9 Cultural policy and cultural diversity

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Policies reflect societal realities as well as political ideas and ideologies. Therefore, policies are in a state of constant change. Cultural policy makes no exception. In modern times, both the more narrow arts policy and the broader cultural policy have developed in relation to what has been taking place in their local and national environments, with regard to international agreements and in the context of the proliferation of ideas and innovations. In addition to the promotion of arts and creativity, policies regarding arts and culture have always had other, more instrumental, societal functions.

The first half of the 20th century was characterized in Europe by the consolidation of nation-building processes, and cultural policy instruments were used to strengthen national feelings and enhance national esteem. In the second half of the century, especially in the 1960s and thereafter, cultural policy increasingly became a tool to enhance welfare and well-being. At the same time, the cultural needs and rights of traditional minorities and the value of the diversity of cultural expressions received more attention.

Meanwhile, immigrants from other parts of Europe and from other parts of the globe began to arrive. In the final decades of the century, practically all European countries had become destinations of international mobility. As immigrants formed families, new ethnic groups and cultural minorities were established. Many countries acknowledged the diversification of societies; some of them even celebrated multiculturalism. Gradually, national cultural policies started accommodating their principles and operations in relation to changing demographic and ethno-cultural structures.

In the 1990s, however, different forms of neo-nationalism appeared on the political scene, challenging multiculturalist ideas of responding to the new diversity. Nationalist forces have been able to occupy influential positions in many countries and this development has had repercussions for national cultural policies. Moreover, the global financial crisis that started in 2008 has put additional pressure on the funding of public services. In many countries, cultural policies and arts policies have suffered from austerity measures.¹ In times of affluence, it is also easier to allocate resources for minorities and other deviations from mainstream culture than in periods of resource scarcity.

In this chapter, I will take a closer look at the development sketched previously by focusing on four Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The main questions guiding the analysis are the following: what has been the national cultural policy reaction towards the increasing ethnic and cultural diversity in these countries? Have neo-nationalist political ideas, parties and movements during the last few decades already influenced national cultural policies? Is there a Nordic cultural policy model, and if yes, is this model under pressure?

Nordic nations and the diversification of societies

Nordic countries have traditionally had a reputation of being nation-states, that is, societies where the national community and the political unit, the state, are congruent. There are differences between them, though. Sweden and Denmark belong to older European states where the nation-building process has been state-led. Norway and Finland are, in turn, countries that gained full independence in the early 20th century. The 19th-century nation formation took place at the same time as a state-seeking process was going on. In comparison with many Eastern European nations that belonged to the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, or Ottoman empires, in both cases there was nevertheless an autonomous unit before independence within which the consolidation of the state-nation relation could develop: the personal union between Norway and Sweden since 1814 and the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland since 1809.

These four Nordic countries never had completely homogeneous populations – that is, there have always been ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural minorities.² The Sámi, speaking many different languages, are considered an indigenous people with age-old origins in the region. The Roma diaspora was also established in Scandinavia centuries ago. In larger cities, there was often a Jewish community and other minorities and ethnic or national groups. At the end of the 19th century, many Tatars moved to Finland thereby forming one of the oldest Muslim communities in Western Europe.

In literature concerning nationalism and the treatment of minorities, it has often been mentioned that the state-led (often Western European) version of nation-building has been more benign towards minorities, whereas in the state-seeking (often Eastern European) countries there has more often been hostility and even persecution. Assimilation has been a frequently applied model of integration in both cases, but in the more radical nationalism, it has often been carried out with clearly oppressive means.³

If we look at these Nordic countries from the perspective of minority rights, the picture is, however, more complicated. In the first half of the 20th century, minority rights were best guaranteed in Finland. Finland became an officially bilingual state right from the beginning of independence and the state church system was abandoned in the 1860s. Denmark recognized the cultural rights of Germans in South Jylland after the plebiscite in 1920, but otherwise minorities

had few rights before the second half of the 20th century. Norway also became bilingual, with two variations of the Norwegian language, *nynorsk* and *bokmål*. Sweden was characterized by what has been called *folkhem*-nationalism in which the basic idea was that it would be better for the members of minority groups and communities to assimilate into the majority, ethnically and culturally.⁴

Generally speaking, there was positive development in the position of minorities and in the provision of individual and collective rights for members of minority communities after the Second World War. Especially since the mid-1960s, a kind of general mental or theoretical framework was developed within which the recognition of minority rights was combined with the concession made by many minorities not to challenge state integrity. Instead of full independence, the objective became different kinds of autonomy solutions, either territorial or non-territorial, or at least the provision of cultural rights for the representatives of minorities.⁵ In Norway, Sweden and Finland, the position of the Sámi, in particular, started improving in this period.⁶

At the same time, ethnic and cultural structures have undergone significant changes. Europe had been a continent of emigration for centuries, and in the last decades of the 19th century vast numbers of people from the Nordic countries left their places of origin to search for a new life and opportunities elsewhere, mainly in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. After the Second World War, as a result of the collapse of colonial empires and of the post-war reconstruction and rapid economic development, many European countries started either receiving immigrants from former colonies or recruiting a foreign labour force and sometimes both.

