



The Nordic Welfare Watch

Final report

 Nordic Council
of Ministers



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*Siv Friðleifsdóttir, Guðný Björk Eydal, Sigríður Jónsdóttir
and Stefán Ólafsson*

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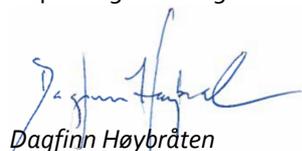
Address

This is a final report of the *Nordic Welfare Watch*, a research programme financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2014–2017. The aim was to study the effects of financial crises on the Nordic welfare systems and to find out how the Nordic welfare systems can meet the challenges of the coming years.

The *Nordic Welfare Watch* had three main projects: 1) Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crises, 2) Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises and 3) Nordic Welfare Indicators. The report shows how the Nordic countries can find better ways to measure and monitor citizens' welfare. It shows how the financial structures can affect the Nordic welfare systems and examines how the social services in the countries' municipalities were implemented in the Emergency Management systems. Finally the report maps future welfare challenges.

In addition to the five reports published by the *Nordic Welfare Watch* programme there were made two proposals to the Nordic Council of Ministers for Social Affairs and Health. One of the two proposals, the *Nordic Welfare Indicators*, is undergoing an evaluation process. The second proposal, to establish a *Nordic Welfare Forum* devoted to discussions on the sustainability of the Nordic welfare system, has been initiated as the Ministers have already decided to establish such a forum as a pilot project in 2018.

Copenhagen in August 2017



Dagfinn Høybråten
Secretary General
Nordic Council of Ministers

Preface

The Nordic Welfare Watch was a leadership programme during the Icelandic presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2014. The Nordic Welfare Watch consisted of three main projects: *Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises*, and *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. The project period was from 2014–2017. The goals of the programme were to find better ways to measure and monitor citizens' welfare and to explore the role of financial structures and austerity measures in mitigating the effects of financial crises in different societies, with special emphasis on the Nordic welfare societies. Another goal was to examine how well municipal social services in the Nordic societies were implemented in the Emergency Management systems and to map the known risks that the Nordic welfare system could face in coming years and evaluate what challenges they pose for local social services.

The Nordic Welfare Watch has increased our knowledge and provided valuable information on welfare risks and challenges and on the need to improve social monitoring and targeted intervention. Five reports were published under the heading of the Nordic Welfare Watch and several other products created that are illustrated in the relevant sections in this report. Furthermore, two main proposals were made, which are now in a formal procedure under the Nordic Council of Ministers. The proposals are twofold. One is to establish a new Nordic Welfare Forum devoted to discussing the sustainability of the Nordic welfare systems. The other is to publish a new set of Nordic Welfare Indicators that can be used for Nordic surveillance and policy formulation in the social and health care field.

The programme has demonstrated the value and importance of Nordic cooperation, as knowledge from the programme will transfer between leadership programmes of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The programme connects with Finland's leadership programme 2016–2018, *Ett öppet och innovativt Norden med välmående människor 2020 – Lika möjligheter till välfärd, kultur, utbildning och arbete* (Norden 2020).

We hope that all of those involved in policy formulation and research relating to the Nordic countries' welfare systems will draw upon knowledge from the results of the Nordic Welfare Watch. The Nordic countries have some of the most robust welfare systems in the world. In spite of this, numerous challenges clearly demand that the Nordic countries conduct research on how the welfare states are prepared for crises and that they join hands in protecting and further strengthening those welfare states. They must respond timely to future challenges, based on the best knowledge available. Doing so will increase the likelihood that the Nordic countries will continue in the forefront of welfare. The Nordic Welfare Watch is a part of this response.

September 2017

Siv Friðleifsdóttir

Program Manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch

Summary

The Nordic Welfare Watch was a part of Iceland's leadership programme in Nordic Cooperation in the field of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The programme was active during the period 2014–2017. Its goals were to find better ways to measure and monitor the welfare of citizens, to support and inform policy formulation on welfare, explore the effect of financial structures on the Nordic welfare systems in times of crisis, map future challenges to welfare, and explore how social services in the countries' municipalities were implemented in the Emergency Management systems. The programme was also intended to evaluate whether it would be appropriate to base a Nordic Welfare Watch on Icelanders' experience with the Icelandic Welfare Watch established in 2009, following the banking collapse.

The programme consisted of three separate main projects: 1. *Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis*, 2. *Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises*, and 3. *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. A great deal of Nordic cooperation went on during all these projects. The emphasis was on bringing together the most qualified experts in the Nordic countries in each field. This approach yielded broad joint Nordic knowledge and solidarity on the content of the five reports published on behalf of the projects. Numerous networks formed during these projects are still active today. We can assume that people will utilise many of these networks in the Nordic search for knowledge and the decision-making ahead of us.

Another important result of the Nordic Welfare Watch was the formulation of two concrete proposals. One is a proposal called *Nordic Welfare Forum*. It addresses a joint Nordic forum that is to be held biannually to deal with future challenges to the welfare systems. This forum offers two arenas: a venue for discussions of urgent welfare issues at the top of the political agenda, and a platform for presenting results from academic circles regarding impending challenges that have not yet risen to the top of political agendas. The second proposal is called *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. It is a system of 30 Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI) set up to monitor welfare trends and policy making in the Nordic countries.

In 2017, the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S) and the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S) discussed both these proposals positively. This discussion led to a pilot project, the 2018 Nordic Welfare Forum, and to continued discussions on the Nordic Welfare Indicators.

1. Introduction

The Nordic Welfare Watch was a research programme initiated at the start of Iceland's presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2014. The programme continued from 2014 to 2017 and was carried out on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S). The purpose of the programme was to bring together scholars and researchers in the Nordic countries to achieve a clearer vision of how to promote sustainability of the Nordic welfare systems and strengthen them. The Nordic Welfare Watch is also part of an extensive programme that the Nordic Council of Ministers organised in 2013–2015, *Hållbar Nordisk Välfärd*, and is part of the programme's research component.

1.1 Main objectives

The objectives of the Nordic Welfare Watch were to find better ways to measure and monitor citizens' welfare for the purpose of promoting informed policy formulation on welfare matters, research the effect of financial strictures and related consequences on the Nordic welfare systems, map future welfare challenges, and explore how social services in the countries' municipalities were implemented in the Emergency Management systems. The project was also intended to evaluate whether it would be appropriate to base the Nordic Welfare Watch on Icelanders' experience with the Welfare Watch established in 2009, following the banking collapse. The Nordic Welfare Watch programme comprised three separate main projects: 1. *Nordic Welfare Watch – In Response To Crisis*, 2. *Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises*, and 3. *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. The goals of these three projects are explained below.

More specifically, the program was intended to achieve the following:

- Develop comparative Nordic welfare indicators as a valuable tool to enhance the possibilities of planning and decision making, based on knowledge, in times of change.
- Increase understanding of the extensive role that the welfare state, local social services in particular, plays in crises and disasters.
- Evaluate the experience and lessons learned from the Welfare Watch, which Icelanders created following the Icelandic banking crisis, and consider the possibilities of and interest in creating a Nordic Welfare Watch based on the experience from Iceland.
- Evaluate the known future risks and challenges for which Nordic welfare systems should be prepared.

- Assess and compare multi-dimensional welfare consequences of the financial crises of the 1990s and the present crisis. Evaluate the consequences for the living conditions of the populations, policy environments, and effectiveness of policy responses.
- Collect comparable information on all relevant aspects of welfare consequences and policies' timelines, characteristics and outcomes for the Nordic countries and other European countries, to use in a comprehensive comparison of welfare consequences of the great recession in an international publication.
- Based on the project, offer a joint Nordic platform for cooperation, collaboration, and exchange of views between researchers and experts in the welfare sector.

Figure 1: The Nordic Welfare Watch logo



1.2 Steering Group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme

The Ministry of Welfare in Iceland was responsible for the progress of the programme, but it was carried out on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S). A Steering Group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme was established to ensure the programme's progress. The group members were the Program Manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch, the three leaders of the main projects under the Nordic Welfare Watch's umbrella, and several officials from Iceland's Ministry of Welfare. The group members were as follows:

- *Guðný Björk Eydal*, Professor, Faculty of Social Work at the University of Iceland, Project Leader of Nordic Welfare Watch – In Response to Crisis.
- *Guðrún Sigurjónsdóttir*, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Welfare.
- *Ingi Valur Jóhannsson*, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Welfare.
- *Lovísa Lilliendahl*, Project Manager, Ministry of Welfare.
- *Sigríður Jónsdóttir*, Project Leader of Nordic Welfare Indicators, Ministry of Welfare.

- *Siv Friðleifsdóttir*, Program Manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch, Ministry of Welfare.
- *Stefán Ólafsson*, Professor, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences at the University of Iceland, Project Leader of Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises.
- *Vilborg Ingólfssdóttir*, Director General, Ministry of Welfare.

A large group of Nordic individuals participated in the projects of the Nordic Welfare Watch. They are listed in the relevant sections of the main projects.

