

Evaluating the Research Programme

NORDIC SPACES

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FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

In 2013, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (RJ, the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences) tasked three experts with evaluating the research programme entitled *Nordic Spaces: Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800*. Taking part in this programme, which ran from 2007 to 2012, were some 40 researchers from 11 mostly Nordic or Baltic littoral nations. With an aggregate budget exceeding SEK 30 million (approx. EUR 3.4 million, it was cofunded by NordForsk and seven other research funders (including RJ) in three countries.

At an early stage, RJ and the Nordic Spaces Steering Committee decided to have the programme evaluated. With the publication of five thematic volumes (in a series entitled *The Nordic Experience*) by the highly-regarded publishing house Ashgate in 2012–13, the academic performance of the programme had already been assessed. The evaluators' main tasks, instead, were to appraise the organisation, cofunding model and management of the programme, and the cohesion of its parts within the whole. RJ wanted to know what lessons could be drawn from this approach, i.e. one that both allowed each subproject to evolve separately and united the various programme components in a single entity. What were its strengths and weaknesses, and what can funders learn from this way of working?

The evaluators made many positive comments on the initiative and its implementation. In their view, the programme was timely, ambitiously prepared and generously funded. They also pointed out that it had resulted in numerous academic publications, including the impressive compilation in the form of Ashgate's special book series.

Criticisms and constructive suggestions for improvements were also expressed, and these recommendations will be very useful to RJ in similar future initiatives. On 20 February 2014 RJ's Board discussed the evaluation and backed the measures formulated by its Secretariat. The first conclusion was the need for clear written directives on management, funding, responsibilities and powers. In similar calls for proposals, moreover, paying particular attention to researcher recruitment in terms of gender, nationality and research topics, and also to which assessment criteria are applied to the call, was recommended.

Another conclusion was that sufficient time and resources must be allocated to the coordinator function. A decision-making group was also, in the Secretariat's view, needed to assist the coordinator, on a continuous basis, in reaching decisions and by providing advice. In addition, special earmarked funds should be set aside for joint activities.

The final conclusion, which follows from the above recommendations, was that RJ should adopt the ambition that similar programme initiatives were to culminate in joint international publications. In their applications, researchers should present a publication strategy and describe how the results will be conveyed to a broad interested public.

Nordic Spaces has indeed been a fruitful initiative. RJ thanks the evaluators for their wise ideas about how to obtain an even richer harvest.

Göran Blomqvist
Chief Executive

FOREWORD BY THE AUTHORS

This is an evaluation of a major research programme established in 2006, on the initiative of *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (RJ), the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences. The title of the Research Programme was *Nordic Spaces: Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800*. This external evaluation was commissioned by RJ in January 2013, following a decision taken by the Steering Group at its last meeting. We were asked to assess, not the quality of research, but rather the structure, management, co-ordination and format of the programme in terms of financing, cooperation and outcomes and particularly “to highlight what can be learned from the format of the programme, what was the added value, what could have been done better”¹ It was specifically suggested that the evaluation team should include some members “from outside of the Nordic countries”.

On the basis of a considerable amount of written documentation, questionnaires and interviews we have tried to come to an understanding of the implementation of this large-scale, many-faceted undertaking and on the following pages we present our assessment of:

- the organisation of the programme involving a Steering Group, a Programme co-ordinator, the administration of the programme and projects, and the application and selection processes, partly from a gender perspective,
- co-operation both within and between research teams,
- diversity from both a national, disciplinary and gender perspective,
- results in terms of productivity, i.e. output in the form of books, articles, conference papers etc., outreach to the scientific community and the public at large and various spin-off effects,
- the co-ordination of the programme as a whole and the special role of the Programme co-ordinators,
- the added value of the *Nordic Spaces* programme for the funding agencies, including RJ, and the academic participants and its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

Finally, we sum up our observations and provide recommendations for similar future undertakings.

We would like to express our gratitude for the way in which Riksbankens Jubileumsfond has facilitated our work by giving us access to a large amount of archived data and information and for their openness in sharing with us their knowledge and experience of the *Nordic Spaces* programme. We are also grateful to all those who co-operated by giving us the benefit of their experience of this research programme in reports, questionnaires and interviews.

Limerick, Paris and Stockholm, December 2013

Pat O'Connor, Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, Staffan Wahlgren

1. Steering Group minutes 24 August, 2012, see item 3 entitled *Forthcoming external programme evaluation*.



1. ORIGIN OF PROGRAMME

The research programme *Nordic Spaces, Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800* originated from an idea first put forward in 2005 by Dr. Torbjörn Eng, Södertörn University (Stockholm), of supporting new research on the concept of Northern Europe in a wide perspective. At that time, the historical separation of Sweden and Finland in 1809 and its consequences were in focus. Activities to commemorate the event, including a number of research projects, were being planned. The larger context of Northern Europe, or *Norden*, was still more or less neglected by researchers. This seemed a particularly significant omission in the light of globalisation and issues surrounding European integration. The proposal was encouraged by *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (RJ), serving as the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences, which decided to finance a workshop in the famous historical town of Sigtuna, near Stockholm, in May, 2005. At this meeting some 20 scholars met to identify and discuss themes relating to the concept and identity of *Norden* in a spatial, historical, political and cultural context. It was suggested that an important requirement for further development was, however, that the concept of *Norden* should be widened to include not only the traditional five countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden but also historically related areas, primarily the Baltic States that had joined the European Union in 2004 (Estonia, Latvia, Estonia), and that the programme should analyse the development of all of these areas in relation to neighbouring regions and states.

In 2006, the RJ board decided to fund a research programme on *Norden*, but with the proviso that funding should be made available also from other agencies supporting research in Sweden as well as in other relevant countries. After a period of intense canvassing, seven research funding bodies had joined *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*: a further two from Sweden, three from Finland, one from Estonia and finally *NordForsk*, the Nordic funding organisation under the auspices of the *Nordic Council of Ministers*.² There was no funding from either Danish, Icelandic or Norwegian organisations, but several scholars from all these countries later participated as project researchers. *The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies* (CBEEES) at Södertörn University, financed by the *Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies* (FBEEES)³, funded the overall administrative management of the programme, which included the financing of a Programme co-ordinator, various joint conferences, publications and the maintenance of a website (www.nordicspaces.com). The involvement of effectively eight core funding agencies necessitated a central management structure including them all. Such a central management structure, serving a number of multidisciplinary projects, based in different countries and researching a wide area was new to RJ.

2. Eight bodies were involved in supporting the Programme: *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*, *The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies* (Östersjöstiftelsen), *The Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities* (Sweden), The Estonian Science Foundation (Eesti Teadusfond), *The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland*, *The Foundation for Swedish Culture in Finland*, *The Finnish Cultural Foundation and NordForsk*.

3. *The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies* (Östersjöstiftelsen) is currently called the *Baltic Sea Foundation* (BSF) by the second *Nordic Spaces co-ordinator* (see the Steering Committee minutes dated 26 August 2010 and programme of the final *Nordic Spaces* conference that took place in Saaremaa (Estonia, 23–26 August 2012), while the Foundation website (ostersjostiftelsen.se) keeps using today (accessed 30 November 2013) the English formulation: *Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies*.

The aims of the programme were spelled out in the *Call for applications* in October 2006: “to promote research that from partly new points of departure generates more multifaceted knowledge about the formation of the region from the early 1800s when the outlines of modern *Norden* became discernible, until the present day. This research will also problematize the spatial dimension of the region more than previously. In addition, comparative approaches are crucial. Comparisons between *Norden* and its adjacent regions are just as relevant as those within *Norden*. Through broad perspectives the programme can deepen our understanding of how Nordic experiences relate to general European tendencies.” It should be added that projects that were transnational and/or multidisciplinary in composition were encouraged.⁴ Applications were to be submitted no later than 31 January 2007. This Call was advertised in a number of countries in northern Europe including Russia, the UK, Poland and Germany.

PROJECTS FUNDED⁵

Three individual projects and six group projects were funded.⁶ The individual projects were:

a) *Imaginative Geographies in late Soviet Russian Culture* (subsequently referred to as *Imaginative Geographies*) was funded for two years from 2007. It dealt with how “geographical and imperial space is imagined and represented in Russian cultural practices in the decades preceding the fall of the Soviet Union.”

b) *Nordic Profile: The Image of the Nordic Community in Latvian Printed Mass Media from the End of XIX century to XXI Century* (subsequently referred to as *Nordic Profile*) was funded for two years from 2007. It studied “images of the Nordic states in Latvian printed mass media from the end of the 19th century to the 21st century.”

c) *Distant News and local opinion: How the Telegraph affected Spatial and Temporal Horizons in Northern Scandinavia 1850 – 1880* (subsequently referred to as *Distance News*) was initiated in January 2008 and was funded for four years. The project studied the effects on Northern Scandinavia of the spread of teleology, in this case the electric telegraph.

There were six group projects, all of which were funded for four years within the 2007–2012 period:

d) *Arctic Norden: Science, Diplomacy and the Formation of a Post-War European North* (subsequently referred to as *Arctic Norden*) studied “the formation of ‘Arctic Norden’ as a composite of science, diplomacy and policy in the Cold War context”.

4. For the full text of the Call for Applications, see *Appendix 5 below*.

5. The brief descriptions of the projects are taken from the *Nordic Spaces* website: www.nordicspaces.com. For more detailed information, please consult the website.

6. For clarity, the evaluation team decided to present the projects, in the following comparative Tables, according to a permanent order (from “a” to “h”, and using an acronym, without referring to Project leaders.

e) *Baltic Regionalism: Constructing Political Space(s) in Northern Europe 1800 – 2000* (subsequently referred to as *Baltic Regionalism*) studied “the long-term formation of regional identities in Northern Europe. It focuses on a case study of the area of the current Baltic states.”

f) *Northern Spaces in North America: Heritage Preservation in Real and Imagined Nordic Places* (subsequently referred to as *North America*). The aim of this project was to examine the ways in which Nordic spaces are “created expressively in the Nordic countries and North America and how such spaces give shape to cultural heritage, delimit identities and draw boundaries via recognition of difference.”

g) *The Nordic Model of Democracy: Diffusion, Competition* (subsequently referred to as *Democracy*), “concerns the Nordic ‘model’ of democracy – defined in terms of both institutional patterns and the values with which political discourse is laden – and its relation to the Baltic states.”

h) *Museums – Nordic Culture: Negotiating identity in the Museums* (subsequently referred to as *Museums*) investigated “how images of Norden as a supranational identity have provided, and continue to provide, arenas for negotiating political, military, social, economic, ethical and cultural understandings of community in specific public and nationalised contexts, using museums as the focal point.”

i) *Dance in Nordic Spaces: The Formation of Corporeal Identities* (subsequently referred to as *Dance*) “investigated dance and dancing as participants in the development of “Norden” with a focus on comparative perspectives from the late 19th through the 20th century.”

2. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

THE EVALUATION TEAM

In January 2013, RJ commissioned a team consisting of Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, Professor at Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris, France; Pat O’Connor, Professor of Sociology at the University of Limerick, Ireland and Staffan Wahlén, former Senior Advisor at Högskoleverket, Sweden.⁷

OBJECTIVES

An evaluation of the programme was envisaged from the outset. The Steering Committee⁸ of the programme initially discussed the idea of a formative evaluation, which was, however, discarded, for reasons that were not clear to the evaluation team. In 2012 it was decided that *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (RJ) should appoint and fund a brief programme evaluation which should be prepared by external

7. See the Evaluation Team section below for their short Curricula Vitae.

8. In interviews with members of the Committee, it was emphasized that they looked upon themselves rather as a more informal Steering Group. Henceforth, we use the term “Group” in the present report, except in direct references to official documents, e.g. minutes, except for the “Nordic Spaces final steering group meeting” which took place on 24 August 2012.

evaluator(s). The purpose of this evaluation “would be to highlight what can be learned from the format of the programme, what was the added value, what could have been done better?”⁹

For RJ the way in which the research programme *Nordic Spaces* was organised and managed was innovative. First, it brought together, for a period of two years, two individual projects and for four to five years, six large-scale projects and one individual project, thus involving a considerable number of scholars. They came from different disciplines and different countries to research a spatial area, which could be defined in different ways from (at least) geographical, historical, political and cultural points of view. This made it important to create and support synergy between the various projects involved in the programme. Second, most of the projects that were funded included several sub-projects. There was thus a question of coordination at both programme and project levels. Coordination at programme level was the responsibility of a Programme co-ordinator, an innovative development for RJ. Third, financing involved the pooling of resources from different funding organisations in different countries and using them for one major purpose, viz. to explore the concept of *Norden*. Managing this complex structure was ultimately the responsibility of the cross-national Steering Committee, consisting of representatives of funding organisations: also a new development for RJ.

The results of the programme are in many ways impressive in terms of output. But was the management of the programme and of each of the projects conducive to a successful implementation of the programme? What was the added value of the multi-national and multi-disciplinary approach?

More specifically, the aims of the evaluation were originally to assess:

- The management of the programme and the projects and the roles of the Steering Committee and the Programme co-ordinator(s)
- Financing the programme
- Cooperation within the programme as a whole and within projects, between co-ordinator and projects, and between co-ordinator and Steering Group
- The multi-disciplinary and multi-national approach
- The added value of a large-scale programme with many sub-projects
- The results of the programme in terms of output i.e. books, peer-reviewed articles conferences, workshops, spin-off effects etc.
- Dissemination of findings to the academic world and the general public
- The co-ordination of the programme
- Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

In the context of an increasing awareness of the existence of effective gender discrimination in the awarding of research funding in Sweden (Wennerås and Wold 1997; Ahlqvist *et al*, 2013) on the initiative of Pat O’Connor, it was agreed with RJ that gender issues related to various aspects of the programme should be included (O’Connor forthcoming).

9. Steering Group minutes 24 August 2012.



The present evaluation is not an assessment of the quality of the research. That has been done mainly through the peer reviews of the books, articles etc. published. It is rather an attempt to find out how the programme has worked and how, or if, similar undertakings should be carried out in the future.

IMPLEMENTATION

The task was undertaken in several stages. First, we examined a considerable amount of written documentation generated by the programme. This included the Call for Applications, the applications submitted by the successful applicants, reports from the project conferences, minutes of Steering Group meetings, midterm programme and project reports and final project reports including researchers' reflections.

Second, we designed questionnaires which were sent to the four main groups involved in the programme: Steering Group, Programme co-ordinators, Project leaders and Project researchers

Third, we went through and analysed the responses and on the basis of our analysis identified areas that needed further clarification.

Fourth, we organised interviews/hearings with members of the Steering Group, the Programme co-ordinators, Project leaders and researchers involved in the projects in order to get an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the programme.

The evaluation team met for a planning session on 7 and 8 March 2013, and for the hearings/interviews on 25–27 September 2013 and finalised the report by intense correspondence in order to reach consensus in December 2013, without meeting again. Throughout the whole process the three members of our small group were in constant contact, mostly via email, to comment on the material and the many versions of the report.

The questionnaires

In late April 2013, a total of 56 questionnaires were sent to the four groups of participants, with a deadline of 31 May 2013 for responses. Reminders were sent in June and July and by the end of the summer 2013 we had received 36 completed responses, a response rate of 64 per cent. It should be noted that all the group Project leaders and two of the three individual Project leaders responded. However, there was considerable variation between the different addressees, as seen in Table 1:

The overall response rate was 64 per cent, but if we exclude the Steering Group (see Table 1, last line) the overall response rate reaches 75 per cent (33 out of 44), which is a very acceptable level.