With regard to post-war immigration, there are again some important differences between the Nordic countries. The most obvious exception is Finland that remained a country of emigration until the 1970s, much longer than the other three Scandinavian states. The main country of destination for Finnish emigrants was Sweden that, in turn, has received more newcomers than any other Nordic country. In 2000, the percentage of that population that were foreign-born was in Finland only 2.6 per cent, and Finns constituted the largest group of immigrants in Sweden. At that time, there were about one million foreign-born people in Sweden (11.3%). In Denmark and Norway, the foreign-born population stood at 5.6 and 6.8 per cent, and in absolute numbers, the size of the immigrant population was similar (about 300.000), too.

Since the turn of the millennium, the Nordic countries have also followed different paths in immigration and immigration policy. Denmark started restricting its immigration policy, especially concerning those seeking international protection. Sweden, in turn, remained an important destination of international mobility until the political turnover in 2015, and the share of those with a refugee background of all immigrants is high in international comparison. Finland became a country of immigration in the early 1990s, and immigration from Estonia, Russia and other countries continued to diversify the population rapidly in the 2000s. Norway also has recently received many

asylum seekers. In addition, the country has become an important destination of labour migrants from countries that joined the European Union in 2004 such as Poland and Lithuania. In terms of the share of migrants in population, Norway has approached Sweden, whereas Finland has come closer to Denmark (Table 9.1). If we would include those born in the country of residence to parents born abroad (the so-called second generation), the figures would be much higher, and the gap between Finland and the other countries significantly wider.⁷

This development means that the Nordic countries of today are unquestionably ethnically and culturally diverse. There are hundreds of languages spoken, privately and publicly, especially in the metropolitan areas. All major world religions with their belief systems and ceremonies are present in Nordic spiritual life. A vast number of cultural traditions are reproduced in smaller and larger circles. Lots of people have some kind of combined, mixed or hyphenated identity, many individuals also feel like living in a third space outside of all ethno-cultural or national categories. Calling these countries nation-states in the meaning stated here is no longer correct.

Nordic multiculturalism

Before analysing the cultural policy development in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden more closely, it is worthwhile to take a more detailed look at different approaches to ethnic and cultural diversity in these four countries. Nationalism was, after the Second World War, discredited as an ideology, especially in its most extreme, fascist forms. However, there are significant

Table 9.1 Top ten foreign-born populations by country of birth in 2017.

<i>Denmark</i>	<i>Finland</i>		<i>Norway</i>		<i>Sweden</i>		
Poland	39.400	Former USSR	56.476	Poland	97.553	Finland	153.620
Germany	35.660	Estonia	45.659	Sweden	48.316	Syria	149.418
Syria	33.530	Sweden	32.147	Lithuania	37.686	Iraq	135.129
Turkey	32.45	Iraq	13.825	Somalia	28.720	Poland	88.704
Romania	24.42	Russia	13.668	Germany	27.965	Iran	70.637
Sweden	22.85	Somalia	11.102	Denmark	24.762	Former Yugoslavia	66.539
Iraq	21.22	China	10.447	Iraq	22.524	Somalia	63.853
Norway	20.19	Thailand	10.184	Philippines	22.211	Bosnia and Herzegovina	58.181
United Kingdom	19.54	Viet Nam	7.468	Syria	20.833	Germany	50.189
Bosnia and Herzegovina	17.14	Former Yugoslavia	7.307	Pakistan	20.138	Turkey	47.060
Foreign-born population, N	641.3		357.541		799.797		1784.497
Foreign-born population, %	11.2		6.5		15.1		18.0

Source: OECD.

differences between states with regard to the cultural rights of minorities and newcomers even within the relatively homogeneous group of Nordic countries. Some Nordic countries have been more nationalist and less multiculturalist than others.⁸

In literature concerning minority rights and immigrant integration, there is usually a distinction made between assimilationist countries and multiculturalist countries.⁹ In an assimilationist strategy, historical minorities are hardly recognized, and immigrants are supposed to leave behind their old identity and cultural traditions and markers. Multiculturalism, in turn, recognizes different forms of ethnic and cultural diversity. The state regards this diversity positively, or at least neutrally, and feels obligated to support at least some minorities in the realization of cultural rights.