1.3 Background and implementation

The Nordic Welfare Watch sprouted from the conditions characterising the situation in Iceland following great economic contractions. Following the banking collapse in Iceland in 2008, Icelandic society experienced great upheaval. In the beginning, no one knew what consequences this would have for the status of Iceland's citizens and the State Treasury and, by extension, welfare services. The Icelandic Government discussed the situation with many parties, including Nordic collaborators that had experienced financial crises. Nordic meetings on experience with economic and social shocks that the countries had struggled with in previous decades elicited useful advice and pointers on what had proved effective under similar conditions. Examples included emphasising the importance of immediately monitoring developments closely and noting the possible consequences of crisis. The Icelandic Welfare Watch was established in early 2009, following the banking collapse the previous year. This was one of the first tasks of the Minister of Social Affairs and Social Security at that time. The Welfare Watch's brief was to monitor the social and financial consequences of the economic collapse for families and individuals in Iceland and propose measures for households. The Icelandic Welfare Watch, which was an innovative project on monitoring and solving problems following the economic collapse, caught the attention of parties in other countries. The results of the Icelandic Welfare Watch seemed so favourable that the Icelandic Government decided to maintain its operations even after the effects of the crisis subsided with renewed economic growth. The Government was interested in assessing the results of the Icelandic Welfare Watch and examining more closely how the welfare systems of the Nordic countries addressed crises, as well as investigating whether the experience with the Welfare Watch would be worthwhile in a Nordic context. The origins of proposing the Nordic Welfare Watch research programme lie in the Icelandic Welfare Watch's success in coping with the challenges following the crisis. In addition to this being Iceland's leadership programme, it was decided that the Nordic Welfare Watch would also be part of an extensive programme organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2013–2015 under the name *Hållbar Nordisk Vælfærd* and would become part of the programme's research component.

The Nordic Welfare Watch was one of the three leadership programmes launched under Iceland's presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2014. The other

leadership programmes were NordBio and Nordic Playlist. The financing of these three leadership programmes was itemized in the budget of the Nordic Council of Ministers as follows: DKK 30 million to NordBio, DKK 9 million to the Nordic Welfare Watch, and DKK 6 million to the Nordic Playlist. On 2 July 2013, a meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Nordic Cooperation (MR-SAM) approved the budget for these leadership programmes. The Steering Group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme monitored the progress of the three main projects under the Nordic Welfare Watch umbrella and the utilisation of funding during the period.

1.4 About this report

This report is the final report of the Nordic Welfare Watch. It discusses the programme's progress and results of the three defined main projects undertaken under the Nordic Welfare Watch's umbrella. It also discusses the programme's final conference, which took place at Reykjavik's Hilton Nordica Hotel on 10 November 2016 under the title *Are the Nordic Welfare States Ready for Future Risks? How can we prepare?*, and the two proposals resulting from the Nordic Welfare Watch programme: the *Nordic Welfare Forum* and the *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. The report also discusses how both of these proposals are in progress on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S and the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S).

2. Nordic Welfare Watch – In Response to Crisis

2.1 Aims of the project

The project The Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis aimed at increasing understanding of the extensive role that the welfare state, local social services in particular, plays in crises and disasters. Local social services entail the municipal services according to the law on local social services in each country. The tasks and organization of the local social services in the five countries vary somewhat, but the core task is to provide all inhabitants with basic care services and social assistance in times of need.

Historically, although health systems have been included in contingency planning and organization of emergency management, the role of local social services has been rather unclear. Furthermore, the literature shows the need for the social services' participation in all phases of disasters – mitigation, preparedness, response and, last but not least, long-term recovery. Hence the project aims at investigating the role of local social services in the context of disaster. The project also addresses the risks that the Nordic welfare states might face in the near future and evaluates the work and organization of the Icelandic Welfare Watch established during the aftermath of the crisis in 2008.

Thus the project breaks down into three independent subprojects:

1. Social Services in Times of Disaster examines emergency response systems in the five Nordic countries, focusing on the role of the local social services.
2. The Icelandic Welfare Watch evaluates the work and organization of the Icelandic Welfare Watch.
3. Preparing for risks: The Nordic Welfare States maps the known risks that the Nordic welfare system could face in coming years and evaluates what challenges they pose for local social services.

The final phase of the project entails using the results, in cooperation with the other two Nordic Welfare Watch projects (*Nordic Welfare Indicators* and the *Welfare Consequences of Financial Crisis*), to determine whether there is a need for a Nordic Welfare Watch.

“We see that some groups are more vulnerable than others. We all live through the same earthquake, but it hits us in different ways. Social services are often our first point of contact when the catastrophe occurs. Often the challenge is to share information while taking necessary considerations into account, like privacy. It is therefore important to be prepared for what information you will be able to share and what you won't.”

Guðný Björk Eydal, project leader,
Nordic Welfare Watch final conference, November 2016.

2.2 Participants

2.2.1 *Steering Committee*

Figure 2: Iceland



Note: Guðný Björk Eydal Project Leader, Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Iceland.

Figure 3: Denmark



Note: Rasmus Dahlberg, Assistant Professor at the Royal Danish Defence College.

Figure 4: Finland



Note: Merja Rapeli, Ministerial Adviser at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, PhD student at the University of Jyväskylä.

Figure 5: Iceland



Note: Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir, Project Manager, PhD student at the University of Iceland.

Figure 6: Norway



Note: Björn Hvinden, Professor, NOVA, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.

Figure 7: Sweden



Note: Tapio Salonen, Professor, Faculty of Health and Society, Malmö University.

Figure 8: Sweden



Note: Carin Björngren Cuadra, Associate Professor, Malmö University.

2.2.2 Danish Advisory Board

Figure 9: Christina Anderskov



Note: International Strategist and Sustainability Coordinator, Copenhagen Municipality.

Figure 10: Ziga Friberg



Note: Project Manager, Psychosocial focal point, Danish Red Cross.

Figure 11: Lis Montes de Oca



Note: Assistant Professor in Social Work, VIA Faculty of Education & Social Studies, Aarhus.

Figure 12: Marie Østergaard Møller



Note: Senior Researcher, KORA, Danish Institute for Local and Regional Government Research.

Figure 13: Inge Mønster-Kjær



Note: Research assistant, Copenhagen Business School.

Figure 14: Nanna Grave Poulsen



Note: Head of section, Danish Health Authority.

Figure 15: Annlize Troest



Note: Managing doctor, Danish Health Authority.

2.2.3 Finnish Advisory Board

Figure 16: Elina Aaltio



Note: Project researcher, National Institute for Health and Welfare.

Figure 17: Anna Cantell-Forsbom



Note: Director of Family Services, City of Vantaa, Health and Social Welfare.

Figure 18: Henna Haravuori



Note: Senior researcher, National Institute for Health and Welfare.

Figure 19: Aila Puustinen-Korhonen



Note: Senior Specialist, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities.

Figure 20: Kati Närhi



Note: Professor, University of Jyväskylä.

Figure 21: Juho Saari



Note: Professor, University of Tampere.

Figure 22: Tarja Wiikinkoski



Note: Head of Rescue and Preparedness Department, Regional State Administrative Agency, Western and Inland Finland.

2.2.4 Icelandic Advisory Board

Figure 23: Stefán Eiríksson



Note: Executive Director, Department of Welfare, City of Reykjavik.

Figure 24: Ragnheiður Hergeirsdóttir



Note: Project Manager, Directorate of Labour.

Figure 25: Gyða Hjartardóttir



Note: Specialist in Social Services, Icelandic Association of Local Authorities.

Figure 26: Guðrún Jóhannesdóttir



Note: Project Manager and Environmental and Social Scientist, Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management.

Figure 27: Víðir Reynisson



Note: Chief Inspector, South Iceland Police.

Figure 28: Kristján Sturluson



Note: Director of Administration, Hafnarfjörður Municipality.

2.2.5 Norwegian Advisory Board

Figure 29: Arnfinn Andersen



Note: Research Director, Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies.

Figure 30: Atle Dyregrov



Note: Head of professional issues, Center for Crisis Psychology.

Figure 31: Per Læg Reid



Note: Professor, Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen.

Figure 32: Hans Stifoss-Hanssen



Note: Professor, Centre for Diakonia and Professional Practice, Diakonhjemmet University College.

Figure 33: Oddrun Sæter



Note: Professor/Head of research, The Urban Research Program Oslo and Akershus University College.

2.2.6 *The Swedish Advisory Board*

Figure 34: Erna Danielsson



Note: Docent, Risk and Crisis Research Centre (RCR), Mid Sweden University.

Figure 35: Ann Enander



Note: Docent, Swedish Defence University.

Figure 36: Per-Olof Hallin



Note: Professor, Urban Studies, Malmö University.

Figure 37: Markus Planmo



Note: Administrator, Swedish Local Authorities and Regions.

Figure 38: Johanna Sandwall



Note: Preparedness Director, the National Board of Health and Welfare.

Figure 39: Bengt Sundelius



Note: Professor, Uppsala University, and strategic advisor at the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency.

