministers. They have a great many similarities and common challenges, which means that they can also benefit greatly by learning from each other and collaborating on projects that can be beneficial to more than just one region. The cross-border committees agree that they have much to learn from each other; they place great value on the network and they would ideally like to see it develop further.

The Nordic Council of Ministers finances an annual "Border Region Forum", where the cross-border committees' secretariats and politicians are invited to a two-day seminar. The programme varies from year to year, and aims to deal with topics that are relevant to the work of the committees. The forum consequently acts as a meeting platform, contributing to a strong sense of being a group of cross-border committees under the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Priorities such as statistics and border obstacles also bear witness to the fact that there is considerable co-operation between the cross-border committees – both in concrete projects and generally when it comes to dealing with the same themes and attempting to influence both national and Nordic policy.

The Nordic region is not a solitary entity, rather both the joint Nordic collaboration and the individual cross-border committees collaborate with other European cross-border committees. This takes place for example through the AEBR (the Association of European Border Regions), which is working to increase the attention given to the committees within the EU. By co-operating and exchanging experiences across national borders, the cross-border committees can develop and learn together.

## EUROPE'S BEST CROSS-BORDER PROJECT IN 2004

How can we make it easier to live and work on the Swedish-Norwegian border? That was the question that formed the basis for the Grensetjänsten project which, after exceeding all expectations as regards results, has been able to continue after the end of the project period.

Every month, just over 2,000 private individuals and companies receive answers to their questions, the majority of which relate to work opportunities on the other side of the border.

People living along the 1,610 km-long Swedish-Norwegian border have always made use of the labour market in the neighbouring country, shopped where it is cheapest, employed specialists and professionals in the local area and taken advantage of the range of cultural and leisure activities. Here, the border between the two countries is an invisible, bureaucratic obstacle, with little connection to the practical reality.

The level of integration between Sweden and Norway is constantly increasing, and the growing exchange is obviously positive, although at the same time it exposes the various types of problem that restrict and slow down developments. This includes everything from differences between regulations to an absence of knowledge and co-ordination.

A report from the Nordic Council of Ministers also highlights the fact that authorities and individuals have an "almost entirely opposing view of the existence of border obstacles and problems", i.e. the authorities do not perceive the problems to be particularly great, whereas questions from companies and individuals show that the problems are actually extensive.

### THE MOROKULIEN INITIATIVE

Morokulien is the second-largest border crossing between Sweden and Norway, with the Swedish county of Värmland on one side of the border and the Norwegian county of Hedmark on the other. The site has symbolic value, and in 1914 a peace monument was erected in memory of 100 years of peace



ARKO

between the two countries. More than 6,000 cars cross the border here every day.

Here, the Swedish-Norwegian employment service, Inre Skandinavia, has been able to demonstrate the need for and the benefits of co-operation across the national border. They were able to show that sectorisation and central control hamper rapid, versatile solutions, and that many analyses of problems are followed by insufficient measures. It was clear that there was a lack of a driving actor that was both firmly established and had sufficient knowledge to identify, work on and resolve problems.

### MEETING RESULTED IN AN INFORMATION AND ADVICE SCHEME

In order to identify and establish such an actor, Eda and Eidskog municipalities on either side of the border at Morokulien contacted the ARKO cross-border committee. They started by inviting representatives from the regional offices of the social insurance offices, customs authorities, tax agencies, employment services and unemployment insurance funds in both countries to a meeting. Representatives from the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise, LO and affected regional administrative authorities also attended the meeting.

The aim of the meeting was to establish a trial and development programme for the quality assurance of an accessible, professional and co-ordinated information and advice scheme in Morokulien, which would also provide Internet and telephone services.

The target group for the information and advice scheme comprised all the private indi-

viduals, organisations and actors in the business sector who were looking for information about or having problems that in some way were linked to cross-border activities.

Grensetjänsten was established as a direct result, a name that is a symbolic mix of the Norwegian and Swedish languages and that translates as "Border Service". Grensetjänsten's aim is to simplify economic activities and growth in the region by co-ordinating various authorities. Other goals include supporting the national authorities to identify and eliminate border obstacles, as well as collaborating within networks that exist between other cross-border regions.

### GRENSSETJÄNSTEN'S FLYING START

Grensetjänsten was able to get started immediately, as both the expertise and customer information were already present, in the form of operations within the employment service of Inre Skandinavia. The service was staffed with five permanent and a number of floating employees, including from the Social Insurance Office. Inquiries were received from just about all social groups. From companies that needed services for the recruitment of employees and for information about forms in connection with business operations on both sides of the border, to people who wanted to retire and purchase a summer cottage on the other side of the border. The majority of the inquiries related to Swedes who wanted information about job opportunities in Norway, and in the beginning some forty telephone inquiries a day were being received. The service now handles more than 2,000 inquiries a month.



### GRENSERÅDET FOR THE DIFFICULT CASES

In order to arrive at a smooth form of co-operation between Grensetjänsten, authorities and organisations, Grenserådet ("Border Council") was also established. Within this body, meetings are held several times a year in order to discuss and attempt to eliminate those border obstacles whose resolution requires more than just the right information. From here, any problems that cannot be resolved regionally are passed on to the correct body – which can entail anything from changes to the law and the co-ordination of authorities to promoting international amendments.

NAMED EUROPE'S BEST CROSS-BORDER PROJECT IN 2004 Grensetjänsten delivered results pretty

much from day one. During the initial project period between 2002 and 2006, the service succeeded in both achieving and exceeding its goals. As a sign of its success, Grensetjänsten was named Europe's best cross-border project in 2004, and was cited as a role model for the rest of Europe.

### GRENSSETJÄNSTEN TODAY

This success led to Grensetjänsten continuing operations after the end of the project period, with the same organisation and set-up as before. The activities are now conducted with financing from bodies such as NAV, the Employment Service in Sweden, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, affected departments in Norway, the County Administrative Board in Värmland, Hedmark Fylkeskommune, etc. Eda

and Eidskog municipalities are the formal owners of Grensetjänsten.

Grensetjänsten now functions as a specialist body for the Border Obstacle Forum, and has, among other things, been asked by the Swedish Government Office to investigate the situation and submit a report regarding a similar cross-border co-operation in the Cap of the North region.

### FACTS

**ARKO'S ROLE.** With its experience and contact networks, the ARKO cross-border committee participated in the start-up phase for Grensetjänsten and helped with financing during the project period, from 2002-2006. The project was run as an Interreg III A project. ARKO is now included in Grenserådet.

## STRONG BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE ENERGY SECTOR

The Cap of the North region is home to many energy-intensive companies, and the energy sector in the region is very strong – particularly thanks to the extensive access to hydroelectric power and forests. The transition to renewable energy sources is also providing the forestry and agricultural sectors with new growth opportunities. Two projects that have focused attention on and brought together various actors in the region are the “Centre of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate” and its continuation, the “Network of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate”.

➤ The EU has set as its goal that 20 per cent of the energy produced in 2020 should come from renewable energy sources, and has hereby signalled clearly to both governments and companies regarding the importance of investments in the energy sector. In the Cap of the North region, there are driving forces for continued development within the field of renewable energy, and new job opportunities can be created both within small-scale entrepreneurship and through increased co-operation between various actors. In October 2007, these opportunities were taken up politically, when the foreign



BOTHNIAN ARC

ministers of Norway, Sweden and Finland made a joint announcement in Bodö stating that “developments in the north are opening the door to a closer dialogue regarding the energy issue in a broader sense”.

The Norwegian foreign minister employed the organisation “Innovasjon Norge” to identify possible sectors for research collaboration, with the sights set on regional business development. This was the launch of the two projects, “Centre of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate” and “Network of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate”, which are providing the Cap of the North with a new platform for co-operation and business development within the field of energy.

