

# Northern Europe

= Scandinavian countries (Norway and Sweden) + Finland, Denmark and Iceland

*Norway and Sweden* = mountainous relief \_ Scandinavian mts.

*Finland and Denmark* = low-lying countries

*Iceland* = volcanic origin

## Norway

*Capital:* Oslo

*Population:* 4,641,500

*Density:* 14/km<sup>2</sup>

*Life expectancy:* 79.40

*GDP/capita (2001):* 42,400 \$ (2<sup>nd</sup>)

*HDI (2003):* 0.963 (1st)

Reporters Without Borders Worldwide press freedom index - 1st of 166 countries 2002-2005

- located along western coast of Scandinavian peninsula, long and narrow country in its

- northern part, influenced by the warm Gulf stream => sea never freezes.

- coastline of over 83,000 km

- Norway's highest point is the Galdhopiggen at 2,469 m.

- spectacular landscape - most of the country consists of thousand of deep islands and

- fjords \_ ice age => tourism

- fjords - natural harbours providing shelter for communities of fishermen and farmers

- The Norwegian economy is a prosperous bastion of social capitalism, featuring a combination of free market activity and government intervention. The government controls key areas, such as the vital petroleum sector.

- The country is richly endowed with natural resources - petroleum, hydropower, fish, forests, and minerals - and has obtained one of the highest standards of living in the world partly from petroleum production; in 2004, oil and gas accounted for 50% of exports. Only Saudi Arabia and Russia export more oil than Norway

- many people employed in oil and natural gas extraction, shipbuilding and mining

- the largest oil producer of Europe \_ North Sea, but produces a plenty of electricity by

- hydro-electric power-steep mountains and rivers => aluminium steelworks

- fishing, forestry and agriculture = 5% of the total workforce

- 1 of the largest shipping fleets in the world, the most important port - Oslo

- Population living in Northern Europe is mainly protestant.

- Approximately 86% of Norway's inhabitants are members of the state church, the Evangelic Lutheran Church of Norway. Other Christian denominations total about 4.5% (the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church, the Roman Catholic Church, Pentecostal congregations, the Methodist Church,...). Among other religions, Islam is the largest in Norway with about 1.5%

- Norway is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government.

King Harald V

Prime minister: Jens Stoltenberg

Largest cities: Oslo, 538 411

(people) Bergen, 242 158

Trondheim, 158 613

Stavanger, 115 157

Bærum, 105 928

## The Kingdom of Sweden

*King:* Carl XVI Gustaf

*Prime minister:* Göran Persson

*Area:* 449,964 km<sup>2</sup>

*Capital:* Stockholm

*Population:* 9,047,752

Life expectancy: 80.40

Density: 20/km<sup>2</sup>

*HDI:* 0.949 (6th)

*GDP/capita (2003):* \$33,586 (9th)

- Lutheran 87%, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Baptist, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist
- long industrial traditions + highly skilled labour = 1 of the world's most advanced manufacturing countries
- population concentrates in the fertile south
- equal rights and well-developed social system, unemployment (11%) but very high taxes (30% + 20-25% when earning more than 300 000SEK) and prices
- recycling system + conservation of cultural heritage and environment (Lake Vänern)
- people are employed mainly in manufacturing and high-tech industries
- The engineering sector accounts for 50% of output and exports.
- Agriculture accounts for only 2% of GDP and 2% of the jobs.

Other large cities: Stockholm 765 044

Göteborg 481 410

Malmö 269 142

Uppsala 182 076

Linköping 136 912

## The Republic of Finland

*Capital:* Helsinki

*Population:* 5,261,008

*Density:* 15/km<sup>2</sup>

*GDP/capita (2004):* \$29,305 (16th)

*HDI:* 0.941 (13th)