The low response rate from the Steering Group, in spite of several reminders, is striking. In communication with those who did not respond the main reasons given were lack of time and "It is such a long time ago". Others simply did not reply.

Table 1. Number of questionnaires sent by the evaluation team late April 2013; number of responses received and number of interviews conducted by evaluators, by different groups of programme participants.

GROUPS	No. of questionnaires sent	No. of responses to questionnaires	No. of interviews undertaken
STEERING GROUPS	12	3	3
PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATORS	2	2	2
GROUP PROJECT LEADERS	6	6	6
INDIVIDUAL PROJECT LEADERS			
(a) Imaginative Geographies	1	0	0
(b) Nordic Profile	1	1	0
(c) Distant News	1	1	1**
PROJECT RESEARCHERS			
(d) Arctic Norden	5	2	1
(e) Baltic Regionalism	6	5	1
(f) North America	4	4	1
(g) Democracy	5	2	1
(h) Museums	6	5	1
(i) Dance	7	5	1
TOTAL	56	36	18
(Total without Steering Group)	44	33	15

** same person as co-ordinator

The interviews

The interviews took place on 25–27 September 2013 in Stockholm. Steering Group members (three, including Chair and Vice-Chair), both of the Programme co-ordinators (including the second co-ordinator who was also grant-holder of an individual project), four Project leaders representing the large-scale projects and seven project researchers were interviewed by the three evaluators. All the projects were represented except for two of the individual ones. Table 1 includes also two Project leaders who were interviewed separately in late August and early September by Staffan Wahlén, since they were unavailable during the September 2013 interview period.



3. THE ORGANISATION: THE STEERING GROUP AND THE PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATORS

The programme was established after a period of thorough probing of potential interest in the topic among a number of research councils in several countries. When RJ gave the go-ahead signal in 2006 to set up a research programme, the next step was to proceed to seek financial support. This task was entrusted to a co-ordinator, who was appointed beginning January 2007 and salaried by the *Centre for Baltic and East European Studies* (CBEES), in principle on a half-time basis (see below, section Programme co-ordinator). He undertook a large fundraising task, visiting some thirty public and private funding organisations, in the Nordic countries and the Baltic Sea area, including Russia (see www.nordicspaces.com). He used the input from the Sigtuna conference in 2005 (see above in section Origin of programme), at which a number of scholars had already been familiarised with the idea and also had the opportunity to contribute their reflections on the possible shape of the research programme.

It was particularly important to find partners in the Nordic countries outside Sweden. Institutions which had been represented at the Sigtuna 2005 seminar in Sweden (viz. *The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies*, *The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland*, *The Finnish Cultural Foundation* and *The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland*) were positive *a priori*, and had had the advantage of participating in discussions on the general orientation of research in this area, and had been able to some extent to influence it. This meant that those potential partners who were approached later may have been faced with a concept involving strategies and structures that may have been more or less fixed. This may help to explain why, for example, no Norwegian, Danish or Icelandic organisations joined. As suggested in one of the questionnaire responses, bringing in partners at an earlier stage and discussing possible strategies and structures with them might have helped to broaden the programme further. It is true that a balance had to be struck between what was practically feasible in terms of the size and complexity of such an undertaking. Nevertheless we find it striking that only three Nordic countries (and *NordForsk* as part of the Nordic Council) were represented in the funding structure, although a number of nationalities (see *Table 6*) are found among the researchers. At the same time, as will be seen later, financing a large programme with contributions in different currencies from several bodies in different countries which were all represented on the Steering Group was not unproblematic.

THE STEERING GROUP

Each of the participating funding agencies proposed a representative for the Steering Committee. Although the minutes continued to refer to it as a Steering Committee (except at the final meeting in 2012), at the interviews in September 2013, two of the three of its members stressed that the Steering Committee in fact saw itself as a Steering Group, with implications for its actual role in the governance of the programme. This Group met for the first time on 18 January 2007, a few days before the Call for Applications deadline fixed on 31 January. The original Group had ten members (two F and eight M; 20 per cent female) including the Chair (M), who was also the chairperson of RJ. Thus at its inception it breached the 40 per cent gender balance requirement. A number of changes took place in the composition of the Steering Group between 2009 and 2010, with regard to the co-ordina-

tor, the representatives of RJ, the *Estonian Science Foundation*, *NordForsk* and the *Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies*. This had the effect of increasing female participation to three out of ten members: but still below the 40 per cent level. At the final Steering Group meeting on 24 August 2012 in Saaremaa, the Estonian representative again had changed, but this new and at the same time last representative hosted the Final Conference of the Programme in her country.

The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies played a special role in that it financed the administration, including the salary of the co-ordinators and the costs of conferences, travel and publication. The two Programme co-ordinators (see below) were employed by the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES) at Södertörn University, Stockholm.

The number of Swedish members of the Steering Group (five out of ten) was larger than that of the other participating countries; Finland had three representatives (one of whom participated only once), Estonia one, and NordForsk one.

The Steering Group's mandate was defined as follows:

- To be “responsible for the management of the funding and the budget of the programme
- To decide the projects that will be funded;
- To supervise the programme;
- To support and guide the Programme co-ordinator;
- To be responsible for the assessment of the programme”.¹⁰

The Steering Group convened on six occasions, three times in Stockholm, once in the Faroe Islands (2010) and twice in Estonia: at Tartu in 2011 and finally at Saaremaa, during the concluding conference in 2012. The most frequent meetings were in the early years of the programme. In 2007 there were two, the first to establish principles for handling and evaluating applications (18 January 2007), the second to make funding decisions (28 May 2007). A third meeting was planned in conjunction with the Kick-off conference in November 2007, at Södertörn University, but did not come about. It was not until two and a half years later that the Steering Group met again, on 11 December 2009, three months after the mid-term (“Mid-way”) conference which was held at Vilnius, Lithuania, in August 2009.

One decision between these meetings was taken *per capsulam*¹¹ in December

10. Steering Committee minutes 18 January 2007, *Appendix 2*.

11. *Per capsulam* (in Latin “by letter”) decision making process is found in the Nordic countries (Anonymous Norden 2007) while it seems not in other part of Europe, even if the practice of taking a decision after consulting a group of people by correspondence may have existed in a mythical Latin speaking past bearing Roman and medieval Christian traditions. This new operating rule, which usually follows strict internal regulations, is nowadays spreading among Boards of Directors, thanks to digital communication, saving travel money for commercial companies and business men's time, particularly in Russia, apparently in accordance with the Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 208-FZ dated 26.12 1995 (“On Joint Stock Companies” and other regulatory legal acts of the Russian Federation (Anonymous 2008 p.2). Actually, this practice seems to have spread from Uralic post-communist spaces along Eurasian business pipelines routes to Northern Europe, providing a model of cultural transnational contamination deserving further interdisciplinary studies.

A publication of the Nordic Council of Ministers gives a good example of *per capsulam* type of management: “The Investors' Committee [IC] is responsible for making decisions on project approval and other strategic issues [...]

According to the Operating Guidelines [OG], decision-making is based on single majority voting [...] with each IC member (excluding the Fund Manager) present at the meeting having one vote. In practice, however, decision-making is typically consensus-driven and voting rarely takes place.



2007. For the rest, the Steering Group was kept informed of the progress by the co-ordinator via email, phone calls and possibly Skype, avoiding, for each funding agency, the costs of travel and meetings that had not been included in the Programme's general budget. In any case, the Steering Group implemented an important management decision taken at the second meeting in May 2007, item 5 of the Agenda, concerning "*Principles for decision-making*: The Steering Group discussed principles for decision-making: it was decided that they should try to reach consensus in decisions."¹² The Steering Group convened annually in 2010, 2011 and 2012.¹³ At the last two meetings, only five members were present, two from RJ, one from FBEES, one from the Finnish organisations and one from the *Estonian Research Council*. The Steering Group was not overly represented at the various conferences and workshops, e.g. at Hanaholmen (Finland, 16–18 March 2009), the Vilnius Midway conference (26–28 August 2009), Voksenåsen (near Oslo, Norway, 27-28 January 2010), and the Saaremaa (Estonia) final conference (23–26 August 2012) at which results and publication plans were presented and ideas for future research were discussed. This, and the low response rate of its members to the questionnaires, raises the issue of the size and brief and mode of decision making of the Nordic Spaces Programme Steering Committee/Group. Would a large representative "Committee" supplemented with a small executive group chosen from among the committee members have been an option, with a brief mainly to assist and advise the co-ordinator? It is true that in *Nordic Spaces* there were fairly close contacts between the Chair and the co-ordinator, and that an extra level might have been cumbersome, but in our view, such an arrangement would have contributed to more effective steering of the programme.

THE PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

The Programme co-ordinator, employed by CBEES at Södertörn University was responsible for the administration and smooth running of the programme. He was secretary to the Steering Group and kept it informed of the programme's progress. His tasks also included overseeing the finances, the promotion of contacts between projects, for example by organising conferences, seminars and workshops and also for what is known as the "third mission", i.e. dissemination of on-going research and results.¹⁴ The co-ordinator was further responsible for the creation

Decisions may be made at IC meetings or through a written procedure (*per capsulam*). Provisions for a written procedure were laid down already in the OG, and it is being increasingly applied to decision-making as the project pipeline has matured and contracting has been picking up. As with meetings, invitation and agenda must be circulated to all investors" (Anonymous/Norden 2007, pp. 22–23). The giant international academic network *H-Net-Humanities and Social Sciences Online* By-Laws, registered in USA, 1995, gives a perfect example of management at the international level, see h-net.org. The term "per capsulam" is not used when preparatory debates are accessible on line (which means registered from the historical point of view).

12. Steering Committee minutes 28 May 2007, item 5.
13. 26 August 2010 on the Faroe Islands, 17 February 2011 in Tartu, Estonia and 23 August 2012 on Saaremaa, Estonia.
14. In the frame of the European Union, besides their traditional missions of teaching and research, universities were being broadened to include "Third Mission" activities that facilitate their engagement with society and industry. The development of Third Mission activities is of main interest for Higher Education Institutions, accreditation and ranking agencies, policy makers, all institutions working with universities in the areas of technology transfer and innovation, continuing education and social engagement, and international organisations. See <http://www.openeducationeuropa.eu/en/project/e3m>.

and maintenance of a website (from 2010 www.nordicspaces.com), which includes a description of the programme and the nine projects, their teams, their research and publications as well as continually updating information on developments of the programme and projects (see further under the section on Co-ordinating the Programme and the website).

The first Programme co-ordinator effectively held a full-time position beginning January 2007 and up to the end of December 2009. He was paid by the *Centre for Baltic and East European Studies* (CBEES), according to an institutional agreement between RJ and the Baltic Sea Foundation (Östersjöstiftelsen) (FBEEES). But, as was originally arranged with *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (RJ), half of the Programme co-ordinator's time was contracted to CBEES at Södertörn University, in the Stockholm suburbs (where he had been previously employed), while the other half of his work time was dedicated to the *Nordic Spaces* Programme, in a largely flexible way at RJ (see CBEES financial report dated 12 September 2013, for January 2007–December 2013).

The first co-ordinator applied for a permanent full-time position, as a research secretary at RJ that was advertised in the early autumn of 2009, and he was selected from among a number of other applicants. He was appointed from 1 January 2010 and thus had to quit his part-time university position and be replaced as Programme co-ordinator.¹⁵ Five persons applied for the position of programme co-ordinator, after which the Director of the Baltic Sea Foundation (FBEEES), on 11 December 2009, “announced” at the Steering Group meeting “that CBEES (The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies) at Södertörn University has decided to offer PhD J.H. the vacant position as coordinator of the Nordic Spaces programme. J.H. from The Midsweden University is one of the project managers of the Nordic Spaces programme” (item 7 of the minutes). This is how a second Programme co-ordinator was appointed, this time on a strict half-time basis, for two years (but an extra nine months' prolongation was finally given to him by CBEES, up to end of September 2012).

While the first co-ordinator had been clearly elected as “secretary of the Steering Committee” and also “as the coordinator of the Nordic Spaces programme” at the first Steering Group meeting on 18 January 2007¹⁶, the present evaluation team had difficulty ascertaining how the second co-ordinator was finally recruited, in order to understand the rough formulation of the December 2009 minutes concerning this matter.¹⁷

Considering the profile of the successful applicant, we can now reconstruct the criteria by which this candidate may have been chosen from among the five applicants for the position of Programme co-ordinator. The successful person was a male, with a serious and relevant CV. He presented, besides his field competences, particular advantageous features in this competition: 1) he had already some two years' experience of *Nordic Spaces* administration since he was actually one of the individual projects leaders; 2) he was the only one of the three individual Project

15. Steering Committee minutes, 11 December 2009, Appendix 1: “Major programme activities during the first half period of the programme... Recruiting a new programme coordinator, autumn 2009”.

16. Steering Committee minutes 18 January, 2007, item 5.

17. Steering Committee minutes, 11 December 2009, item 7, “*New management organisation*: The current coordinator T.E. decided to leave his position in the end of 2009. M.Y. announced that CBEES (The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies) at Södertörn University has decided to offer PhD J.H. the vacant position as coordinator of the Nordic Spaces programme”. [Here, we replace names by capital letters].

leaders living in Sweden and 3) he was the only one of the individual projects leaders who had a four year project – a project which had been awarded to him at the beginning of January 2008 and which did not have as heavy a work load as a group project. Therefore, with a half time position at CBEES, this new Programme co-ordinator was required to finalize a programme which had been running for three full years, and in which Programme he had been scientifically active for two. This new co-ordinator was already a *Nordic Spaces* grant-holder at Mid Sweden University where he was able to keep a half-time position with his project. However, in making this appointment it appears that ethical issues, such as a possible conflict of interests between the role of co-ordinator and that of researcher, were not considered sufficiently by CBEES, and ultimately by the Steering Group, since the Steering Group members accepted this decision without debate and applied the principle of “consensus” that they had previously adopted, as seen above, on 28 May 2007.

The mandates of the Steering Group in relation to those of the Programme co-ordinator are clear and reasonable. The Steering Group had the overall responsibility and made the strategic decisions whereas the co-ordinator’s most important task was implementation (see *Appendix 4* below). This will be discussed in more detail under the various headings below. Suffice to say here that the programme co-ordinator role was undertaken by the two successive coordinators with different emphases, depending on their leadership styles and the different demands placed on them at the beginning and at the final stages of the programme.

The first Programme co-ordinator’s most important tasks had been to define the programme, to find sponsors, to organise the evaluation and selection of applications, to establish the programme as a more or less unified undertaking with its own website, to create conditions for cooperation and to monitor developments. His successor’s main responsibilities were to concentrate on outreach activities, especially the further development of the *Nordic Spaces* website and the reporting of the projects, as well as the final conference and the final “products” of the programme. Their respective contributions are commented on in the section *Responsibilities of the Programme co-ordinators later*. The questionnaire responses are generally positive with regard to their respective achievements.