### UNITED DECISION TO GATHER THE ENERGY EXPERTISE RESULTS IN COE

Right from the outset, it was clear that there was a pent-up need to come together on the energy issue. Within universities and university colleges, county administrative boards, county councils and other regional actors, for example, there was a clear desire to identify methods of co-operation. Things were now moving, and representatives from research organisations, the business sector and authorities in Norway and Sweden with links to the field of energy came together to discuss what form this co-operation should take. Finland was not involved at this time, as it had not been possible to recruit any Finnish partners or organisations when setting up the project.

Agreement was reached to co-ordinate energy expertise within a competitive

“Centre of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate” (CoE). The CoE project was conducted between 2008 and 2009, and succeeded in generating funding to conduct innovative technology development projects based on renewable energy. In addition, CoE established a resourceful development environment that possessed leading-edge expertise primarily within renewable energy fields such as bio, wind, hydro and solar energy.

CoE also constituted a joint platform for co-operation between the various actors along the value chain – from applied research to commercial product. Above all, however, CoE brought actors together in order to jointly create technology development projects and to develop new, energy-efficient, commercial and potentially exportable products, as well as job opportunities primarily in the region’s small companies.

The CoE project resulted in the formation of five technology development groups: environmentally friendly small-scale hydroelectric power, bio-energy, solar energy, wind energy and energy rationalisation.

### EASIER TO SEEK PROJECT FUNDING

One experience from CoE was that the potential to obtain project funding for joint technology development projects increased dramatically when the various skills within the energy field in the Cap of the North region were brought together, compared to if the various actors were to apply individually, as the allocation of funding at national,



### ➤ SELECTION OF THE RESULTS ACHIEVED BY COE:

- A pilot study worth SEK 350,000 was granted by Norrbotten County Administrative Board and Norrbotten County Council. It was implemented October 2009 - February 2010.
- A small-scale hydroelectric power project worth SEK 12 million was granted by the EU’s structural fund in autumn 2010.
- The Swedish/Norwegian solar energy group created a trade association for solar energy in the Cap of the North region. An interim Board of Directors was established in December 2008.

### RESULTS OF NOE TO DATE:

- A stage 1 application has been submitted to Sustainable Energy Systems 2050 in December 2010 in the field of bio-energy. The partners come from Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland.
- A project application was submitted to Interreg IV A Nord in December 2010 in the field of wind power. The application is entitled WIND ARC. Partners from Finland and Sweden are included.
- A stage 1 application for funding part of the research was submitted to Nordic Energy Research (NER) in December 2010. The stage 1 application qualified and was approved at the end of January 2011. A stage 2 application was completed and submitted to NER on 16 March 2011. Partners are from Norway, Sweden and Finland.
- An application for a pilot study regarding environmentally friendly, small-scale hydroelectric power was submitted to Interreg IV A Nord in March 2011.
- In February 2011, a Norwegian partner conducted an inventory trip to northern Sweden and Finland. The overall objective of this trip was to build research networks and relations with the aim of creating a rewarding, long-term collaboration between Norway, Sweden and Finland.

### ➤ FACTS

**THE “CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR ENERGY IN COLD CLIMATE” PROJECT.** CoE ran between 2008 and 2009. The project partners were Luleå University of Technology, Bedriftskompetanse Narvik, Norut Narvik and Narvik University College. Centek acted as project leader at the request of Luleå University of Technology.

The project was financed by Interreg IV A Nord, the North Calotte Council and Norrbotten County Council.

**THE “NETWORK OF EXPERTISE FOR ENERGY IN COLD CLIMATE” PROJECT.** NoE is running between 2010 and 2012. The project partners are Luleå University of Technology, Samkommun för Utbildning Lappia, Bedriftskompetanse Narvik, Bothnian Arc, Norut Narvik, Narvik University College, Oulu Innovation Oy (now BusinessOulu), Ylivieska Region/Oulu South and Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences. Centek is acting as project leader at the request of Luleå University of Technology.

The project is being financed by Interreg IV A Nord. Bothnian Arc is contributing to the project through cross-border networks and good relations with companies and organisations in both Sweden and Finland.

Nordic and EU level takes place in the face of very stiff competition with many strong and established institutions.

### NOE TAKING OVER AND DRIVING THE OBJECTIVE ON

The experiences from CoE were so good that it was more or less taken for granted by the partners involved that the work would continue. The starting shot has now been fired for the continuation, the “Network of Expertise for Energy in Cold Climate” (NoE). This is a network that brings small Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish companies working within renewable energy together with research and large companies.

The NoE project is running between 2010 and 2012, and has the goal of developing a competitive network that ensures the long-term survival of already established collaborations and new collaborations.

The five technology development groups that were established during the CoE project are continuing to develop joint projects within their respective areas, and will be linked to the NoE project, which has been strengthened with Finnish partners.

### WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS DRIVING DEVELOPMENTS FORWARD

NoE will continue to generate formats for

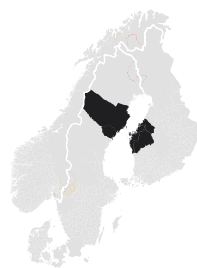
workshops and other meeting places. The purpose is to create the conditions to ensure that new innovative solutions for technology development, based on renewable energy, can be integrated through new collaborations between small companies, universities, university colleges, large companies and public organisations.

NoE has the same underlying driving forces as CoE. The new technology development concepts will form the basis for new, energy-efficient and commercial products that offer the potential for exporting. In the longer term, NoE will also contribute towards the creation of more job opportunities in the Cap of the North region. ◀

## HOW THE KVARKEN ARCHIPELAGO BECAME A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The Kvarken sea area between Västerbotten in Sweden and Österbotten (Pohjanmaa) in Finland forms a natural co-operation area, where people have looked after, used and protected the shared natural area since time immemorial. The Kvarken Council's targeted environmental and nature conservation work is the foundation for the unique Kvarken Archipelago now having been included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Kvarken is the narrowest part of the Gulf of Bothnia, joining Österbotten in Finland with Västerbotten in Sweden. Co-operation regarding common interests has characterised the region since ancient times. The sea, the watercourses and the air know no boundaries, but rather presuppose this collaboration between people.



THE KVARKEN COUNCIL

Together with the High Coast region in Sweden, the Kvarken archipelago is a unique geological entity and a transnational World Heritage site. The steep cliffs of the High Coast and Kvarken's flat, low coastline are the topographical opposites of each other. There is a distance of approximately 150 km between the two coasts, and the area is home to more than 7,000 islets and skerries. The area is a unique example of ongoing geological and biological processes, where the land uplift phenomenon has characterised both the countryside and the culture of the people who live here. The land is rising by approximately 8 mm per year, giving rise to approximately 1 km<sup>2</sup> of new land each year. This uplift will result in a permanent land connection across Kvarken in approximately 2,500 years.

### A LONG JOURNEY WITH A SUCCESSFUL ENDING

In 2006, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee decided to include Kvarken Archipelago in Finland on UNESCO's World Heritage List as an extension of the High Coast in Sweden, which was included in 2000, under the joint name World Heritage High Coast/Kvarken Archipelago. This would not have been possible without the genuine conviction that Kvarken Archipelago is something unique, measured with the stringent criteria included in UNESCO's regulations for World Heritage approval. A subjective conviction was

not enough, of course, rather the application had to contain an objective assessment of the unique values that the object is considered to represent. For the Kvarken Archipelago, these were to be found in the area's geological conditions.

### ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, WORKPLACES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCOME

The most significant anticipated value of the World Heritage status is improved economic activities, resulting from the increased attractiveness and the tourism that this status entails. This presupposes investment in enterprise, infrastructure and service, in order to benefit from the attractiveness of the World Heritage status. At the same time, the region's competitiveness is supported, e.g. when arranging conferences which are provided with a new marketing argument. Additionally, there is the justifiable hope that the World Heritage site will generate jobs in itself, as there is an obligation to look after it, just as there is an obligation to make it accessible to people.