2.3 Activities

2.3.1 Meetings of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) held working meetings where results were presented and discussed and decisions made about the next steps to be taken. The meetings took place in all the five countries and, when possible, experts from the country in question were invited as guest lecturers to present their institutions or fields. The following SC meetings took place: Reykjavík, 5 September 2014; Reykjavík, 20 January 2015; Malmö, 1 June 2015; Birkeröd, 15 September 2015; Oslo, 21–22 January 2016; Helsinki, 13–14 June 2016; Copenhagen, 15 December 2016; and Vestmannaeyjar, 7–9 September 2017. In addition, SC meetings were held in connection with other events and on SKYPE. The country leaders in the SC appointed advisory boards of five to seven experts, researchers and stakeholders. The advisory boards held work meetings in their respective countries as needed throughout the project period.

2.3.2 Symposium, courses and workshops

- On 4–5 May 2015, 73 experts, scientists, and stakeholders from Nordic and other European countries participated in a multidisciplinary Nordic symposium on the topic Social Services in Times of Disaster, at the Nordic House, Reykjavík, Iceland. The symposium was held in cooperation with NORDRESS [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/nr/35160>]

- A seminar was held in Reykjavík on Emergency Management in Iceland and Sweden on 18 January 2015. Lectures were given by two members of the Swedish AB (Erna Danielson and Carin Cuadra) and two member of the Icelandic AB (Guðrún Jóhannesdóttir and Víðir Reynisson).
- On 20–22 April 2016, the workshop Communities coping with Crisis was held in Grímsnes, Iceland, with 32 participants from the SC and the Advisory Boards in all five countries. A video of the lectures can be found on the project website [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/nr/35809>].
- A seminar on Volunteer Organizations in Disaster was held in Reykjavík as a joint arrangement between the University of Iceland Faculty of Social Work Mid Sweden University, and the NWW on 25 April 2016. Participants represented all of the Nordic countries [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/workshop-volunteer-organizations-in-disaster-at-the-nordic-house-on-april-25th-2016>].
- An international PhD Summer Course and seminar entitled Disaster social work: Resilience and crisis management in the context of welfare states were held on 24–27 May 2017 in Skálholt and Reykjavík, Iceland. Participants represented 18 countries; 16 PhD students were enrolled, and 40 stakeholders from the field participated in a one-day seminar connected to the course. The course was funded by NORDRESS, the Icelandic Association of Social Workers, and the Nordic Welfare Watch in Response to Crisis. It was hosted by the University of Iceland Faculty of Social Work [http://www.hi.is/frettir/althjodlegt_doktorsnamskeid].
- Guest lectures were held: Rasmus Dahlberg lectured in, Akureyri, Iceland, in April 2015, on a century of accidents and catastrophes in Denmark-on land, sea and in the air [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/nr/35226>], and Lis Klovning lectured in Reykjavík in February 2015 on Social capital in post-disaster recovery.

2.3.3 *Presentations of the project in conferences and meetings*

Members of the SC presented the project on various occasions:

- Félagsráðgjafabing, Reykjavík, May 2014, by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- Þjóðarspegillinn, Reykjavík, 2014 by Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir and Guðný Björk Eydal.
- CHRODIS – Good practices in the field of health promotion and chronic disease prevention across the life cycle, Reykjavík, 2015, by Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir.
- NEEDS, Copenhagen, 2015, by Guðný Björk Eydal and Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir.
- EmBRACE: Framing Community Disaster Resilience: resources, capacities, learning and action, London, September 2015, by Guðný Björk Eydal.

- ESA (European Sociological Association), Prague, August 2015, by Guðný Björk Eydal and Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir.
- Þjóðarspejillinn, Reykjavík, 2015, by Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir and Guðný Björk Eydal.
- Ministry of Welfare, 24 April 2016, by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- SRA Europe 2nd Nordic Chapter Meeting, Gothenburg, 14–15 November 2016, by Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir and Guðný Björk Eydal.
- Svalbardgruppen: Strategy Workshop, Helsinki, 13 December 2016: Presentation of the results by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- NOVA Oslo, 2016, by Björn Hvinden.
- ISA (International Sociological Association) Vienna, July 2016, by Guðný Björk Eydal, Carin Cuadra, and Merja Rapelli.
- Joint World Conference Social Work, Education and Social Development, Seoul, June 2016, by Carin Cuadra and Merja Rappelli.
- Þjóðarspejill, Reykjavík, 2016, by Guðný Björk Eydal and Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir.
- Félagssráðgjafabætur, Reykjavík, February 2017, by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- ESWR, Reykjavík, May 2017, by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- NEEDS, Copenhagen, 2017, by Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir.
- ESA (European Sociological Association), Athens, August 2017, by Guðný Björk Eydal.
- Svalbardgruppen: Workshop, Svalbard, 30 August 2017, by Carin Cuadra.

2.4 Results and main findings

2.4.1 *Local Social Services in Nordic Countries in Times of Disaster*

This part of the project investigated whether local social services have a formal role in the contingency planning of the Nordic emergency management systems.

The main findings show that Finland, Norway, and Sweden specifically address the role of social services in times of disaster in their legal frameworks on emergency management. Finland and Norway also address the role in the law on social services. In Sweden, the role is more implicit, as social service legislation applies regardless of circumstances. All countries expect all authorities to prepare a contingency plan. This means that even if the law in Denmark and Iceland does not address the role of social services, the social services are legally obliged to make contingency plans. Furthermore, Finland, Norway, and Sweden have prepared special guidelines on contingency planning for social services.

(Svalbard Group) and collaborate closely with the Haga process. Such high-level cooperation enhances regional and local level cooperation.

In December 2016 and August 2017, respectively, Eydal and Cuadra presented the results of the project to the *Svalbard Group* that now has an extended mandate to coordinate social issues, in addition to health issues related to disaster risk management among the Nordic countries.

The results of the project are presented in the report *Local Social Services in Nordic Countries in Times of Disaster* [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>].

The results are also presented in articles. In 2017, Eydal and Ómarsdóttir wrote an article (in Icelandic) about the project in *Tímarit félagsráðgjafa* [<http://www.timaritfelagsradgjafa.is/article/view/2559>]. An article entitled *Local Social Services in Disaster Management: Is there a Nordic Model* by Rapeli *et al.* will be published in November 2017 in the *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, and more articles will follow. Furthermore, one working paper *Disaster social work in Sweden: context, practice and challenges in an International perspective*, by Carin Cuadra, [<https://dspace.mah.se/handle/2043/22410>] was published in 2015.

2.4.2 The Icelandic Welfare Watch

The work, organization, implementation, and outcome of the Icelandic Welfare Watch was assessed by means of interviews, questionnaires, and content analysis. Interviews were held with the Head of the Welfare Watch, one of the project's workers, and three other representatives from the Steering Committee. The various ministers in office during the lifetime of the Welfare Watch were also interviewed. Discussions were held in two focus groups among working group members who had participated in Welfare Watch activities. The project was then assessed by means of three questionnaires sent to members of Welfare Watch working groups, staff in agencies involved in the project, and the general public. Finally, the content of reports, minutes, and other material connected to the Welfare Watch was analysed in order to gain insight into the organization of the project and the proposals generated.

Interviewees considered the Welfare Watch to have had a significant effect on welfare in Iceland at the beginning of the financial crisis. This was also the case for individuals external to the Welfare Watch. Surveys among the general public and the staff in public bodies represented in the Welfare Watch revealed that half of those who had heard of the Welfare Watch considered it to have been very important for Icelandic society in the early years of the financial crisis. One aspect of the importance of the Welfare Watch was the various reports containing proposed improvements used by the government to prioritise tasks. One respondent indicated that the work of the Welfare Watch may have contributed to fewer cutbacks in welfare than in other areas. Note was also made of the fact that, although not all of the Welfare Watch's proposals had been implemented, its work had made an indirect impact on welfare in Iceland by raising

awareness about issues requiring attention. Increased debate subsequently prompted entities other than the government to take on such issues.

Through the Welfare Watch, various public bodies and organizations worked together on welfare issues, and representatives of the Welfare Watch felt they had learned a great deal from their participation in this interdisciplinary project. Respondents agreed that cooperation on a broad basis had played a crucial role in efforts to improve the situation of people in Iceland. A large majority of working group members expressed pride at having taken part in the Welfare Watch working groups.

The results of the project are presented in the report *Evaluation of the welfare watch* to be found at [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>].

2.4.3 *Preparing for risks: The Nordic Welfare States*

This report, published in December 2017, maps the known risks that the Nordic welfare system could face in coming years and evaluates what challenges they pose for local social services. The report can be found at [<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>].

The project, *Nordic Welfare Watch-in response to crisis*, has facilitated cooperation among the participants, new groups/networks have already been started, and others are in making. There is a great need for networking among the researchers and stakeholders who are producing knowledge about the role of the welfare system in times of disaster, and more broadly those who are analysing the social dimensions of disasters.

3. Welfare Consequences of Financial Crisis

3.1 Aims of the project

The aim of this project is to draw lessons from present and past experiences of financial crises on the welfare and well-being of the affected nations. The project is led by Professor Stefán Ólafsson of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences at the University of Iceland. The focus of this project is on policy reactions to the crises and how successful or unsuccessful they were, particularly with reference to how well and quickly the nations recovered from crisis conditions and how the welfare and well-being of nationals were affected by the crisis itself and the policy measures aimed at tackling it.