The Multiculturalism Policy Index (MCP) developed at Queens University in Canada is helpful in comparing the Nordic countries with regard to the cultural rights of national minorities, indigenous people and immigrant groups. The MCP Index monitors the evolution of multiculturalism policies in 21 Western democracies. It has been designed to provide information about multiculturalism policies in a standardized format concerning the three types of minorities mentioned previously. Each policy indicator captures a policy dimension where liberal-democratic states face a choice about whether or not to take a multicultural turn and to become more accommodating and supportive of minorities.¹⁰

The Swedish post-war approach was assimilationist until the late 1960s after which the country took a conspicuous multiculturalist turn concerning both more traditional and more recent minorities (Table 9.2). Instead of assimilation, the key words of the new policy became equality, co-operation and freedom of choice. The last point referred to the right of newcomers and their descendants to choose whether they would like to become Swedish or to maintain their previous identity and culture. Nowadays, it is the most multiculturalist country regarding immigrant groups in Europe.

When it comes to the total score, Finland comes first. This is because the MCP Index does not recognize Nordic minorities other than the Swedish-speakers in

Table 9.2 Multiculturalism policies in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

	<i>Total score for immigrant minorities</i>				<i>Total score for indigenous people</i>			<i>Total score for national minorities</i>		
	1980	1990	2000	2010	1980	2000	2010	1980	2000	2010
Denmark	0	0	0	0	6	7	7	N.B.	N.B.	N.B.
Finland	0	0	1.5	6	3.5	3.5	4	4	4.5	4.5
Norway	0	0	0	3.5	0.5	4	5	N.B.	N.B.	N.B.
Sweden	3	3.5	5	7	1	2	3	N.B.	N.B.	N.B.

Source: Multiculturalism Policy Index.

Finland as a national minority.¹¹ The Sámi policy is most advanced in Norway, but the Danish policy with regard to the rights of the population of Greenland is even better assessed. Denmark turns out to be the least multiculturalist. In relation to immigrant integration, there has been multiculturalist development between 2000 and 2010 in Finland, Norway and Sweden, whereas the Danish approach has remained strictly assimilationist.¹²

Cultural policy development

The development of modern Nordic cultural policy has taken place in the general context of the construction of the Nordic welfare state.¹³ The autonomy of the field of the arts has occupied a central position, and the arm's length principle in making many policy decisions has been guaranteed. Cultural policy, arts policy in particular, has been regarded as a means to promote aesthetic values in a society according to a humanistic rationality that emphasizes artistic quality as the most important assessment criteria. Under the slogan of cultural democratization, arts of high quality were made accessible to all citizens regardless of their social status or geographical location.

Together with the expansion of financing of culture and the arts by public authorities, other aims, objectives, rationalities and discourses have emerged. Dorte Skot-Hansen¹⁴ has in the Danish context and from the point of view of local cultural policy written about a social rationality emphasizing social and cultural emancipation, and the Swedish scholar Jenni Johannisson¹⁵ has written about welfare discourse enhancing citizenship participation. Cultural democracy became, especially in the 1970s, one of the keywords of cultural policy, denoting an increasing recognition of group-based cultural activities and of different forms or artistic and cultural expressions. Local cultural initiatives were increasingly stimulated, and everyday culture was given more credit. In this heyday of Nordic welfare states, cultural policy was also legitimized as an important instrument in the fight against the negative impacts of commercialization and cultural industry.¹⁶

Nordic scholars also seem to be quite unanimous in their judgments that in the last few decades, since the 1980s, the instrumentalization of cultural policies has become all the more prominent.¹⁷ Instead of having an intrinsic value, arts and culture are increasingly seen as assets that can be used for social, economic and even political purposes. The role of markets has become stronger and international visibility is appreciated more than before. Commercial culture is not shunned any more. Quite the contrary, economic success is increasingly taken as a sign of high quality. As a result, different rationalities and discourses are now overlapping in Nordic cultural policies making these policies quite multifaceted.