*Area:* 338,145 km<sup>2</sup>

Life expectancy: 78.35 years

Finland has the second lowest level of corruption

- There are two official languages in Finland: Finnish 92%, Swedish, 5.5%
- Lutheran National Church 84.2%, Greek Orthodox in Finland 1.1%, other Christian 1.1%, other 0.1%, none 13.5% (2003).
- Gained independence from Russia in December 6, 1917
- country of thousand lakes 187,888 lakes and 179,584 islands – 10% of the country's area, large forest regions(boreal), half of the year it is carpeted by snow, bounded by *Gulf of Finland* and *Bothnia*
- distinctive language and culture (Ugro-Finnish language group)
- unemployment: 8.9%
- key economic sector is manufacturing - principally the wood, metals, engineering, telecommunications (especially Nokia), and electronics industries. Trade is important, with exports equalling almost one-third of GDP. Except for timber and several minerals, Finland depends on imports of raw materials, energy, and some components for manufactured goods. wood-processing industry (>70% of total land use), and timber waste is used to produce electricity
- Lapland – the icy north of Finland, Sweden and Norway, Lapps live here herding reindeers for milk and meat consumption
- The most important cities in Finland are the Greater Helsinki metropolitan area (including the cities of Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa), Tampere, Turku, and Oulu.

## The **Kingdom of Denmark**

*Capital:* Copenhagen

*Population:* 5,415,978

Density: 126/km<sup>2</sup>

HDI: 0.941 (14th)

*GDP/capita (2003):* \$34,718

Queen: Margrethe II

life expectancy: 77.62 years

area: 43,094 km<sup>2</sup>

- Denmark is the oldest monarchy in Europe. In 1849, it became a constitutional monarchy
- Religion: Evangelical Lutheran 95%, other Protestant and Roman Catholic 3%, Muslim 2%
- located in Jutland peninsula bounded by Strait of Skagerrak and Strait of Kattegat
- Denmark consists of the peninsula of Jutland (*Jylland*) and 405 named islands. Of these, 323 are inhabited, with the largest being Zealand
- considered to be the granary of European Union \_ lowlands = 1 of the flattest lands in the world
- famous architecture – Danes combine local materials (cement, bricks and timber) to create buildings harmonizing with the environment (solar panels + insulation) – in Finland too
- 1/3 of all the people work in SME, intensive pig and dairy farming, design of furniture and glassware, Legoland
- high-tech agriculture, up-to-date small-scale and corporate industry, extensive government welfare measures, comfortable living standards, a stable currency, and high dependence on foreign trade.
- men play important role in child care, i.e. number of working women has increased. This has happened yet in Norway and Sweden. However, they live quite unhealthy way of life (cigarettes, alcohol since 16 yrs., etc.)
- other large cities: Frederikshavn, Odense

## The **Republic of Iceland**

*Capital:* Reykjavik

*Population:* 296,737

*GDP/capita (2005):* \$34,600 (11th)

HDI: 0.956 (2nd)

Life expectancy: 80.19 years

Area: 103,000 km<sup>2</sup>

It is the world's 18th largest island.

- 10 percent of the island is glaciated
- religion: Lutheran Church of Iceland 85.5%, Reykjavik Free Church 2.1%, Roman Catholic Church 2%, Hafnarfjorour Free Church 1.5%, other Christian 2.7%, other or unspecified 3.8%, unaffiliated 2.4% (2004)
- Over 99% of the country's electricity is produced from hydropower and geothermal energy
- Many fjords punctuate its 4,970 km long coastline
- the island's interior, the Highlands of Iceland, is a cold and uninhabitable desert.
- The major towns are the capital Reykjavík, Keflavík, where the national airport is situated, and Akureyri. The island of Grímsey on the Arctic Circle contains the northernmost habitation of Iceland.
- volcanic island => lot of bubbling hot springs and mud pools => heating of towns by underground hot water (by geothermal heat)
- plenty of icebergs beyond the polar circle
- SE part of Iceland is influenced by Gulf stream
- economy is basically capitalistic, yet with an extensive welfare system (including generous housing subsidies), low unemployment, and remarkably even distribution of income. In the absence of other natural resources (except for abundant geothermal power), the economy depends heavily on the fishing industry, which provides 70% of export earnings and employs 8% of the work force.
- Labour force by occupation: agriculture, fishing and fish processing 10.3%, industry 18.3%, services 71.4%