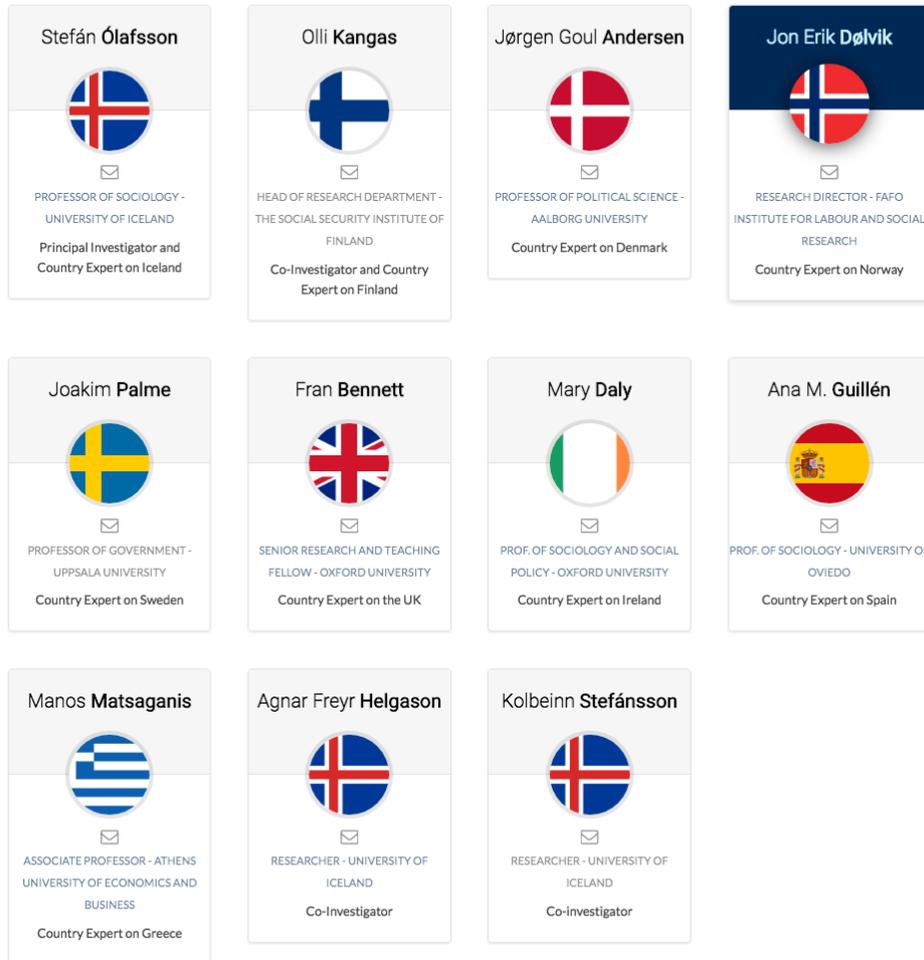
While the macroeconomic and socio-political contexts are of great relevance, the main focus will be on crisis amelioration measures and how these affected the living standards of the general public, including the effect on different socio-economic groups. Hence the issues directly tackle the distributional effects of the crisis and the policy reactions, as well as the policies' effectiveness in lifting the relevant economies and societies out of crisis conditions. The issues will cover how the social protection system and the labour market environment were used – and not used – to tackle the crisis and its consequences. Welfare and social protection expenditures or austerity measures (how limited resources were used), distributional aspects (how the burdens were shared out), employment creation, activation and rehabilitation, taxation, and other redistribution measures will thus feature prominently in the accounts.

The main focus is on how the Nordic countries weathered the present financial crisis as well as the crises of the late 1980s to early 1990s (which were particularly severe in Finland and Sweden), in an intra-Nordic comparative framework. The project will also compare the Nordic crisis management strategies with policy reactions in other Western countries that were deeply affected by the present financial crisis, in order to establish to what extent the Nordic crisis strategies did or did not differ.

The project is organised as a book comprising individual chapters on selected countries and country groupings, cross-national empirical and analytical chapters, plus an introduction and a concluding chapter summarizing and analysing the outcomes in a wider context. The project website is <http://welfarecrisis.hi.is/>

3.2 Participants

Figure 41: Project Team



3.3 Activities

In November 2016, the Project Team presented the main results of the project in a report entitled *Welfare and Nordic Crisis Management Strategies*, which can be found at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/welfare-consequences-of-financial-crises/>.

The Project Team held one working group session in Reykjavík in autumn 2016 and took part in collective sessions of the other two main projects within the Nordic Welfare Watch framework.

Because the project is primarily organized as a book aiming for international publication, the coordination, collection, and analysis of comparative material (mainly

from EU-SIC data and from OECD databanks) were undertaken in Reykjavík by Stefán Ólafsson, Agnar Freyr Helgason, and Kolbeinn Stefánsson.

The study combines a detailed analysis of survey data on living standards in 30 European nations (using EU-SILC micro data from Eurostat) and in-depth case studies from nine countries, which have been strategically selected to reflect variation. Of those nine countries, four experienced a particularly severe crisis (Greece, Spain, Ireland, and Iceland), another three experienced a significant but less severe crisis (the UK, Denmark, and Finland), and two had only a mild experience of the Great Recession (Norway and Sweden). The latter two and Finland are included especially so as to offer some lessons from their serious financial crises in the early 1990s.

All of the authors of the country case studies are specialists on their own countries and internationally known scholars working in the fields of comparative social policy and welfare.

The study is framed in the context of theories of welfare and crisis management. We map the major perspectives and prevailing traditions of political economy, with differential emphasis on fiscal policy (stimulus, austerity, and mixed approaches) and social policy (retrenchment, redistribution, resilience, recalibration, and/or reform). We also draw lessons from different societal conditions before the crisis and policy reactions during the crisis for shaping its welfare consequences.

The plan of the Project Team is to deliver a full book manuscript to an international publisher by the end of 2017. The book will be edited by Stefán Ólafsson, Mary Daly, Olli Kangas, and Joakim Palme.

The Table of Contents of the book is as in the figure.

Figure 4.2: Table of Contents

Part I – General Framework and Comparative Profiles	
Introduction (<i>Ólafsson, Daly, Kangas and Palme</i>)	
1.	Wellbeing consequences of the crisis (<i>Stefán Ólafsson and Kolbeinn H. Stefánsson</i>)
2.	Theories of welfare and government policy responses to economic crises (<i>Agnar Freyr Helgason</i>)
3.	How governments responded to the Great Recession – the macro perspective (<i>Agnar Freyr Helgason</i>)
Part II – Country Case Studies	
Individual Case Studies	
4.	Spain and Greece (<i>Ana M. Guillen and Manos Matsaganis</i>)
5.	Ireland (<i>Mary Daly</i>)
6.	Iceland (<i>Stefán Ólafsson</i>)
7.	UK (<i>Fran Bennett</i>)
8.	Finland (<i>Olli Kangas</i>)
9.	Denmark (<i>Jörgen Goul-Andersen</i>)
10.	Norway (<i>Jon Erik Dølvik</i>)
11.	Sweden (<i>Joakim Palme</i>)
Part III – Outcomes and Lessons	
12.	How environments and policies mattered (<i>Ólafsson, Helgason and Stefánsson</i>)
13.	Conclusions (<i>Ólafsson, Daly, Kangas and Palme</i>)
References	

We managed to maintain a high employment level throughout the crisis because of the welfare policy, the redistribution policy, the active labor market policy, and the devaluation of the currency. It has also helped the tourism industry.

Professor Stefán Ólafsson,
the Nordic Welfare Watch final conference, November 2016.

3.4 Results and main findings

The following is a summary of Chapter 1 from the book, which gives an indication of some conclusions and lessons:

“We have surveyed the economic contraction and well-being consequences of the Great Recession among European nations, with selective comparisons to other Western nations. There is great variety in the crisis experience of these nations, as indeed was the case during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Nowadays, Western nations have the added benefit of modern welfare states that provide institutionalized social protection systems intended to shelter the most vulnerable in society. There should also be the added benefit of more economic knowledge of how to prevent and react to financial crises (Eichengreen 2015).

Modern nations use both of these potential benefits to differing degrees, however. We have already provided indications that some welfare states cushioned more effectively against the negative well-being consequences of the Great Recession than others – and most, perhaps, did better than was the case in the 1930s. We will have more to say on that in later chapters.

Unemployment, financial hardship, inequality, and poverty increased significantly during the contemporary crisis, but to varying degrees, even among the countries that went deepest into the crisis. Some of the Mediterranean countries were particularly badly hit and have also had slow recoveries. Others, like the Baltic States, Ireland, and Iceland, were also badly hit but recovered faster and better. Amongst other less economically advanced Eastern European nations, there are cases of continually reduced financial hardship, albeit from very high levels.

The Nordic nations, except for Iceland, had a fairly easy ride through the Great Recession, even though the Danes saw some real increase in their financial hardship levels. In general, the main eurozone countries in northwestern Europe did not experience significantly increased financial hardship during the crisis.

