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Jean Monnet Module

Understanding European Integration Through the Regional Lens

Centre for European Studies,
School of International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Organises

International Conference

on

Current Global Developments and the Nordic

May 10 & 11th 2023



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Concept Note

Developments over the last two years have been challenging for states across the globe. The Covid-19 pandemic affected one and all, every country struggled to cope and devise policies that would limit its spread and deadly impact. The lockdown and the ban on travel affected life and livelihoods. Developing and administering vaccines to immunize the population posed a daunting task. The pandemic years had their economic fallout, and states had to prioritize pandemic recovery. And just as the world started to limp back to normalcy, new developments on the international stage posed their own set of challenges. The Russia- Ukrainian crisis has blown up into a full-scale war the effect of which is being felt much beyond Europe. Europe's reading of the current crisis as a challenge to 'their way of life' has resulted in a unified show of strength and response in condemning Russia and extending support to Ukraine and Ukrainians. Ukrainian women and children fleeing the war and seeking refuge in neighbouring CEE countries where were warmly welcomed and European citizens extended support unhesitatingly. Many countries recalibrated their policies to help Ukraine mount and sustain an offensive against Russia. The crisis had an impact on how the EU and Europe perceived their security. Severe sanctions were slapped to strike Russia's ability to sustain its offensive. But it also exposed the EU and Europe's vulnerability vis-à-vis their dependence on Russian oil and gas. The looming energy crisis would also impact Europe's climate commitments.

Apart from the challenges that the immediate crisis posed, Europe and the European Union were also dealing with the impact of the rise of an assertive China on the established rules-based international order. This is reflected in the EU and its member states growing interest in the Indo-Pacific and the EU articulating its position on the region and its connectivity strategy countering China's BRI.

It is in this backdrop of such developments that the Centre for European Studies is holding a two-day international conference on the Nordic. The Centre has been regularly looking at this region known for its welfare model, providing quality education and healthcare,

advanced technology, gender parity, social trust, and happiness. However, the Nordic have over the last few years not been immune to the rise of right-wing populism in Europe. Immigration, integration, and refugees are as much an agenda in the Nordic as in other European countries. For instance, Sweden which was the first country in the world to adopt a feminist foreign policy in 2014 has given up on it post-2022 elections. Following the 2022 elections Sweden Democrats emerged as an important player and though not in government will play a deciding role in policies in the coming years. Sweden and Finland's debate on NATO membership changed after February this year and both have applied for NATO membership. All these developments merit attention.

The conference (hybrid mode) is being organised on 10th -11th May 2023 and will focus on both the internal and external developments in the Nordic countries.

Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar

Convener

Organising Committee

Prof Bhaswati Sarkar

Conference Convener

Jean Monnet Chair

Chairperson, CES

Sanskriti Rajkhowa

Research Scholar, CES

Lyimee Saikia

Research Scholar, CES

Binod Khanal

Research Scholar, CES

Harsh Pandey

Research Scholar, CES

Abhishek Khajuria

Research Scholar, CES

Ravneet Kaur Bhogal

Research Scholar, CES

Sunanda R. Marak

Research Scholar, CES

Keynote Address

H.E. Manjeev S. Puri,

Former Ambassador to EU, Belgium, Luxembourg and Nepal



Manjeev Singh Puri is a former Indian Ambassador. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1982 and served as Ambassador of India to the European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg (2013-2017) and Nepal (2017-2019). He has also served as Ambassador/Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN from 2009-2012, a period during which India was on the Security Council. Prior to that, from 2005-2009, he headed the division in the Ministry of External Affairs dealing with UN issues on the social and economic side. In addition, he has served twice in Germany (in Bonn and Berlin), in Cape Town, Muscat, Bangkok and Caracas. He retired on 31 December 2019 in the rank of Secretary, Government of India.

Major areas of his experience relate to multilateralism (UN), Europe and Nepal and he was involved as a lead member of the Indian delegation at numerous global negotiations on, migration, human rights and UN reforms. His professional focus has been on issues relating to the environment, climate change and sustainable development. He was a lead negotiator for India at the UN on issues relating to the post-2015 development agenda, Sustainable Development Goals and at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. He was a key member of India's delegation at various Climate Change negotiations, including the Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Copenhagen in December 2009 and before that at Montreal, Bali, Bonn and Poznan.

Furthermore, he was involved with India's participation in the G8-G5 Summits from 2005 and was the point-person for the Major Economies Forum.

Ambassador Puri has a Masters' degree in Management and did his BA (Honours) in Economics from St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He is presently Distinguished Fellow at The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and a Distinguished Visiting Fellow with the Ananta Centre.

Working Session I: Foreign Policy and Security Concerns in the Nordic

Finland's Accession to NATO: Security Challenges in Europe's Nordic Periphery

Prof. Vasileios Syros

Professor, Greek Chair, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to trace the trajectory of Finland's accession to NATO. Amidst the war in Ukraine and defying all warnings issued by Russia, Finland applied for fast-track NATO membership and it represents a case study of a small nation successfully harnessing its diplomatic and military resources to enter the Alliance. The paper will examine the social, historical, and political factors that contributed to Finland's decision to join NATO and the various ways of shaping public opinion. It will also analyse the geopolitical repercussions of Finland's membership for the Nordic region and how it can set a precedent for the admission of Sweden, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Ukraine.



Brief Bio

Dr. Vasileios Syros is Professor and Greek Chair at Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi, India). He is also a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies at the United Service Institution of India (USI), India's oldest tri-service think tank (est. 1870) for research into national security and military affairs, and a Life Member of Clare Hall, University of Cambridge. His areas of interest include the history of medieval and early modern political thought (Christian, Islamic, and Jewish traditions), cross-cultural leadership, and Indian strategic thought.

The Ukraine War: A Zeitenwende for Security in the Nordic Region and Europe

Prof. Ummu Salma Bava

*Professor & Jean Monnet Chair, Centre for European Studies,
SIS, JNU, New Delhi*

Abstract

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, on the one hand, undid the existing security structure in Europe and refocused attention on territorial defense, which for long was not considered a problem. In one stroke with all talk of hybrid warfare, territorial integrity has come into question along with the dramatic shift in the balance of power on the continent. The disruption of security in Europe has been a 'zeitenwende' not only for the entire region but has brought sharp focus to the variable geographies and the exposure to conflict and the ramification for security. In particular, for the Nordic and Baltic regions, given their proximity and border with Russia, it has raised concerns about security vulnerabilities and the ability to deter a new enemy. This paper lays out the impact of the Ukraine war on security in the Nordic region by examining first, the implications of the war to security in Europe, second, the security challenge to the Nordic region looking at specific country preferences, third, it brings out the political response in the Nordic region especially in Finland and Sweden and Europe to the security threat and disruption and finally, gives an analysis of the consequences of this 'zeitenwende'.