The position as Programme co-ordinator was taken over on 1 January 2010 by a researcher, who had his own project in the programme. The problem of appointing as co-ordinator a person already involved in a programme does not seem to have been discussed. If it was, it was probably discussed as a positive feature – as carrying advantages as expressed above – and not as a negative feature, as carrying a possible conflict of interests. Furthermore, the first co-ordinator, in January 2010 shifted, within the Steering Group, from the position of Secretary to the position of full member. This ensured, on the one hand, a great chance for his successor (as co-ordinator of the programme and at the same time – not by election but *ex officio* (according to the co-ordinator’s mandate) – secretary of the Steering Group) to find quick and supportive advice if needed, but, on the other hand, it potentially created a risk of conflict of interests for both of them, from the ethical perspective. In our view, these ethical questions should have been discussed and recorded or at least mentioned, as a matter of principle, whatever the final decision of the Steering Group.

4. APPLICATIONS, SELECTION PROCESS AND GENDER BIAS

The first official document describing the programme was the Call for Applications, which was advertised widely in November 2006 with a final submission date on 31 January, 2007. By then, the Steering Group had been established and convened for one meeting on 18 January 2007 to appoint the evaluation team and establish the ranking procedure and criteria.

The Call invited applications from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as from the three Baltic States, Germany, Poland, Russia, and the United Kingdom. It emphasised that projects with comparative approaches would be prioritised and that applications with a multidisciplinary and/or transnational orientation from research groups rather than from individuals would be particularly welcome. The response was very impressive with 158 applications from 12 different countries submitted, involving 650 researchers. Among the 158 applications, 26 per cent were individual projects (41 applications: 19F and 22M). Of the group projects, (n=117), 44 per cent (52/117) were led by women and 56 per cent (65/117) were led by men. Table 2 presents the distribution by gender and national location for Project leaders and researchers involved in all eligible applications, compared to the gender and national location of funded Project leaders.

Table 2. Number of applications: applying leaders, researchers and funded leaders by gender and national location of the Project leader.

Country	No. of Project leaders			No. of researchers	Project leaders funded		
Sweden	86	F36	M50	322	5	1F	4M
Finland	30	F15	M15	148	2	1F	1M
Norway	8	F3	M5	37	0		
Russia	6	F3	M3	36	0		
Estonia	6	F3	M3	34	1M		
Germany	4	F2	M2	22	0		
Lithuania	4	F3	M1	22	0		
Denmark	6	F3	M3	12	0		
United Kingdom	3	F2	M1	7	0		
Poland	3	F1	M2	6	0		
Iceland	1	F0	M1	3	0		
Latvia	1	F0	M1	1	1M		
TOTAL	158	F71	M87	650	9	2F	7M

On 18 January 2007, the Steering Group met for the first time and appointed a team to evaluate the applications, which consisted of 15 prominent scholars (7F, 8M), from eight different countries in Northern Europe including Estonia, Poland and Germany as well as Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. These experts represented ten different disciplines (see *Appendix 1, Table 12*). The gender profile of the evaluation team was within acceptable gender limits: 54 per cent men and 46 per cent women (*Table 11*).

The team of experts divided into three groups based on discipline, each responsible, under a chairperson, for one-third of the applications. The members of each of these groups read their share of the applications they had been assigned in



accordance with their instructions.¹⁸ The three groups met separately on 24 April, 10 May and 11 May 2007 at RJ to reach agreement and ranked the applications into five categories, from one to five, five being top quality.¹⁹ The results were then presented to the Steering Group. This seems to us to be a reasonable way of handling the task, considering the large numbers of proposals and the time pressure, even if a final general meeting of the three groups of experts – at least the three chairs – would have been better, following the usual process applied for main European research Programmes (ESF, HERA, ERC, Marie Curie grants etc.).

At their second meeting, on 28 May 2007, the members of the Steering Group had received the evaluation team's assessments and were ready to make decisions on their own principles for selection, and, finally on the selection itself. The evaluation team had identified 16 applications at level 5 (6 F and 10 M applicants; 38 per cent female) and 18 applications at level 4 (7 F and 11 M applicants; 39 per cent female).

Level 5 projects were to take precedence, but the Steering Group decided that the distribution between topics, disciplines, gender and nationality should also be taken into account in a holistic qualitative way, a procedure that has been found to militate against women since it can more easily include gender bias. In that context, seven level 5 projects were selected (two with female and five with male Project leaders) from the 16 identified by the expert panels, and one level 4 project (M) from the 18 identified by those expert panels as being at level 4. The Steering Group established a reserve list of four proposals, all at level 5. Of these four applicants, three (two F, one M) had proposed individual projects and one (M) a large-scale group project. Neither of the remaining group projects led by women at level 5, was included in the reserve list.

In December 2007 one of these individual projects (*Distant News*, M, level 5) was included by the Steering Group through a simple decision by correspondence which reached consensus (*per capsulam* decision) though by emails only. This project had been ranked highest among the reserves by the Steering Committee in consensus at its previous May 2007 meeting. However, in our view a more formal Steering Group meeting by Skype or video conference would have given better opportunities to discuss the matter. Actually, this kind of decision making process, as noted above (section "The Steering Group"), reflected also the principles that were adopted by the Steering Group in May 2007 to attempt to reach consensus in all its decisions.²⁰ This mode of decision, if usual for policy makers, seems strange to academics who noted that consensus is not equivalent to unanimity (Sherrington 2000). The advantages and disadvantages of using consensus-decision making instead of voting as a dominant pattern has been extensively discussed in the European Union (Heisenberg 2005), the academic world, attached to open and traditional debates, remains in general ambivalent about such decision-making processes, particularly when a large number of people are involved, who are unable to express their views in detail (Bidina 2013). This creates frustration and absenteeism. In any case, and whatever the reasons, the latter could be seen in the low attendance at

18. For assessment criteria, see *Appendix 3*.

19. The team assessed the research plan, the scientific competence of the research group/individual researchers, the budget plan and made an overall assessment of feasibility and strengths and weaknesses (*Appendix 3*).

20. See the important management decision taken at its second meeting in 28 May 2007, point 5 of the Agenda of the Steering Group, concerning "*Principles for decision-making*": "It was decided that the committee should try to reach consensus in its decisions".

Steering Group meetings, and was also reflected in the level of participation by the Steering Group in the present evaluation process.

Anyway, the overall success rate varied little by country: six per cent of the Swedish applications (5 from 86) were successful as compared with just under six per cent (4 from 72) of those from other countries. However there were striking gender differences in Project leadership. Thus 45 per cent (71 among 158) of the Project leaders who submitted applications were women, whereas only 22 per cent (2/9) of the projects funded had female Project leaders. Putting it another way, male Project leaders who applied had a roughly one in 12 chances of being successful (7/87), whereas female Project leaders had a roughly one in 35 chances of being successful (2/71). The under-representation of women as Project leaders was not restricted to the non-Swedish applications. It was also evident in the Swedish applications, where although 42 per cent of the Swedish Project leaders who applied were women, only 20 per cent of the Swedish applications funded had female Project leaders: women's chances being 1/36 as compared with a 1/12 chance for men (4/50). Table 3 shows the difference with regard to male led and female led level 4 and 5 projects identified by the experts and those finally selected for funding by the Steering Group.

Table 3. Number and gender of project proposals selected by experts (levels 5 & 4) and by the Steering Group.

N propose by experts	N of these led by women	Percent-age led by women	N proposed by Steering Group	N of these led by women	Percent-age led by women
34*	13 F (vs 21 M)	38%	9	2 F (vs 7 M)	22%

**Note: The evaluation team selected 34 projects, including 16 considered at level 5 (excellent) and 18 considered at level 4 (very good). These gender differences persist amongst those at level 5 only.*

Furthermore, one of the two successful projects led by a woman was a two year individual one. The only project selected from outside level 5 was male led. An additional male led individual project was selected at a later stage through a consensus decision making process with a considerably larger budget (four year grant) than the other individual projects which had two years grants. These discrepancies will also be discussed below under *Financing*.

There is evidence of the insidious nature of biases in scientific judgements. In an earlier Swedish study (Wennerås and Wold 1997:3), peer reviewers were shown to over-estimate men's achievements, and to under-estimate those of women. Thus, the most productive women applicants in that study were the only group of women who were judged to be as competent as the least productive male ones, leading the researchers to conclude that "female applicants had to be 2.5 times more productive than the average male applicant to receive the same scientific competence score as he". Even where applicants were similar in terms of scientific qualifications and publications, men's applications were more likely to be labelled excellent. Assessments of competence were also affected by affiliation with a Committee member (despite rules that those who had such contacts could not participate in the scoring of these applications). It is unclear to what extent this happened in the present context, but the gender patterns emerging as regards the allocation decisions of the Steering Group are provocative. Recent evidence from the Swedish Research Council (Ahlqvist *et al*, 2013) illustrates the processes involved in the perpetuation of such patterns.



On the basis of the material to which we have had access, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Steering Group showed little awareness of or interest in promoting the gender objectives endorsed by the Swedish state, the Swedish Research Council (Ahlqvist *et al* 2013), the EU (2004, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2002b) and OECD (2012), and in particular little interest in fostering women's access to the leadership of research projects. Thus the discretion exercised by the Steering Group served to perpetuate male dominance of Project leadership in a way which was not supported by the experts' evaluations. In interviews with the Steering Group, it was striking that such decisions were seen as in no way problematic.

It is not for us to assess the quality of the projects selected, but it is somewhat surprising that eventually one third of them, admittedly with more limited budgets than the group projects, were individual undertakings. It is understandable that by selecting them, the Steering Group was able to include more themes related to Nordic Spaces at a lower cost, but at the same time there was a risk that the idea of group dynamics as expressed in the Call for Applications²¹ would become less prominent (see further under section *Cooperation* below). The *per capsulam* decision to fund an individual male led project seems particularly problematic.

The outcome of the selection process must have been a result of discussions and considerations within the Steering Group at the decision-making meeting, when "the distribution between topics, disciplines, gender and also ... the national distribution between applicants" (Steering Group minutes 28 May 2007) was considered. It demonstrates the difficulty of taking into account different interests in a programme financed by different funding agencies in different countries, where constraints due to both national and organisational demands play a major role. This is a problem which was discussed at the final conference of the Programme on Saaremaa (Estonia, 23–26 August 2012), and that will have to be brought up in the planning of any new internationally or multi-nationally financed research programme. The lack of importance attached to gender in such a context merits particular attention. Traditionally the choice has been presented as between excellence and diversity, the implication being that the former can only be achieved at the expense of the latter. However, it is now increasingly recognized that excellence is gendered (Mavin and Bryans, 2002; GENset, 2010) and that procedures and metrics that effectively advantage men are frequently seen as unproblematic (Van Den Brink and Benschop, 2012; O' Connor, forthcoming).

5. FINANCING THE PROGRAMME AND THE VARIOUS PROJECTS

In principle, the contributions of the various organisations were pooled. This was important for several reasons, above all for the programme to be seen as a joint venture in which the Nordic countries shared responsibility through joint financing. In our view, this was a rational way of handling the finances of the programme. At the same time, it was somewhat unnecessary to transfer money from Estonia and Finland and then back again to these countries. As has been discussed above, the constraints imposed by national and organisational restrictions also influenced funding and it may be argued that in reality pooling occurred only to a minor ex-

21. See *Appendix 5*.

tent. Thus, in practice, the Estonian Science Foundation funded the Estonia based *Baltic Regionalism* and the Finnish Councils funded *Dance* (and added a further EUR 75,000 to North America, the only group project led by a woman). RJ and the Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities and NordForsk financed the rest of the programme. FBEEES bore the costs of the administration, including the salaries of the Programme co-ordinators, the costs of the various conferences and travel, a not insignificant, and yet necessary part of the budget. Further financing for the conferences at Hanaholmen and Voksenåsen was found by the Programme co-ordinator. The following Table 4 shows the sums made available by the various funding organisations.

Table 4. Total contributions by the funding organisations, at the end of the Programme, evaluated in EUR.²²

Funding organisations	Contribution in EUR
Riksbankens Jubileumsfond	1 080 000
The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities	750 000
The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen)	567,000 (originally 300,000)
Estonian Science Foundation (Eesti Teadusfond)	254 000
The Finnish Cultural Foundation (Suomen Kulttuurirahasto)	200 000
The Foundation for Swedish Culture in Finland	75 000
The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland	125,000 (originally 50,000)
NordForsk	290,000
TOTAL	3,341,000 (originally 3,074,400)

At its second meeting on 28 May 2007 the Steering Group made its funding decisions (see *Table 5*) from the then available total of EUR 3,074,000. According to the minutes, it was decided then that the budget to be used for project research funding was EUR 2,597,000, including EUR 106,000 kept as a security reserve (see *Table 5*). The Society for Swedish Literature in Finland added another 75 000, which was used for *North America* project.

From the total available funding of EUR 3,074,400 in May 2007, the EUR 300,000 coming from the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (FBEEES) for administration, travel, conferencing and publications, would remain in the hands of CBEES at Södertörn University and therefore this financial contribution in Swedish Crowns (SEK) was kept apart from the general “Nordic Spaces fund” created at RJ in 2006 for running the programme.²³ CBEES added later EUR 267,000 in order to cover extra publication costs and extension of the programme.

This left EUR 2,774,000 available in the Nordic Spaces fund at RJ in May 2007 (see *Table 5*), of which 2,491,000 was immediately allocated to six group research projects (for four academic years) and two individual projects for two years. Since it was decided that EUR 106,000 should be kept as a reserve for unanticipated contingencies, this left a substantial amount (EUR 177,000) to be allocated at a later

22. The table is taken from the co-ordinators’ final report: *Nordic Spaces research programme. Final report.*

23. See http://anslag.rj.se/sv/ar/2007/Nordiska_rum.



date.²⁴ The Steering Group minutes note that remaining money was reserved for “future needs”, which could involve funding of another project or other activities. It is difficult to understand why such a large amount remained unallocated at the May 2007 meeting, given that 16 of the 158 applications were assessed as excellent by the expert group.

The Steering Group decided that no project should be granted more than 500,000 EUR over the four year period and that “the distribution between topics, disciplines, gender and ... the national distribution between applicants” should be taken into account.

Altogether an amount of 2,491,000 EUR precisely was precisely allocated on 28 May 2007 for research projects, which corresponded to about three quarters (73 per cent) of the sums applied for (*Table 5*).

The costs of conferencing, travel, co-ordinators, etc. borne by FBEEES over the four academic years (and even a fifth academic year, as extra money was provided by CBEEES for nine months additional funding for the co-ordinator, up to September 2012)²⁵ were considerably higher than originally envisaged. This contribution in 2007 was EUR 300,000, a sum which had almost doubled by the end of the programme, finally amounting to 17 per cent of the total costs (*Table 4*).

Table 5. Funding engaged for research projects at the Steering Group meeting on 28 May 2007 and six months later, evaluated in EUR (for individual and group projects)

Projects (by acronyms)	Funding given	Funding requested in application	% of sum requested
a) Imaginative Geographies (individual)	EUR 51,000	51,000	100
b) Nordic Profile (individual)	EUR 15,000	15,000	100
d) Arctic Norden (group)	EUR 350,000	435,000	80
e) Baltic Regionalism (group)	EUR 300,000	497,000	60
f) North America*(group)	EUR 350,000	671,000	52
g) Democracy (group)	EUR 425,000	503,000	84
h) Museums (group)	EUR 500,000	511,000	98
i) Dance (group)	EUR 500,000	741,000	67
Total engaged in research	EUR 2,491,000	3,424,000	73 %
Additional funding (end of 2007)			
c) Distance News (individual)	EUR 142,000	207,000	69
f2) *North America (group)	EUR 75,000		63
Additionally engaged in 2007	EUR 217,000		
Final Total	EUR 2,708,000	3,631,000	75 %

* *North America (line f) received additional funding, see line f2.*

24. See below: as the Finnish councils contributed another EUR 150,000 (Steering Committee, 28 May 2007) of which 75,000 was used for *North America* and about 140,000 for *Distant News*, some EUR 35,000 remained for the future.