Thus there are a great variety of crisis experiences that indicate differing conditions and institutional environments, as well as differing policy reactions. These we examine in greater detail in the chapters that follow.”

3.4.1 *The expected contribution of the proposed book*

This will be the first comprehensive study of the welfare consequences of the Great Recession that covers the most important phases of the crisis period (2007–2015) and includes a systematic comparison of the crisis experience of populations differently situated across European countries, with particular focus on the Nordic countries. Combining that approach with more detailed and carefully selected country case studies provides for more depth in the analyses.

Most studies of the crisis to date are macroeconomic in character. This study is distinctive in that its primary focus is not just on countries but also on households and

their well-being throughout the crisis period. In order to assess the impact of policies and political-economic environments, a key contribution of the book is to relate well-being outcomes to broad macroeconomic characteristics.

In addition to using classical indicators of crisis consequences (unemployment, income loss, poverty, etc.), we develop an indicator of “financial hardship”, which is a modification of Moisiu’s (2004) methodological paper and Nolan and Whelan’s work on the indicator of “economic vulnerability” (cf. *Poverty and Deprivation in Europe*, OUP, 2011). This measure, which combines income poverty levels with material deprivation and difficulties in making ends meet, provides a very useful tool to disaggregate the impact of the crisis by social groups and then analyse how it varies with the depth of crisis and welfare regimes, as well as other political-economic factors.

Material from the project has been presented at the ESPANET conference in Rotterdam in 2016; at FISS conferences in Sigtuna, Sweden, in 2016 and 2017; and at the University of Iceland in November 2017. The plan is to follow the publication of the book with presentations at international conferences, both within the Nordic countries and across Europe.

4. Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI)

4.1 Aims of the project

Defining 30 Nordic welfare indicators makes it possible to compare people's living conditions and well-being over time in the Nordic countries, with a special emphasis on vulnerable groups. The focus is on the development of an easily accessible indicator system with a limited number of indicators that can be used as early warning indicators for the impact of crises. Thus an important feature in the design is the use of timely and policy-relevant information for the Nordic countries and the possibility of distributional analyses of sub-groups of the population in order to enable detection of sub-groups in the population that are hit earlier or more severely than others by external shocks such as economic crises. Furthermore, the goal is to enable analyses of national policies to see whether and how policies have been successful in mitigating the social consequences of a crisis. Last but not least, the system of Nordic welfare indicators could facilitate more general monitoring of social trends in the Nordic countries. The role of the NOVIs is therefore to give warning signals about challenges facing Nordic societies and to meet the administrative and political need for relevant information.

4.1.1 Background

The Nordic Welfare Indicators project, as presented in the report A Nordic Welfare Indicator System (NOVI), which can be found here <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/nordic-welfare-indicators/>, originates from the experience of the Icelandic Welfare Watch, which was established following the economic crisis in Iceland in, 2008 and more specifically, of its system of social indicators, which was developed under the auspices of the Icelandic Welfare Watch. The social indicators were developed in order to increase the understanding of current and future health and social needs in society and to monitor the welfare of the population, but also to serve as a basis for policy making and political decisions. Thus the system of Nordic Welfare Indicators suggested in this report is based on the same principle.

The proposals for the Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI) came from a Nordic project group with participants from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. A project manager from Sweden was entrusted with project management, and specialists in each of the five countries worked as reference groups. The project leader was from Iceland.

4.2 Participants

4.2.1 *The Project Group*

Figure 43: Sigríður Jónsdóttir



Note: Project Leader, Ministry of Welfare, Iceland.

Figure 44: Håkan Nyman



Note: Project Manager, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden.

Figure 45: Lárus Blöndal



Note: Statistics Iceland.

Figure 46: Preben Etwil



Note: Statistics Denmark.

Figure 47: Thomas Helgeson



Note: Statistics Sweden.

Figure 48: Elisabeth Rønning



Note: Statistics Norway.

Figure 49: Timo A. Tanninen



Note: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland.

4.2.2 *Delegation leaders in NOSOSCO*

National experts

Figure 50: Anders Barstad



Note: PhD, Statistics Norway.

Figure 51: Erik Bihagen



Note: Associate Professor, Stockholm University.

Figure 52: Mika Gissler



Note: Professor, National Institute for Health and Welfare and Karolinska Institute.

Figure 53: Heli Mikkilä



Note: Deputy Director General, Statistics Finland

Figure 54: Stefán Ólafsson



Note: Professor, University of Iceland.

Figure 55: Niels Ploug



Note: Director, Statistics Denmark.

4.3 Activities

A kick-off meeting on behalf of the *Nordic Welfare Indicators* project was held in Reykjavík on 10–11 June 2014, with participants from administration, national statistical bureaus, and universities/research forums from the Nordic countries. It was decided at the kick-off meeting that the Nordic Social-Statistical Committee (NOSOSKO) would take on the role as a Steering Committee for the project. A project manager was assigned in autumn 2014. Following the kick-off meeting, a Project Group was appointed with members from each of the five participating countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. National experts were also appointed from each country.

Over the working period, five project group meetings were held: the first in Helsinki on 12–13 November 2014, the second in Stockholm on 5 March 2015, the third in Iceland on 1 September 2015, the fourth in Sweden on 8 March 2016, and the fifth in Denmark on 30 August 2016. Two of the project group meetings were held in relation to NOMESKO/NOSOSKO's plenary meeting in autumn 2015 and 2016 in Iceland and Denmark, a decision based on the fact that some of the project group members attended the plenary meeting. On the same occasion, the steering group was informed and consulted. During the working period from autumn 2014 to autumn 2016, there was ongoing cooperation and consultation between project leader, project manager, project group members and national experts. The project manager and project leader held Skype meetings whenever necessary. The steering committee was informed at all stages of the working period. During the working process, there were also meetings and consultation with partners from Nordic Council of Ministers, mainly those who work on coordination and reorganization of Nordic statistics, such as Niels Stern and Ulla Agerstov, as well as other relevant partners in the field. The final report was

published in November 2016, and findings were presented on the Nordic Welfare Watch Final Conference in Iceland on 10 November 2016.

The project was carried out in collaboration with NOSOSCO (Nordic Social Statistical Committee) and NOMESCO (Nordic Medico-Statistical Committee) and involved national experts from the research community, governments, and national statistical bureaus.

The project was presented at a few occasions, including a presentation by the project manager in October 2015 at a conference on *Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe* in Italy. The Nordic Welfare indicators were presented in *The Nordic Labour Journal* and in *Magasin* published by the Nordic Welfare Center in 2017.

4.4 Results and main findings

The main results according to the projects report, which can be found here <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/nordic-welfare-indicators/>, is the proposal to publish, on an annual basis, a system of 30 Nordic Welfare Indicators that follow nine dimensions to monitor changes in welfare in the Nordic countries and inform policy- and decision-making. It should be noted that the concept of welfare refers to an overall condition emphasizing individuals' standard of living in financial or material ways and is synonymous with the notion of well-being or living conditions. These terms are therefore used interchangeably in the report. The concept of welfare also refers to the condition of an entire country or economy, and the welfare indicators suggested in this report indicate the conditions of countries through measuring individuals' welfare.

The NOVI system presented has targeted specific Nordic features and challenges and is a comprehensive yet user-friendly system that could be easily and quickly implemented and maintained. NOVI will bring added value to the monitoring of Nordic welfare and will be an important tool for analysing the impact of crises on individuals' welfare in the Nordic countries, with focus on factors such as gender, age, and vulnerable groups in the population. The indicator system can increase the sharing of experiences between the Nordic countries concerning which policies can effectively address negative trends and crises. The project has not found any other examples of comparative indicator systems that provide indicators as comprehensive as the NOVI, let alone any examples covering the Nordic countries. The system is a powerful tool that could be implemented easily and at relatively low cost.

The outcome of the project gives some concrete suggestions on how a system of indicators could be implemented and maintained. Furthermore, based on the long Nordic tradition of administrative data based on registers, the project also suggests how these could serve as a basis for developing the indicator system and how to complement it with contextual information. Because it was not possible to quantify all aspects that the project judged important to include, the report also gives suggestions for future work.