Despite of these similarities in overall cultural policy development, based on the differences between the four Nordic countries with regard to minority rights and the integration of immigrants, we can expect that there should also be clear differences between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden when it

comes to the adaptation of arts policy and cultural policy to the more diverse societal realities. In the following, I shall briefly look at the development in each of these four countries separately. I will mainly concentrate on the policy principles and policy implementation concerning immigrants and new ethnic groups.¹⁸

Sweden: from celebration of diversity to mainstreaming

In the Swedish Government Bill on Culture in 1974, immigrants and members of minority groups – together with children, handicapped people and other marginalized people – were regarded as disadvantaged groups whose position should be improved. Immigrants and minorities were also thought to give inspiration to Swedish society if they had a chance to maintain their own culture and identity. State institutions were expected to give groups and communities as much autonomy as possible in managing their own affairs.¹⁹

This reasoning was in line with the changes in the overall approach of Swedish society towards minorities and immigrants. In practice, however, concrete action remained quite modest, and for the most part, located outside official cultural policy. Swedish schools started giving native language instruction to immigrants and to members of minority groups. Newcomers and members of minority groups were also encouraged to form their own associations and media organizations and to apply for public funding. Immigrant and minority cultural activities were supposed to take place mainly within these organizational frameworks.

In the 1990s, Swedish integration policy and cultural policy were almost simultaneously reformed. Immigrants and minorities were now regarded as an intrinsic part of Sweden, and diversity (*mångfald*) became a key concept.²⁰ The emphasis of policy moved from a group-based to an individual-based approach. The national cultural policy reform also introduced a new concept, world culture (*världskultur*), which took a central place in diversity-related cultural policy and mainly referred to non-Western cultures.²¹ Furthermore, there was a proposal to establish regional world culture consultants.²²

The commission report that preceded the government's 1997 proposition on integration policy urged the Swedish cultural policy and cultural landscape to better reflect society's diversity. Swedish cultural arenas and institutions were challenged to broaden their operational framework and offerings. Specific state allowances to promote the cultural activities of ethnic or linguistic groups were also suggested. In the final proposition, concrete ideas were, nevertheless, either omitted or profoundly reformulated.²³

The next major step was taken in 2004 when the Swedish Government decided to proclaim 2006 a specific Year of Cultural Diversity (*Mångkulturåret* 2006). The main idea was that publicly funded cultural institutions and organizations have a responsibility to address and include the whole Swedish population.²⁴ Studies conducted as preparatory work for the special year had shown that there was a wide gap between those people who were regularly involved in

publicly financed cultural activities as practitioners or audiences and those who were rarely or never involved.²⁵

In the final report regarding the accomplishments during *Mångkulturråret*, the national coordinator, Yvonne Rock, found it promising that there exists a strong and growing will to promote ethnic and cultural diversity in the publicly financed cultural sector.²⁶ However, the Year of Cultural Diversity was also treated with criticism in the Swedish media and among artists and cultural workers. For example, instead of the original aim of generating long-lasting, structural changes, the year was often considered something special and temporary, sometimes even as something that disturbed already existing activities and development.²⁷

Swedish cultural policy was once again reformed in 2009. According to the Government Bill on cultural policy, culture in Sweden should now be a dynamic, challenging and independent force based on freedom of expression. Everyone should be able to participate in cultural life, and creativity, diversity and artistic quality should mark society's development. Under the heading, 'diversity and inter-cultural co-operation', the bill discusses discrimination, participation in culture and the arts, gender equality, national minorities and other forms of diversity. Cultural policy should contribute to increasing diversity and to a multifaceted cultural supply and thus to everyone's increased freedom of choice.²⁸

So close to *Mångkulturråret*, references to ethnic and cultural diversity are strikingly short, superficial and ambiguous. Jenny Johannisson has also pointed out that there is a clear rank order in the Swedish cultural policy that also reflects the tensions between particularism and universalism and between democratic and aesthetic values, favouring the latter.²⁹ Nina Edström and Charlotte Hyltén-Cavallius, in turn, argue that integration policy and cultural policy have moved further away from each other.³⁰ At the same time, integration policy initiatives have since been, at least rhetorically, included in the cultural policy. An illustration of this might be that the Swedish Arts Council (Kulturrådet), which allocates state funding to many arts and cultural institutions, now points at promoting the cultural diversity perspective as one of their central tasks.

Finland: multiculturalism in principle with little concrete impact

Finnish cultural policy adapted to the societal change quite swiftly when immigration started to increase in the early 1990s. The first policy guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Culture concerning immigration were published in 2003. In this document, cultural services and the support mechanisms in the field of culture and the arts were considered important means to advance integration. The needs of minority cultures should be better taken into account in the general system for supporting arts and culture and in the functioning of cultural and art institutions. Furthermore, the cultural needs of immigrants should be taken care of by increasing the financial means for supporting minority

cultures to correspond with the changes caused by immigration. Finally, systems for supporting professional artists that belong to ethnic minorities and their organizations should be developed.