Brief Bio

Prof. Ummu Salma Bava, Professor & Jean Monnet Chair, Centre for European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. She is the leading Indian expert on the European Union and India's foreign and security policy and also works on regional integration, emerging powers, the Indo-Pacific region, global governance, peace and conflict studies and has numerous publications. Fluent in English, Hindi and German, she was conferred in 2012 with the German civilian honour-Bundesverdienstkreuz (Order of Merit) by the President of Germany.

Turkey and the NATO membership of Finland and Sweden

Dr. George N. Tzogopoulos,

*Senior Research Fellow, Centre international de formation européenne
(CIFE), Nice, France*

Abstract

Turkey is emerging as an actor with the capacity of influencing developments in the international sphere. Turkey has been hesitant to accept the road of Finland and Sweden to NATO membership despite the appetite of both countries to join the Alliance in the aftermath of the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine. The trilateral memorandum signed in June 2022 set the basis for difficult negotiations. While the way for Finland's membership was cleared a few months later, obstacles for Sweden remain. The conference talk will focus on Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis Finland and Sweden and will attempt to decode the motivations behind decisions made by the Turkish government. These decisions will be analyzed not only through the prism of relations between Turkey and Finland and Turkey and Sweden but will also be placed under the microscope of Turkish distinctiveness in international affairs and the status of Turkish-American relations.



Brief Bio

Dr George N. Tzogopoulos (Ph.D. Loughborough University, UK, 2009) is an expert in media, international relations and Chinese affairs. He is member of CIFE core faculty and Senior Fellow, as well as director of the module 'Conflict and Co-operation in the International System' within the MA 'European Integration and Global Studies.' George is also a Senior Fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), and the Begin Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA) in Israel, and Lecturer in International Relations at the Democritus University of Thrace. He is the author of three books: *US Foreign Policy in the European Media: Framing the Rise and Fall of Neoconservatism* (IB TAURIS), *The Greek Crisis in the Media: Stereotyping in the International Press* (Ashgate) and *The Miracle of China: The New Symbiosis with the World* (Springer and China Social Sciences Press).

The Impact of NATO Membership to Finland and Sweden on European Defence and Security

Dr. J. Jeganaathan

*Sr. Assistant Professor and Head, Department of National Security Studies,
School of National Security Studies, Central University of Jammu, Jammu
and Kashmir*

Abstract

Is European Security and Defence in Crisis due to Russia-Ukraine War? The recent historic decisions by two Nordic countries Finland and Sweden which maintained military neutrality for decades to join NATO has raised serious concern that European security and defence is at peril. Though the 30-member NATO assembly accepted their application to join NATO, Turkey and Croatia have raised issues and put a series of political demands before these two countries in order to get the application ratified by their national assemblies. Being the oldest member of NATO, Turkey is the only NATO member which opposed citing Nordic countries' support to "Kurdish Groups" which have been designated as terrorist groups by Turkey. It is almost a done deal. Russia has warned that NATO membership to these Nordic countries would further deteriorate the security situation in Europe. But Nordic countries defended their decision by arguing that the Russian invasion has created a sense of uncertainty and insecurity among the Europeans. The outcome of this ongoing war is also quite unpredictable and there may be a possibility that the war may spill over into neighbouring regions in the near future. In this context, this paper examines the impact of NATO membership to Finland and Sweden on European security and defense in general and the Russian-Ukraine war in particular.



Brief Bio

Dr. J. Jeganaathan is an Assistant Professor & Head of the Department of National Security at the Central University of Jammu, J&K. Prior to this, he was a Research Fellow in the Internal and Regional Security Programme (2011- 13) and headed the South Asia Regional Security Programme focusing on Afghanistan and Iran at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS). He has an M.Phil./PhD in European Studies from the School of International Studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University with specialization in Post-Cold War European Security Order/architecture and NATO enlargement process. He was also a Member of the Indian Policy Group of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Regional Project on Envisioning the Future of Afghanistan, since 2012 and a Member of 'Nuclear Stability in South Asia Project' by Stimson Centre and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace since 2013. His research interests include Regional Security, Af-Pak and Terrorism, Border Security Studies, Trade and Connectivity in South Asia, Foreign and Security Policy of India, China in South Asia, NATO, Comparative Regionalism, Geopolitics and J&K and National Security.

Changing Security Dynamics in the Nordics Amid Ukraine War

Dr. Himani Pant

Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi

Abstract

The European security architecture has evolved significantly amid the ongoing war in Ukraine. The crisis has brought back the focus on NATO's role in European Security. At a time when countries such as France and Germany have been underscoring the need for European sovereignty and strategic autonomy, countries like Finland and Sweden have shed their inhibitions about joining NATO. It is notable that their membership not only adds to military-technical capabilities to the transatlantic alliance but also implies extension of NATO's border with Russia from the Arctic Ocean to the Baltic Sea. Meanwhile, the Nordics have also strengthened their intra-regional cooperation by agreeing to integrate their air defence to counter the Russian threat. Accordingly, the Nordics have emerged as key players in leading Western response towards Russia. Since the beginning of Ukraine crisis in 2014 and particularly since Russia's attack in the country last year, these countries have provided significant political, economic, military and humanitarian assistance to Kiev. With their proactive response these countries, along with Poland and the Baltics, have been contributing towards shifting of the centre of gravity from Western Europe towards the Northern and Central- Eastern Europe. This paper analyses the impact of Ukraine war on European security with an emphasis on the four Nordic countries- Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. It compares their response to Ukraine crisis and highlights their security concerns vis à vis Russia.



Brief Bio

Dr. Himani Pant is a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi. She has done her PhD from the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her doctoral thesis focused on “The European Union and Russia in their Common Neighbourhood: A Case Study of Georgia and Ukraine, 2004- 2016.” Prior to joining ICWA, she worked at the Observer Research Foundation and Vivekananda International Foundation. She was also a Visiting Research Scholar at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium in 2018. Her research focuses on developments in Russia, European Union, and Eastern Europe.

Finland's Development in its Foreign Policy to Diminish the Risks of Refugees coming to Europe through Turkey's Border with Greece

Dilge Bengü Özcoşkun

Rīga Stradiņš University, Faculty of European Studies, Doctorate Study Program, Social Sciences (Political Sciences), Latvia

Abstract

Finland's foreign policy can address migration crisis and refugees through humanitarianism, human rights, and international law. This involves collaborating with stakeholders, advocating for safe pathways, and promoting solutions addressing root causes of irregular migration. Through diplomatic efforts and cooperation, Finland aims to manage regional migration, ensure border security, uphold humanitarian and human rights standards. By providing humanitarian aid to refugee-hosting countries, Finland can reduce risks and promote sustainable solutions.

Finland can also prioritize regional cooperation on migration with EU member states, Turkey, and Greece, strengthening border security, reception, asylum processing while upholding humanitarian and human rights standards. Through initiatives, dialogues, and diplomatic engagement, Finland can improve migration management and support local development programs addressing root causes of irregular migration. Advocacy for safe and legal avenues for refugees in Europe, like increased resettlement quotas, family reunification, and other legal migration channels, aligns with Finland's foreign policy goals of managing the refugee crisis and promoting sustainable solutions.