25. See CBEEES financial report dated 12 September 2013: the final total sum engaged by CBEEES for the Programme, including salaries, costs of premises, website and all other costs as overheads – of which 98 % were covered by the *Baltic Sea Foundation* (FBEEES) – is 5,326,579 SEK, which makes about 567,000 euros, as reported in Table 4. The remaining 2% were covered by CBEEES with other income at Södertörn University.

The Steering Group set up a reserve list consisting of one large-scale and three individual projects. Six months later, by a consensual *per capsulam* decision²⁶ the top individual project on that list, *Distance News* (an application from the researcher who later became the co-ordinator), was allocated a grant using some of the funding reserved at the 28 May meeting.²⁷ At that time, the only female led group project, *North America* was granted another EUR 75,000, furnished by the Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland.²⁸ Thus, the total sum allocated at the end of 2007 was EUR 2,708,000 while 3,631,000 had been applied for (75% of the sum requested was allocated).

The applicants' average share was 73 (finally 75) per cent of the sum applied for (Table 5). There was, however, considerable variation in the proportion allocated (from 100 per cent to 52 per cent). It is particularly noticeable that the latter was an application from the only female led group project, on which a cut of nearly 50 per cent was imposed by the Steering Group. Even including the extra money allocated later, this project was among the least successful in terms of funding (but not when it came to results). This, when combined with the under-representation of female led projects funded raises questions about implicit gender discrimination by the Steering Group.

In our view, a *per capsulam* decision to fund an individual male led project from the unallocated EUR 177,000 as recorded in the Steering Group minutes was not uncontroversial. In view of the under-representation of women led research projects, relative to those identified as excellent by the experts, there could have been other options. These appear not to have been considered.

Half of the sums were paid out after contracts had been signed between the leading funding organisation, *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* and the relevant universities, grant administrators for the Project leaders, whatever their country of affiliation. The remaining sums were to be allocated following a review after two years. This original centralisation in Stockholm, however, had the consequence that since the funds were handled by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (RJ), they were in SEK, whereas payments were made mostly in EUR for projects based outside Sweden. As exchange rates had gone up in 2010 by about 15 per cent over the period, this second payment caused some concern at the time. This was funded through the reserve fund of EURO 106,000 to cover unforeseen costs. RJ signed and registered contracts with all the Project leaders' administration. But, since the Finnish organisations can only allocate funds to Finnish researchers according to their statutes, *Dance* was financed directly by the Finnish funding organisations and also reported directly to them. The same scenario occurred in the case of *Baltic Regionalism*, University of Tartu, Estonia. As money was transferred from one institution to another, new contracts had to be drawn up (see Co-ordinators' final report).

Projects were encouraged to find further funding from other sources. This happened in several cases according to the Project leaders' final reports, their questionnaire responses, and interviews, which means that the total funds available to the programme exceeded the contributions from *Nordic Spaces*. For one programme (*Arctic Norden*, Project leader, M) this involved an increase of 30 per cent which is partly explained by the possibility of combining activities for *Nordic Spaces* with

26. See above about this decision-making process *per capsulam*.

27. The sum for *Distance News* was quoted in SEK: 1,309,000. The exchange rate used here is 1 euro = 9.25 SEK, which is about EUR 142,000.

28. The original allocation for *North America* was for EUR 350,000, but was later increased by EUR 75,000.



those in major projects financed through other sources, among them undertakings funded by the *European Science Foundation* (ESF). *Museums* used a similar method (Project leader, M). *Baltic Regionalism* (Project leader, M) received extra money from the *Estonian Science Foundation* to cover the costs of Tartu University for hosting the project.²⁹ *North America* (Project leader, F) found extra resources for their own conferences and workshops via *NordForsk*. The rest of the projects did not receive (or apply for) further funding according to their final reports.

It should be added that funding for activities in the programme was also provided from other sources, notably for the workshop “The Nordic Region in the Museums” at Hanaholmen, Helsinki, Finland, 16–18 March 2009 (see below), which was partly financed by the *Nordic Culture Fund*.

Our conclusion is that pooling resources in an international programme with national and other stakeholders involved is problematic when it comes to selecting and funding research projects. In the case of *Nordic Spaces* it resulted in the under-selection and under-funding of projects led by women. Given the recent attention paid by the Swedish Research Council to discriminatory practices in research funding allocations (Ahlqvist et al., 2013) this indicates a surprising lack of awareness by the Steering Group of both gender issues and of the wider research context.

SCHOLARS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECTS AND GENDER

The programme was transnational in the sense that it included projects based in different countries in Norden. However, as we have seen there was great variation across the programme as a whole. Project leaders were located in Sweden (five³⁰, including one individual project), Finland (two, including one individual project), Estonia (one), Latvia (one individual project).

Table 6. National location and gender of originally funded Project leaders and Researchers (together).

Nationalities	Number	F	M
Sweden	16	7	9
Finland	7	4	3
Estonia	7	1	6
Norway	4	1	3
United States	2	1	1
Denmark	2	2	
Iceland	2	1	1
Latvia	1		1
Germany	1		1
United Kingdom	1		1
Total	43	17	26

Sources: www.nordicspaces.com

29. In any case, some extra money was due to *Baltic Regionalism*, since the contract with RJ signed by the Estonian Project leader and his institution in 2007 was for a grant of EUR 300,000, and since the *Estonian Science Foundation* had originally promised only EUR 254,000 as a contribution to the Programme (see *Table 4*), an amount of EUR 46,000 should still be given to this team.

30. One of them, *North America*, was headed by a Swedish scholar, based in the United States with the help of a Finnish scholar based in Helsinki.

A total of 43 persons were thus involved originally, representing ten countries. Sweden dominated as could be expected, and was represented by 16 scholars (37 per cent), Finland and Estonia by seven each and Norway by four (although no Project leader was Norwegian). However, there is an uneven distribution between the projects: of the seven participants in *Baltic Regionalism* six were located in Estonia. Researchers located in Sweden dominated in *Arctic Norden* and *Democracy*, whereas in three of the projects (*Dance*, *Museums* and *North America*) there was greater variety in the national locations of the projects members.

Table 7 below is based on the original membership of the teams according to the website www.nordicspaces.com. In one project (*Democracy*) considerable changes took place over the years in the composition of the team, although most of the other project groups were very stable in composition. Although the majority of the Project leaders were from Sweden (five of nine), the projects themselves were more mixed from the point of view of their current national location.

Table 7. Project members, including leaders, their gender and national location.

Projects (by acronyms)	F	M	National locations	Total
a) Imaginative Geographies	1		Finland	1
b) Nordic Profile	0	1	Latvia	1
c) Distance News	0	1	Sweden 1	1
d) Arctic Norden	2	4	Sweden 4, Norway 1, US 1	6
e) Baltic Regionalism	1	6	Estonia 6, Finland 1	7
f) North America	3	2	Sweden 1, US 1, Denmark 1, Finland 1, Iceland 1	5
g) Democracy	2	5	Sweden 5, Estonia 1, Germany 1	7
h) Museums	3	4	Sweden 3, UK 1, Norway 1, Finland 1, Iceland 1	7
i) Dance	5	3	Sweden 2, Norway 2, Finland 3, Denmark 1	8
Total	17	26	43	43

Sources: www.nordicspaces.com

The Call for Applications (see *Appendix 5*) stated that the programme was mainly intended for postdoctoral researchers. Thus it could be seen as providing an opportunity for non-tenured scholars to advance in their careers, reflecting a developmental, capacity-building approach and thus simultaneously increasing the numbers of women potentially available as researchers. This seems to have happened in some cases (notably in *North America* and *Imaginative Geographies* and *Museums*). The inclusion of other early career researchers in the writing of chapters in some of the final research volumes (see section below on The Ashgate Series) extended the academic range of the project and its involvement with younger researchers. However this kind of generative developmental approach was missing in the majority of the projects funded.



6. COOPERATION

COOPERATION WITHIN TEAMS

Project leaders and project researchers in the *Nordic Spaces* Programme (NS) report that internally there were few, if any, problems. One likely and important reason for this is that team members knew each other well beforehand and could therefore work quite easily together. There may be a contradiction between the objective of having projects with teams working closely together internally, on the one hand, and bringing together teams with different approaches and research goals from different countries and disciplines, on the other. There is a risk that homogeneous teams become so tight that they do not fully become part of the whole programme. Furthermore, it is now increasingly accepted in a business context that diversity is key to innovation. Hence homogeneity may have important negative consequences in terms of research innovation.

Projects, whose members lived in different countries, arranged internal workshops and other activities at fairly regular intervals. This applies to *North America*, whose five members were based in four different countries and were quite diverse with regard to disciplines. The Project leader (F) maintains that they “probably worked together more as a team than most of the NS projects”, which is verified by statements in the questionnaire responses of all the members of the project. The same applies to *Dance*, whose eight members from four different countries from the very beginning made considerable efforts to weld their group together and convened twelve times for workshops/meetings between 2007 and 2012 (Project leader’s (M), final report). *Arctic Norden* was also a “travelling” team and “recurrent meetings of the whole group and of minority constellations helped to keep groups together” (Project leader’s (M) final report). Discussions often concerned draft papers by team members, and a recurring comment in the questionnaires was that team members discussed each other’s contributions critically but positively and gave useful feedback. In *Baltic Regionalism* the whole team, except for two members, worked in the same corridor and could consult each other easily. One of them was a woman working in a different location in Tartu, which may have resulted in the only woman in the project being left out of the day-to-day discussions. The other was the only non-Estonian, who visited Tartu on a fairly frequent basis. That project arranged its own workshops and a “kick-off conference”, which “brought together both the core group and the associated members” (Project leader’s (M), final report). Insulation from the programme as a whole may to some extent be the case of the *Baltic Regionalism* project. But the Estonian team was happy to be involved in the final conference of the Programme that took place in their country, at Saaremaa, in August 2012, with a very large representation.

The fact that several research groups stayed largely intact throughout the whole period of the programme is also evidence of an open internal working environment. This applies in particular to *North America* and *Dance*. On the other hand, closeness may also involve drawbacks, if it is combined with a lack of diversity of gender, nationality and multi-disciplinarity. In three of the other projects only minor changes among the core members occurred, mostly in the form of inclusion of one or two new researchers as others dropped out. In the last two years, a few of the teams recruited several additional researchers (not paid from the *Nordic Spaces* budget) for contributions to journal articles and other publications, notably the final Ashgate volumes (see further under Results section below). This must be

seen as a positive broadening of the task, bringing in new perspectives on the main theme. Only in one project were there instabilities in the core team.

We conclude that the internal working climate in the projects was positive throughout the programme, which is corroborated by the vast majority of the questionnaire responses, but that monolithic teams may counteract the other goals of an international programme such as multi-disciplinary and multinational cooperation and that ultimately they may inhibit research innovation.

INDIVIDUAL VS. LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS

All the projects, including the individual ones, state that interaction with other groups was rewarding. It is difficult to tell whether individual projects were less involved with other projects than the large-scale ones. *Nordic Profile* had useful relations with *Baltic Regionalism*, resulting in meetings, fruitful participation in an otherwise internal workshop and the (individual) Project leader participated in a special issue of the peer reviewed Estonian historical Journal *Ajalooline Ajakir*, which was one of the major publications of the Baltic project (see further in the section Results below). In his final report the scholar responsible for *Nordic Profile* also participated in a seminar arranged by a member of *Museums*, whose orientation was in line with his work. Clearly, the individual Project leader responsible for *Distant News* could benefit from contacts with all the other projects because his funding was spread out over four years and because of his position as Programme co-ordinator during the latter half of the programme. But the individual Project leader of *Imaginative Geographies* had few contacts with the rest of the programme (although she did participate at the final programme conference), which raises the question of the advantages (or disadvantages) of mixing large-scale projects financed for a considerable period of time with small-scale projects with short-term duration (2 years as opposed to 4 – 5 years). That scholar (F) asserts in her final report that "I could have widened the research programme's intellectual scope more forcefully with a full-fledged research team." Also her project was different from the others in that it involved mostly literary research as opposed to history, political science or etÓography/etÓology. This could have been considered either in the selection process or in relation to support of activities in the course of the programme.

All three individual projects participated in the Midway conference at Vilnius, Lithuania, 26–29 August 2009, and presented the results of their work, and two of them were present at the final conference in Saaremaa, Estonia, 23–26 August, 2012. The two-year ones were successful in the sense that they produced results in the form of several publications. However, in a large programme like *Nordic Spaces* they did not have the advantage of close continual collaboration with others involved in similar research. By contrast, in projects with several members, it seems natural to read and comment on each other's texts and to support one another in various ways. Those who are on their own have to find alliances in groups of researchers with similar interests and may need assistance in that process. In at least one case this turned out to be problematic.

It is our conclusion that shorter individual projects may be overshadowed by the large-scale ones and that in a major research programme such as *Nordic Spaces*, if they are to be funded at all, their role needs to be carefully considered. It was a stated purpose in the programme to establish added value through close cooperation within and between projects³¹, and the long-term effects of more large-scale

31. See the *Call for Applications below, Appendix 5*.

collaboration are likely to be greater. Alternatives to funding a new individual (male led) project in December 2007 were not considered.

COOPERATION BETWEEN TEAMS

Two circumstances helped to promote co-operation between the various projects: the conferences and meetings arranged in the course of the programme and the joint publications.

Conferences

Conferences were of two kinds. One brought together all the participants to discuss the status and further development of the projects and the programme. The other could best be described as workshops. The first kind included the “Kick-off” conference in November 2007, at Södertörn University, near Stockholm, at which Project leaders presented their projects, and a considerable amount of time (three hours during day 2) was allowed for projects to discuss their own activities. It is unclear how the two individual grant-holders at the time were involved in these discussions.

The main aim of the Mid-way conference in Vilnius in 26–29 August 2009 was to report on the progress, to evaluate the results so far and to plan further activities. There were slots dealing with collaboration, networking and strategies for publication, and, most importantly, a Publications Committee was formed.

The final conference at Saaremaa, Estonia, 23–26 August 2012, was devoted to a summing-up of the projects and the programme as a whole. Items on the agenda that were appreciated included the contributions on international research cooperation by two external scholars, one from Bulgaria and one from Korea. At this conference, too, time was set aside for discussions on strategies for future research and for establishing a *Nordic Spaces* network. There seem to be no minutes from these discussions, but certain spin-off effects are noted in the questionnaire answers and the Project leaders’ final reports (see under *Spin-off effects* section, below).

These three conferences were all well attended by all teams. At the final 2012 Saaremaa conference also more “peripheral” project members participated as well as the individual grant-holder of *Imaginative Geographies*, whose project had ended in 2009.