These guidelines can be seen as a key document that has laid the general framework for Finnish cultural policy regarding cultural diversity. Other strategic documents have also displayed a positive view to ethnic and cultural diversity and to the cultural rights of immigrants. For example, the national strategy for cultural policy that was published in 2009 clearly affirms the positive attitude towards diversity and multiculturalism:

Finland is a multicultural country with a strong cultural identity. The cultural diversity springs from a wealth of diverse regions, languages, indigenous cultures and cultural heritage – diverse cultural expressions and mores. . . . Immigrants are a new creativity and talent resource, and the positive effects of multiculturalism add to the vitality of Finnish culture.³¹

There have been concrete instruments to achieve the stated policy goals in the 2003 guidelines. At the national level, the main channel to financially support the maintenance of language, culture and identity has been the state grants for supporting multiculturalism and combating racism. Another important measure has been the establishment of the Helsinki City Library to function as the national Multilingual Library. The cultural needs of immigrants and cultural minorities have also been included into general efforts to secure everyone's equal opportunity to participate in culture and to express creativity. In order to achieve this task, the Ministry of Education started financing Culture for All Service in 2003. An independent association later took over this service. The state-funded Cultura Foundation supports the maintenance and development of the linguistic and cultural identity of the Russian-speaking population in Finland and also otherwise promotes bidirectional and multi-dimensional integration.

In 2009, The Arts Council of Finland (later the Arts Promotion Centre) started distributing grants for art projects promoting multiculturalism in Finland. The overall aims were, on the one hand, to strengthen the opportunities for immigrant artists and for artists belonging to national ethnic minorities to engage in artistic activities and to take part on an equal basis in Finnish artistic life. On the other hand, the objective was to support the multicultural work of other artists and working groups and art projects promoting intercultural interaction in Finland.³² The Arts Promotion Centre also later distributed the grants for supporting multiculturalism and combating racism.

It would thus be unfair to say that multiculturalism in Finnish cultural policy would be mere rhetoric. However, similar to the Swedish situation, a closer look reveals some qualifications to the general picture. For example, we can observe a discrepancy between the general and specific level of cultural policy documents. Immigration, minorities and the overall ethnic and cultural diversity, and the new challenges that these changes pose for national cultural policy,

were easily discernible in the general cultural policy documents, such as the cultural policy strategy. In policy documents closer to the implementation of cultural policy and arts policy, such as policy plans and programs for music, visual arts and performing arts, these questions were much weaker and far less systematically answered.³³

This observation is also in line with the results of a survey carried out in 2007 in which arts and cultural institutions in the Helsinki region were asked how they take immigration and the ethnic and cultural diversification of Finland into account.³⁴ The survey revealed that there undoubtedly was much goodwill in the Finnish arts and cultural institutions to do something. However, there were very few examples of concrete action. In many cases, these activities were considered something additional that one can start implementing if there is extra funding available.³⁵

It is also relevant to ask how much money there has been in the Finnish cultural policy to achieve the stated policy objectives regarding cultural diversity. Based on the available sources, one can conclude that the amount of money for the maintenance of language and culture and for multicultural arts projects has been relatively small. Public funding has mainly been sufficient to relatively small-scale and project-like activities only.³⁶

Norway: slow acceptance of the change

According to Trevor Davies³⁷ (2007), Norwegian cultural policy started paying more attention to the ethnic and cultural diversification of the society at the end of the 1990s. Before that, activities had usually been limited to separate, often short-term, projects and initiatives without sufficient funding. In 1996, it was officially acknowledged that Norwegian society has always been culturally diverse and will also increasingly be so in the future. As in Sweden and Finland, diversity was then in Norway generally seen as an enriching element and an asset in society.

An important specific investment was the *Mosaikk* programme from 1998 to 2000. The main purpose of this programme was to promote multicultural and intercultural expressions in the established arts and cultural policy arrangements and in the daily operations in culture and the arts. Furthermore, the programme strived for improving minority groups' opportunities for self-defined creativity and for enhancing the participation of members of minority groups in the arts as artists and as audience.

As a whole, *Mosaikk* was considered a success. However, the incorporation of diversity issues into the ordinary operations of arts institutions proved to be difficult also in Norway. In addition, the aims and objectives of the programme were criticized for being not clear enough and the scope of the programme for being too large. The demarcation of multicultural projects into a category of its own, in which rules different from the rest of the arts world and arts policy would apply, was also criticized.³⁸

Furthermore, inspired by the Swedish Year of Cultural Diversity and the European Union Year of Intercultural Dialogue, Norway decided to celebrate 2008 as a specific Year of Cultural Diversity (*Mangfaldsår*). The aim of this thematic year was to stimulate both traditional and new cultural actors to work for the sake of cultural diversity and to strengthen the cooperation of established institutions with artists and audiences with a minority background. In addition, there was an effort to incorporate a multicultural perspective into different operations and to institutionalize arenas in which people representing different views could challenge each other. Similar to the Swedish *Mångkulturåret*, cultural diversity was supposed to have sustainable impact on Norwegian cultural policy.