The project developed a web-based prototype of the suggested indicator system in order to highlight its added value. The idea is to give potential users the possibility of

hands-on elaboration and analysis of some of the indicators. The indicators can be found online at <http://nomi.bazooka.se/>

4.4.1 *For the structure of how the 30 NOVI's follow 9 dimensions, see below*

1. Health:
 - a. Self-reported health status
 - b. Self-reported unmet need for medical care (examination)
 - c. Self-reported unmet need for dental care (examination)
 - d. Deaths from circulatory diseases
 - e. Cancer mortality rate
 - f. Deaths from suicide
2. Educational skills:
 - a. Early leavers from education and training
 - b. Educational attainment
3. Employment:
 - a. Employment rate
 - b. Unemployment rate
 - c. NEET (Young people Neither in Employment nor in Education and Training)
 - d. Long-term unemployment rate
 - e. Involuntary part-time
4. Work-life balance:
 - a. Child care
 - b. Parental leave
 - c. Average number of actual weekly hours of work
5. Income and earnings:
 - a. Mean and median net income
 - b. Distribution of disposable income
 - c. Relative at risk of poverty rate
 - d. Persistent low income
 - e. Material deprivation
 - f. Arrears on payments
6. Housing:
 - a. Mean share of housing costs in income
 - b. Self-reported financial burden of total housing costs
7. Social network and participation:
 - a. Social network
 - b. Social support
 - c. Social participation
8. Social security:
 - a. Crime, violence, or vandalism in the area
 - b. Deaths from accidents

- 9. Subjective well-being:
 - a. Life satisfaction

Figure 56: Prototype of one of the Nordic Welfare Indicators presented at the Nordic Welfare Watch final conference in November 2016



5. Proposals

The Nordic Welfare Watch programme has shown how organized cooperation, like the cooperation that took place in each of the main projects, benefits Nordic citizens by increasing knowledge on important issues. The three projects published a total of five reports on behalf of the programme. In addition to this, the programme yielded two main proposals, the *Nordic Welfare Indicators* and the *Nordic Welfare Forum*. The preparation of those proposals and their current status is explained in this section.

5.1 Preparation of the proposal on *Nordic Welfare Indicators*

About the time the project report *A Nordic Welfare Indicator System (NOVI) – Report for the Nordic Council of Ministers* was published, the project leader for the *Nordic Welfare Indicators* and the programme manager for the Nordic Welfare Watch wrote a proposal on the Nordic Welfare Indicators based on the proposal in the project report. The Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S) is now working on that proposal. The final text of the proposal as it was introduced in the final conference of the Welfare Watch programme can be found at the following link: <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>. It was as follows.

5.1.1 *Nordic Welfare Indicators*

A proposal by the Nordic Welfare Watch

A system of 30 Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI) will be established to be used for monitoring welfare trends and policy making in the Nordic countries. The guidelines in the report “A Nordic Welfare Indicator System (NOVI)-Report for the Nordic Council of Ministers” will be the road map for the establishment. The work of the project in the report was carried out in collaboration with NOSOSCO (Nordic Social Statistical Committee) and NOMESCO (Nordic Medico-Statistical Committee) and involved national experts from the research community, governments, and national statistical institutes.

The NOVI system presented has targeted specific Nordic features and challenges and is a comprehensive yet user-friendly system that could be easily and quickly implemented and maintained. The NOVI will bring added value to the monitoring of Nordic welfare and will be an important tool for analysing the impact of crises on individuals’ welfare in the Nordic countries and with a focus on e.g., gender, age or vulnerable groups in the population. It can increase the sharing of experience between the Nordic countries about which policies can respond effectively to negative trends and crises. The project has not found any examples of comparative indicator systems that provide a comprehensive presentation of indicators with such a detailed presentations that are suggested for the NOVI, let alone covering the Nordic countries. The system can be a powerful tool that easily could be implemented and to a relatively low cost.

The structure for the 30 NOVI's will be the following 9 dimensions: health, educational skills, employment, work-life balance, income and earnings, housing, social network and participation, personal security and subjective well-being.

The 30 NOVI's will be: Self-reported health status, self-reported unmet need for medical care (examination), self-reported unmet need for dental care (examination), deaths from circulatory diseases, cancer mortality rate, deaths from suicide, early leavers from education and training, educational attainment, employment rate, unemployment rate, neet (not in employment, education or training), long-term unemployment rate, involuntary part-time, childcare, parental leave, average number of actual weekly hours of work, mean and median net income, distribution of disposable income, relative at risk of poverty rate (also by illustrative atrop threshold), persistent low income, material deprivation, arrears on mortgage, rent payments, utility bills and hire purchase, median share of housing cost in disposable income, self-reported financial burden of total housing cost., social network, social support, social participation, crime, violence or vandalism in the area, deaths from accidents and/or assault, life satisfaction.

It is recommended that the Nordic welfare indicators is implemented and updated by DST consulting at Statistics Denmark and that NOSOCO is given the role to assess the Nordic welfare indicator system, after two years from the implementation. It is furthermore recommended that NOSOCO is given the overall responsibility for the management of the system of Nordic welfare indicators concerning its structure, content and development. The estimated one-off cost for the implementation is approximately 100,000 DKK. The estimated cost for updating the Nordic welfare indicators is approximately 50,000 DKK per update. Further information regarding the cost of the project is on page 28 in the report "A Nordic Welfare Indicator System (NOVI)-Report for the Nordic Council of Ministers".

NOVI's will be presented at specific day annually and are expected to generate debate and political focus. The venue for publishing them will be the Nordic Welfare Forum, which will be held every second year. In the years when the Nordic Welfare Forum does not assemble, the NOVI's could be made public, e.g., in connection with the meetings of the Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs or other relevant meetings if possible.

5.2 Preparation of the proposal on the *Nordic Welfare Forum*

The Nordic Welfare Watch research projects gathered a great deal of knowledge that all of the Nordic countries will utilise in coming quarters and years. In addition, two proposals are under examination by the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S) and the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S). One proposal deals with the Nordic Welfare Indicators, and the other deals with the Nordic Welfare Forum. Its development is based on one of the objectives of the Nordic Welfare Watch; i.e., to consider whether it would be appropriate to base the Nordic Welfare Watch on Icelanders' experience with the Welfare Watch established in 2009, following the banking collapse of 2008. The Icelandic Welfare Watch proved to be a sound method and tool for counteracting the negative effects of the crisis; furthermore, a product of the Welfare Watch, the *social indicators*, was useful for monitoring the results of the welfare system. In the Nordic Welfare Watch programme's final year, when the connecting themes of the main research projects began to come together, the steering group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme

decided to hold a workshop to enable the projects' key parties to discuss the results and usefulness of the Nordic Welfare Watch. During the workshop, which was held on 25 April 2016 at the Ministry of Welfare in Reykjavík, there was also a review of the Nordic Welfare Watch project, and those attending discussed preparations for the project's final conference.

Figure 57: Workshop in April 2016



Note: Anders Geertsen, Lovísa Lilliendahl, Håkan Nyman, Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Guðný Björk Eydal, Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir, Ingi Valur Jóhannsson, Merja Rapeli and Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

5.2.1 Participants in the workshop

- *Anders Geertsen*, Head of Department at the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers, responsible for education & research, health, social and labour market policies, Denmark.
- *Merja Rapeli*, Ministerial Advisor at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland.
- *Timo A. Tanninen*, Ministerial Advisor at Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland.
- *Håkan Nyman*, Project Manager for Nordic Welfare Indicators, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Sweden.
- *Professor Guðný Björk Eydal*, Faculty of Social Work, University of Iceland, and Project Leader for Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis.

- *Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir*, Project Manager for Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, Faculty of Social Work, University of Iceland.
- *Professor Stefán Ólafsson*, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University of Iceland, and Project Leader for Welfare consequences of financial crises.
- *Agnar Freyr Helgason*, Project Manager for Welfare consequences of financial crises, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University of Iceland.
- *Sigríður Jónsdóttir*, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Welfare in Iceland and Project Leader for Nordic Welfare Indicators.
- *Lárus Blöndal*, Statistics Iceland.
- *Ingi Valur Jóhannsson*, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Welfare in Iceland.
- *Lovísa Lilliendahl*, Project Manager, Ministry of Welfare in Iceland.
- *Siv Friðleifsdóttir*, Program Manager for the Nordic Welfare Watch, Ministry of Welfare in Iceland.

Also attending part of the workshop were officials from Iceland’s Ministry of Welfare: Anna Lilja Gunnarsdóttir, Secretary-General of the ministry; Bolli Þór Bollason, Director General; Guðrún Sigurjónsdóttir, Deputy Director General; Þór G. Þórarinnsson, Senior Advisor and chairman of the board of Nordic Welfare Centre; and Vilborg Ingólfssdóttir, Director General.

Figure 58: The Nordic Welfare



Note: The Nordic Welfare Watch main projects discussed at Workshop in April 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

The workshop discussed support for ideas and proposals to present to the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S) on exploring the advantages

of founding a joint *Nordic Welfare Forum* that would meet every other year to confer on and discuss joint welfare challenges. The objective would be to strengthen the sustainability of the Nordic welfare systems. The Nordic Welfare Forum would be a platform for parties with good knowledge of the welfare systems, such as representatives of welfare institutions, stakeholders, associations of volunteers, politicians, and officials. Taking into account the Nordic Welfare Indicators, the forum would discuss the development and the highest priority matters concerning the countries' welfare and the challenges facing the welfare systems. This would involve a forum similar to the Icelandic Welfare Watch. The proposal originating at this workshop was introduced at the final conference of the Welfare Watch programme. The final text of the proposal can be found at the following link:

<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>. It was as follows.

5.2.2 Nordic Welfare Forum - A proposal by the Nordic Welfare Watch

A Nordic Welfare Forum will be held biannually. A formal joint Nordic forum does not exist today for addressing future challenges in the welfare systems.

