

# **Nature-based integration in Nordic countries**

*Results of a survey*

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# Outdoor recreation, nature interpretation and integration in Nordic countries

## (Friluftsliv, naturvägledning och integration i Norden)

- ORIGIN-project:
  - June-December 2016
  - Nordic Council of Ministers, Terrestrial Ecosystem Group (TEG)
  - Metsähallitus (FIN), Suomen Latu (FIN), Sininauhaliitto (FIN), University of Copenhagen (DK), Swedish Centre for Nature Interpretation, SLU (SWE), Hushållningssällskapet (SWE), Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, NINA (NO), Norwegian Environment Agency (NO), Municipality of Oslo (NO)
- Project aims:
  - Nordic networking
  - Overview of key actors, current practices and research
  - Future needs

Table 1. Asylum Applications Filed in Scandinavian Countries by Top Countries of Origin, 2015

Country of Asylum	Total Asylum Applications	Top Country of Origin	Second Country of Origin	Third Country of Origin
Sweden	162,877	Syria (51,338)	Afghanistan (41,564)	Iraq (20,857)
Finland	32,476	Iraq (20,485)	Afghanistan (5,214)	Somalia (1,981)
Norway	31,145	Syria (10,536)	Afghanistan (6,987)	Iraq (2,991)
Denmark	7,162	Syria (3,515)	Eritrea (1,276)	Stateless (702)

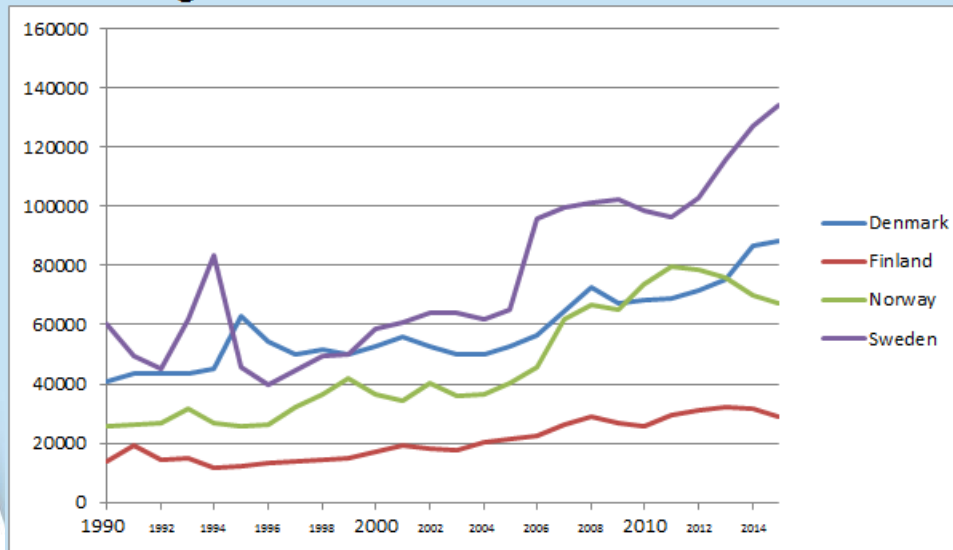
Note: Figures for Denmark include the first three quarters of 2015.

Sources: Finnish Immigration Service, "Asylum applicants 1/1-11/30/2015," available online; Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), "UDI-direktøren oppsummerte asylåret 2015 (med video)," [UDI director summed asylum year 2015 (with video)] (press release, January 7, 2016), available online; Statistics Denmark, "Asylum applications and residence permits," accessed February 2, 2016, available online; Swedish Migration Agency, "Applications for asylum received, 2015," available online.

Asylum seekers per capita in Europe:

Sweden 1st  
Norway 4th  
Finland 5th  
Denmark 9th

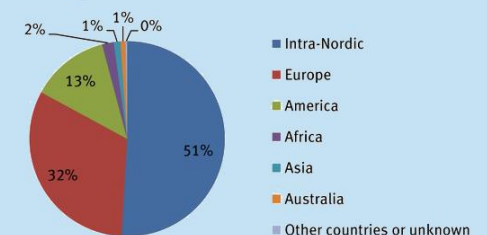
### Immigration to Nordic countries in 1990-2015