It remains to find new ways of sustainably developing and preserving the World Heritage site alongside the responsible authorities. The area has been awarded the distinction that entails the highest international value status from an environmental perspective, and this shows that the area is home to a unique part of the Earth's history – a part which deserves to be protected and put on display. ◀



THIS TRANSNATIONAL SITE IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT COVERS A CONSIDERABLE MARINE COMPONENT (...) BUT ALSO AS IT PROVIDES AN OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES THAT FORMED THE GLACIATED AND LAND UPLIFT AREAS OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE. ▶▶

FROM MECHTILD ROSSLER'S (UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE) SPEECH AT THE INAUGURATION OF WORLD HERITAGE KVARKEN ARCHIPELAGO/HIGH COAST

### UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE LIST

A World Heritage site is a place of natural or cultural interest which is so valuable that it is important for the whole of humanity. It is a place, site, environment or object which provides unique testimony to the history of the Earth and of mankind. Once inscribed on the prestigious World Heritage List, it is guaranteed protection and care for all time.

### FACTS

**THE DRIVING ROLE OF THE KVARKEN COUNCIL.** Ever since the idea of applying for World Heritage status was first considered, the Kvarken Council has been the driving, financing and organisational force that initially endeavoured to bring the two nations together and establish the idea of applying to be a World Heritage site.

Since the 1990s, the Council has conducted a long series of projects that have succeeded one another. In various forms and at various levels, the projects have supported the natural areas and produced supporting data, with an application for World Heritage status as the primary, overall goal, with the aim of increasing the area's national and international status. The projects have also promoted nature conservation, traditional businesses as well as ecotourism within the region.

For example, the projects have generated various forms of co-operation, conducted environmental surveys, identified environmental goals and, at various levels, worked to achieve sustainable development in the coastal region.

The collaboration regarding Kvarken is now conducted under the project "World Heritage in co-operation – 63 degrees north", a collaborative project between Kvarken Archipelago and the High Coast, funded by the EU programme "Bothnia-Atlantica". During the period 2008–2011, the project will further develop and extend the co-operation between the High Coast and Kvarken Archipelago.

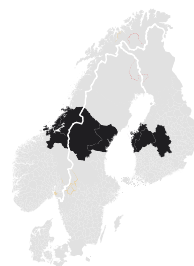
## EAGERLY AWAITED SHORT-CUT ACROSS THE NORDIC REGION

The new Midnordic Green Transport Corridor will make transport through the Midnordic region both faster and greener, and will open up opportunities for exports to new markets. 2.7 billion euro is now being invested in the preparatory pilot studies that will pave the way for the short-cut.

For several decades, Finland, Sweden and Norway have spoken about the Midnordic project and the Midnordic Green Transport Corridor, where freight transport will be linked by road, rail and sea to an effective short-cut across the Midnordic region and the Baltic Sea.

The business sector in the Midnordic region – and above all the export industry – is dependent on cost-effective, well-functioning transport links to important markets within the EU area and to the developing markets around the southern and eastern Baltic Sea.

From the outer edges of the transport corridor, freight transport to Europe, North America, Russia and Asia will become much smoother than in the current situation.



THE MID NORDIC COMMITTEE

**DESIRE FOR A GREEN TRANSPORT CORRIDOR**  
There is a great deal of hope, supported by forecasts, that the Midnordic Green Transport Corridor will result in vigorous economic and cultural development in Finland, Sweden and Norway. There is also a desire and an objective to move freight from the roads to the railway and the sea in a more environmentally sustainable manner. In communications regarding the project, there is much talk about the development of a Midnordic green transport corridor, under the motto “We need good green connections now!”.

**THE PROJECT THAT IS MAKING THE PILOT STUDIES POSSIBLE**  
The NECL II project is being conducted between 2010 and 2013, and will implement the preparatory pilot studies that will pave the way for the continued development of the eagerly awaited transport corridor.

The project is involving large parts of the region, as a developed transport corridor will have radical consequences and will change the conditions for large portions of the business sector and the labour market. A total of 22 partners from Sweden, Finland and Norway are taking part in the NECL II project. This includes representatives from e.g. transport authorities, county administrative boards and county councils in Västernorrland and Jämtland, municipal associations in Finland, counties in Norway, the Mid Sweden University and a number of municipalities in all three countries. There are also support partners in the form of chambers of commerce, development companies, the

Nordic Council of Ministers and the non-profit association NECLA. The entire project was initiated by the Mid Nordic Committee.

The total budget for the NECL II project stands at around 2.7 million euro. The realisation of the Midnordic Green Transport Corridor will entail investments worth many billions of kronor, and the granting of the NECL II funds is viewed as a major step along the way towards the longed for transport corridor.

### CLEAR OBJECTIVES CHANGING THE MIDNORDIC REGION

The objectives of the NECL II project also include removing bottlenecks and improving roads, railways and intermodal solutions in the corridor by streamlining the hand-over points between different transport types. This also involves developing a fully functioning ICT system for transport operators and haulage companies.

The project also aims to market the corridor to business, decision-makers and other related target groups by demonstrating the opportunities, the potential and the benefits of the Midnordic corridor. It is vital to establish a close co-operation with national transport authorities and industry, as well as with related projects. The aim is also to achieve transnational co-operation between the Midnordic regions, with connections to relevant export and import markets.

### IN LINE WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S NEW WHITE PAPER

In March 2011, the European Commission presented the new white paper that will guide the development of Europe's trans-



port over the next few decades. The plan that the Commission has developed, Transport 2050, will result in transport in the EU becoming both greener and more efficient. The road network, the railways, air traffic and sea transport will be linked together and will work in better harmony, and at the same time emissions will be reduced. The new plan for transport in the EU will also increase mobility and reduce dependence on imported oil. If the objectives are satisfied, the EU will be able to reduce its emissions from all means of transport by

60 per cent by 2050, the time by which the goals in the plan are to be achieved. The work of establishing the Midnordic Green Transport Corridor is part of the work of achieving these European objectives.

### WORK IN FULL SWING

The NECL II project includes numerous sub-projects that will involve and affect actors in the Midnordic region during the change-over to the planned transport corridor. The sub-projects include a business

plan that sea transport companies can use to determine where new ferry routes should be located, as well as the freight volumes that will be required. The Mid Sweden University is conducting research on how to reduce unnecessary transport from a purely logistical perspective, and the Norwegian National Rail Administration and the Swedish Transport Administration are looking at how to extend and modernise rail connections between the countries in order to eliminate the bottlenecks that exist at present. ◀

### FACTS

**THE ROLE OF THE MID NORDIC COMMITTEE.** Between 2003 and 2006, the strategy was formulated for today's Midnordic Green Transport Corridor, which at the time went by the working name of the North East Cargo Link, through the initial project NECL I. This was initiated, co-ordinated and financed by various bodies including the Mid Nordic Committee. For example, the project put forward proposed measures for eliminating bottlenecks and demonstrated missing links within the corridor's transport infrastructure. The NECL I project also proposed improvements to intermodality, i.e. the hand-over of freight between different transport methods, by establishing combi-terminals at suitable locations along the corridor.

The NECL II project, which will run between 2010 and 2013, was initiated by the Mid Nordic Committee and co-ordinated by Västernorrland County Administrative Board, which is responsible for managing everything and co-ordinating the project. NECL II is being financed by the EU's Baltic Sea Region Programme.



## A FUTURE GLOBAL COMPANY ON THE FAROE ISLANDS

When it proved possible to extract collagen from fish skin, the Faroese company Seanergy was formed, which now possesses important expertise regarding the marine biotech industry. The company anticipates achieving export figures of DKK 50 million annually, and has further strengthened the island group's self-confidence.

The collagen production project has a long history, beginning back in the early 1990s. At the time, a project was conducted between Iceland, Norway and the Faroe Islands, focusing on how to utilise traditional waste products from filleting factories. The report from this early project contained a long list of recommendations, including a concrete proposal to extract collagen from fish skin.