The Nordic Welfare Forum will be divided in two arenas. One will be a venue for entering into discussions on urgent welfare issues which are at the top of the list of the political agenda (pressing issues/urgent themes). The second will be a platform in which to introduce results from academic circles regarding impending challenges which have not as yet risen to the top of the political agenda.

The agenda will contain issues to which the countries should respond most urgently, e.g., predictions on the quality of life, future challenges such as the refugee crisis, social integration, care of the elderly, teenage issues, child poverty and others (top down). The themes are determined by the Council of Ministers of Health and Social Affairs and Senior Officials Committee for Health and Social Affairs.

The Nordic Welfare Forum will also be a channel for discussions on future challenges which are less apparent (bottom up). This could be implemented, e.g., by having an open window in discussion groups for introducing research and making open calls for papers from academics. This way the Nordic Welfare Forum will become a popular platform in which research in the field can be aired.

A Nordic Welfare Forum will be the venue for publishing the Nordic welfare indicators (NOVI); i.e., approximately 30 joint indicators that are expected to generate debate and political focus. In the years when the Nordic Welfare Forum does not assemble, the NOVIs could be made public, e.g., in connection with the meetings of the Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs.

The participants in the Nordic Welfare Forum would be representatives from the welfare institutions, the public administration, major interest organisations, academics, non-government organisations, politicians and others. The Nordic Welfare Forum will be a joint Nordic cooperative project with the Nordic Welfare Center (NWC) being responsible for arranging and organizing practical matters. If it is felt that the name Nordic Welfare Forum is too similar to the annual Northern Future Forum, there are possible alternatives, e.g., Nordic Welfare Summit/Nordic Welfare Challenges.

It will be clear this autumn which of the 30 Nordic welfare indicators will be proposed in the Nordic Welfare Watch project.

5.3 Current status of the proposals on the Nordic Welfare Indicators and the Nordic welfare forum (autumn 2017)

The final conference on the Nordic Welfare Watch presented both proposals developed during the programme. The conference took place at Reykjavík's Hilton Nordica Hotel in Iceland on 10 November 2016. Following this, Iceland's representatives presented them at a meeting of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S) on 23–24 February 2017. Subsequently, a meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Health and Social Affairs (MR-S) addressed both these proposals on 30 March 2017. There, Iceland's Minister of Social Affairs and Equality presented the proposals, after which the Ministers decided to hold, as a pilot project, the Nordic Welfare Forum in 2018. The meeting's attendees also decided to continue to discuss the Nordic Welfare Indicators. In May 2018, Iceland took the leadership for preparing further decision making for the Nordic Welfare Forum, including content and form, along with further preparations of decisions on the Nordic Welfare Indicators. Further decisions on both of these matters will take place at the meeting of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Health and Social Affairs (EK-S) on 27–28 September 2017.

6. Final Conference, Ready for Future Risks?

How can we prepare? The Nordic Welfare Watch's final conference took place in Reykjavík's Hilton Nordica Hotel on 10 November 2016. Its title was *Are the Nordic Welfare States Ready for Future Risks? How can we prepare?*

Figure 59: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Professor Stefán Ólafsson, Project Leader of Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises addresses the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

At the final conference, the projects' leaders presented the fruits of the main projects in two ways: through traditional lectures and through a *World Café Q&A*, where participants could circulate on their own between the projects' leaders for discussions in smaller groups. The participants were very pleased with this arrangement, which was highly successful.

Figure 60: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Project Leader of the Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI) and Håkan Nyman, Project Manager of the Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI), present the Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI) in the Q&A at the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Figure 61: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Professor Guðný Björk Eydal, Project Leader of the Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, and Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir, Project Manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, talking to Q&A participants with project leaders.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Figure 62: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Professor Guðný Björk Eydal, Project Leader of the Nordic Welfare Watch - in Response to Crisis and Ingibjörg Lilja Ómarsdóttir, Project Manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, make a presentation to participants in the Q&A with Project Leaders the project’s findings at the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Figure 63: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Professor Stefán Ólafsson, Project Leader, and Agnar Freyr Helgason, Project Manager, present findings of the project Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises during the Q&A at the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Figure 64: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Panel discussions at the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016. Anders Geertsen, Head of Department at the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers, responsible for education & research, health, social, and labour market policies; Kirsi-Marja Lehtelä, Researcher at THL National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland; Axel West Pedersen, Researcher I at Institute for Social Research in Norway; Lára Björnsdóttir, MA in Social Work and former chair of the Icelandic Welfare Watch; and Carin Cuadra, Associate professor and senior lecturer at School of Social Work, Lund University.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

There were also presentations of the two proposals prepared on behalf of the Steering Group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme. First, there was a proposal on founding a *Nordic Welfare Forum*. Second, there was a proposal on the annual publication of 30 *joint Nordic Welfare Indicators – NOVI*. This report describes both proposals in relevant sections. The guest lecturer at the Final Conference was a respected scholar in the field, Lena Dominelli, Professor of Social Work at Durham University. The other guest lecturer, Professor Jonas Pontusson from Geneva School of Social Science, was unfortunately unable to attend the conference due to weather conditions.

“The reports show how Nordic countries managed the crisis well compared to other countries.”

Kirsi-Marja Lehtelä, Researcher at THL National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland and Project Leader of Norden 2020, at the Nordic Welfare Watch final conference in November 2016.

Figure 65: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: The guest lecturer Professor Lena Dominelli, School of Applied Social Sciences at Durham University, at the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch in November 2016.

Source: Siv Friðleifsdóttir.

Figure 66: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Professor Stefán Ólafsson, Project Leader of the Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises; Eygló Harðardóttir, Minister for Nordic Cooperation and Social Affairs and Housing in Iceland; and Ingi Valur Jóhannsson, Senior Advisor in the Ministry of Welfare in Iceland and member of the Steering Group of the Nordic Welfare Watch programme, attending the final conference in Reykjavík.

Source: Berit Kvam/ Nordic Labour Journal.

The participants in the Final Conference came from all of the Nordic countries. In all, 180 people attended the conference – 40 from other countries. The media in both Iceland and other Nordic countries discussed the substance of the conference. Berit Kvam, Editor-in-Chief of the *Nordic Labour Journal*, attended the conference and covered it thoroughly.

For those who could not attend, the conference was streamed on the Internet, giving interested parties a chance to follow the activities. The webcast of the entire conference can be found at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.

Figure 67: Conference of the Nordic Welfare



Note: Agnar Freyr Helgason, Project Manager, Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises; Professor Stefán Ólafsson, Project Leader, Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises; Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Project Leader, Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI); Professor Guðný Björk Eydal, Project Leader, the Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis; and Håkan Nyman, Project Manager, Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI), after the final conference in Reykjavík

Source: Berit Kvam/ Nordic Labour Journal.

6.1 Programme of the Final Conference of the Nordic Welfare Watch on 10th November 2016

Table 1: Programme

Time	Event
08:30–09:00	Registration
09:00–09:10	Welcome
	Siv Friðleifsdóttir, Project Manager
09:10–09:50	Social protection and income redistribution in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, Professor Jonas Pontusson, Geneva School of Social Science, University of Geneva
09:50–10:20	Welfare consequences of financial crises, Professor Stefán Ólafsson, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University of Iceland
10:20–10:45	Coffee
10:45–11:15	Risk and Disaster Management in Nordic Welfare States: The role of the local social services, Professor Guðný Björk Eydal, Faculty of Social Work, University of Iceland
11:15–11:45	Nordic Welfare Indicators, Sigríður Jónsdóttir, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Welfare in Iceland; and Håkan Nyman, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Sweden
11:45–12:30	Lunch break
12:30–12:45	Entertainment: Ari Eldjárn, stand-up comedian
12:45–13:25	Making Invisible Gender Relations Visible: The welfare state in promoting environmental and social justice in (hu)man-made and natural disasters, Professor Lena Dominelli, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University
13:25–14:10	Q & A with project leaders
14:10–14:30	Coffee
14:30–15:00	Proposals: Siv Friðleifsdóttir, Project Manager
15:00–15:45	Panel discussions: Anders Geertsen, Head of Department at the Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers, responsible for education & research, health, social and labour market policies; Axel West Pedersen, Researcher I at Institute for Social Research, Norway; Carin Cuadra, Associate Professor and senior lecturer at School of Social Work, Lund University; Kirsi-Marja Lehtelä, Researcher at THL National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland; Lára Björnsdóttir, Social worker MA and former chair of the Icelandic Welfare Watch
15:45–16:00	Eygló Harðardóttir, Minister of Social Affairs and Housing and Minister of Nordic Cooperation
16:00–17:00	Light refreshments: Conference Moderator: Baldvin Þór Bergsson, reporter and programme host

6.2 Summary of slides of the conference and proposals

- Stefán Ólafsson's slides:
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.
- Sigríður Jónsdóttir's and Håkan Nyman's slides:
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.
- Guðný Björk Eydal's slides:
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.
- Siv Friðleifsdóttir's slides:
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.
- Proposal on Nordic Welfare Forum:
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.
- Proposal on Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI):
<https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/news/the-nordic-welfare-watch-final-conference>.