However, also in this case, the development has been slow and cumbersome. In 2013, an extensive cultural policy report examined the role of cultural policy in the Norwegian nation-building process, analysed contemporary challenges and proposed recommendations. According to this *Kulturutredningen*, cultural diversity has become an important characteristic in Norwegian society. However, this demographic fact is not properly reflected in culture and the arts, in the professional and institutionalized part of cultural life, in particular. People belonging to minority groups are clearly underrepresented in culture and the arts. The authors of the report point out that in the future it would be essential to enhance the accessibility of cultural services and to give support to such forms of arts and culture that different groups find interesting and meaningful.³⁹

Denmark: ignorance of diversity issues

Knowing the general anti-multiculturalist approach of Denmark to the cultural rights of immigrants, it is not surprising to notice that issues related to the diversification of Danish society have largely been ignored in Danish cultural policy.⁴⁰ Not completely, though. In the 1970s, at the same time cultural democracy (the equality of different forms of cultural creativity and expressions) and cultural democratization (increased equality in the participation in 'high culture') were important catchwords in cultural policy, cultural activities of ethnic and cultural minorities, and the intrinsic value of these activities, were also increasingly recognized.

However, Dorte Skot-Hansen⁴¹ has remarked that this recognition-in-principle had little practical impact. The promotion of cultural democracy was mostly delegated to Danish municipalities. In some cases, local communities incorporated activities by immigrant or minority groups or by immigrant artists to the operations of local cultural centres or community houses. At the national level, 'multiculturalist' cultural policy activities were located into the social sector or into humanitarian organizations that, in the final instance, aimed at a one-way integration of newcomers into society. Of these activities, many remained separate from other operations and of short duration.

At the end of the 1990s, there was a short period when the general attitude seemed to be changing. Minister of Culture Jytte Hilden felt the need to better recognize the existence of different subcultures, including those of immigrant groups. A series of publications on cultural policy (*Kulturens politik*) included a subchapter on culturally diverse Denmark. The authors of this chapter suggested that the national government should initiate concrete action to benefit immigrants. The Hilden's successor, Ebbe Lundgaard, also pointed out that Danish cultural policy should 'provide possibilities for the new Danes to cultivate their cultures, preferably in a form which invites other Danes to gain more familiarity with them'.⁴²

These suggestions did not receive much positive response nor did they lead to concrete implementation. In addition to small-scale activities, one can notice the mentioning of ethnic and cross-cultural art among the two focus areas of a specific development fund (*Kulturministeriets Udviklingsfond*) established in 1998. Its role, however, remained modest. According to Skot-Hansen, this was partly a result of the lack of goals clear enough to promote concrete action.⁴³ Furthermore, there were difficulties in combining the traditional notion of quality emphasizing universalist and aesthetic values and a more group-based notion of quality that recognizes different cultural contexts in making value judgments.

Neo-nationalism and cultural policy

The brief analysis of cultural policy development in the four Nordic countries here reveals, on the one hand, that there are differences between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Accommodation to new and more diverse demographic realities is traceable especially in Finland and Sweden and to a growing extent also in Norway whereas in Denmark societal change caused by immigration has been approached with hesitation if not reluctance. On the other hand, however, even in the more multiculturalist countries, the inclusion of diversity issues into mainstream cultural policy has been cumbersome.

During the last 25 years or so, the Nordic political landscape has been complemented with new parties and movements that have sometimes been labelled right-wing populist parties, radical right parties, or xenophobic politics.⁴⁴ In this context, I will call these actors neo-nationalist because of the importance of restrictions to immigration, critique of multiculturalism and the emphasis on traditional 'national' culture on their political agenda.⁴⁵ Can we trace any impact of neo-nationalism in Nordic cultural policy during the last few decades?

In Sweden, the electoral support of neo-nationalism, in the shape of Sweden Democrats, long remained at a low level, but it has recently started rising. In the 2014 parliamentary election, the party received almost 13 per cent of the vote, and in 2018, the electoral support rose to 17.5 per cent. Until now, the established parties have refused to co-operate with them, thus isolating the

party from decision-making. Therefore, we can, at least for the time being, notice that Swedish cultural policy has had a rather anti-populist and anti-nationalist character even though there have not been any notable new openings towards the incorporation of diversity into cultural policy or arts policy either.