The thematic workshops were more specialised. They were planned in co-operation between the Programme co-ordinator and the leaders of those projects that had proposed them, and were intended also as an outreach activity to inform the general public. Originally, three workshops had been envisaged, which would have made it possible for those who were not involved in the first two thematic workshops to have a similar experience. The co-ordinator planned for such a third event to take place in 2010 and contacted, among others, the Velux Foundation in Denmark to raise money for this, but unsuccessfully. It is not clear why this thematic workshop could not be funded by CBEES, particularly in view of the availability of additional funding (EUR 267,000) from that source over the course of the project. Thus, only four of the nine projects were involved in the workshop format and all of these were headed by Swedes. This limited the cross fertilization of ideas in the programme. The first thematic workshop, entitled *The Nordic Region in the Museums*, Affinity and Particular Individuality, was a three-day event held 16–18 March 2009 in Hanaholmen, Helsinki, Finland, and included contributions from three of the projects: *Arctic Norden*, *North America* and *Museums* and two external

researchers, who had been specially invited to read and comment on their work. The three public lectures were appreciated according to an internal report (See Eng, 2009, *Rapport från seminariet Norden på museer*) but did not attract a large audience.

The second thematic workshop, *Where and in what way is there a "Norden"? The importance of spaces and places for representations of "Norden"*, took place in Norway, Oslo (Voksenåsen) on 27–28 January 2010 along similar lines. It presented perspectives on research concerning the tension between, on the one hand, *Norden* as a cultural community which is taken for granted and, on the other, external spaces for historical struggles, boundaries and current relations. The same projects were represented as in the first workshop minus *Arctic Norden*, which was replaced by *Distant News* (the second co-ordinator's individual project). This event, too, included public lectures, but again attendance was limited.

These two thematic workshops were ambitious, and contributed, in our view, and according to questionnaires submitted by those who attended, to enhanced cooperation between the projects involved ("The impact of Hanaholmen and Voksenåsen was difficult to overestimate", "It was a great opportunity to discuss common issues ..."). For those projects that took part it gave them an opportunity to meet internally for planning etc. without having to spend their own project money. This opportunity was not available to five of the nine projects.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, the workshops were not advertised generally and it is not surprising, therefore, that several respondents state in their questionnaire responses that they did not know about them. Lack of time and resources were the main reasons why projects that might also have benefited from such meetings were not invited to them (*Baltic Regionalism, Dance, Democracy*). It seems to us that invitations to researchers in the programme as a whole could have been extended in order for those interested to be informed and perhaps inspired.

The task of the Programme co-ordinator(s) to establish and maintain contacts between projects and keep the programme as a whole together was crucial. It was their responsibility to contribute to reaching the goal of international and interdisciplinary cooperation. Nearly all the questionnaire responses express their appreciation for their efforts. But as the programme approached its final stages after the Vilnius Midway conference (26–29 August 2009), more attention was paid to the planning and the delivery of the final publications. This, perhaps inevitably, could be expected to create conflicting interests for a part-time co-ordinator who had his own research agenda. Perhaps a full-time co-ordinator could have continued to further support cooperation and still have had time for preparing publications.

Joint publications

At the Vilnius Midway conference in 2009 there was a discussion on how to present the results of the *Nordic Spaces* Programme. The above-mentioned initiative of forming a Publication committee consisting of the co-ordinator and leaders of the various projects was applauded by the Steering Group. Their collective efforts resulted in the most important scientific outcome of *Nordic Spaces*, a series – entitled *The Nordic Experience* – of five large volumes published by Ashgate and containing contributions by researchers from all the large-scale teams except *Baltic Regionalism*. Three of the volumes are jointly co-edited, two of them by members of different research teams, and several of them contain contributions by younger scholars loosely connected to the programme. This was good initiative, which may have contributed to capacity-building (see further under the Results section



below). *Baltic Regionalism* did not participate, as they were planning their own final ‘product’ and had already arranged their agenda.³²

7. MULTINATIONAL AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY AMBITIONS AND GENDER DIVERSITY

MULTINATIONAL ASPECTS

A distinct and very conscious ambition of those responsible for the *Nordic Spaces* programme was for as many Nordic (in an extended sense) regions as possible to be represented and work together. This was achieved in several ways.

The projects were based in four countries, in the sense of the national location of the Project leader: Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia (see *Tables 2 and 6*). But there had been a majority of Swedish applications: 54 per cent (86/158), compared to 19 per cent (30/158) from Finland and 5 per cent (8/158) from Norway). This resulted in five of the projects being led by scholars located in Sweden (one of which was an individual project), two by scholars located in Finland (one of which was an individual project), one by a scholar located in Estonia and one in Latvia (individual). The programme had originated in Sweden, and Sweden had allocated by far the largest sums (see above under *Financing the programme and Table 4*). Also the two programme co-ordinators were Swedish.

It may thus be argued that for a multinational programme, one country dominated heavily, even if the membership of the projects included researchers from a total of eleven countries: those mentioned above plus Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway, the UK and the US (for the distribution of national locations, which varied within and between the different projects see *Table 2*). In three of the group projects there was a considerable mix (i.e. *North America, Museums and Dance*), whereas others were more homogeneous (i.e. *Baltic Regionalism and, originally, Democracy in particular*) with a striking similarity between the Project leader’s and researchers’ national location, as is seen in the following *Table 8* based on the original applications.

Table 8. Similarity between Group Project leaders’ and researchers’ national location and university affiliations

Project	Similarity of national location	Per cent similarity	Similarity of university affiliation	Per cent similarity
d) Arctic Norden	4 of 6	67	3 of 6	50
e) Baltic Regionalism	6 of 7	86	6 of 7	86
f) North America	0	0	0	0
g) Democracy	6 of 8	75	4 of 8	50
h) Museums	3 of 7	43	3 of 7	43
i) Dance	2 of 8	25	0	0

32. One representative of *Baltic Regionalism* participated at the first meeting of the Publication Committee in 2009 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

However, even where the composition of teams varied little internally, it is important to recognise that several of the research themes dealt with topics that were multi- or even inter-national. For example, *Arctic Norden* investigated problems in an area contested by a number of nations. *Democracy* examined the diffusion of Nordic (in the traditional sense) political systems to the Baltic countries. This mix of nationalities and different backgrounds as well as research themes which we find in several of the projects has contributed to widening the scope of the different projects.

As has been mentioned already, the members of the Steering Group were all representatives of funding bodies in the different countries of the programme, which was a conscious strategy on the part of RJ. It means that over the years it included members from Sweden, Finland, Estonia and areas of Norden representing Nord-Forsk (Greenland followed by the Faroe Islands). The Steering Group also made a point of meeting not only in Stockholm (on three occasions out of six), but also in Tartu (Estonia), the Faroe Islands and finally on Saaremaa (Estonia), in conjunction with the concluding programme conference (see above).

It is in our view surprising, however, that neither Norway nor Denmark was involved in the programme, except through individual researchers within the teams. Their presence might have opened up other perspectives, not least since the historical relationships between Sweden and these two countries were very different from those with Finland and the Baltic States. A Danish foundation was approached, and considered joining the programme³³, but in the end decided against it.

The Ashgate volumes offered an opportunity to widen projects and include new researchers also from other countries other than those originally represented (in *Arctic Norden* from Russia and South Africa; see further down under the heading *The Ashgate Series*).

Finally, the conscious efforts of the Programme co-ordinators to arrange important Nordic Spaces Programme activities at a number of different places in the Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Norway) contributed to enhancing the multi-national character of the programme by bringing together the project members from the different countries. This is true of the above-mentioned conferences, meetings, and workshops, involving the programme as a whole or part of it.

Nevertheless, in a context where a very large number of applications were received (n=158) where the multi-national aspect was seen as an important aspect of the programme, and where the ability to draw on a multinational pool could have enhanced its excellence and innovativeness, it is disappointing that in three of the six funded group projects, at least two thirds of the participants had the same national location as the Project leader (*Table 8*). This suggests that convenience and homosociability – i.e. selecting researchers “with familiar qualities and characteristics to one’s self” (Grummell *et al.*, 2009: 335) – were disproportionately used by these Project leaders in putting together their project teams: features that are not always associated with excellence.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND GENDER ASPECTS

The research in the programme had its basis in several different academic fields within humanities, social sciences and art. The programme as a whole is thus

33. Steering Committee minutes 28 May 2007.



clearly multi-disciplinary, with bases in several different theoretical spheres within the humanities, social and political sciences. One project (*North America*) was mainly etÓographical, but also included performative art (theatre), and its main orientation was performativity, which facilitated co-operation with the *Museums* project: “we would never have reached the kind of understanding of the role of performance in heritage making without having worked at the intersection of humanities and the performing arts”. *Imaginative Geographies* was based on literary theory, and the *Dance* project investigated various aspects of dance and dancing in the development of *Norden* using etÓographical and anthropological theory among other approaches. Several questionnaire responses indicate that the experience of multidisciplinary research collaboration was very positive, mainly because new forms of cooperation were created: “Bridges were built”, “New forms of co-operation have been created.” However, *Democracy* was a political science project and *Baltic Regionalism* a history project, and neither of them collaborated closely with any other projects. This circumstance made programme-wide co-operation and joint conferences such as those at Hanaholmen (2009) and Voksenåsen (2010) potentially even more important.

But it was stressed in the Call for Applications (*Appendix 5*) that comparative approaches were crucial, that one of the objectives of the programme was to stimulate cross-disciplinary contacts. “Individual researchers may apply for project grants”, but “projects conducted by research groups of multidisciplinary and/or transnational character will be particularly welcome”. In other words: “projects with transnational and/or comparative approaches will be prioritised.” This sits uneasily with the fact that three of the nine selected projects were individual and that two of the six group projects could not be seen as fully meeting the above criteria. This means that in our minds there are question marks over five of the nine projects funded in a context where there were 34 projects at levels 4 and 5 to choose from.

The overall gender profile of the originally funded project teams including leaders, according to the *Nordic Spaces* Programme website was 17 women vs. 26 men (40 per cent females vs. 60 per cent males).³⁴ However this varied between projects. In three of the six group projects, more than two thirds of the researchers on the funding applications were men (i.e. *Baltic Regionalism*, *Artic Norden* and *Democracy*). Thus for example, *Baltic Regionalism* included one woman and six men. It was striking that the most gender balanced project was led by the only female group Project leader (i.e. *North America* which included three women and two men). *Museums* was also balanced within appropriate gender limits, while in *Dance*, a male Project leader led a predominantly female team (five women vs. three men).

Across the programme as a whole a variety of national locations and disciplines are represented, and there is gender diversity. However, all of these varied substantially between projects. In terms of national location, group projects varied from one where six out of seven researchers are at the same university (in fact mostly in the same corridor) to one where all its members worked in different countries. Two of the projects are mono-disciplinary in their staffing; while in half of the group projects at least two thirds of those originally involved were men. There is a certain correspondence between the three aspects: gender, discipline and national location. Those that are male-dominated also tend to be less diverse in terms of discipline

34. This number is based on the data on the website www.nordicspaces.com. The original applications of the funded projects listed more researchers than 43 (17 women and 29 men (a total of 46), 37 per cent females vs. 63 per cent males). See previous *Tables 6* and *7*.

and location. Hence one can suggest that roughly half of the group projects showed evidence of homosociability (i.e. recruiting others in their own likeness) and an (implicit) aversion to diversity: a pattern that has not been seen as conducive to scientific excellence. The selection process could have taken these considerations into account in awarding funding.

8. RESULTS

PRODUCTIVITY

Each of the projects had its own agenda for research and publication, and the Project leader was responsible for its implementation and results. At the “Midway conference” in Vilnius in 2009 the status of the projects was presented and discussed. The general impression as communicated to the Steering Group by the Programme co-ordinator was positive.³⁵ The projects had been productive in terms of publications, conference participation, workshops etc.

The same impression is communicated in the Project leader’s Midway reports (August 2009). All projects had been active at academic seminars, workshops and conferences and most of them report extensive participation. A large number of publications are reported: books, peer-reviewed articles and conference papers, although the contributions vary between the projects, partly due to differences in the number of project members.

The Project leaders’ final reports list publications and various kinds of academic and outreach activities. As the interpretation of “academic activity” varies to some extent, it is sometimes difficult to specify exact numbers. Also, work is still continuing, and new publications are due to appear. The following *Table 9*, taken from the Programme co-ordinators’ final report (2013), shows the current status (at the end of academic year 2012–2013) which gives an overview of publications and papers produced in the frame of the *Nordic Spaces* Programme. Since nine cross-project publications were reported under both projects the aggregate sum of 510 “outputs”, shown in *Table 9*, has to be reduced by this amount (510 minus 9), which gives 501 “outputs” including conference papers and 311 (320 minus 9) focusing only on publications.

Table 9. An overview of publications and conference papers produced by the nine projects of the *Nordic Spaces* Programme, up to 2013

Project	Mono-graphs	Special issues	Edited books	Journal chapt.	Book chapt.	S-total: publications	Conf. Papers	Other	Total
a) Imaginative Geographies	1			2		3	5		8
b) Nordic Profile				1	2	3	7		10
c) Distant News		1	4	5	12	22	9		31
d) Arctic Norden	3	1	2	24	27	57	11	2	70
e) Baltic Regionalism	6	2	6	26	48	88	37	0	125

35. Steering Committee minutes, 11 December 2009.



f) North America		4	2	17	26	49	48	7	104
g) Democracy	1		1	2	12	16	10	1	27
h) Museums		1	4	15	35	55	20	1	76
i) Dance	1	0	2	0	24	27	22	10	59
Project	12	9	21	92	186	320	169	21	*510

* Nine cross-project publications were reported under two projects involved. The aggregate sum has to be reduced by this amount, which gives a result of 501 “products.”

In addition, in their final reports the Project leaders report on participation in academic events, for example seminars, conferences and workshops.

It is possible to make a very crude comparison between the funding provided to the projects and their research output, focusing on number of publications reported, before the Ashgate volumes were produced. But obviously this ignores the important variation in quality and quantity that may exist between various types of publications. It is also a snap-shot at a particular moment in time, and does not take into account the fact that important publications may subsequently be produced. Our conclusion is that publication rates varied among the projects, that some exceeded their goals, and that the programme as a whole benefited from this.

OUTREACH – “THIRD MISSION” ACTIVITIES

The Project leaders’ final reports also comment on specific outreach activities for each of the projects. The total number reported amounts to more than 150 separate contributions and events with great variation between the projects.

They consist mostly of lectures to the general public or to categories of interested audiences (e.g. history teachers, museum employees), radio talks and articles in newspapers and magazines, and in a few cases participation in exhibitions. In the case of *North America* there have been a number of stage performances and readings in the theatre (*Akvavit*) in Chicago, which was established as a result of the Programme. Four of the projects also set up their own websites, but in at least two cases, they were closed down as the new programme website was established in 2010.