Finland can prioritize refugee integration through education, employment, and social support, promoting social cohesion and cultural respect. By addressing integration and inclusion, Finland can help refugees rebuild their lives and become active members of their new communities. Finland can also cooperate with countries of origin and transit to address the root causes of irregular migration through diplomatic engagement, development cooperation, and policy advocacy. This collaborative approach aligns with Finland's foreign policy objectives of promoting safe migration processes and finding solutions to challenges associated within, including challenges posed by refugees arriving Europe from Turkey's border with Greece.



Brief Bio

Dilge Bengü Özcoşkun is a Ph.D. Candidate of Social Sciences (Political Sciences) at the Riga Stradiņš University in Latvia. She did her postgraduate studies in International Governance and Diplomacy at RSU. Her interest areas are international relations, diplomacy, immigration, and human rights. She carries out research work on `EU-Turkey Refugee Readmission Agreements`, and is currently working on `Turkey-Greece Crisis of Trust Between the Two Countries and the Leaders`

Working Session II: Contemporary Challenges to Nordic Society and Politics (I)

Framing Anti-Gender Discourse in Political Narratives of Right-Wing Populist Parties in Nordic Countries.

Dr. Manasi Sinha

Associate Professor, Political Science, Galgotias University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Abstract

The Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway) are extensively considered as paragons of social welfare and gender equality. This largely has been the result of deeply-rooted gendered welfare state policies committed to implementing gender mainstreaming across the socio-economic and political landscape. Diverse policy initiatives including parental leave policies; childcare services; informal care and long-term care services; transport and infrastructure; flexible working arrangements among others seek to address gender equality concerns and democratic values.

However, the rising salience of radical right parties in Nordic countries and the ideas they espouse raise questions about its implications on gender equality concerns and a discourse on intersectionality. The paper looks at how the rise of radical right parties has been accompanied by an observable shift in attitude towards and policies on anti-gender and intersectionality aspects. Using a feminist and discourse analysis, the paper explores how the anti-gender and intersectionality discourse gets framed and formulated in the key political speeches and ideological narratives of far-right radical parties in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway.



Brief Bio

Dr. Manasi Sinha is an Associate Professor in Political Science (International Politics/Gender Studies) at the School of Liberal Education, Galgotias University, India. She holds a multidisciplinary academic background with Ph.D in European Studies from School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University(JNU) and dual M.A. Degree in Political Science and English Literature & Critical Theories. Her teaching and research have resulted in academic appointments and fellowships in India and Europe. She is a recipient of the prestigious ‘Interdisciplinary Bridges for Indo-European Studies (IBIES) Erasmus Mundas Scholarship’ from the European Commission during 2014-2015 at the University of Warsaw, Poland. She also has received ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship in India. She had worked as a Teaching Assistant in the Institute of International Relations at the University of Warsaw, Poland. She has also been Visiting Research Fellow at Uppsala University, Stockholm University (Sweden) and Vrije University in Brussels, Belgium. Her research interests include European Union and Global Politics, Gender mainstreaming and EU Politics, Gender, culture and violence in South Asia and Europe. Her recent publications include: “Locating Pitfalls in EU Gender Equality Policy”, *Forum Italicum*, Sage Publications, 2023; Encyclopedia Article on “Gender-mainstreaming in the European Union Policies” by Bloomsbury Publications, 2023, Edited Book ‘Decade of Power Politics 2022 by KW Publishers etc. She has been extensively involved in academic research in above mentioned areas and has more than a few scholarly papers, peer-reviewed articles and popular media pieces to her credit

Data Protection in the Digital Era: An Analysis of Nordic Countries' Approach, Initiatives and Concerns

Dr. Aakash Natani

Assistant Professor, IIIT Hyderabad

Abstract

Data privacy is becoming a global concern and different countries, regions and organizations are taking different steps to address it. This research paper examines the initiatives taken by Nordic countries to protect data privacy and address citizens' concerns about potential data breaches. The study focuses on the policies and regulations implemented by Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland to safeguard personal information and ensure individuals have control over their data. The paper also highlights the electoral concerns that are emerging in Nordic countries on data privacy issues.

The study found that the Nordic countries have been at the forefront of data privacy protection, with strong legal frameworks and active enforcement of privacy laws. However, the paper also notes that there are concerns about the potential impact of data privacy issues on electoral processes in the region, as the use of personal data in political campaigns and the potential manipulation of data could have significant consequences for democratic practices and processes. The study concludes that while the Nordic countries have made significant progress in protecting data privacy, there is still a need for continued monitoring and enforcement to ensure that the rights of individuals are protected in the digital era.



Brief Bio

Dr Aakansha Natani is working as an Assistant Professor in the Human Science Research Centre, International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad. Her research areas are Data Ownership and Privacy Debates, Digital Public Sphere and Civic Engagement, New Digital Rights Paradigm, Digital Divide and Inclusion. Her work is focused on developing a democratic perspective on the technical use of ICT for governance, public deliberations and decision-making processes. She teaches 'Internet and Democracy' and 'The Making of Contemporary India' in IIIT Hyderabad.

Realising Sustainable Development Goals and Disability in the Nordic Region: A Case Study of Denmark

Dr Pankaj Singh Kushwaha

Assistant Manager, Canara Bank, New Delhi

Abstract

The implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2008 marked a significant shift in the global discourse surrounding disability. The Convention aimed to ensure a dignified life for all people with disabilities, emphasizing the need for an adaptive political system to address their concerns. Denmark ratified the Convention in 2009, accepting all mandatory instructions and identifying goals and objectives for the disabled population. This piece of writing explores the institutional measures taken by Denmark to provide a dignified life for its disabled community.

Denmark's institutional measures appear to have implemented the Convention appropriately, providing institutional safeguards to address the concerns of the disabled population. The Convention emphasizes the need for detailed discussions and measures to minimize risks and maximize happiness for people with disabilities. Denmark's implementation of the Convention seems to have focused on this aspect, identifying goals and objectives to address the needs of the disabled community.

This piece of writing delves into Denmark's institutional measures, examining how they have provided a dignified life for the disabled community. It aims to shed light on the effectiveness of the measures taken and provide insights for other countries looking to implement the Convention. By examining Denmark's approach, this writing provides a blueprint for other countries to follow in providing a dignified life for their disabled population.



Brief Bio

Dr Pankaj Singh Kushwaha completed his MPhil & PhD from the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies JNU from 2013-2021. His MPhil dissertation was on 'Disability and Public Policy in the United Kingdom 1995-2010'. He submitted his PhD thesis titled 'Inclusive Education for Children with Blindness: case studies of the United Kingdom and India 2006-2016". He has presented several research papers at various national/international conferences. "Making Inclusive Education Special: Analysing trinity practices in India" was presented at the Second Asian Conference on Disability in Indonesia. As a research contribution, He published 'Disability, technology and independent living'. His broader area of research is disability and discrimination.