NORA

### PROJECT LED DIRECTLY TO COMPANY START-UP

In 2006, the Faroese company Faroe Marine Biotech decided to investigate the potential for developing the previous idea

of technically complex collagen extraction through the project "Production of collagen/gelatin from fish skin from Faroese and Icelandic fish". The aim of the project was to ascertain whether it was possible to extract collagen/gelatin from Faroese and Icelandic fish, to be sold on the commercial market.

This was a collaborative project between Icelandic, Faroese, Norwegian and Spanish partners, including researchers, experts in the fields of raw materials, logistics and marketing, as well as the Spanish technology partner Junca Gelatines, which was already working with the high-tech extraction of collagen. The NORA cross-border committee took part in the funding of the investigations as well as in the tests that were conducted in order to lay the foundations for the innovative collaboration between researchers and entrepreneurs.

The project took off when the partners decided to commence the commercial production of collagen. In November 2008, the newly formed company Seanergy opened the gates of the newly built factory in the village of Eiði on the Faroese island of Eysturoy. The company is owned by the Faroese investor collective Biotech Invest and Junca Gelatines.

### STRONG BELIEF IN THE FUTURE

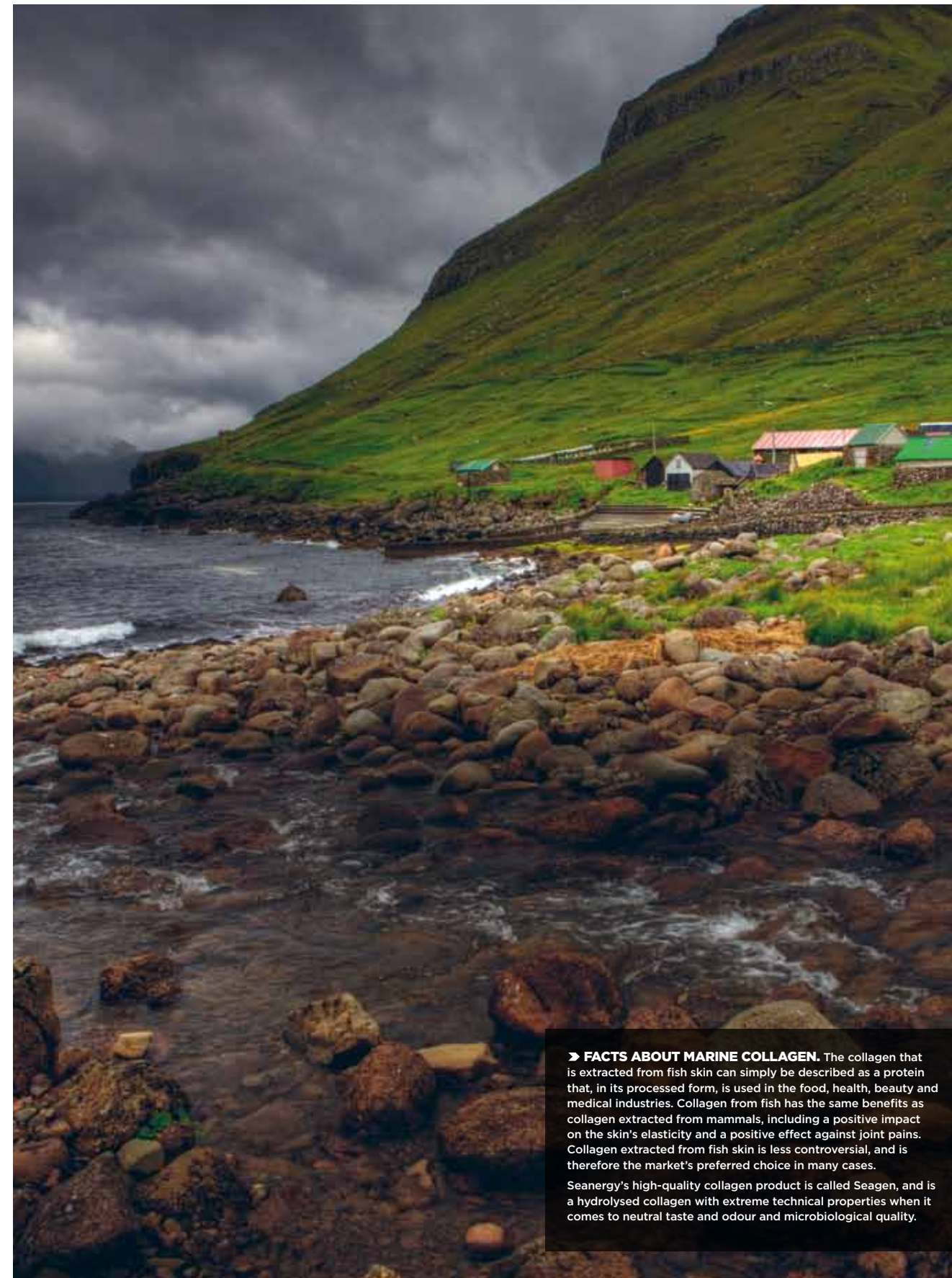
When opening the factory, Seanergy maintained that it intends to achieve exports of DKK 50 million a year. In order to reach

this figure, considerable focus in 2009 was placed on encouraging the fishing industry and the biotechnology sector to co-operate in creating innovations and new business opportunities. The financial crisis has caused the development process to take longer, although it has not fundamentally altered the strong belief in the product.

Seanergy's factory has the capacity to handle all the fish skin produced as residual products from the filleting factories on the Faroe Islands, totalling around 1,200 tonnes a year. At full production, this means that around 10 tonnes of collagen peptides will be produced each month. The principle markets are Japan and the rest of Asia.

### EXPERTISE OPENING UP OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW DOORS

Seanergy and the factory have had a positive impact on the Faroese society and on the self-confidence within the marine industry. In addition to the direct growth in the value of the fisheries sector, Seanergy and its partners, thanks to their expertise, have provided several opportunities for research within the biotechnology field. The new knowledge is also contributing to a better utilisation of the marine industry's resources. The company is also receiving requests from universities in Denmark, Norway and Iceland to participate in international applications for EU-supported research projects within the fields of gelatin and collagen. ◀



► **FACTS ABOUT MARINE COLLAGEN.** The collagen that is extracted from fish skin can simply be described as a protein that, in its processed form, is used in the food, health, beauty and medical industries. Collagen from fish has the same benefits as collagen extracted from mammals, including a positive impact on the skin's elasticity and a positive effect against joint pains. Collagen extracted from fish skin is less controversial, and is therefore the market's preferred choice in many cases. Seanergy's high-quality collagen product is called Seagen, and is a hydrolysed collagen with extreme technical properties when it comes to neutral taste and odour and microbiological quality.

## INVESTMENT IN YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Business partners and networks are necessary in order to work as an entrepreneur – something that is not always easy when the distances are long and it is difficult to arrange personal meetings. In the space of 18 months, the project “Young Entrepreneurs in Barents” has shrunk the distances between entrepreneurs in the Barents region. Above all, however, it has been possible to achieve significant changes in attitudes.

There was a festive three-day conclusion to the “Young Entrepreneurs in Barents” project. Hundreds of young people from the Barents countries – Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia – gathered in Pajala for a grand finale at the Barents Business Festival.

The aim of the 18-month project was to promote and support young enterprise within creative industries across the borders in the Barents region. This was achieved by increasing knowledge about and experience of international entrepreneurial co-operation. In tangible terms, this entailed individuals developing their own companies and themselves as entrepreneurs alongside others in a similar situation. Networks were established between the participants, with the express purpose



THE NORTH CALOTTE COUNCIL

of leading to greater business opportunities and innovative projects – and in the final analysis to increased growth in the Barents region. The fact that the project promoted young entrepreneurship can also contribute to young people not moving out of the region, but instead finding employment closer to home.

Around one hundred entrepreneurs between the ages of 18-35 took part in the project. The entrepreneurs came from Norrbotten County in Sweden, the counties of Nordland, Troms and Finnmark in Norway, Lappland county in Finland and the Murmansk region in Russia. All were involved in related creative sectors – just over half the companies were in the fields of IT and Media, and the others were in design/culture and tourism.