The outreach activities of the programme as a whole include the website, and above all the new one, www.nordicspaces.com, accessible from June 2010, which succeeded the site created in 2008. As we see it, it could have been developed earlier, and this is also suggested in some of the questionnaire responses. It is informative and contains a number of details of the individual projects including video presentations by the Project leaders and interviews with Steering Group members. It lists joint activities such as the conferences, including the final conference on Saaremaa, Estonia (August 2012), and a summing up of the programme by the co-ordinators. A list of publications from about halfway into the programme is included. But it does not fulfil all the requirements specified in the Steering Group minutes from 11 December 2009 that it should be a “virtual meeting place for discussions, reflections, etc.” and that it should provide “the means for video conferences, on-line communication between projects.” Nor are the lists of scholars in the project updated but are still those included in the original applications. For the survival of the ideas behind *Nordic Spaces* it is, in our view, essential that the webpage is maintained and updated, especially with regard to the projects and their

“outputs”. The site is prepaid until 2017, but there are no funds for the work of updating it, and even if the second Programme co-ordinator has taken it upon himself to do so, it seems reasonable to assume that without further funding, it will not be prioritized. Some of the questionnaires refer to the neglect of social media as a way of advancing outreach activities at programme level, reflecting a lack of time and of technical help at the level of the programme as a whole.

The *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* (RJ) Yearbook 2011/12, *Ett nordiskt rum* (A Nordic Space), published in Swedish, which features a range of contributions from scholars in the *Nordic Spaces* programme, was launched at a seminar on 4 July 2011 during the Almedalen political week in Visby, Gotland (Sweden) under the headline: *The Baltic Countries – 20 years after they regained independence*. It was also presented at the annual Gothenburg Book Fair in September 2011. The book contains excellent illustrated articles for a large Swedish-speaking readership, concerning all the projects, and deserves further dissemination. A translation into English would make it internationally accessible. The question was touched on at the Steering Group meeting, 26 August 2010.³⁶

There is a lack of information on the programme as a whole in the media (one exception is a column in *Helsingfors Dagblad* on 25 September, 2012). Certain lectures at Hanaholmen, Finland (March 2009) and the whole of the Voksenåsen conference, in Norway (January 2010) were aimed at the general public, but attendance was not overwhelming. There were references in the questionnaires to what was seen as a failure by the programme to impact on public debate and to set agendas in the area. It is, of course, difficult to reach out with essentially academic content to large audiences, but perhaps more could have been done by addressing specific categories of potential interest groups.

We conclude that a number of the projects made efforts to communicate their research in various ways to a non-specialist audience. It is impossible for us to identify the impact, but a range of activities are described above. However, the projects were mainly concerned with their own themes, and not necessarily with “marketing” the programme. As far as programme-wide outreach is concerned, it is our impression that more could have been done by the co-ordinators to reach various kinds of audiences, for example through the website, the social media and the press.

THE ASHGATE SERIES

The most notable concrete result of the *Nordic Spaces* programme as a whole is the five volumes published, or due to be published, by the Ashgate publishing house. The editor summarises their aim and the spirit of the editorial enterprise: “Through in-depth and comparative analyses of heritage practices, polar science, transnational media structures, expressions of cultural identity and the distribution of democratic ideals, the five volumes explore the negotiation of which territories, activities, objects, traits or ideals should qualify as Nordic”, a definition rewording, after five academic years of intense collective efforts, the initial ambition of the programme appearing in the sub-title of the 2006 *Nordic Spaces* Call for Applications as *Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800* (Appendix 5). Three volumes have appeared so far (late November 2013) and the remaining two are due out in

36. It “discussed the possibilities for also publishing this book in English and how to fund such an endeavor.”

2014. This collaboration, as one of the final reports put it, "helped to bring out the commonalities of the programme better than might have otherwise been the case" (Project leader, M).

Catalogued in the field of "Human Geography"³⁷, the series, entitled *The Nordic Experience*, is edited by the (second) "Programme Manager, Center for East European and Baltic Studies, Södertörn University, Stockholm, and Department of Humanities, Mid Sweden University" (Harvard and Stadius 2013). In the collective volumes available, a general *Series Preface* (ibidem, p. XIII), signed by the series editor, is followed by a *Series Acknowledgements* (ibidem, p. XV) giving full credit to the "consortium of eight research agencies" that supported the research and "for additional grants enabling among other things numerous book workshops, language editing, the purchase of image rights and professional indexing. It says finally that "The programme was coordinated from the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies at Södertörn University, Stockholm". Then comes, in some of the volumes, a specific *Acknowledgements* page, written by the volume editor(s), thanking *the Nordic Spaces* research Programme and specific projects, and all people (including anonymous reviewers) who offered advice and/or expertise throughout the research and the publication process. The volumes are edited by five leaders of the large-scale projects and one scholar with an individual project, who is also the co-ordinator and general editor of this series, under a personal and private contract with Ashgate. All authors kept their own copyrights.

Some co-editors were not Project leaders but were asked to join. Each manuscript has undergone a rigorous double blind peer review process³⁸, which vouches for the final quality of the scientific content. The first three books are products of collaboration between researchers from different projects. *Baltic Regionalism* was not represented but produced its own monographs, the most important one published in the Estonian Historical Journal *Ajalooline Ajakiri*.³⁹ Furthermore, two of the individual projects were not represented in the Ashgate series, since their funding was for only two years and they reported their projects at the time of the Midway Conference in 2009, at Vilnius. This means that the whole programme was not involved.

The Ashgate volumes include several contributions from scholars who were not formally in the original *Nordic Spaces* programme but belong to research circles connected with the various projects. This is in itself a spin-off effect and a bonus of the programme. In fact, of the total of 54 authors included in the five volumes, 20 are not core members of the projects. There is considerable variation, however, in the participation of external writers, ranging from nine out of 12 chapters in one volume to none in two of them. The gender profile is acceptable, as is seen in the

37. Reducing "Nordic Spaces" to "Human Geography, even if the British publisher's catalogue includes heritage and studies of cultural identities, illustrates the big gaps that are found between the different definitions of academic disciplines, already at the European level. This was recently stressed in an article entitled "The region as a unit of study; the History and Geography in harmony" by the historian E.A. Wrigley, a member of the British Academy, who noted also that "the relative significance of the region, the nation-state, and the world as a whole has changed radically in the course of the last three centuries" (Wrigley 2013, p. 118).

38. The double blind peer review process implies strict anonymity: 1) The readers (at least two) do not know the authors' identity and 2) the authors do not know the readers' identity. The readers accept or reject the manuscript and generally ask for corrections.

39. *Ajalooline Ajakiri* No 1/2, 2012, a special issue of 200 pages dedicated to "Baltic Regionalism", edited by Pärtel Piirimäe and Andres Andresen, available as an open access publication at: <https://ojs.utlib.ee/index.php/EAA/issue/view/38>.

following Table 10 (ranging from 38 per cent of the authors in *Models of Democracy* to 63 per cent in *Nordic Dance Spaces*. The inclusion of external female authors contributes to this gender balance in three of the five volumes). Furthermore, the fact that 34 of a possible 43 researchers were involved in the series is remarkable (an involvement rate of 80 per cent; in effect 94 per cent (34/36 when those involved in Baltic Regionalism are excluded).

Table 10. Gender and external authors and total number of authors in the five Ashgate collective volumes⁴⁰

Ashgate collective volume main titles	All		Of whom authors ex- ternal to original NS		Total number of authors
	M	F	M	F	
1. Performing Nordic Heritage (2013)	5	7	2	2	12
2. Polar Region (2013)	8	5	4	3	13
3. Communicating the North (2013)	7	5	4	5	12
4. Nordic Dance Spaces (forthcoming)	3	5	0		8
5. Models of Democracy (forthcoming)	5	3	0		8
Total	29	25	20		54

However, this is only a rough estimate of the gender profile of the contributors, since Table 10 does not take into account the size of contributions. Some of them are longer than others. Some writers have written two chapters, others only one, some chapters are joint products by two or more scholars. At present, we do not have access to all information concerning the whole series, since the last volume is not due to appear until the second half of 2014.

The fact that two volumes will be published in 2014 will help to keep the programme alive for a period of time after its official closure. This joint publication project may, in fact, be the most powerful impact of the programme. It is a good example of how the collaboration and cooperation in a large-scale undertaking such as *Nordic Spaces* may have a lasting impact.

The book series is thus a major undertaking, but we agree with the Project leader (M) who argues in his questionnaire response that: “a concerted follow-up on the book series is crucial. To work with the publisher in securing reviews in journals and newspapers, to promote the books in conferences and policy and media events. To use them as singles or as an ensemble as circumstances demand”.

It may be argued that a publication summarising the programme as a whole, attempting to analyse the commonalities and differences between the projects and to examine the outcomes of joint efforts would be valuable. What are the common features? In what respect do they differ? This was also a proposal discussed in the Publication Committee. We are aware that it would be a difficult task, but it could be worth the effort from the point of view of trying to get a full picture of what could be meant by *Norden*, directed at an academic audience, perhaps written by

40. See the list of references below.



one of the group Project leaders whose publications have most centrally engaged with the concept of Norden.

In conclusion, the Ashgate books are the most valuable concrete outcome of the programme with regard to both scientific content and circulation among scholars. It is regrettable that the volumes have not so far been made available at least to all Project leaders. This serves to weaken the identity of the project and to reduce its overall impact. In addition, books published by Ashgate are known to be expensive on the market, even in ebook format, and hardly accessible to young scholars, even those involved in one of the books in the series, other than through university libraries.

SPIN-OFF EFFECTS

A number of different initiatives are reported in the questionnaire responses from all projects, although some of the scholars appear to have established or joined new research constellations more quickly than others towards the end of the Nordic Spaces programme.

Project leaders point out that they themselves and individual members of their teams were involved in other related research under the auspices of various funding organisations while still active in *Nordic Spaces*. Applications for new research projects have been submitted and some of them have been successful. This is for example the case of *Arctic Norden* researchers, who are now participating in an ESF programme and a MISTRA (The Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research) foundation programme, which could be said to constitute a continuation of research carried out within *Nordic Spaces*. Collaborative research with other scholars has thus been initiated, resulting in publications in peer reviewed journals and in joint book projects.

As a continuation of the programme, members of the *Museums* project are preparing research on several far-reaching themes, as stated in the project manager's (M) final report, including *Scandinavianism revisited; Multi-disciplinarity in the renewal of museum studies; Changing Nordism in the diaspora; The Ecology of knowledge, politics and culture*.

Others also state that their research agenda has been widened and that, as a result of *Nordic Spaces*, they are now seeking broader contacts within area studies. New research projects are developing with original team members active in related projects, e.g. *Russification of Baltic Education Systems in the 19th century* involving scholars from the *Baltic Regionalism* project (Estonia, M). New teams have been formed bringing together researchers from several countries. As for *North America*, their project has led to contacts with practitioners and thus generated material which should be analysed further and used in future research. A special spin-off effect is the establishment of a theatre production company in Chicago, The *Akvavit* Theater, whose "mission is to investigate and encourage discussion about what "Nordic" means and how it is perceived through translated theatre performance. The plays we produce will give Nordic countries a strong voice in North America while contributing to the vibrant intercultural theatre scene already thriving in Chicago" (Researcher M).

To some extent, the different character of the various projects and/or their gender profile impacted on how they collaborated and developed. For example, those involved in *Dance* worked, and are still working, very closely together, travelling extensively in the Nordic countries. Their work is, as it is described in their final

report, a “kind of nomadic mapping”.

Some Project leaders in their questionnaire responses list a number of new topics which are based on their experiences of Nordic Spaces. It is not always clear how far they have developed or whether they have resulted in further successful applications.

All in all, the impression given by the Project leaders and several of the scholars in the projects is that a number of ideas for continued research were generated by the Nordic Spaces programme. How, or whether, the image or images of Norden as researched in the programme will continue to be developed is an open question, however, and primarily one to be pursued by the researchers themselves and not the funding organisations.

9. CO-ORDINATING THE PROGRAMME

One of the special features of the programme was the organisation: the programme aimed to explore one concept (*Norden*) from a number of perspectives (historical, geographical, political, etÚographical, etc.) researched by nine projects, each of which could also be based on several different approaches and theoretical starting-points. This model involved three levels: at programme level with a Steering Group and a coordinator whose task was to see to it that the programme as a whole fulfilled the general aims established by the funding bodies; at project level with a Project leader who had overall responsibility for the quality of the research in the project; and (in the group projects) a sub-project level where the different research tasks within each project were carried out.

The main functions of the Programme co-ordinators were thus administrative as seen in the fairly detailed instructions (*Appendix 4 and below*). One of them also had his own individual project. It may be argued that this was inappropriate. Either research may suffer as the administrative tasks take over, or the running of a research programme may be neglected because of one’s own scholarly ambitions. As a matter of principle it should be avoided, as much as possible, since it could lead to a conflict of interests.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CO-ORDINATORS

The co-ordinators played a crucial role in the programme. Their task was to make it possible for the projects to reach their stated goals and the goals of the programme as a whole. Below, the main functions of the co-ordinator as described textually in the Steering Committee meeting minutes 18 January 2007 (*Appendix 3*) are commented on:

[The co-ordinator] maintains contacts with the projects and the funding organisations.

The questionnaire responses are mainly positive. According to them, contacts with Project leaders varied over the different stages and were more frequent before conferences and towards the end of the programme when the book series was being prepared. Mostly they consisted of individual contacts with each of the leaders and dealt with finance and the planning of workshops and conferences.

The Kick-off conference in November 2007, at Södertörn University, was par-



ticularly mentioned by both Project leaders and researchers as an opportunity to meet members of both one's own team and the other teams. It included plenary sessions for presentations of all the projects and planning sessions for the teams, but time was also set aside for discussions about collaboration and cooperation between projects. This particular issue, which was at the heart of the programme, might have been emphasised more clearly and funded separately at the outset according to some of the questionnaire responses.

After two years the projects were to be "reviewed before any grants are prolonged". This seems to have been mainly a formality based on the submission of a half-time project report, as stated in the contracts with each of the Project leaders.

The "Midway" conference was organised by the first co-ordinator in 2009. The fact that the venue was in Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, one of the Baltic States, gave a further dimension to the meeting. This meeting was an important occasion for teams to demonstrate their own progress and to be informed about the status of the other teams' work. It was structured along the same lines as the Kick-off event with reports, presentations and group sessions for projects. There was a plenary session which involved the possibility of discussing cooperative undertakings, but here, too, more time could have been allotted for this purpose.

In between these large-scale conferences, there were fairly regular contacts, although they varied between projects, through e-mail, mainly with Project leaders, but also with individual researchers whenever the need arose. In both cases, however, they were for the most part occasioned by particular questions or problems. Recurring meetings or Skype conferences with Project leaders as a group, say, once every two to three months might have contributed to developing the programme further with regard to e.g. collaboration between projects. More or less regular meetings of the Project leaders, most of whom constituted the Publication Committee, took place after the Vilnius conference, as the Ashgate idea was formed and developed. Since the *Baltic Regionalism* project was not involved in that undertaking, they were not represented at these meetings (except for the first), whose agenda for obvious reasons was mostly concerned with the development of the volumes. This, again, is an example of the fact that *Baltic Regionalism* was less involved in the programme than the other projects.

The website was a way for project members to keep abreast of developments, and information was continually supplied throughout the duration of the programme. Up to 2010 some of the projects also had their own sites, which were of course also open and available for both the general public and the project members. After 2010 with the focus on the programme based site, there was less need for these and some were closed down. The website potentially helped to maintain contacts within the programme but as we understand it, it does not contain a function for two-way communication, discussions and reflections between the projects. Hence its role in actually promoting co-operation and contact between projects was limited.

As has been stated earlier, it is important that the Nordic Spaces website should be maintained as, for example, the Ashgate volumes continue to appear and that it should be updated with regard to the results of the projects. It has been pre-paid for another four years, but updating it will require commitment by a social media expert on dissemination and further funding.