The Onslaught of Covid 19 on the Nordic Welfare Model

Dr. Shreya Pandey

*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, St. Xavier's College,
Ranchi*

Abstract

The Nordic Welfare model stands out as a distinct characteristic of the five countries that are largely looked upon as a single cohesive unit by the external world. An attempt shall be made to define this model and trace its origins. An evaluation of the quality of services rendered by the welfare model as a response to the Covid-19 (coronavirus disease) epidemic shall be made. The visible shift from social democracy to neo-liberalism resulting in the increasing role of the private sector in fulfilling the welfarist responsibilities promised by the public sector while dealing with the impact of the pandemic shall be investigated. The constant strife to achieve the welfarist goals and getting rid of social disparities on the one hand and ensuring robust economic growth on the other, along with meeting many unprecedented challenges in the Covid-19 era shall be analysed. The various challenges threatening the sustainability of the Nordic welfare model and creating impediments in achieving its goals shall be highlighted and the possible ways and means of overcoming these problems shall be explored. The notable features of the existing welfare model worth emulating by the rest of the international community shall be emphasised upon. An attempt at defining the changes in the role and status of the Nordic welfare model in the near future on account of being mindful of the pandemic and its consequences shall be made.



Brief Bio

Shreya Pandey is a faculty at the Political Science Department of St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. She was a Fellow at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi from 2017-2019. She has completed her Masters in Political Science with specialization in International Relations as well as M.Phil and Ph.D from the Centre for European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has taught various courses in International Relations and Political Science at Delhi University, Ranchi University and Central University of Jharkhand since 2009. She has worked as Principal Researcher in several international projects on EU-India perception studies coordinated by the National Centre for Research on Europe, University of Canterbury, New Zealand and Asia- Europe Foundation, Singapore sponsored by the European Commission. She has been presenting and publishing papers on India-Korea relations since 2008. She has participated in more than 50 international conferences in India and various parts of the world. She has published a book, *India and the European Union: Perceptions of the Indian Print Media and Elites* (Knowledge World, 2017). Her research interests include current trends in international relations, EU-India relations, India-Korea relations and Indian foreign policy. She is currently teaching courses on Indian Government and Politics, Ancient and Modern Indian Political Thought, Public Administration and Public Policy.

Understanding Whiteness and Racism in a Swedish Context

Sumbul Parveen

Research Scholar, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

It is argued that in Northern Europe, there is a special kind of whiteness - Nordic whiteness - to be white is to be Nordic, to be Nordic is to be white and within this grouping, Sweden is said to have its own Swedish variety of whiteness. This article traces Sweden's racial temporalities, spanning over a timeline from 1905 till present time. Further, the article also seeks to analyse the issue of racism in Sweden, a country that has internationally been known for its support to anti-colonial, anti-racial movements. Given the nature of the study, the methodology is qualitative.



Brief Bio

Sumbul Parveen is a PhD Scholar at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, India. The title of her PhD thesis is “Impact of Immigration on Politics and Society in Norway and Sweden, 2001-2018”. Her main areas of research interest include immigration and integration, race and racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, right-wing populism, multiculturalism and discourse analysis. For her MPhil, she worked on “Response of Norway and Sweden to the Refugee Crisis of 2015”. Sumbul has presented papers in various national and international conferences and also published papers in international journals.

Working Session III: Contemporary Challenges to Nordic Society and Politics (II)

Impact of Right-wing Populism on the Nordic Welfare Model

Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar

*Professor, Jean Monnet Chair, Chairperson,
Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi*

Abstract

In Europe, the five Nordic countries are identified as strong democracies with responsive and responsible governments, stress on human rights and gender equality, robust welfare states, solid education systems and great technological advancement. Consensual democracy is the hallmark of the Nordic countries which meant that many contentious issues once agreed upon by the political elite have been removed from the ambit of competitive politics. However, over the last few years, this consensual functioning has been impacted by the increasing electoral success of right-wing populist parties that has also brought them into the circle of power. Right-wing populist parties of the Nordics share the family characteristics in so far as they stress on nativism and are anti-immigrant. In this context, the paper looks at how these parties' positions are shaping the political discourse and policies and argues that as the right-wing populist parties become electorally successful it has led to both their co-option and increasing internal tensions and divisions within these parties as they balance the need to govern through compromise while remaining true to the core.



Brief Bio

Dr Bhaswati Sarkar is a Professor at the Centre for European Studies (CES), School of International Studies, JNU. She is currently the Chairperson of the Centre. She did her graduation and post-graduation in Political Science. Her interest areas are nation, nationalism, democracy, immigration, minority rights, European integration and European identity. She currently holds the Jean Monnet Chair on 'Democracy, Diversity and European Identity in the European Union' and the Jean Monnet Module 'Understanding European Integration Through the Regional Lens'.

Religion and Secularisation in the Nordics

Dr. Sheetal Sharma

Assistant Professor, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

Over the last 80 years, religion in Europe has seen a strong decline. Although the process of secularisation and gradual decline of religiosity had begun a couple of centuries ago, the last century witnessed a steep decline in the number of believers in god. The phenomenon of secularisation is pan European but the Nordic region in particular exhibits the sharpest and steepest decline. The secularisation theorists have defined secularisation as the dissociation of god from everyday life. This paper attempts to identify some aspects of the concept of secularisation, why the Nordic region is registering a higher percentage of non-believers as compared to other regions in Europe, what is the nature and extent of belief in god, has secularisation really set in and how new forms of religion are replacing traditional religion.



Brief Bio

Dr. Sheetal Sharma is faculty at the Centre for European Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research interests include social and cultural issues in contemporary Europe and India and their historical roots, Multiculturalism and Diversity, Methodology of Social Sciences, Gender and empowerment of women. She has received JNU Research Excellence Award for outstanding contribution and excellence in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities in the Young Scholars Category for the year 2018-19. She is selected for the prestigious European Union Visitors Program, 2020. She has been awarded grants for projects funded under the framework of the Erasmus Program of the EU and has been part of international projects as a project investigator from India. Dr. Sharma has several publications which include over a dozen books (authored and edited), research papers, articles, book chapters, comments and columns. She writes regularly for journals and magazines of national and international repute. She has also been invited as a discussant on radio and TV programs and has presented papers at national and international conferences.

Has Denmark been transformed since Covid 19?

Dr Peter Birkelund Andersen

*Associate Professor, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies,
University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

Abstract

Two European intellectuals Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben foresaw that the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 would lead to radical changes in liberal European societies. Žižek argues for a basic change in the neoliberal economic systems and for the developing new balance between the state and individuals in the economic system. In fact, a full-fledged reawakening of communism in a new international order of collaboration. Agamben argues that the governments were using the pandemic as a cover for implementing policies that solidify their hold on power, at a minimum, and might enable them to obtain absolute power.

None of them turned out to be right in the case of Europe. The present paper will investigate this in light of the decrease in psychological well-being (WHO-5) in Denmark during closedown during the first wave of the pandemic and relate it to developments in political trust and religion. In this regard, the meaning and significance of the Danish and European responses to COVID-19 will be considered.