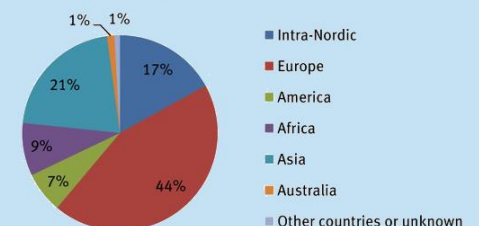
Source: Nordic Statistics

<http://www.dst.dk/nordicstatistics>

### Immigration, Nordic total 1961



### Immigration, Nordic total 2010



Source: Nordic Statistics

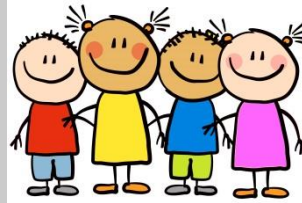
<http://www.dst.dk/nordicstatistics>

# Current research directions



Use, experiences, perceptions and preferences of nature/green spaces (comparisons between immigrants and natives, different immigrant groups)

Psychological and mental well-being impacts of nature & outdoor recreation



Acculturation and adaptation through nature & outdoor recreation

Social interaction and cohesion in natural environments / through outdoor recreation

Belonging, sense of place and place attachment



Ethnic minorities' access to green spaces

Management and planning implications



# ORIGIN survey

- Simultaneous online survey in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark
- Targeted at public, private and third sector organisations and people working with immigrants
- Distributed through social media, mailing lists, direct email requests etc.
- July-October, ongoing
- 15th Sept, N=114

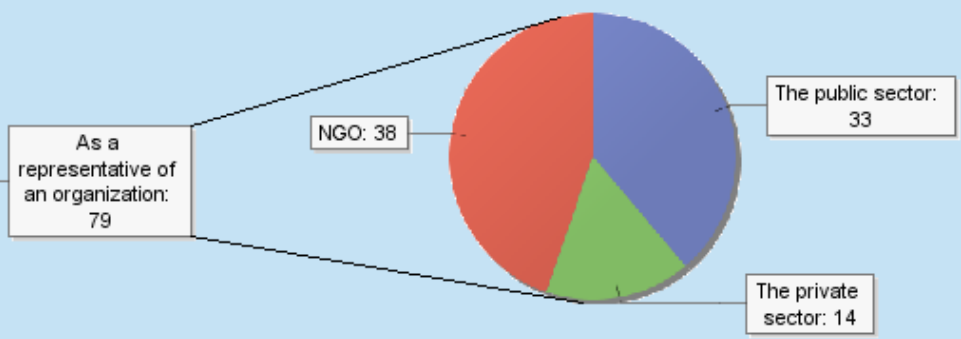
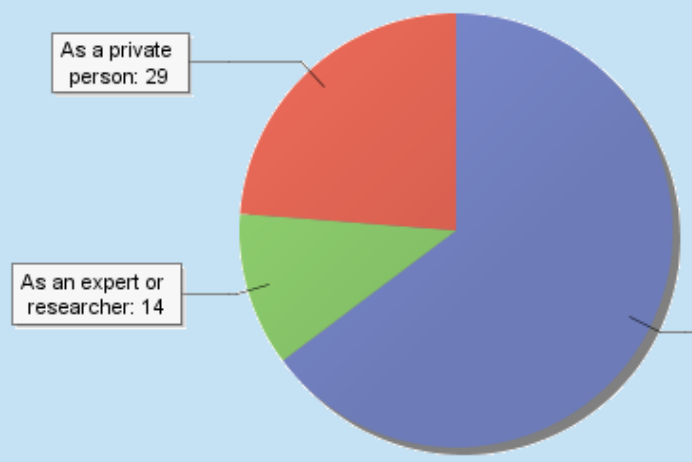
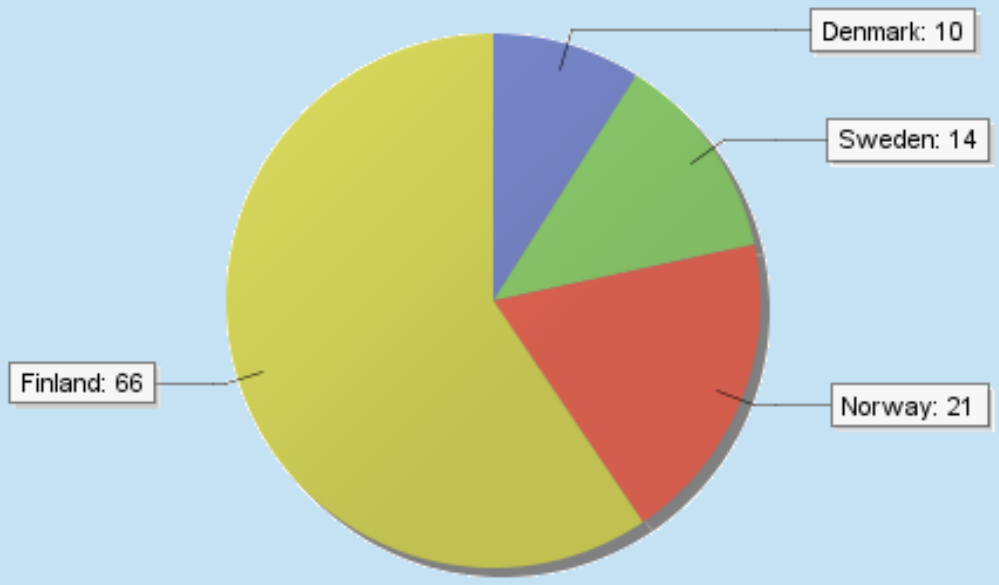
## Survey themes:

- Experiences and practices
- Opportunities and barriers
- Knowledge and collaboration needs

## Links to the survey:

- [Finnish](#)
- [Swedish](#)
- [English](#)

[Project website](#)



# What is nature-based integration in Nordic countries?

- Information and learning about Nordic nature, rules, traditions, activities etc.
- Social interaction in nature, doing things together in a neutral and natural environment
- Organised and guided activities, nature based methods for immigration work
- Having the courage to go out into nature, nature as a part of everyday life
- Psychological and mental well-being from nature, creating a personal human-nature relationship
- Equal access to nature for immigrants

*”Defineres som opphold og aktivitet i i friluft. Bli kjent med vår kultur. Synliggjøre hvilke muligheter som finnes. Klare seg på egenhånd i naturen og gi dem lyst til å være og ferdes i naturen.”*

*”Samhandling i/med natur og mellom mennesker med ulik kulturbakgrunn.”*

*”Luonto tulee osaksi arkea. Luonto ei pelota. Tunnistaa esim. syötäviä kasveja”*

*“Equal knowledge and access to the opportunities of nature activities. Cross-ethnic participation and use of nature areas and activities, which increase the possibilities of interaction, friendships, positive attitudes and wellbeing of the population.”*

# Examples of current practices and projects

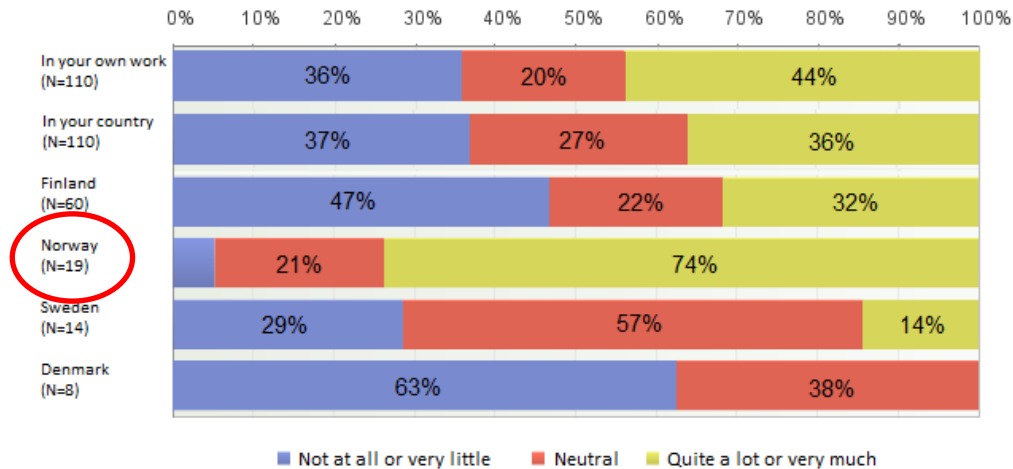
- Organised and guided trips and excursions to nature: hikes, nature paths, petting zoos (immigrant and mixed groups)
  - Teaching and trying out activities (+ borrowing and providing outdoor gear) →
  - Teaching and learning how to use berries, mushrooms, fish etc.
  - Summer camps, courses, nature clubs, study groups
  - Activity days and events
  - Working bees: building bird houses, building recreational facilities, restoring nature, lawn raking
  - Community gardens and allotments for immigrants
  - Environmental art projects
  - Teaching and lectures for immigrants, indoors and outdoors: intergration training
  - Vocational training (e.g. forest work)
  - Translation and interpretation into different languages
  - Nature based methods for health, well-being and social interaction, methods of nature-based integration
  - Teaching, lectures and seminars for teachers and immigration workers
  - Published outcomes: nature guidebooks, reports, theses, research papers
- ❖ Games and playing
  - ❖ Skiing
  - ❖ Snow sliding
  - ❖ Berry, mushroom & herb picking
  - ❖ (winter) Fishing
  - ❖ Hunting
  - ❖ Cooking outdoors
  - ❖ Sailing
  - ❖ Canoeing
  - ❖ Rowing
  - ❖ Biking
  - ❖ Frisbee/disc golf
  - ❖ Birdwatching
  - ❖ Kite building and flying
  - ❖ Mountain climbing
  - ❖ Orienteering