[He] keeps the Steering Group informed about the progress of the programme and, at regular intervals, organises meetings the Steering Committee decides to hold, and is secretary of the Steering Committee

This was done regularly in conjunction with the Steering Group meetings. In between these, there were contacts with the Chair and decisions were taken after consultations with the other members, if necessary (oral communication, Programme co-ordinator). One important decision was taken *per capsulam* (see above). We would argue that this organisation is too weak and involves the Steering Group in the running of the programme only to a limited extent, especially as there were no meetings for two and a half years after the initial two years. An executive group of, say, three Steering Group members including the Chair would have helped to keep the Steering Group more engaged, and would have been more effective in enabling it to deliver on its mandate.

[He] promotes collaboration and contacts between the projects within the programme for example by organising conferences, seminars and workshops

As described above, the co-ordinators were active organising joint conferences (three for the entire programme and two thematic workshops in collaboration with two to three projects). These latter workshops, at Hanaholmen (Finland, March 2009) and Voksenåsen (Norway, January 2010) were all much appreciated by the participants, judging from the questionnaire comments. However, they were reserved for those involved and invited, and members of the other five projects were not even necessarily informed about them, to our knowledge. Nor did they get the opportunity to have similar workshops related to their own projects. As mentioned previously, there were plans to organise similar activities in Denmark, London and Helsinki which would have contributed to further involve those three (or five, including two of the individual projects) that had not participated. For various reasons these did not materialise.

[He] promotes contacts between the programme and the scientific community and between the programme and the public and is responsible for the dissemination of internal and external information of the programme and its outcomes (such as web pages), as well as for editing collaborative publications within the programme

The two thematic workshops referred to above are examples of attempts to establish contacts with the general public. Another, more successful, example is the RJ Yearbook 2011/2012 (*Ett nordiskt rum*), which was initiated by the co-ordinator and promoted at the political week in Visby and at the Gothenburg book fair in the summer and early autumn of 2011 (Björkman, Fjæstad and Harvard, 2011). However, outreach activities appeared to lack priority in the programme despite their inclusion in the mandate of the Co-ordinator.

The website was a potential medium for communication also with the outside world. But as mentioned above it does not provide for two-way communication and thus does not give the users the opportunity to comment on or discuss with those responsible. Other kinds of social media were used at the project level, but not in the programme as a whole.

[He] assists in the assessment of the research programme after its expected completion, by compiling information and results of the projects

Both Programme co-ordinators have been very helpful in providing documents, figures, and other information concerning the programme.



[He] is responsible for further fundraising”⁴¹

Further fundraising initiated centrally after the beginning of the programme was mainly for conferences and travel. Funds were provided for the three programme conferences events by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies. Further financing for research was the responsibility of the projects. However, some of the questionnaire responses stated that one of the few disappointments was that as the programme closed in 2012, no further funding would be available.

10. ADDED VALUE OF THE PROGRAMME

FOR THE FUNDING AGENCIES

All the eight funding bodies were part of a joint experience which involved financing research on various aspects of a common theme. They will now be able to weigh the pros and cons of organising or participating in similar ventures in the future. They will be more aware of how to set up jointly funded programmes with a programme manager and estimate the costs and benefits involved. Further, they will all have gained from having contributed to valuable research documented in a series of five volumes as well as in other forms.

The funding agencies had different stakes in the programme. FBEES had a special role in that it generously funded the joint administrative functions of the undertaking: the half-time salaries of the co-ordinators, the three programme conferences and the costs involved in publication. The Finnish and Estonian financers had to consider their own statutes and interests in the process, whereas the other five were relatively free to use their resources. In our opinion, the consequences of such an arrangement for the selection of the projects and the involvement of the Steering Group, have become clear and need to be taken into account in any future collaborative research funding. In particular the consequences in terms of the under-representation of female led projects need to be considered.

FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

All the questionnaire responses to the question of lessons learned from the programme are positive. Most deal with the structure and collaboration: “I have learnt about research that I had no idea about ... and about how to interact in a research organisation; ” “Learned a lot about teamwork and international collaboration”; “I learned better ways to motivate team members to work together, to publish the results of researches in the most effective way”. Some recognized the costs as well as the benefits of international collaboration: [It is] “challenging to create real co-operation between research groups that do not know each other beforehand.” For some, the experiences they had in the project changed their research agendas in fundamental ways.

These answers indicate that in retrospect (about seven months after the final conference), the impressions of a fruitful experience remain. In fact, there is only

41. Steering Committee meeting minutes 18 January 2007, *Appendix 3*.

one disappointment: “that there were no opportunities for continuation ...”

Similar comments are heard from the Project leaders: “The investment in central leadership was unique and important.” “The importance of the Kick-off conference, midterm conference and concluding conference was obvious.” “Interdisciplinary and international structure were important.”

In the interviews, too, there was no mistaking the enthusiasm felt: “I got time and money for a project that I had been interested in, and it was, for me, a first step towards independence.” “It opened up a new field to me.”

On the basis of these statements we may conclude that the programme was a useful experience, which provided an opportunity for long-term research on a given theme in cooperation with other scholars. For most of the Project leaders and Programme co-ordinators it was also an important learning experience in building leadership capacity.

11. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES

STRENGTHS

- The idea of the enlarged Norden concept as expressed in the Call for applications was a novel approach, which attracted a very large number of applications (n=158) from many countries in the North. It was interpreted in several ways by different applicants and the successful projects approached it from a number of different angles.
- The idea of joint funding was interesting and well-conceived, and could have made it possible to select the very best from among the very large number of applications.
- The role of a Programme co-ordinator with responsibility for keeping the programme together and supporting co-operation and collaboration between projects, with responsibility for the finances and for internal and external information (including the third mission) was an exciting model.
- The three programme general conferences were stimulating and highly valued experiences: the Kick-off conference gave opportunities for members to meet and plan their work and, to some extent for project members to meet members of other teams; the Midway conference (2009) brought together researchers to report on progress and prepare further research, and the Final conference (2012) summed up the results and discussed further developments.
- The ambitious research carried out in the projects, resulted in a large number of peer reviewed publications.
- The Ashgate series will no doubt be the most enduring result of the whole enterprise.
- The spin-off effects, as seen in most, if not all, the projects, and in particular the perceived benefits were recognised by virtually all participants in the programme.



WEAKNESSES

- Joint funding was a good idea, but in practice, national and organisational considerations played a role in the selection of projects and it may be argued that pooling of resources took place only to a limited extent.
- The absence of Steering Group meetings over a 2.5 year period raises fundamental issues about governance.
- The decision making process resulting from the principles that were adopted by the Steering Group in May 2007 to reach consensus in its decisions and the consecutive absence of registered debates contribute to a perception of some lack of transparency when taking an important resource decision by correspondence (*per capsulam*) between meetings. This mode of decision, if usual for policy makers (particularly in the context of the European Union), seems strange to academics who stress that consensus is not equivalent to unanimity (Heisenberg 2005; Sherrington 2000). Besides, it may have been a reason for absenteeism, turn-over and disinterest among some Steering Group members.
- The *RJ* website regarding Nordic Spaces allocations and the dates of contracts signed with grant-holders is wrong and will have to be amended. Some absurdities should be deleted, particularly when incomplete or erroneous information is made public: how could nine grant holding administrators be registered at *RJ* in 2006, months or years before funds were applied for and projects successfully selected?⁴² Securing the funding in 2006 (by creating a specific fund in advance, called “Nordic Spaces” (NR meaning *nordiska rum*), for a major financial institution of national importance, should be clearly dissociated from grants’ contractual management, which occurred, by definition, later in time. These pages are important because final reports for the nine projects may be found there (or links to other pages), currently with similar information referring to 2006 as year of contractual engagement with *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*, which is not correct.
- We thank in advance *RJ* administration for taking care of necessary corrections as soon as possible, in order to reach transparency for the readers.
- The inclusion of three individual projects (one third of the projects funded) ran counter to the idea expressed in the Call for applications that “projects conducted by research groups of multi-disciplinary and/or transnational character will be particularly welcome.”
- We noticed few open-access publications among the many published results of the Programme. Since *RJ* was engaged in 2010, together with the Royal Library in promoting this type of publication⁴³, it is regrettable that Swedish Project leaders were not more involved, even at a later stage, in this scholarly effort.⁴⁴

42. See http://anslag.rj.se/en/year/2006/Nordic_Spaces Accessed 30 November 2013. The page is entitled (sic): “Grants approved during 2006 in *Nordic Spaces*” and includes a detailed list of the nine accepted and funded projects. We read, for example, that for project *Distant News*, the Grant Administrator of Mid Sweden University Campus Östersund signed a contract with *RJ*, approved 2006, registered number : NR2006-911-4:1 (0 kr) <http://anslag.rj.se/en/fund/45886> Accessed 30 November 2013.

For project *Democracy*, we read that the Grant Administrator of Södertörn University signed a contract with *RJ*, approved 2006, registered number : NR2006-9109:1 (0 kr) <http://anslag.rj.se/en/fund/45881#> Accessed 30 November 2013.

43. www.openaccess.se/initiative, see *RJ* Annual Report 2011, p. 42.

44. http://www.kb.se/OpenAccess_english/reports/

- The under-representation of female led projects (despite their proportional presence on the lists rated by expert evaluation groups as excellent) suggests the existence of institutionalised gender discrimination. This disturbing possibility was further underlined by the disproportionate cut in the initial funding provided to the only female led group project: implicitly suggesting that the processes identified by the Swedish Research Council (Ahlqvist et al. 2013) might also have been present in the Steering Group.
- The selection of projects also did not sufficiently take into consideration the issue of multi-nationality and multi-disciplinarity within projects. Indeed, three of the six group projects were homogeneous in one or more respects, which runs counter to intentions expressed in the Call for applications.
- The lack of priority attached to the inclusion of postdoctoral researchers in a number of the projects limited the embedding of the concept of Norden in a new generation of scholars and also may have contributed to the absence of gender diversity.
- The absence of an agreement with Ashgate that all the Project leaders at least would have access to all published volumes limited the development of a sense of collective identification with Norden and Nordic Spaces.
- As a matter of principle, the double role of a grant-holder and co-ordinator in one person is unacceptable.

Outreach to the public at large could have been more effective. In particular there was limited use of an interactive web and of social media for outreach to the public and the scientific community. In academic European and American contexts, local doctoral students are usually informed and invited individually to attend international seminars and conferences related to their field of research or competence and taking place in their university or in their town, where they can learn (in the audience) without any cost for the organizers. The “*Östersjöstiftelsen* (The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies) was founded by the Swedish Government in 1994 with a mission to support research and doctoral studies, as well as the academic infrastructure at Södertörns högskola (Södertörn University)”.⁴⁵ It is therefore surprising that the Centre for Baltic and East European Research (CBEEES) “which was founded at Södertörn University in 2005 to promote and coordinate research and doctoral studies focusing on the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe and, at the same time, to strengthen multidisciplinary research” at this university missed such a learning opportunity (with the exception of the first day of the Kick-off conference in 2007) for its doctoral students to attend at least some Nordic Spaces programme events in the audience. This is particularly surprising since the “Baltic and East European Graduate School (BEEGS) is incorporated within CBEEES, and the Graduate School offers an international and multidisciplinary research environment mainly within the Humanities and Social Sciences, where English is the working language”. It is regrettable that so few open events were organized at Södertörn University and that there were no visible connections with doctoral programmes, at least in Sweden, while other main international research programmes do care about this aspect.

45. <http://ostersjostiftelsen.se/in-english>



OPPORTUNITIES

- The programme opens up opportunities for further research on the topic. This is already being carried out (see *Spin-off effects*), but it is unclear whether the collaboration generated by this structure will continue to develop.
- The lessons learned from the structure and organisation of this programme may help funding organisations to develop similar cooperative undertakings in the future.
- There is an opportunity for lessons to be learned as regards gendered processes in resource allocation decisions in such multinational projects.
- There is a similar opportunity for lessons to be learned as regards governance at steering group level in multi-national projects.
- Combining the role of co-ordinator with that of an individual researcher in the programme needs to be re-evaluated and discussed as an appropriate model.

12. SUMMING UP AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nordic Spaces was a timely and well thought out programme. It was ambitiously prepared and generously funded, something that was corroborated by Researchers and Project leaders. It resulted in a series of five scientific volumes edited by six Project leaders and published by Ashgate. *Baltic Regionalism* published its own final research volume. Furthermore, the programme generated a large number of other edited books, journal articles, book chapters, conference papers and other material. However, as has been seen in this report, several aspects raise issues for the future which will need careful consideration. We comment on them more or less in the order outlined in relation to our assignment (see above, section 2 “Evaluation Process”).

1. The management and financing of the programme and the projects and the roles of the Steering Group and the Programme co-ordinator(s)

The Steering Group was composed of representatives of funding organisations, some of them bound by their own statutes and interests, which may have affected the selection and financing of projects. The selection resulted in relative heterogeneity with regard to gender, nationality and disciplines across the programme as a whole, but internally, three of the six group projects were homogeneous in one or more respects which runs counter to intentions expressed in the Call for Applications. Projects led by women, and particularly female led group projects were also clearly under-represented and this, together with the disproportionate early cut in the funding of the only female led group project (even if this was later improved, as seen in *Table 5* above), raises fundamental issues about institutionalised discrimination. Anxieties about this were not assuaged by interviews with the Steering Group.

The Steering Group’s involvement seems to have been strongest during the selection phase, i.e. at the first two meetings in 2007), and then again in the last two years, when publications of results were discussed. In between, the Programme co-ordinators were responsible for ensuring that the ambitious aims of the programme were met. During this period, most communication between Co-ordinator and Steering Group was with the Chair. This reminds us of the fact that the Steering Group, as it was expressed in one of the interviews, was to be seen as a

group of interested parties rather than a board. This may have reduced its impact and possibly contributed to the limited turnout at meetings. However, it seems to be a problematic redefinition of the role of a body responsible for the allocation of more than EUR 2.5 million in research funding (*Table 5*).

The issue of implicit institutional gender bias in the allocation of funds by the Steering Group is disturbing.

In selecting projects in a large-scale multinational and multi-disciplinary programme more attention will have to be paid to the internal composition of the projects in terms of gender, nationality and discipline, and resources should be allocated taking these factors into consideration. The possibility that institutionalised gender discrimination existed within the Steering Group cannot be eliminated, and it is important that measures are put in place to ensure that discriminatory processes are not tolerated within such funding structures.

The Programme co-ordinators had a number of demanding duties, which to some extent varied over the years as the projects developed. In a programme of the size and complexity of *Nordic Spaces*, it is doubtful whether a half-time position is enough. With a full time engagement, there would have been greater opportunities for supporting cooperation between projects, organising further workshops and outreach activities, etc.

In an international programme such as *Nordic Spaces*, it may be unavoidable to have a Steering Group partly composed of members with vested interests. We would recommend, however, that the overall group should function as a gender aware Steering Committee and should be supplemented by a smaller gender aware executive group, which could have convened more frequently and support the Programme co-ordinator more effectively, and more transparently.