The paper is partly based on a survey on Covid-19 – Religion and existential wellbeing – University of Copenhagen (ku.dk)



Brief Bio

Dr Peter Birkelund Andersen is a faculty member at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. His main research themes are social changes and changes in religion and culture. In Denmark and Europe, it has mainly been investigated through surveys and in India through participant observation and through archive studies in London. Primary themes of research in India include the Santals and conceptualisations of religion, Christian missions, education, modernity and tribe.

In 2020 and 2021, during the Covid 19 pandemic, he chaired a panel study on religion and psychological well-being ([Nr. 72 \(2021\): COVID-19 - Religion, trivsel og eksistens | Religionsvidenskabeligt Tidsskrift](#)) and has also edited (together with Amit Prakash og Meghna Guhatarkurta) [No. 12 \(2022\): Special Issue: Covid-19 and Civil Society in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka | NAVEIÑ REET: Nordic Journal of Law and Social Research \(tidsskrift.dk\)](#). His studies in the Santal Rebellion in Bengal in 1855-1856 has recently been published ([The Santal Rebellion 1855–1856: The Call of Thakur - 1st Edition - P \(routledge.com\)](#)).

A Nordic Model of Associative Governance?

Prof. Haldor Byrkjeflot

Professor, Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, Norway

Abstract

The Nordics, at least in recent history, have been regarded as successful societies, due to their abilities to provide welfare, security, and well-being for their citizens. In this paper, I argue that the current narratives of the Nordic models are not adequately explaining what has happened, or what kind of lessons and inspirations may be drawn from historical experiences. I will first review the literature on the Nordic model and thereafter provide a sketch for an alternative perspective related to the idea of associative governance.

Recently there has been a change from emphasizing socio-political aspects towards arguing for the role of Protestantism and free farmers in shaping the Nordic models. In order to develop a third and alternative perspective to a political economy and culturalist approach we take our departure from the literature on the relationship between civil society and the state in the Nordics. These dimensions have been important for understanding the Nordic development paths, but in this paper, the organizational and civil society dimension will be emphasized. Historically, it has been pointed to the role of people's movements and the broader experiences with organizing political processes across spheres, but this perspective has been rather absent in recent scholarship related to the idea of a Nordic model and its relation to global developments.

The paper reviews historical and social science sources providing information and perspectives related to the organizational dimension in the formation of Nordic societies. Associational life in the Nordics has been characterized by highly organized people's movements promoting religious as well as cultural and economic aims. The people's movements, voluntary organizations and later corporatist compromises may be understood as necessary preconditions for the development of the Nordic models. The associative governance style or tradition, so typical for the Nordic region, developed as a response to actions taken by local and central state institutions, as they were confronted by a high level of social mobilization.



Brief Bio

Haldor Byrkjeflot is a professor of sociology at the University of Oslo (UiO). He was the academic director of UiO: Nordic, one of three strategic priority areas at UiO (2015-2019). Byrkjeflot has published on comparative management and employment systems, the knowledge foundations of management, the Nordic model, the globalization of the MBA, changing knowledge regimes in universities, the role of bureaucracy in modern societies and organizational dynamics in health and education. He is co-editor of the book series *Nordic Studies in a global context* at Routledge and *The Making and Circulation of Nordic Models* (Routledge 2022) as well as a forthcoming book with the working title *A Nordic Model of associative governance*

Green Transition and the Welfare State: A Challenge for the Norwegian Model?

Prof. Hans Christian Garmann Johnsen

Professor, Department of Working Life and Innovation, School of Business and Law, University of Adger, Norway

Abstract

What is today referred to as *The Norwegian model* was developed over an almost 90 years period, starting from the agreement between the social partners in 1935. The core of the model is still the voluntary collaboration between the social partners but over the years, the state-run welfare programs and legislation have played a greater part. Thus, the model was a response to social challenges that appeared during what is often called Industry 2.0. The core of Industry 2.0 was a change towards mass production and the kind of social organisation that it implied, including class division, the consternation of capital, and urbanisation, to mention some. Many will argue that the model has been quite successful in mitigating the social challenges that follow this development. As we are now foreseeing a transformation towards Industry 4.0 (both including the AI revolution and the green transformation), it is relevant to ask how well fit the model is to meet future challenges. The presentation will reflect on some of the dilemmas that the model is facing.



Brief Bio

Hans Chr. Garmann Johnsen (b. 1955) is Professor of Work Life research at the Department of Working-Life and Innovation, School of Business and Law, University of Agder, Norway. He has a background in economics and political science and has a PhD from CBS, Copenhagen, Denmark. He has published extensively within the field of innovation and work life research. He has for many years been teaching philosophy of science at different European universities. He is currently involved in two EU Horizon projects: GI-NI and BRIDGES 5.0. Both are related to the transformation of work life in Europe because of technological change and global challenges. His latest book is *Science Meets Philosophy: What Makes Science Divided but Still Significant*, London, Routledge, 2023.

Working Session IV: Climate Change and Energy

India and the Nordic: A Development Cooperation Perspective on Agenda 2030

Dr. Swati Prabhu

Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi

Abstract

Starting their bilateral relationship in 1947, India and Norway are two important actors placed at different tangents of development. Given how the world is currently in the midst of a polycrisis, development cooperation is imperative, going beyond the usual moral obligation of giving aid. Also, fostering partnerships hold the key in building resilience and inclusivity for the vulnerable, bringing positive social, political and economic changes and addressing some of the pressing sustainability challenges. Both India and Norway have their respective development partnerships in place, with a particular focus on achieving Agenda 2030. As one of the strong driving forces from the Global South, India's development partnerships have been gradually making inroads in several developing countries of Africa and South Asia. On the other, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation or Norad is also deepening its engagements, both thematically and geographically for the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This paper attempts to examine the potential of a joint Indo-Nordic development cooperation initiative in sectoral areas of energy, climate change and global health. It also seeks to comprehend how these two actors have utilised development cooperation as a tool of diplomacy and increasing strategic visibility, in the current geopolitical context.



Brief Bio

Dr Swati Prabhu is Associate Fellow with the Centre for New Economic Diplomacy (CNED), Observer Research Foundation (ORF), Kolkata. Her research explores the interlinkages between India's development partnerships in South Asia and Africa and the Sustainable Development Agenda. Swati's broader research interests encompass climate change and environment, sustainability, and development cooperation.

India and Norway Energy Cooperation: Pathways for Energy Transition

Dr. Pooja Sharma

*Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Daulat Ram College,
University of Delhi, New Delhi*

Abstract

India is a developing country with an energy-deficient and coal-based economy that faces many socio-economic challenges. Norway, on the other hand, is a highly developed economy, much smaller than India, not only in terms of geographical area but also concerning the size of the population. Norway is an energy exporting and hydro-electricity based economy, sustaining a strong socio-economic background. Moreover, the two nations are located in extremely different climatic conditions.