7. Reports and public presentations

7.1 Summary of the reports issued on behalf of the Nordic Welfare Watch

The three main projects of the Nordic Welfare Watch published five reports, discussing the research done and the lessons that can be drawn from it. The prior sections discussing the main projects in an integrated fashion give a good account of the reports. Below is a list of them, with brief explanations:

In March 2015, the project *Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis* published the report *Assessment and the work of the Welfare Watch*. It showed the results of the Icelandic Welfare Watch – whether it achieved set goals, and its main strengths and weaknesses. The report is available at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>.

In October 2016, the project *Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis* published the report *Local Social Services in Nordic countries in Times of Disaster*. The goals of the report included mapping the Nordic countries' emergency management systems, with emphasis on the role of the social services. The question was whether local social services have a formal role in the contingency planning of the Nordic emergency management systems, and if so, what that role entails. The report is available at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>.

In November 2016, the project *Nordic Welfare Indicators* published the report *A Nordic Welfare Indicator System (NOVI)*. The report describes 30 Nordic Welfare Indicators and their selection and function. The report is available at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/nordic-welfare-indicators/>.

In November 2016, the project *Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises* published the report *Welfare and Nordic Crisis Management Strategies – a comparative project*. The report discusses effective post-crisis measures taken in the Nordic countries, what could have been improved, which consequences of the economic strictures stemmed from a lack of governmental action, etc. The report is available at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/welfare-consequences-of-financial-crises/>.

In December 2017, the project *Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis* will publish a report outlining the main risks that the Nordic countries could face in future years and the associated challenges for local social services. The report can be found at <https://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/nordicwelfarewatch/in-response-to-crises/>.

7.2 Public presentations on the Nordic Welfare Watch

The Nordic Welfare Watch carried out relevant research on issues affecting all those living in the Nordic countries. Because of this, there were numerous requests for presentations on the project. The three main projects made presentations under the Nordic Welfare Watch's umbrella. The sections of this report on the main three projects provide a good account of these presentations. There were also public presentations covering the entire Nordic Welfare Watch project. Several times, a presentation on the Icelandic Welfare Watch accompanied the presentation of the Nordic Welfare Watch project. Here below is a summary of public presentations on the entire Nordic Welfare Watch project.

In March 2015, a public presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch was given at the Ministry of Welfare in Iceland. The first speakers were the project leaders of all three main components of the Nordic Welfare Watch – *The Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises* and *Nordic Welfare Indicators*. Parties related to the projects attended the meeting, as did employees of ministries, individuals from the university community, representatives of the Icelandic Welfare Watch, and other parties involved in welfare matters and Nordic cooperation.

In September 2015, there was a public presentation at Nordic House in Reykjavik, where all of the project leaders of the Nordic Welfare Watch presented the projects under the Nordic Welfare Watch umbrella.

In October 2015, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch presented the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to a group of Nordic journalists at Centrum Hotel in Reykjavik. They visited Iceland in connection with the session of the Nordic Council held at Harpa Convention Centre on 27–29 October. The contact was Sigrún Stefánsdóttir.

In January 2016, a website for the project Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises was launched. The URL is welfarecrisis.hi.is, and the website's title is *Welfare and Nordic Crisis Management Strategies – a Comparative Research Project*. Statistics, summaries, reports, and other information related to the project can be found on the site.

In January 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch presented the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch in Turku, Finland, at the conference *Hur mår du Norden*. This was the opening conference of Finland's leadership project 2016–2018 *Ett öppet och innovativt Norden med välmående människor 2020 – Lika möjligheter till välfärd, kultur, utbildning och arbete* (Norden 2020).

At a one-day workshop held on 25 April 2016 at the Ministry of Welfare in Iceland, key people discussed the Nordic Welfare Indicators and the status of the project. The proposal on the Nordic Welfare Forum evolved there. The section in this report on two concrete proposals gives a full account of this proposal.

In May 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on it and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to *Samfunnsviterne* from Norway at their meeting at the University of Iceland's Institute of Continuing Education. The contact was Lilja Mósesdóttir.

In June 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to *CHRODIS*, addressing chronic diseases and healthy ageing across the life cycle. The contact was Gígja Gunnarsdóttir.

In June 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to Greek students, *TOCSIN* (Teacher support Confronting Social Inequalities) at the Ministry of Welfare. The contact was Guðbjörg Andrea Jónsdóttir.

In June 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch at the Nordic Convention on Social Assistance and Social Services in Oslo. The contacts were Hildur Röed Sverrisdóttir and Anna Margrét Ólafsdóttir.

In August 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to the Minister of Nordic Cooperation and of Municipal Affairs of the Åland Islands, Nina Fellman. The presentation took place at the Ministry of Welfare in Iceland.

In October 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch to evaluator from *Gaia Consulting*. This company works in collaboration with Stockholm Environment Institute, in accordance with a request of the Nordic Council of Ministers, to map Nordic efforts aimed at fulfilling the United Nations sustainability criteria 2030.

In November 2016, the Nordic Welfare Watch's final conference took place at Reykjavík's Hilton Nordica Hotel under the title *Are the Nordic Welfare States Ready for Future Risks? How can we prepare?* A separate section in this report details the conference.

In November 2016, the project manager of the Nordic Welfare Watch made a presentation on the Nordic Welfare Watch project and the Icelandic Welfare Watch at a conference in Helsinki on The Future of the Nordic Welfare Model.

Sammanfattning

Nordiska välfärdsvakten var ett forskningsprogram och en del av det isländska ordförandeskapet inom det nordiska samarbetet under Nordiska ministerrådet. Programmet pågick under perioden 2014–2017. Målsättningen med programmet var att utveckla bättre metoder för att mäta och övervaka medborgarnas välfärd i syfte att stödja och lägga grund för strategiplanering inom välfärdsområdet, undersöka effekterna av ekonomiska kriser och därmed besläktade konsekvenser på de nordiska välfärdssystemen, kartlägga framtida utmaningar inom välfärdsområdet samt undersöka hur socialtjänsten i ländernas kommuner är involverade i ländernas krishanteringssystem. Programmet skulle också evaluera erfarenheter av den isländska välfärdsvakten som etablerades 2009 i efterdyningarna av den finansiella krisen med hänsyn till eventuell nordisk nytta av nordisk välfärdsvakt.

Programmet bestod av tre separata huvudprojekt. 1. *Nordiska välfärdsvakten – att hantera kriser*, 2. *Konsekvenser för välfärden i ekonomiska kriser*, och 3. *Nordiska välfärdsindikatorer*. Samtliga projekt baserades på omfattande nordiskt samarbete och målsättningen var att föra samman de mest kvalificerade experterna i Norden inom respektive område. Detta sätt att närma sig problemet resulterade i en bred nordisk kompetens och sammanhållning rörande innehållet i de fem rapporter som publicerats inom projektet. Ett antal ännu aktiva nätverk formades under dessa projekt. Vi kan förmoda att flera av dessa nätverk kommer till användning inom Norden i sökande efter kunskap och vid framtida beslutsfattande.

Ett annat viktigt resultat av den Nordiska Välfärdsvakten var två konkreta förslag. Det förra är ett förslag som kallas *Nordiskt Välfärdsforum*. Det förutsätter ett gemensamt nordiskt forum som skall sammankallas vartannat år i syfte att hantera välfärdssystemens framtida utmaningar. Forumet erbjuder två arenor. Den ena är tänkt att vara en mötesplats för att diskutera viktiga utmaningar som välfärdssystemen står inför och som kommer stå högst på de politiska agendorna. Den andra arenan är tänkt att vara en plattform för presentation av resultat från akademiska kretsar rörande oroväckande utmaningar som ännu inte blivit satta högst upp på de politiska agendorna. Det andra förslaget kallas *Nordiska Välfärdsindikatorer*. Det är ett system bestående av 30 nordiska välfärdsindikatorer (NOVI) som övervakar trender inom välfärd och kan underlätta strategiplanering i de nordiska länderna.

Nordiska ministerrådet för social- och hälsopolitik (MR-S) och den Nordiska ämbetsmannakommittén för social- och hälsofrågor (ÅK-S) diskuterade dessa förslag under 2017 i en konstruktiv anda. Den diskussionen ledde dels till beslutet om att hålla Nordiskt välfärdsforum 2018, som är att betrakta som ett pilotprojekt, dels till fortsatta diskussioner rörande de nordiska välfärdsindikatorerna.



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The Nordic Welfare Watch

The Nordic Welfare Watch was a leadership programme during the Icelandic presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2014 and consisted three main projects: Nordic Welfare Watch – in Response to Crisis, Welfare Consequences of Financial Crises, and Nordic Welfare Indicators. The project period was from 2014–2017. The goals of the programme were to find better ways to measure and monitor citizens' welfare and to explore the role of financial structures and austerity measures in mitigating the effects of financial crises in different societies, with special emphasis on the Nordic welfare societies. Another goal was to examine how well municipal social services were implemented in the Emergency Management systems and to map future welfare challenges. Five reports and two main proposals were made, one to establish a Nordic Welfare Forum and the other to publish a set of Nordic Welfare Indicators (NOVI). This report is the final report of the Nordic Welfare Watch and contains a summary of the main outcomes of the programme.



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