2. Cooperation within the programme as a whole and within projects, between coordinator and projects

Internal cooperation within projects has worked well in our view, but there was variation when it came to cooperation in the programme as a whole. Four of the nine projects had joint workshops at Hanaholmen (2009) and Voksenåsen (2010) organised by the Programme co-ordinators, whereas the others unfortunately did not have this opportunity. Some of the members of these projects cooperated on an individual basis with members of other projects in Ashgate volumes. These forms of collaboration were very much appreciated and contributed to the success of those who participated.

The Programme co-ordinators' relations with the projects and their leaders were on the whole very positive. Contacts were maintained more or less regularly and depending on needs. However, regularly recurring meetings between the Programme co-ordinator and Project leaders both individually and as a group, either physical or virtual, would have helped to increase contacts between projects, particularly those with less experienced Project leaders. In a future programme of this size and complexity, more attention should be paid to the use of social media and an interactive website.

3. A large-scale programme with many sub-projects

As has been seen above, the experience of *Nordic Spaces* shows that this form of organising research can be successful, but also involves problems if there are special requirements with regard to, for example, multi-nationalism and multi-disciplinarity. Also, if the undertaking is to be more than just a collection of individual projects,



these requirements need to be addressed more firmly by a more engaged Steering Group in the selection process and by the co-ordinator in the management of the programme.

One of the advantages of this kind of large enterprise is the possibility of learning from each other. This could have been achieved through more time devoted to joint group discussions at joint conferences, rather than presentations of individual projects. If cooperation between projects is seen as an important aspect, all projects must be given the opportunity to at least participate in joint events, such as thematic workshops. More time should be devoted to discussions between projects on what could be gained from closer cooperation and more incentives should be set up for cross-cutting initiatives. The identification of funding specifically targeted at collaborative activities should also be considered in the future.

4. The results of the programme in terms of output i.e. books, peer-reviewed articles conferences, workshops, spin-off effects etc.

The results of *Nordic Spaces* as a whole are impressive in terms of number of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers etc., but the output varies considerably among the projects. This is not surprising in a programme of this size, and the scientific impact seems to us to be secured to a large extent. The marketing of the Ashgate volumes is mostly the responsibility of the publishers, but it is also important that Project leaders and the researchers themselves find ways of promoting them. According to the contract with Ashgate, the eight bodies involved in supporting the *Nordic Spaces* Programme purchased a total of 150 copies of each volume, at the cost of 20 GB pounds for each book.⁴⁶ Planning should have ensured that all the Project leaders (at least) receive the five volumes.

The spin-off effects as described by the Project leaders are substantial and appear to lead to further research in the areas covered by *Nordic Spaces*. It is obvious that at the level of the individual researcher as well as that of the Project leaders, *Nordic Spaces* had an important impact on their research agenda and overall development as researchers and research leaders. However, it is unclear to what extent the programme will lead to further cooperative ventures between the groups involved, but this is hardly the responsibility of the funding organisations.

We find it, finally, also unclear whether the programme has reached out to the public at large and the media in spite of, for example, invitations to workshops, the publication and the marketing of *Ett nordiskt rum* volume and the website.

We recommend that in a large programme of this size spanning a number of years the question of outreach to the public and the scientific community should be addressed from the very beginning, with relevant stakeholders being included in the Steering Committee. That way, it would be an organic part of the development of the projects and of the programme itself.

Finally, we would like to refer to the *Vilnius Declaration* of 24 September 2013⁴⁷ following the conference “Horizons for Social Sciences and Humanities” initiated and organized by the EU Lithuanian Presidency, inviting elaboration of the potential that SSH can bring to the goals defined in “Horizon 2020”, suggesting better ways of integrating the knowledge, methods and experience the SSH have to offer over a wide range of phenomena and problem spaces. Point 3 of this text stressed

46. Steering Group meeting, Kuressaare, August 24, 2012.

47. <http://horizons.mruni.eu/>

that “Policy-making and research policy have much to gain from SSH knowledge and methodologies. The latter led to new perspectives on identifying and tackling societal problems. SSH can be instrumental in bringing societal values and scientific evaluation into closer convergence”. And point 5 claims that “Pluralistic SSH thinking is a precious resource for all of Europe’s future research and innovation trajectories, if it can be genuinely integrated. H2020 offers this opportunity for the first time”. (EU 2013, p. 2).

Our team fully agrees on the value and benefits of integrating Social Sciences and Humanities which are “indispensable in generating knowledge about the dynamic changes in human values, identities and citizenship that transform our societies”. But we are surprised that the gender issue was not mentioned at all in this text among the “Conditions for the successful integration of Social Sciences and Humanities into Horizon 2020”. This omission sits uneasily with the recognition that European research still suffers from a substantial loss and inefficient use, of highly skilled women (EU, 2013b, p.7). Horizon 2020 does include calls for promoting gender equality in research and innovation; including the “Impact of gender diversity on Research and Innovation”. “Evaluation of initiatives to promote gender equality in research policy and research organisations” and “support to research organisation to implement gender equality plans”. Nevertheless, the omission of gender from the overarching statement could be seen as implicitly suggesting that gender inequality, particularly in research leadership positions is no longer a problem in Europe. The reality is very different. Indeed, one of our main conclusions as evaluators of *Nordic Spaces* international research programme dedicated to the *Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800* is that the problem of under-representation of female leadership is far from being solved yet today in a European context.

Certainly Europe will benefit from wise further investment in research and innovation and Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), are ready to contribute, and this means men and women together “engaged in research, design and transfer of practical solutions for a better and sustainable functioning of democracy” on equal basis (EU 2013, p. 1).



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. THE TEAM ASSESSING THE APPLICATIONS

Table 11. National location of evaluation team, according to Steering Committee minutes, 18 January 2007

Count.	Sweden	Finland	Denmark	Germany	Norway	Poland	Iceland	Estonia	Total
	4 (1F,3M)	3 (2F,1M)	2 (1F,1M)	1 (1F)	2 (1F,1M)	1 (1M)	1 (1M)	1 (1F)	15 (7F,8M)

Table 12. Subject specialisations of evaluation team members

Political Science	2	(1M, 1F)
History	4	(3M, 1F)
Ethnology	1	(F)
Business Administration	1	(F)
Language/Literature	2	(2F)
Theology	1	(F)
Sociology	1	(M)
Human Geography	1	(M)
Conservation	1	(M)
Musicology	1	(M)
Total.	15	(7F, 8M)

APPENDIX 2. THE COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING GROUP

Table 13. Steering Group composition by national location and gender (2007–2009)

Location	N	Gender
Sweden	5	4M, 1F
Finland	3	3M
Estonia	1	1F
NordForsk	1	1M
Total	10	8M, 2F

Note: Over the years three different persons represented the Estonian Research Council; between 2009 and 2011 the representative was a man. Two different women represented The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (FBEEES) in 2007–2009 and 2010–2012. The male representative of NordForsk was replaced by a female representative in 2009.

APPENDIX 3. CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

	Levels				
1. Assessment of the research plan	1	2	3	4	5
1.1 The relevance of the research questions in relation to the overall aim of the programme	1	2	3	4	5
1.2 The project proposals potential for generating new knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
1.3 The theoretical ambition and relevance of the project proposal	1	2	3	4	5
1.4 The adequateness of the methods and the material	1	2	3	4	5

	Levels				
2. Assessment of the research group (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5
2.1 The scientific competence of the research group	1	2	3	4	5
2.2 The scope of transnational cooperation within the project and other international contacts	1	2	3	4	5
2.3 The scope of inter-disciplinarity cooperation within the project	1	2	3	4	5

	Levels				
3. Assessment of individual research projects (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5
3.1 The scientific competence of the researcher	1	2	3	4	5

	Levels				
4. Assessment of the budget plan of the project	1	2	3	4	5
	Unrealistic			Realistic	

	Levels				
5 Overall assessment of the project	1	2	3	4	5
5.1 The feasibility of the research plan	1	2	3	4	5
5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the research project	1	2	3	4	5
5.3 Further comments and recommendations	1	2	3	4	5

The scale of the assessment consists of five levels:

- 1 = insufficient
- 2 = adequate
- 3 = good
- 4 = very good
- 5 = excellent



APPENDIX 4. THE MANDATE OF THE PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

The coordinator

- Promotes the attainment of the objectives of the programme
- Is responsible for the implementation of the programme
- Maintains contacts with the projects and the funding organisations
- Keeps the Steering Committee informed about the progress of the programme and, at regular intervals, organises meetings the Steering Committee decides to hold, and is secretary of the Steering Committee
- Promotes collaboration and contacts between the projects within the programme for example by organising conferences, seminars and workshops
- Promotes contacts between the programme and the scientific community and between the programme and the public
- Is responsible for the dissemination of internal and external information of the programme and its outcomes (such as web pages), as well as for editing collaborative publications within the programme
- Assists in the assessment of the research programme after its expected completion, by compiling information and results of the projects.
- Is responsible for further fundraising⁴⁸

APPENDIX 5. THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS⁴⁹

The Research Programme Nordic Spaces. Formation of States, Societies and Regions, Cultural Encounters, and Idea and Identity Production in Northern Europe after 1800.

Objectives

The fall of the Soviet Union, European integration and globalisation have had repercussions on Norden's position in Europe and have challenged Nordic co-operation over the last decades. These ongoing processes raise several questions of great scholarly interest concerning how the region adapts itself to the constantly changing surrounding world.

In order to understand these transformations, there is a need for research that highlights the formation of the region in a longer historical perspective as well as in a European context. The complexity of these processes, calls for broad perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences. The overall aim of the programme is to deepen our knowledge of the Nordic societies by studying and analysing how Norden has been formed politically, socially, economically, culturally, mentally and conceptually, not least through encounters with neighbouring regions and states. Even though external influences and impulses are crucial for making this process intelligible, the significance of internal Nordic aspects must not be neglected.

The aim of the programme is to promote research that from partly new points of departure generates more multifaceted knowledge about the formation of the region from the early 1800s, when the outlines of modern Norden became discern-

48. Steering Committee meeting minutes 18 January 2007, *Appendix 3*.

49. The Call for Applications was ready at the end of October 2006. The deadline for proposals was 31 January 2007.

able, until the present day. This research will also problematise the spatial dimension of the region more than previously. In addition, comparative approaches are crucial. Comparisons between Norden and its adjacent regions are just as relevant as those within Norden. Through broad perspectives the programme can deepen our understanding of how Nordic experiences relate to general European tendencies.

Funding and organisation

The research programme is an international joint project in which several funding organisations participate. Besides The Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, who initiated the programme, The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen), The Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, Eesti Teadusfond, Suomen Kulttuurirahasto, The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland, The Foundation for Swedish Culture in Finland and Nordforsk take part in the programme.

At the moment, one Nordic and seven national funding organisations from three states contribute to the funding of the programme. Negotiations to further enlarge the financial base are still ongoing. We have great hopes that other funding bodies will join the programme.

The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies at Södertörn University College, which is financed by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen), is responsible for the scientific and administrative management of the programme.

The research programme starts in 2007 and will run for four years. The objective is to establish cooperation with research projects that are externally funded but closely linked to the thematic framework of the programme. Thereby the programme will constitute a cooperative network for research within and about Northern Europe. This will secure the long-term growth of knowledge within this field of research.

Call for applications

Grants are mainly available for postdoctoral researchers. Applicants may apply for salaries for two plus two years, preferably by up to 50% of a full-time salary. After the first two years the projects will be reviewed, before any grants are prolonged. In addition to salaries, applicants may also apply to cover cost for travels, research visits abroad and other costs. The programme highly encourages the projects to apply for grants from other funding sources.



How to apply?

The programme invites applications from researchers from the Humanities and Social Sciences mainly from the Nordic and Baltic states, Russia, Poland, Germany and Great Britain. Within the thematic framework applicants may freely formulate their research subjects. However, projects with transnational and/or comparative approaches will be prioritised. Individual researchers may apply for project grants, but projects conducted by research groups of multidisciplinary and/or transnational character will be particularly welcome.

Applications must be written in English. They should contain a project description with a maximum length of 30000 characters including a short curriculum vitae and a list of the ten most relevant publications of the researcher/research group. There is no application form. The documents must be sent electronically, in one file, PDF format, to: nordicspaces@rj.se no later than 31 January 2007. Please write "Nordic Spaces Application" as the subject heading on all correspondence.

The application should include the following information on the front page:

- The title of the proposed project
- Full name and address of the applicant(s), incl. the project manager
- Home department (i.e. intended recipient of grants, name and position of responsible person, contact address)
- Information of whether this or a similar application has been submitted to other funding organisations

The following information is needed for the evaluation of the application:

- Abstract (up to 150 words)
- Aims and methods of the project
- The contribution of the project to research in the field concerned
- Research plan (including time schedule)
- Intended visits to other countries: host institutions and the planned duration of the stay

The following information is needed in order to calculate the grant:

- Year of birth of the applicant(s)
- Date and place for obtained degrees
- Project budget including
- Expected costs for gross salary incl. contribution to social security, overhead etc.
- Expected costs for research visits abroad
- Expected travel costs
- Other costs related to the project

The foundations may apply their own rules for making grants and deviate from the calculated budgets in the project proposals. Remuneration depends on local/national regulations.

Applications that do not contain all the information requested or are received after the closing date, will be disregarded.

Evaluation of applications

A committee of international experts will evaluate the project applications. The five foundations will appoint this group jointly. The selection criteria for the applications are:

- The academic quality and relevance of the project
- The academic qualifications of the applicant(s)
- The applicant(s)' experience of international research cooperation

Funding decisions will be announced in May 2007. The grants can only be paid via research institutes, universities or university colleges.

Programme activities

There will be rich opportunities for funded projects to take part in both transnational and multidisciplinary collaboration, including conferences, workshops and seminars. The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES) at Södertörn University College is responsible for these activities.

For further information please contact:

Programme co-ordinator Torbjörn Eng, telephone + 46 (0)8 6084672 or + 46 (0)735 256453 or send an e-mail message to torbjorn.eng@rj.se.

APPENDIX 6. ABBREVIATIONS

CBEES – The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies

FBEES – The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies

RJ – Riksbankens Jubileumsfond

F – Female

M – Male

NS – Nordic Spaces



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Material emanating from the programme, including:

- Project leaders' applications for project money.
- Project leaders' and Researchers' Mid-term and Final reports.
- Questionnaire responses by Programme Coordinators, Project leaders, Researchers and Steering Committee members.
- Nordic Spaces Steering Committee minutes 18 January 2007, 28 May 2007, 11 December 2009, 26 August 2010, 17–18 February 2011, 26 August 2012.

THE EVALUATION TEAM

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Pat O'Connor is Professor of Sociology at the University of Limerick, Ireland. A sociologist, with a focus on gender, her sixth book, *Management and Gender in Higher Education* is in press (Manchester University Press). She has roughly 100 peer reviewed publications, including refereed journal articles, chapters etc. She has been a member of a number of international research consortia including one on senior management in higher education; and is currently involved in an EU funded Framework 7 project (FESTA: 2012-17) involving Sweden, Denmark, Turkey, Bulgaria, Italy and Germany. She served, under three Presidents, as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (2000-2010). She has been an evaluator for a number of organisations including the European Science Foundation and was Chair of the International Linnaeus Research Funding panel (2010). She has been a visiting professor at the Universities of London; Aveiro; GEXcel Linköping; Deakin and the University of Melbourne. For more see: <http://www3.ul.ie/sociology/index.php?pagid=23&memid=14&useid=htg6236939>

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