There is a huge difference in the electricity mix in terms of sources of energy generation in both India and Norway. While coal is the most dominant source of electricity generation in India, hydro-electricity remains the most prominent source of electricity generation in Norway. However, despite considerable differences in socio-economic status of both countries, a comparative account of pathways of the energy transition is crucial. India and Norway are heading towards a massive energy transition to renewable energy systems. The paper attempts to examine the energy transition pathways (renewable energy RE and electric vehicles EV) of both countries between 1990 to 2020 with respect to policies, energy security, and environmental aspects. The work identifies the scope for energy cooperation in the context of value chains, markets, research, and development. In addition, the political economy of the energy transition is a critical aspect experienced by both nations. The study examines various stakeholders responsible for driving the political economy of energy transition in both nations.

A comparison of the journey of the energy transition will serve as a learning experience for India in terms of policies adopted for energy transition. There is a wide spectrum of the policy mix for adopting renewable energy systems. Apart from witnessing the Norwegian energy transition pathway, the overall economic impact of each policy would also provide an evidence for Indian experience if India plans to adopt an appropriate energy transition pathway. Thus, India and Norway can benefit by inducing bilateral cooperation at various levels, such as international trade agreements, knowledge-sharing, training contracts etc.



Brief Bio

Dr. Pooja Sharma is an Associate Professor at Department of Economics, Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi. An alumna of Miranda House, University of Delhi, she completed her Masters in Economics from Delhi School of Economics, MPhil, and Ph.D. from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). An avid Gandhian, her contribution varies in the field of Energy security, Energy transition, Renewable energy, Human Capital, and Gandhian perspective on energy transition. Also engaged in CEC UGC live lecture series on Environmental Economics, Climate change, and Sustainability. She has published papers in reputed journals. She has contributed two books on Gandhian thoughts, “Through the Lens of Mahatma: Journey of a Migrant” and “Living in Truth: The Gandhian Paradigm.”

India-Denmark Climate Partnership

Dr. Sayantan Ghosal

*Consultant, Research and Information System for Developing Countries,
New Delhi*

Abstract

Climate change is one of the most defining issues of contemporary times with its impact being global and unprecedented. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 13) urges that prior action is needed to combat climate change and its associated impacts. Both, the developing and developed world understand such harsh ground realities and have initiated the necessary measures to address such challenges. In this regard, India has pledged to reach net-zero emissions by 2070 at COP 26. This requires that the country gradually increase its share of renewable sources in its energy mix and reduce its dependency on fossil fuels. India also seeks strong ties with other major powers of the world to drive the transition to a cleaner future. Here, it is noteworthy to mention that India and Denmark plan to forge a sustainable future together as outlined by the Green Strategic Partnership signed by the two countries in 2020. Denmark is globally recognized as a pioneer in the field of energy and climate and aspires to reach net zero emissions by 2045. This partnership between them seeks to advance political cooperation, expand economic relations and green growth; with a focus on an ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Utilizing such cooperation they can demonstrate to the world that delivering on ambitious climate and sustainable energy goals is possible. In this context, this research paper focuses on the objectives of this partnership, associated developments and its present momentum.



Brief Bio

Mr. Sayantan Ghosal is Consultant, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) since January 2022. He has completed his MA in Economics from Jadavpur University (2012) and M.Phil from the Centre for European Studies (JNU) (2015). In August 2021 he submitted his doctoral thesis at the Centre for European Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi). His research interests include welfare systems, social protection policies, ageing population and immigration. At RIS, he is focusing on the G20 economic cooperation.

Norway's Position in EU Energy

Ravneet Kaur Bhogal

Research Scholar, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

Energy is an important component in the daily lives of the people. It makes a crucial element in the growth and development of the country. For the European Union 'Energy' is an important element in structuring and strategizing its policies and agenda. As with the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2016 European Union Global Strategy 'Energy' became one of the core sectors for policy formulation and implementation for the Union. Along with this the Paris Agreement on Climate Change European Union's Energy policy objectives emphasise on the need for the use of renewable sources of energy, less carbon emission, secured energy supply, increased energy efficiency and energy saving. Norway is an important player because of its role in the formulation of the Energy policy because it is participating in the EEA agreement and RES agenda of the EU. Norway, with a large hydropower base and flexibility, has the potential in its offshore natural gas transmission grid, can support the EU clean energy transition by providing much-needed flexibility and controllability. Therefore, this paper will aim to look into the position of Norway within the constellations of energy suppliers to the EU and how is it enabling the EU in achieving the goals of Green Energy and Decarbonizing.



Brief Bio

Ravneet Kaur is currently pursuing Ph.D. in Centre for European Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She did her graduation in Economics from Panjab University, Chandigarh, and post-graduation in Politics with a specialization in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her interest areas are European Energy Union, Energy Security, Political Economy, International Relations, European Human Rights Policy, and Identity Issues in Europe.

Working Session V: India and the Nordics (I)

India, Nordics and Agenda 2030

Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva

Professor, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

Though India and the Nordics are at very different stages of development, they are part of the 2030 Agenda; and committed to implementing 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with its 169 targets. How these goals are implemented in India is not only important for India itself but also for the global success of the SDGs. All Nordic countries have agreed to work together with India in achieving these goals. This has been part of the *India-EU Roadmap 2025* as well as in the declarations of the India-Nordic summits. Traditionally, Nordic donors have earned a reputation for their genuine concern for human rights, democracy and women empowerment. They have also been praised for generosity as they have been above the UN target of 0.7 per cent of their GNI. But the implementation of the SDGs goes beyond development cooperation in the narrow sense. In the last few years, the attempt has been to link some of the Nordic solutions to Indian flagship programmes linked to the SDG agenda. These include green strategic partnership with Denmark, blue economy dialogue with Norway and green transition partnership with Sweden.



Brief Bio

Prof Gulshan Sachdeva is Jean Monnet Chair; Coordinator, Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence; and Professor at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. He is Book Series Editor, Europe-Asia Connectivity (Palgrave Macmillan). Between 2016 and 2021, he was also Editor-in-Chief, of International Studies (SAGE). He headed the ADB and Asia Foundation projects on regional cooperation at the Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kabul. He was also a consultant with the ILO. He has been a partner in many Jean Monnet Networks and Horizon 2020 training networks. Some of his recent publications include Challenges in Europe: Indian Perspectives (Palgrave Macmillan) and India in a Reconnecting Eurasia (Washington: CSIS). He holds PhD in Economics from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest.

India's Nordic Reconnect: Striking Convergence amid Geostrategic Challenges

Dr. Manasi Singh

Assistant Professor, Centre for Security Studies, School of National Security Studies, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

Abstract

Moving past the UK to become the world's fifth largest economy, India is reaching out to diverse partners and strengthening its bilateral and multilateral engagements to become a more influential global player and thereby, leverage its full economic potential. The second India Nordic Summit held in May 2022 heralded high hopes for New Delhi to strengthen collaboration in a host of areas such as climate and environmental protection, post-pandemic recovery, digitalisation, research-based innovation and development etc. The Nordic countries with their unparalleled advantage in critical niche technologies offer an attractive proposition for India to switch to a greener economy and scale up its markets. Reconnecting with the Nordic thus has a strong economic and strategic rationale for India to embark on a sustainable and resilient growth path.