The Finnish nationalist-populist party, the True Finns (later the Finns Party) received a big victory in the 2011 national elections and was able to maintain its level of support in the 2015 and 2019 elections. In 2015, the party also joined the government coalition together with the moderate conservatives (National Coalition) and the Center Party. A representative of the party, Sampo Terho, was nominated as the minister of culture in May 2017.⁴⁶ In public, Terho was frequently interpreted as a conservative willing to support culture with a national or traditional character. This possibility to exercise power has not, however, caused major repercussions to national cultural policy. When the law for the Finnish Public Broadcasting Company was reformed, the tasks of the company were slightly modified to a more nationalist and less multicultural direction.⁴⁷

The Norwegian Progress Party, which represents Nordic nationalist populism in Norway, has been a partner in two consecutive governments since 2013. This has not, however, led into dramatic changes in the Norwegian cultural policy from the point of view of ethnic and cultural diversity. According to Per Mangset and Bård Kleppe, the main reason behind the fact that there are now fewer programmes emphasizing multiculturalism in the arts is the growing emphasis on the autonomy of the arts. Guidelines promoting multiculturalism, for example, have been abolished from the funding agreements of national cultural organizations.⁴⁸

The most obvious impact can be discovered in Denmark where, after the 2001 election, a ten-year period of Centre-Right minority governments leaning on the support of the nationalist and populist Danish People's Party started. This led to cuts in the state cultural budget, including the closing down of the development fund mentioned earlier. Danish language and traditional Danish culture were emphasized in culture policy, the launch of the Danish cultural canon as the most concrete indication of this approach. None of the works of art included in the canon was made by an immigrant artist or reflected immigrant experiences in Danish society.⁴⁹

In 2011–2015, two left-wing cabinets led by the Social Democratic prime minister governed Denmark. According to Dorte Skot-Hansen,⁵⁰ a more liberal attitude towards diversity prevailed and there was an explicit wish to depart from a strict division between the Danish 'us' and the foreign 'them'. However, these ideas never resulted as major concrete action. In 2015–2019, two right-wing governments again strongly emphasized national values and traditions in cultural policy. According to the Government Declaration of the third government of Lars Løkke Rasmussen: 'Culture is a decisive element of our identity as a nation and as a people.'

Conclusion

Nordic countries have often been classified as states where the political unit and the national community are congruent, but this nation-state characterization is no longer correct. All four countries are ethnically and culturally diverse and continue to be ever more so. The largest cities, in particular, are home to lots of ethnic, national, linguistic and religious groups and communities from all over the world. Majority-minority situations where the native population no longer exceeds the 50 per cent threshold are increasingly common.

No unified Nordic model exists to respond to this ethno-cultural diversification. Sweden embraced multiculturalism in the late 1960s whereas Denmark has until today been reluctant to accept this societal change and to provide immigrants with group-related cultural rights. When immigration to Finland started increasing, this country also took a positive view towards multicultural solutions. Norway has also gradually started delivering more rights and freedoms to newcomers and their communities, getting closer to Sweden and Finland and further away from Denmark.

Focussing on cultural policy development, we can also trace differences between the Nordic countries. There has been more cultural policy multiculturalism in Sweden and in Finland whereas Danish cultural policy has not accommodated cultural policy in an increasingly diverse society. In contrast, the governments have often explicitly expected newcomers to assimilate to Danish values. The Norwegian development has again taken a position in between, gradually approaching the Swedish and Finnish recognition of the need for policy adjustment.

However, it is also important to notice that the implementation of multiculturalist cultural policy has often turned out to be slow and problematic. In particular, it has been difficult to incorporate diversity issues into regular arts policy and cultural policy. Even though mainstreaming has been the explicit target, special arrangements have been the most frequently applied solution. Resources allocated to diversity programmes and practices have been modest, fragmented and usually short-lived. Therefore, the difference between Denmark and the rest of the Nordic countries appears wider at the level of policy principles than policy practices. Sweden and Finland have never been as multiculturalist as it might seem if we made judgments based solely on policy discourse.

It also seems that the climax (at least so far) of cultural policy multiculturalism was at the end of the 1990s and during the first years of the new millennium. During the last 10–15 years, we have witnessed far less noteworthy initiatives or openings than in the years preceding this period. Neo-nationalism has also been growing in popularity, but its influence to cultural policy development has, again with Denmark as an exception, been quite modest. Therefore, it seems that there has been a general change of atmosphere towards diversity in general and multiculturalism in particular. Instead of celebration, ethno-cultural differences are nowadays treated with hesitation if not suspicion.