### IMPORTANT RESULTS THROUGH CHANGED ATTITUDES

“Young Entrepreneurs in Barents” helped creative forces to come into contact with each other and created new business contacts, as well as provided inspiration for networks and new collaborations – both across borders and within the individual countries. Examples include two companies in the same town, just a few blocks from each other, starting to co-operate through the project, as well as a Finnish company that was able to expand its operations through

orders from both Russia and Sweden. The personal networks of contacts that were created during the project period have been lasting.

The project has also entailed positive changes in attitudes. It succeeded in reducing the mental barriers that young entrepreneurs can experience when it comes to international co-operation, particularly co-operation with Russia. The project highlighted the importance of linguistic skills in personal and business contacts. The threshold for seeking business contacts or business partners in the neighbouring countries is now lower for the entrepreneurs who took part than for other business owners.

Another change relates to attitudes towards and trust in officials and decision-makers, which is generally low among younger people. The project leaders, who were in the same age bracket as the participants, acted as a trust-building bridge between the young entrepreneurs and the decision-makers and officials in the Barents region.

### NEW INDUSTRIES AND ENTREPRENEURS MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

One point that emerged during the course of the project was that it is important for young entrepreneurs not to be treated as “young entrepreneurs”, but rather as entrepreneurs in general. There is occasionally the sense that people in the business and project world



view young entrepreneurs as “semi-serious”. However, they face the same challenges and problems as more established business owners. It is important to realise that new industries emerge quickly, and that things that were previously viewed as leisure activities or cultural activities are now established sectors with profit-making companies.

### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTED VULNERABILITY

Another important outcome was that the project highlighted the vulnerability of the networks that are built up with project funding. Maintaining contacts when the project funds have been spent is a major challenge. On the other hand, it can also be said that the

network-building that has taken place, for example through workshops, seminars and trade fairs, would not have occurred without the project. Newly established entrepreneurs have limited resources to look for contacts across national borders, and EU funds are an excellent instrument that facilitates the establishment of international co-operation. ◀

### ▶ FACTS

**THE YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN BARENTS PROJECT** ran from 2006 to 2008. The principal financiers were Pajala Municipality in collaboration with the North Calotte Council, municipalities, county councils, educational institutes and municipal associations in the Barents area, as well as Norrbotten Chamber of Commerce and the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. The project had a budget of more than 675,000 euro (equivalent to approx. SEK 6.2 million), with some of these funds coming from the Kolarctic sub-programme within Interreg III A Nord.



## SCANDINAVIAN ISLANDS – A NEW BRAND ON THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL MARKET

The 60,000 islands in the archipelago between Sweden, Åland and Finland have been brought together under the sales promotional name of the “Scandinavian Islands”. The next step is now being taken to market this unique archipelago as an attractive travel destination and to increase the number of foreign tourists. The advertising film about the Scandinavian Islands has been seen by 200 million people, and results have already started to show.

 The tourism organisations Visit Skärgården, Visit Åland and Turku Touring are positive – they have a fantastic archipelago that has not yet been discovered by all the people who ought to experience this unique landscape. Between Sweden, Åland and Finland there are 60,000 islands and 400,000 inhabitants who know that their part of the world has a great deal to offer, and who are looking forward to putting the area’s name on the map.

Today’s tourists value the environment and investments in sustainable development. Experience tourism has already been a powerful trend for a considerable time, and it is assumed that it will continue to grow. New experiences also entail demands for new destinations. In other words, there are many arguments in favour of the archipelago area having significant potential as an increased tourist magnet. However, an individual destination is always relatively small from a global perspective, and it is easy to disappear in the tough competition between tourist destinations.

### SAME THOUGHT FROM SEVERAL SOURCES

The feeling that the area deserves more attention has long been there, but the way forward has not been entirely straightforward. In the beginning of the 2000s, the



SKÄRGÅRDS-  
SAMARBETET

idea of collaboration regarding marketing on foreign markets was put forward by Åland and Stockholm. The newly formed tourism organisation Turku Touring also wanted to start up a collaborative project, but could not bring interested partners together. A draft Interreg application was put on ice.

In 2005, Haninge Municipality in Sweden wanted to extend its collaboration with Åland and Turku in order to achieve the same thing, and officials in the then Interreg programme and Skärgårdssamarbetet (the Archipelago Co-operation) reacted and brought the partners together. Following negotiations with Haninge Municipality, Turku Touring and national financiers, the application for the “Skargarden” project was submitted to Interreg III A/The Archipelago Programme that same autumn, and funding was granted.

### THE NAME

“SCANDINAVIAN ISLANDS” SELECTED  
During the period 2006-2007, work was conducted on brand development for the area, and it was decided that “Scandinavian Islands” would be a good name. The Skargarden project consequently changed its name, a logo was produced, as well as a brand platform and brand statement for the reborn destination. Initiatives were also taken to develop tools for joint product development, and a number of marketing

measures were implemented, both internally and externally. A web platform was also built up.

The third Interreg period was followed by a fourth, and the collaboration continued in a more modest manner while a new project application was being prepared. This was approved in summer 2009, and the project “Branding Scandinavian Islands” will continue until 2013. This Interreg-financed programme will help the three regional tourism organisations Visit Skärgården, Visit Åland and Turku Touring to jointly develop and market the archipelago as a unique travel destination and thereby to develop tourism.

The project connects companies that produce services for the tourism industry to the common venture. Quite simply, the companies are so much more when presented under a common name that is perceived positively and as being attractive, and much greater penetration is achieved when marketing initiatives are co-ordinated.

### GERMANY, THE NETHERLANDS AND GREAT BRITAIN THE MAIN MARKETS

The shared objective is to increase travel to and within the Scandinavian Islands. The number of foreign tourists should increase by 10% between 2008 and 2013. The Scandinavian Islands are being marketed to travel companies and tourism organisations in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands.



**THE SCANDINAVIAN ISLANDS** extend from the Stockholm Archipelago in Sweden, across the island nation of Åland, to Åboland Archipelago in southwestern Finland. This is a distinctive landscape with 60,000 islands and skerries, which welcome the visitor with unique Scandinavian sensory impressions. The Scandinavian Islands region has 400,000 inhabitants, of whom 70,000 live on islands.

In order to succeed, there must first be functioning co-operation between companies, tourism organisations and travel agencies. For this reason, the tourism organisations are actively participating in the development of the travel package to the archipelago. This work includes seminars and meetings under the heading Scandinavian Islands Academy, where participants improve their skills and have the potential to develop networks across the region.

The archipelago municipalities and the regional administration organisations are participating in the collaboration via the tourism organisations.

### RESULTS HAVE STARTED TO SHOW

The venture has produced results. Fifty new travel packages have been developed for the international market, as well as 22 family and press tours for marketing purposes, information about the destination for 200 travel companies and tourism organisations, and an advertising film that to date has been seen by more than 200 million people. Although a year of the project period remains, as well as two years until the goal for the number of visitors is to be achieved, there has already been a ten per cent increase in day-visitors from the markets on which work is being conducted. ◀

### ► FACTS

**BRANDING SCANDINAVIAN ISLANDS** is a project for the development of the tourism industry in the archipelago areas between Stockholm, Åland and Turku. The project partners are Haninge Municipality (lead partner), Öppen Skärgård, Visit Åland, Turku Touring and the City of VästÅboland.

The measures within the Branding Scandinavian Islands project are being realised during the period 2009-2012. These are being part-financed with funding from the European Regional Development Fund via the Central Baltic Interreg IV A programme. In addition to the project partners, the national financiers are Norrtälje, Nacka, Nynäshamn, Tyresö, Vaxholm, Värmdö, Österåker and Östhammar municipalities, the Government of Åland as well as the Regional Council of Southwest Finland. The project has a budget of 1.2 million euro.