As India recalibrates its engagement with Europe in the midst of a realignment of the region's security landscape, it remains to be seen how well the momentum can be sustained on its Nordic outreach. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has triggered a scramble for security cover among the smaller European nations. Considering the ongoing geopolitical developments, the Nordics long known for their neutrality in International Relations, have shown a preference for military power as attested by Finland's eventual entry into NATO in April 2023, while Sweden awaits to follow suit. India-Nordic ties have a strong commonality of interests based on democratic values and a shared commitment to global norms. However, the return of the great game in Europe and the growing proximity of Russia and China could pose a challenge for strengthening cooperation on sustainable ocean management and governance of the Arctic region. In this context, the paper aims to discuss the broad contours of the India-Nordic strategic partnership and argues that the year 2023 marks an opportune time to strike convergence on common economic interests, mutual commitments to meeting global challenges with India holding the G20 Presidency and Sweden chairing the Council of the EU.



Brief Bio

Manasi Singh is an Assistant Professor at School of National Security Studies, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar. She completed her Bachelors from Lady Sri Ram College, Delhi and holds a Master's degree in Politics (with specialization in IR) and MPhil and PhD in European Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Dr. Singh was a Visiting Researcher at ULB (Brussels), Freie University (Berlin) and the University of Bonn (Bonn). She has previously taught International Relations at the University of Delhi and has also worked with *The Times of India* as a copy editor. She has published in peer-reviewed journals of Sage and Brill and has contributed several book chapters in edited volumes of Routledge, Springer and Palgrave Macmillan and has presented papers at international conferences held at the University of Wurzburg (Germany), Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai and IIT Madras.

Currently, she is also the Coordinator of the Centre for Maritime Security Studies at CUG and the Principal Investigator of a Major Research Project funded by ICSSR on Gujarat's coastal security. Her research interests include global governance and multilateralism, the EU as a global actor, peace and conflict studies and India's foreign policy.

India-Nordic Partnership - Strengths and Opportunities

Dr. Ankita Dutta

Research Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi

Abstract

India's engagement with Nordic countries reflects the evolving Indian foreign policy and the role these countries can play in it. With India emerging as an economic powerhouse with strong democratic credentials, a strong partnership with India is seen by Nordic countries as not only desirable but also essential. These countries are pioneers in innovation, clean energy, and green technologies - areas that India is looking to expand its own expertise in. For the Nordic countries, India represents a fast-growing economy with a vast untapped market. The India-Nordic Summits of 2018 and 2022 provided a perfect platform for these countries to come together and realise the full potential of the partnership. This presentation analyses how India views Nordic countries and explores the issues of cooperation.



Brief Bio

Dr Ankita Dutta is a Research Fellow at the Strategic Studies Programme, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi. At ORF, she is engaged in research on Europe. This includes producing analytical articles on the politics, economy and strategic issues of the region. Prior to joining Observer Research Foundation, she was associated with the Indian Council of World Affairs, Sapru House, New Delhi as a Research Fellow for Europe. She has a PhD in European Studies from the Centre for European Studies, School of International Relations, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her area of interest includes Indian Foreign Policy, right-wing politics in Europe, diversity studies, European Union and Politics.

The Arctic in India-Nordic Ties

Dr. Stuti Banerjee

Senior Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi

Abstract

India's engagement with Nordic countries reflects an evolution of India's foreign policy and converging interests for multidimensional strategic cooperation. An emerging area of interest has been climate change and the environment with reference to the Arctic. India has been engaged in the Arctic since 1920 and established a research base in 2008. While the stress on pure scientific research continues, climate change and the rapid decline in the ice-sheets in the Arctic have led to a growing interest in the political, economic and social importance of the region. The presence of resources such as oil and gas reserves, unexploited marine-life and shorter shipping routes connecting two oceans - the Pacific and the Atlantic - presents an incredible opportunity to countries. As a result, contemporary polar research is being relocated at the intersection of three dynamic disciplines – Geo-strategy, Geo-economics and Climate Change - it has led nations, including India to look at the region as an asset for future development. India has a significant stake in the Arctic and has outlined its interest vis-à-vis the Arctic through its Arctic policy. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the Second India- Nordic Summit noted that India's Arctic Policy provides a good framework for expansion of India-Nordic cooperation in the Arctic region. This underlines India strong determination for strategic presence in that region and a new area of collaboration in the relations between India and the Nordic nations.



Brief Bio

Dr. Stuti Banerjee is a Senior Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi. At the Council, Dr. Banerjee is engaged in research on North America and Latin America & the Caribbean, the Indo-Pacific and the Polar region. This includes producing analytical articles on politics, strategy and security with emphasis on US and Indian foreign policy and the polar policy of the two nations.

Prior to joining the ICWA, she was an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi. At CAPS she was part of the Nuclear Security project and was studying the development of nuclear energy in the countries within Asia. During her tenure at CAPS, she has also written on the concept of 'Soft Power'. She has worked as a Research Intern for the Observer Research Foundation. She received her PhD from the American, Canadian and Latin American Studies Division, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Working Session VI: India and the Nordics (II)

India's Nordic Outreach and the Arctic Region

Dr. Sakti Prasad Srichandan

Assistant Professor, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

For centuries, the Arctic region received little attention for the simple reason that it was too hostile an environment to merit any attention. But due to climate change and prospects of harnessing untapped oil, gas and mineral resources, it is now receiving wide attention and creating unexpected and complex new challenges. Apart from the US, Canada, Russia, Nordic countries like Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Sweden and Finland have a direct stake in the Arctic affairs. India with its Arctic Policy, is also looking for enhanced engagement with the Arctic region and intervene in the complex mechanisms of its governance. The growing geopolitical contestations in the Arctic also requires greater interaction by India with different stakeholders including Nordic countries. Keeping India's recent outreach to Nordic countries as the background, this paper seeks to focus on three interrelated objectives: first, protection of the Arctic environment and its indigenous population; second, promotion of sustainable exploitation of resources; and third, improvement of Arctic multilateral governance.



Brief Bio

Dr Sakti Prasad Srichandan is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi since July 2020. He has done his Masters in Economics from Utkal University, and MPhil and PhD in European Studies from Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He had previously worked with National Security Council, Government of India as a Research Officer (2014-2017) and with Government of Odisha as an Administrative Officer (2017-2020). His research interests include India-EU Relations, European Security and Migration Issues, and Comparative Regional Integration. He has been associated with many international research institutions. He has authored two books, and contributed research papers on European issues and Indian foreign policy in a number of academic journals and magazines. He is also a regular contributor of commentaries in mainstream Indian print and digital media.