Both ethno-cultural diversification in society and the strengthening of neo-nationalism are challenging traditional self-understanding and national identity in the Nordic countries. Multicultural diversity renders the assumption of demographic homogeneity problematic, and many Nordics look to the future with anxiety when they see their society drifting further away from the old nationalist ideal. In contrast, there also are a lot of inhabitants in the Nordic countries that experience nationalist and radical right parties and politicians threatening the pluralistic values of openness, tolerance and mutual trust. In these circumstances where gloomy future visions prevail, it is not easy to make progressive cultural policy that also would be properly implemented.

A previous version of this chapter has appeared in Swedish in *Kulturanalys Norden 2017*. I am thankful to Linnéa Lindsköld, Per Mangset and Dorte Skot-Hansen for their valuable comments regarding the recent development in Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

Notes

- 1 Inkei 2019.
- 2 See e.g. Cordell & Wolff 2004.
- 3 See e.g. Alcock 2002.
- 4 See e.g. Kivisto & Wahlbeck 2013.
- 5 Alcock 2002, 139–147.
- 6 See e.g. Sillanpää 1994.
- 7 For more information, see e.g. Karlsdóttir et al. 2018.
- 8 See e.g. Borevi 2013, Løgaard 2013, Brochmann & Britt Djuve 2013.
- 9 See e.g. Favell 2001, Geddes & Scholten 2016.
- 10 There is more information about how the MCP Index works in practice at the index web site, www.queensu.ca/mcp/home.
- 11 Sweden has since 2010 had legislation concerning national minorities and minority languages. The position of these groups and languages is not, however, comparable with the position of Swedish-speakers and the Swedish language in Finland.
- 12 See also Kivisto & Wahlbeck 2013, Saukkonen 2013a.
- 13 Duelund 2003.
- 14 Skot-Hansen 1999.
- 15 Johannisson 2006.
- 16 Cf., Kangas 1999.
- 17 Skot-Hansen 1999, Johannisson 2006, Kangas 1999.
- 18 On a wider European development, see e.g. Bennett 2001, Meinhof & Triandafyllidou 2006. A more detailed analysis of the countries in question can be found from Saukkonen 2010, 2013b, 2013c. On Nordic cultural policy regarding the Sámi, see e.g. Gaup 2007. On policies regarding national minorities, see e.g. country-specific monitoring on the implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the Council of Europe European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- 19 Egeland 2007, 63, Tawat 2014, 10; see also Edström & Hyltén-Cavallius in Kulturanalys 2017.
- 20 On the concept of *mångfald*, see Lindsköld in Kulturanalys 2017.
- 21 Egeland 2007.
- 22 This plan was finally realized in 2002 when the Government allocated SEK 3.0 M. for regional multicultural consultants, Edström 2006, 9.

- 23 Edström 2006, 11.
- 24 SOU 2005, 9–10.
- 25 Pripp, Plisch & Printz Werner 2004.
- 26 SOU 2007, 28–29.
- 27 Edström & Hyltén-Cavallius 2011, 5–12.
- 28 Regeringens Proposition 2009, 22–24.
- 29 Johannisson 2012, 48–49.
- 30 Edström & Hyltén-Cavallius 2011, 11.
- 31 Ministry of Education 2009, 16.
- 32 See also Paula Karhunen's contribution in Kulturanalys 2017.
- 33 Saukkonen 2010, 97–102.
- 34 Saukkonen, Ruusuvirta & Joronen 2007.
- 35 Cf., Myndigheten för kulturanalys 2017.
- 36 Saukkonen 2010, 222.
- 37 Davies 2007.
- 38 Marsio 2005, 40.
- 39 NOU 2013, 15.
- 40 Cf., Løgaard 2013.
- 41 Skot-Hansen 2002, 199–200.
- 42 Quoted from Skot-Hansen 2002, 201.
- 43 Skot-Hansen 2002, 204, 206–207.
- 44 See e.g. Widfeldt 2018.
- 45 On Scandinavian radical right parties and cultural policy, see also Linsköld 2015.
- 46 In June 2017, the Finns Party split into two fractions after a change of the party's chairperson. The dissident group, called the New Alternative (later forming a new Party, Blue Reform), remained in the Government. Terho continued at his post as the Minister of Culture.
- 47 Previously, one of the public tasks of the Finnish YLE was to support tolerance and multiculturalism. The new regulation first emphasizes the need to foster Finnish cultural heritage, and after that mentions tolerance, equity, equality, and cultural diversity that also deserve support.
- 48 Mangset & Bård Kleppe 2016, 19.
- 49 Tawat 2014, 9.
- 50 A speech given by Skot-Hansen at the Nordic cultural policy research conference in Helsinki, 23 August 2017.

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