## MINING HELPING TORNEDALEN ACHIEVE UPTURN

The mining company Northland Resources will be investing around SEK 5 billion in three mines in the Pajala/Kolari area in Tornedalen. Mining operations will be starting in 2012, but the associated work is in full swing, as are the various initiatives and preparations within the region's business sector, for instance.

The increase in metal prices is encouraging mining companies to start up new mines, and in August 2010 Northland Resources obtained a permit to commence mining in the Pajala/Kolari area. The exposure of the iron ore deposit in the Tapulivuoma area, some 20 km outside of Pajala, has been initiated. It will be called Tapuli mine, and the company will start mining the ore from 2012. The mine will create 100–200 jobs, and the first ore deliveries will be leaving the mine in 2013.

In addition to Tapuli mine, a further two mines are planned for mining iron ore in the area: one is being opened in Stora Sahavaara close by, and one in Kolari in Finland. The mining company anticipates extracting a volume similar to that mined at MalMBERGET near Gällivare in Sweden. In total, the three mines may create up to 2,000 jobs, as well as hundreds more in the service sector, such as in shops, schools, etc. The population of Pajala/Kolari is expected to increase by approximately 30 per cent as a consequence of the extraction of the ore.

In order to cope with the future ore train traffic, the railway is being upgraded between Kolari and the shipping port in Kemi, Finland. Extensive investments are also being made in Kemi port, from where the ore will be shipped out to European ports and to the principle market, Bahrain.

### MINING FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT 24 YEARS

The mining operation, primarily for iron ore, is expected to continue for at least 24 years, although the Canadian mining com-



TORNEDALSRADET

pany Northland Resources hopes that it will be for considerably longer. A total of 23 new deposits in the area are still being explored, and the overall size of the ore deposits that will be available for exploitation is not yet known.

**TORNEDALEN'S TRADITION FOR CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION** Tornedalen, the point where Sweden, Norway and Finland all meet, is a Nordic border region where cross-border co-operation between municipalities, inhabitants, authorities, business and organisations is a natural occurrence. There is a common cross-border identity here, as well as a long tradition for co-operation between citizens and institutions across the national border.

Tornedalsrådet is working to help the region draw benefit from its particular strengths and opportunities, in the form of synergy effects and strong constellations that can flourish through the major initiatives due to be implemented in the region.

### PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE THE MINING COMMUNITY

The establishment of the mine entails large-scale, revolutionary changes and challenges for the municipalities of Pajala and Kolari. They are moving from a battle to preserve existing services in a depopulating area to the complete opposite situation. Major investments are now being planned and implemented to meet the demands that are being stipulated with regard to municipal infrastructure and social developments, to ensure that mining operations can commence in a well-organised manner.

Tornedalsrådet's task will be to engage the neighbouring municipalities in the collaboration with Pajala/Kolari, in order to handle the onset of the enormous growth. As part of the preparatory development project "Meänmaa - framtidslandet", various processes were implemented as part of Pajala's and Kolari's development work in co-ordination with other collaborative partners.

### CONDUCTING COLLABORATION TO MATCH DEVELOPMENTS

Tornedalsrådet is now working on the next stage in order to bring together and support the region, enabling it to match the expansive developments. The committee has taken on the role of driving forward and initiating co-operation for the cross-border development of business, the labour market and education.

There are a number of tangible issues in addition to the infrastructure. Labour and a range of subcontractors are required for the mines, and skill-raising initiatives are required in order to "re-educate" and further train the workforce in order to achieve the increase in skill levels that the mining operation requires. Developments are taking place in co-operation with education providers in the region and with Crossborder Tornedalen, which is bringing together the employment services in the Cap of the North region.

### JOINT FORUMS ARE ONE OF THE PROJECTS

One of Tornedalsrådet's projects, which aims to equip the region for the expansion and the opportunities this entails, involves



➤ Work is continuing 24 hours a day at the quarry in Navettamaa, a few hundred metres south of the Tapuli deposit. Here, contractors are busy loading in excess of 250 drill holes, which will form a single blasting round later in the day.

working together with enterprise organisations and Kolari and Pajala municipalities to arrange joint, cross-border forums, "Meänfoorumi", during 2011. Within these, the future developments in the business sector will be illuminated from various perspectives, including through examples from other regions that have experienced similar developments and through discussion meetings. The forums will also help Finnish and Swedish companies in the region to make new contacts with companies in Pajala and Kolari to aid entrepreneurship, supply networks and joint market development.

Tornedalsrådet will particularly highlight business ownership by women, which is easily overshadowed by the heavy mining sector. Business sector development will not be complete unless young entrepreneurs

are also given attention and encouraged to take their share of the "cake" in the "new business sector" in Pajala.

### IMPORTANT LINKS TO UNIVERSITIES

Positive development of the mining industry is linked to the knowledge that is possessed by the companies operating in the region. Research, which is concentrated in the region's universities in Luleå, Tromsø, Uleåborg and Rovaniemi, is extremely important for the area. A specific collaboration between universities and the commercial sector will therefore produce synergy effects within technology and product development in the industry and the rest of the business sector.

The fact that three nations all meet in the Tornedalen area provides opportunities

for synergy effects and strong constellations that will now be able to flourish through the major initiatives due to be implemented in the region. Tornedalen appears to be heading towards a bright future. ◀

### ➤ FACTS

**TORNEDALSRADET** is a collaborative and trade association for Tornedalen, and comprises the municipalities of Tornio, Ylitornio, Pello, Kolari, Muonio, Enontekiö, Haparanda, Övertorneå, Pajala, Kiruna, Storfjord, Kåfjord, Nordreisa and Kautokeino.

Tornedalsrådet was established in 1987 with the aim of promoting co-operation and interaction between all those living and working in Tornedalen, both domestically and internationally, and at the same time to develop Tornedalen and look after the interests of the local residents.

## CROSS-BORDER WORK PLACEMENTS

Over the course of one week, officials from the County Administrative Board in Dalarna and Region Dalarna undertook work placements at the County Governor's Office and the County Authority in Hedmark. The situation was then reversed, with Norwegian officials joining a prepared programme in Sweden. The work placement exchange was a tangible way of encouraging the organisations to get to know each other's activities and working methods, in order to become more effective in their collaboration.

Swedish Dalarna and the neighbouring Norwegian county of Hedmark have similar demographic situations. Both counties have problems with young people moving out, and have the oldest population in their respective countries. Through the Swedish-Norwegian collaborative project entitled TRUST ("Growth and Regional Development in Scandinavia Together"), Dalarna and Hedmark will be equipped to develop the two regions.

The project has worked according to three defined goals: to develop and establish co-operation arenas to strengthen innovation in the region; to profile and reinforce the region's strengths; and to develop methods and models to strengthen cross-border co-operation.

In order to achieve these goals, the project has encompassed a think-tank, a contact fair aimed at building networks, and themed seminars, for example regarding how Dalarna and Hedmark should manage the provision of skills in the future. Study trips have been conducted to both Haparanda-Torneå and to the Bodensee region (Switzerland-Austria-Germany) to study cross-border co-operation, and a work placement exchange has also been included as part of the collaborative project.

**WORK PLACEMENT EXCHANGE TO BRING ABOUT NEW UNDERSTANDING**  
By allowing officials from Dalarna County Administrative Board and Region Dalarna to attend work placements at the County Governor's Office and the County Author-



TRUST HEDMARK-DALARNA

ity in Hedmark, and then to allow Norwegian officials to attend corresponding programmes in Sweden, the organisations have gotten to know each other's activities and working methods. The act of changing perspectives has also been beneficial. The exchange periods were carefully prepared, with programmes that covered all aspects of the collaboration, discussions within the specific areas in question and network building.

The express goals of the exchange were to gain new perspectives, create new networks and to generate understanding and a foundation for future co-operation.

Several of the individuals who participated in the exchange in 2010 feel that the experience will be of practical importance for the upcoming collaboration. A number of things were clear when following up the work placement exchange. Information, planning and preparations are decisive in order to achieve as much of a return as possible from the exchange. The same project leader should, as far as possible, follow the project from start to finish, and it is important to be clear about which individuals will be participating in the project before getting started.

### COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF THE MANAGEMENT DETERMINES THE OUTCOME

The most important lesson, however, is that it is necessary to attract the commitment of the authorities that will be participating in the work placement exchange. Insufficient commitment can be largely attributed to

a lack of knowledge about what the project is to deliver, and can also be due to an absence of encouragement and challenges for the participants, who consequently do not stipulate concrete requirements. The project must be firmly established in the management who must also ensure that the projects are prioritised in the participating departments. This is the key to a successful work placement exchange that produces long-lasting benefits in the continued day-to-day work between the authorities.

### RESULT: TRUST HEDMARK-DALARNA BECOMES CROSS-BORDER COMMITTEE

During the period 2008-2011, TRUST has proven that the co-operation between Hedmark and Dalarna is key, and that grounds exist for an exchange of experiences within many areas. In March 2011, the steering group for the project therefore decided to continue TRUST Hedmark-Dalarna in the form of a cross-border committee after the formal conclusion of the project.

The cross-border committee, which is based on a bilateral partnership agreement, will institutionalise the cross-border co-operation. There will be a smooth transition from project to cross-border committee, with the steering group from the Interreg project also leading the cross-border committee. The strategy and work duties will be clarified through the work on the partnership agreement, on the basis of the Nordic Council of Ministers' cross-border strategy and the lessons learned from the TRUST project. ◀



» I WANTED TO GAIN A PERSPECTIVE ON HOW CORRESPONDING ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES WORK WITH SUPERVISION, PRIMARILY AS REGARDS METHODS AND PRIORITISATIONS. AN INSIGHT INTO THE FACTUAL AREAS WITH WHICH I WORK WAS ANOTHER THING THAT I ANTICIPATED WOULD EMERGE NATURALLY FROM THE VISIT.»

JENNY JONSSON, ENVIRONMENTAL UNIT, DALARNA COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

The work placement exchange between the officials has provided new perspectives, new networks and laid the foundations for future collaboration. This is the group that participated in and worked on the work placement exchange. From the left: Anne Sørum, Jenny Jonsson, Asbjørn Christiansen, Stina Petersson, Maria Sunndal, Carin Lilliehöök and Eva Kaiser.

» I was interested in looking more closely at what progress has been made with in-situ methods for decontaminating contaminated areas. I was also interested in seeing how the legislation relating to contaminated areas differs between Sweden, which is a member of the EU, and Norway which is not.»

STINA PETERSSON, Environmental Unit, Dalarna County Administrative Board

» My expectation regarding the placement was to gain an insight into how the County Administrative Board implements supervision with its supervision objects - its companies. In addition,

it was important to ascertain whether there are any sectors or topics that we can co-operate on or develop information about.»

ANNE SØRUM, Environmental Department, County Governor's Office in Hedmark

» My expectation regarding the placement was to gain an insight into Dalarna County's business sector and challenges. This included gaining an understanding of their innovation investments. In addition, I wanted to gain an understanding of what Dalarna and its inhabitants were like, and how this differed from Hedmark and Norway, and the rest of Sweden.

Finally, I want to create stronger ties with Dalarna and the partners working there, both in the public sector and within private business.»

ASBJØRN CHRISTIANSEN, Hedmark County Authority

### » FACTS

**THE TRUST HEDMARK-DALARNA** project ran between 2008 and 2011, and has been part-financed by Interreg IV A Sweden-Norway. TRUST is the Swedish acronym for "Tillväxt och Regional Utveckling Skandinavien Tillsammans" ("Growth and Regional Development in Scandinavia Together"), and it is a project in which the Swedish county of Dalarna and the Norwegian county of Hedmark collaborate to achieve increased growth and regional development in the two counties.

## THE ÖRESUND MODEL - A ROLE MODEL IN EUROPE

Apparently, simple questions regarding tax, pensions and company cars can constitute obstacles for people living and working on different sides of a national border. By means of firmly established, close-range democratic work, the Öresund Committee aims to contribute to resolving border obstacles and to improving conditions for companies and their employees. It is hoped that the “Öresund Model” can become a role model in Europe regarding how to resolve border obstacles.

The Öresund Bridge was opened on 1 July 2000, radically changing the conditions for the entire Öresund region. The fixed link rapidly became a regional link, not a transport corridor for long-distance traffic, which had been the original intention. The new integration created a strong growth region, and with its 3.7 million inhabitants, the Öresund region is now considered one of Northern Europe's most important and dynamic regions.

The Öresund Committee is working to constantly safeguard and advance the position of the region. To achieve this, it is necessary to create a clear vision and strategy on which decisions and activities are based. The governments on both sides of the Sound have also been clear in their



THE ÖRESUND  
COMMITTEE

endeavour to identify and attempt to rectify the border obstacles and barriers that are discovered. The goals include facilitating the development of a joint working and housing market, as well as an increased exchange as regards innovations, trade, education, culture, sport and leisure.

### ÖRUS IS THE REGION'S FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Against this background, the Öresund Committee has drawn up a development strategy, ÖRUS (“Öresund regional development strategy”), with a perspective that extends until 2020. As part of the work of developing the Öresund region's vision of the future, the Committee has endeavoured to establish a close collaboration with other actors in the region, including the commercial sector, employers' organisations and trade unions, educational establishments and cultural representatives.

The analyses that have been taken into account extend from the municipal level to OECD investigations. The work has also given consideration to the Lisbon Strategy, the Baltic Sea Strategy and EU 2020. The intention is for ÖRUS not only to be a political document. The aim is that it should be an active, living tool, following up both developments in the outside world and the improvements that are constantly being made within the region.

**NEXT STEP WILL FOCUS ON BUSINESS -  
ACCORDING TO THE ÖRESUND MODEL**  
When the ÖRUS development strategy was complete, the Nordic Council of Ministers

commissioned the Öresund Committee to focus on concrete opportunities and border obstacles to the business sector in the Öresund region. The perspective has been based on the way the Swedish and Danish business sectors perceive border obstacles, as well as on the basis of three particular areas: recruitment of employees from the other side of the Sound, establishment of companies on the other side of the Sound and the sale of goods and services on the other side of the Sound. The result was the “Öresund Model”, in which a working process has been established to tackle border obstacle issues at a national level, and at the same time establish closer collaborations between the partners working on the issues facing the region.

### EXTENSIVE SURVEYS IDENTIFIED THE MOST IMPORTANT BORDER OBSTACLES

The Öresund Committee has implemented extensive surveying as the first step of the work according to the Öresund Model. For example, a border obstacle working group and a corporate network have been formed, and eight round-the-table discussions and a large number of interviews with the business sector, employers' organisations and trade unions have been conducted. The actors have discussed and identified the border obstacles that affect business in the region, and accordingly prioritised the obstacles that need to be resolved most urgently.

### WORKING MODEL BECOMES A ROLE MODEL IN EUROPE

The Öresund Model demonstrates a solution-oriented working method based on the

► Between 2001 and 2009, a total of 16 border obstacles were resolved. Thanks to more systematic work, the rate at which these are resolved has increased markedly. Between July 2010 and February 2011, five border obstacles were resolved. Below is a selection of the border obstacles that have been resolved over the years:

- Both social insurance and tax problems are resolved through agreements for people working in both countries for the same employer.
- It is now possible to apply for work spontaneously in Denmark without having unemployment benefits in Sweden questioned.
- Employment for Swedes on an hourly basis in Denmark is now possible, provided you are a member of both countries' unemployment insurance funds in parallel.
- The transfer of wages between Sweden and Denmark is resolved by the market through cross-border commuter accounts.
- Taxi drivers who live in Sweden and work in Denmark can now have their taxi licence renewed.
- The issue of company cars is resolved as regards Swedish-registered company cars for employees who work in Sweden but live in Denmark.
- Payment of Danish capital pension is no longer taxed in Sweden, as a Danish charge has already been levied.
- The calculation of Swedish parental leave in relation to Danish parental leave has been resolved for families where parental leave is to be shared, and where one parent belongs to the Danish social insurance system and the other to the Swedish system.