India-Nordic Relations: Convergence and Cooperation

Dr. Kakoli Sengupta

*Associate Professor Department of International Relations, Jadavpur
University*

Abstract

India and the five Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland) share huge convergences and complementarities. The convergences lie in democratic values, pluralism, climate change and the environment, promotion of global peace and security, freedom of speech and expression, promotion of human rights. Apart from shared values and interests, there are many strategic and economic convergences as well. India and the Nordic states are re-aligning their engagement with each other. India's energetic foreign policy in recent years has seen the country placing renewed focus on Europe especially the smaller states. The Nordic countries are top achievers in innovation, clean energy, good governance, healthcare, transparency, good governance, social justice etc and there are enormous opportunities for India to collaborate with these countries for mutual benefit. There is a lot of scope for bilateral trade and investment. The First India-Nordic Summit held in April 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden and the Second India – Nordic Summit held in Copenhagen, Denmark in May 2022 explored areas of cooperation and convergence between the two sides. A strategic partnership between India and the Nordic countries is now being viewed as an imperative of changing global realities.



Brief Bio

Dr Kakoli Sengupta was the Head of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India from 2016 to 2018. Having successfully completed her term, she is presently teaching as an Associate Professor in the same Department. A Gold Medallist in her graduation, Dr. Sengupta had completed her Ph.D from the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University on the topic 'From Counter-Terrorism to Conflict Resolution: A Study of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland'. As the Departmental Chair, she had organized several noteworthy programmes, lectures, seminars and workshops including talks by policymakers, political leaders, diplomats and Consul Generals of several countries, eminent academicians, legal experts, journalists etc. Her areas of specialisation are Terrorism, Counter Terrorism, Peace & Conflict, European Security, Irish politics and Gender. She appears regularly on television programmes on topics of current affairs and international relations. Dr. Sengupta has also been involved in social work for the last twenty years.

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR): A Role Model for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

Dr. Satya Narayan Prasad

Associate Professor, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

There are a number of criteria which have been employed for identifying regions in different regional configurations. The most advanced cluster of regional functional organization, however, has been developed in Western Europe in the post-World War II period. It is widely acknowledged that the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) today, is one of the most integrated and dynamically developing regions in Europe, which showed considerable economic stability even at times of economic and financial crisis. It is further hoped that only deeper European integration and intensive regional cooperation can keep the region on top of global ratings as the most environmentally sustainable, economically stable, industrially innovative, advanced, dynamic and society-friendly part of the world. The BSR has become the "laboratory of modernity" that could be a European example for others, especially for the South Asian Region. The member countries of SAARC, which hold much promise in terms of both natural and human resources, should be harnessed for lifting up the whole region out of poverty, disease, environmental degradation and other challenges that directly feed 'terrorism, extremism and criminality', take BSR as their role model for meeting regional economic integration as the only option for addressing the long-standing, protected inter-state tensions in this region (South Asia).

The present paper would try to answer the question whether the BSR really provide a model that SAARC could emulate. If yes, then what are the sensitivities and challenges in this context?



Brief Bio

Dr. Satya Narayan Prasad is an Associate Professor at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His area of interest is the Baltics and Baltic security in particular. Apart from supervising research scholars, he also teaches about the Baltic region and Baltic security to MA students at the university as part of the combined courses on Europe offered by the Centre for European Studies.

India-Nordic Relations: Natural partners - do not engage naturally

Abhishek Tripathi

Research Scholar, Sapienza University, Rome

Abstract

India-Nordic relations saw a very euphoric turn when in 2018, the Indian prime minister visited Sweden after almost thirty years. The two geographical regions, holders of the democratic values and system in their respective geographies have been a case of diplomatic reluctance and some degree of unqualified tacit ignorance of the two democracies that could not directly engage regularly. Western European economies engage with China and Russia on one hand on economic issues, and with the USA in social, political, and economic spheres. The major European economies do not see these two engagements as opposing to the democratic values of the EU and or Europe in general. India-Nordic relations have been the case of reluctant partners, who probably would be very natural partners, due to their respective welfare policies, democracies, and functioning vibrant nations and regions. It is of great research interest because the natural partners, do not engage much, even on issues like clean energy and environment, democratic systems, delivery of welfare schemes, women's participation, tourism, joint -research, and many other non-economic co-operations.

Nordic-India relations saw a recently concluded India-Nordic summit in May 2022, there is a sense of galvanizing the partnership in various domains of co-operations between these two regions based on economic reasons and not so much on culture and common democratic values of diversity, welfare, plurality, and other civic based engagements. Ironic as it may sound the two democratically vibrant regions, do not recognize people-to-people connections in a diplomatic relationship, but rather more mutual economic opportunities. One of the salient reasons for the reluctance could be the historical and philosophical understanding of the different natures of these two democratic societies. We do not see the people-to-people connect of between India-Nordic relations, like the western European nations like Germany, and France, and with Eastern European countries. The challenge remains to find the common ground of more civic and people-to-people engagements to offer impetus to not only economic cooperation but a comprehensive relationship between the arctic and Indian oceans. The people-to-people engagement may be increased in

joint research, tourism, and the role of Art and culture in India-Nordic relations.

The paper examines the overlapping factors which favor more close relations and engagement based on non-economic reasons lesser explored in the literature and our philosophical and current discourses.



Brief Bio

Abhishek Tripathi is a doctoral student at the Psychology and Cognitive Science Department, Sapienza University, Rome. His research explores the understanding of Hathayoga and the psycho-philosophical study of Mindfulness. Abhishek has a research interest in Knowledge Diplomacy and research collaboration in higher education.

Impact of Brexit on Nordic States' Approach towards the European Union

Simran Chhabra

Research Scholar, Centre for European Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

This paper will deal with the impact that Brexit has exerted on the Nordic states – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – especially regarding the foreign policy preferences of Nordic states towards the European Union (EU). Out of five Nordic states, three states that are Denmark, Sweden and Finland are members of the EU whereas Iceland and Norway are not members but are part of the internal market. If we see historically the approach of Nordic states towards European integration, we will find that their approach has more resemblance to Britain and are together referred to as 'Reluctant Integrationist'. Like Britain, none of the Nordic countries was involved in initial efforts towards European Communities. Ever since the Brexit referendum happened in Britain, it has ignited a new debate in Nordics with respect to their current relationship with the EU, encouraging the Eurosceptics to ask for more privileges or opt-outs. Even inside the EU, the Nordic standpoint finds more resemblance with Britain. Britain was an important member of the 'northern' grouping in the EU and also the more vocal member. Post-Brexit, its presence will be missed as Nordic countries will lose one of their important partners in decision-making. In light of this background, this paper aims to analyse the various impact of Brexit on Nordic membership of the EU for which we will first see the historical relations of Nordics with the European Union and the importance of the British in Nordics approach. Furthermore, in the next section, we will try to discuss the expected changes in the Nordics' approach toward EU policy-making post-Britain's formal exit from the EU and finally, as a conclusion, we will try to sum up the possible changes in the dynamics of Nordic Five with respect to the EU.



Brief Bio

Ms. Simran Chhabra is a research scholar at the Centre for European Studies (CES), School of International Studies, JNU. She did her graduation in Political Science from the University of Delhi and her Post graduation in International Relations and Area Studies from JNU. Her research work is on “The United Kingdom and the European Union: Membership, Brexit and Beyond”. Her interest areas are European integration, Brexit, Diaspora and its impact, Immigration, etc. She also is a recipient of Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) granted by the University Grant Commission.