A number of border regions in Europe have shown an interest in the Öresund Model, including East Flanders between the Netherlands and Belgium. During Denmark's chairmanship of the EU during the first half of 2012, the Öresund Committee is planning to hold a seminar in Brussels regarding the Öresund Model, targeted at other European cross-border regions. A similar conference was held in Brussels during Sweden's chairmanship in the autumn of 2009 – at that time with a focus on tax and social insurance.

prioritised border obstacles that are identified. The solutions are then to be found at various levels. The legislation in the two countries is not always adapted to cross-border conditions, and so the regulations may need to be reviewed. The market may occasionally resolve border obstacles itself without the need to amend any regulations, and in certain cases a situation may be perceived as a border obstacle, even though it is actually an information problem.

In order to achieve tangible changes, proposed solutions are first established with the business sector, employers' organisations and trade unions, before being forwarded to politicians at national level via the Border Obstacle Forum, the Öresund Committee's politicians or other regional actors with networks above them. In those cases where the national politicians perceive that a border obstacle requires amendments to the regulations, they initiate the appointment of a

national working group. However, before any of the governments take any decisions, the final solution should also be quality-assured in the region through feedback from affected groups.

The Öresund region's form of solution-oriented and quality-assured close-range democracy all the way up to the national level is seen as a role model in the Nordic region and in Europe for how to conduct work regarding border obstacles. ◀

## BUSINESS MATCH IN A MORE EFFICIENT MANNER

An effective, annual meeting place for business is run under the name “CONTACT – Swedish-Norwegian meeting place”. Over the course of two days, the delegates have the opportunity, during short business meetings, to make new contacts and find business partners. An impressive 50% of the meetings lead to business deals or new contacts, and the companies rank the event as being in the top three when it comes to beneficial business arenas.

We are located in the border region with the highest level of exchange along the entire Swedish-Norwegian border. The regions of Västra Götaland in Sweden and Østfold in Norway are strategically situated as regards co-operation and business across the border. There is a large amount of trade between Sweden and Norway. Norway is Sweden's second-largest export market, and Sweden is Norway's largest. The Østfold-Bohuslän/Dalsland cross-border committee acts as a collaborative organisation between 22 Swedish and Norwegian municipalities and the regions of Västra Götaland and Østfold.

One prioritised part of the collaboration involves working in various ways to make it easier for companies to develop new business contacts and to create meeting places for network building and business. This is achieved for example by eliminating border obstacles, as well as by initiating and co-financing projects, although forming networks and meeting places is also an important aspect. And this is where “CONTACT – Swedish-Norwegian meeting place” comes into the picture.

### 16 MEETINGS IN TWO DAYS – AND EVERYONE WANTS TO DO BUSINESS

The arrangement is targeted primarily on Swedish and Norwegian production and service companies in the fields of mecha-



ØSTFOLD – BOHUSLÄN/DALSAND

tics, plastics, chemicals, timber, electronics and electricity/automation in the region between Oslo and Gothenburg. However, companies from other regions of Sweden and Norway are also welcome.

Over the course of two days, the delegates have the opportunity to make new contacts during short, effective meetings. Each meeting lasts for 25 minutes, and the participants can book up to 16 meetings. They pre-book those companies they consider to be of interest, and the organisers then schedule everything. The meetings are supplemented with a kick-off at which speakers talk about a topical subject, including a banquet. The aim of this is to provide further opportunities for mingling and making contacts.

### SHARPENED MODEL FOR ACHIEVING IMPROVED RESULTS

The very first Swedish-Norwegian meeting place was arranged in 1999, and to date ten events have been held and more than 1,000 companies have participated. The cross-border committee chose early on to develop the format of the arrangement and to produce a method which they have noticed generates more business.

The meeting place is based on host companies and guest companies. The host companies pay a slightly larger sum in order to participate, and have a trade fair stall at which they receive companies they have

wanted to meet or that have pre-booked them. The new method is based on the host companies seeking new customers, suppliers or business partners. The needs of the host companies as regards services and products are carefully identified, and the organiser then surveys and contacts selected companies that match these needs. The work is supported in part by a match-making database.

Another key factor is to target the event at a few sectors that have mutual links, which provides good networking opportunities beyond the pre-booked meetings.

### ARRANGEMENT RANKED IN THE TOP THREE

The method that has been developed requires more input. The recruitment work of searching out the companies that will be interesting matches and satisfy the host companies' wishes is time-consuming. On the other hand, it provides radically better conditions for doing business.

The proportion of meetings that result in business deals remains steady from year to year – both regionally and across the border. Just over 50 per cent of the new business contacts lead to tangible results in the form of increased orders and new business partners, as well as an extended network. Follow-ups show that the companies have done deals ranging from SEK 20,000 to several million kronor.



► “CONTACT – Swedish-Norwegian meeting place” began as a project that was financed with the aid of EU funds. Today the project has many business partners, co-financiers and sponsors. The cost of the actual arrangement is covered by income from sponsors and participation fees, while costs for the recruitment work are covered by funds from public co-financing.

The level of success is probably best measured by the fact that the companies themselves rank “CONTACT – Swedish-Norwegian meeting place” as one of the three most rewarding arenas for business. As a result, it is not surprising that it is at the request of the participants that the cross-border committee continues to arrange new Swedish-Norwegian meeting places.

The method is spreading rapidly, and is used by industrial trade fairs such as ELMIA and Lillestrøm. The Østfold-Bohuslän/Dalsland cross-border committee also sup-

ports other Nordic cross-border committees, and has visited locations such as Estonia and Hedmark in Norway to help them match businesses in accordance with the method. And the method is ripe for distribution. It is not only suitable for business, but can also be applied in other sectors, as long as there are a number of partners that can benefit from each other. For example, the Østfold-Bohuslän/Dalsland cross-border committee is managing “Projektkontakt” (“Project Contact”), where Swedish and Norwegian Interreg projects meet one another. ◀

### ► FACTS

A QUESTIONNAIRE is sent out after each event, with a response rate usually around 80%. Opinions about the latest “CONTACT – Swedish-Norwegian meeting place”:

- 90% have a very good or good overall impression of CONTACT 2010
- 56% feel that CONTACT 2010 offered very good or good business benefits
- 96% consider that the practical implementation was very good or good
- 77% feel that the meeting matching worked very well or well
- 69% can recommend CONTACT to other companies
- 62% have gained new thoughts and ideas through CONTACT 2010

## FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US

Please feel free to contact the cross-border committees if you would like to know more about the projects described, obtain information about the co-operation taking place within your cross-border region, or if you have any ideas that may interest the actors in the cross-border region.



**ARKO**  
[www.arko-regionen.org](http://www.arko-regionen.org)



**NORA**  
[www.nora.no](http://www.nora.no)



**TORNEDALS RÅDET**  
[www.tornedalen.org](http://www.tornedalen.org)



**BOTHNIAN ARC**  
<http://bothnianarc.net>



**THE NORTH CALOTTE COUNCIL**  
[www.nordkalottradet.no](http://www.nordkalottradet.no)



**TRUST HEDMARK-DALARNA**  
[www.trusthedmark-dalarna.com](http://www.trusthedmark-dalarna.com)



**THE KVARKEN COUNCIL**  
[www.kvarken.org](http://www.kvarken.org)



**SKÄRGÅRDSSAMARBETET**  
[www.skargarden.com](http://www.skargarden.com)



**THE ÖRESUND COMMITTEE**  
[www.oresundskomiteen.dk](http://www.oresundskomiteen.dk)



**THE MID NORDIC COMMITTEE**  
[www.mittnorden.net](http://www.mittnorden.net)



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[www.granskommitten.com](http://www.granskommitten.com)

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[www.aebr.eu](http://www.aebr.eu)  
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