*"sorry its too many."*



# Status quo in nature-based integration

To what extent are nature and outdoor recreation used in integration processes in your own work and in your country?  
(N=110)



## Key players

- Public: schools, kindergartens, integration training, reception centers, municipalities, regional & national authorities
- NGOs (social, nature, outdoor)
- Private people and SMEs

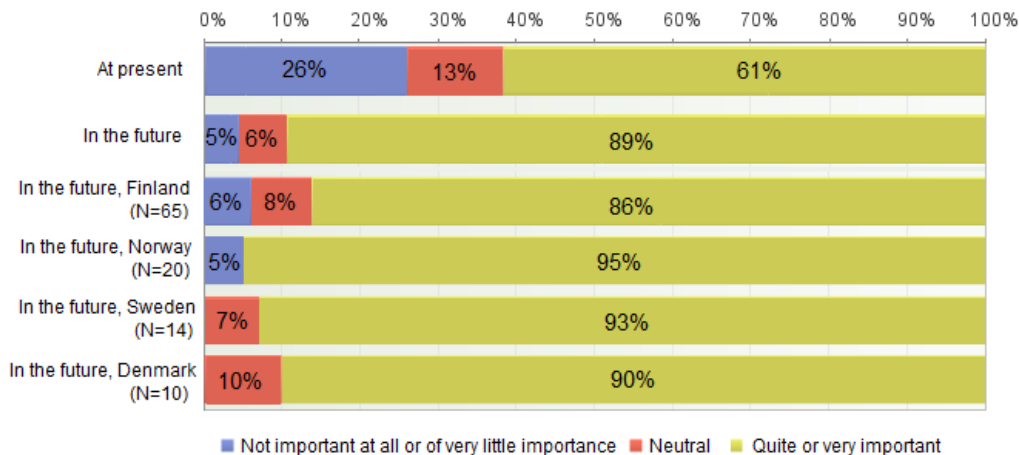
*Vaikea sanoa. Mielestäni tämä luontopuoli on ylipäättään melko heikosti esillä maahanmuuttajien kotoutumisessa, vaikka luonto on merkittävä osa suomalaista kulttuuria ja identiteettiä sekä heijastuu myös suomen kieleen.*

*It is not known to us that such key players exist. Lots of organisations receive fundings for this kind of work, but seem to have problems recruiting people with minority background or lack the will to integrate them into their structures except from isolated stunts and activities with no further plan.*

*Jeg vil ikke si at det er noen få sentrale aktører, men heller mange som gjør noe hver, der de er, som f.eks. skoler og lokale organisasjoner.*

# Importance of nature-based integration

How important is nature-based integration among other integration work?  
(N=113)



- Untapped potential, integration into nature as important as to culture
- Nature is the key to the Nordic society and culture
- Important to know how to act in nature and local environment
- Surviving in Nordic nature and climate
- Health and well-being impacts of nature
- Responsible behaviour in nature, prevention of conflicts

# Opportunities of nature-based integration (1)

Most important:

- Important for the health and well-being of immigrants (mental & physical)
- Nature recreation
- Social interaction
- Nature as an educational arena
- Everyman's rights

Least important: immigrants' possibilities to influence planning and accessibility?

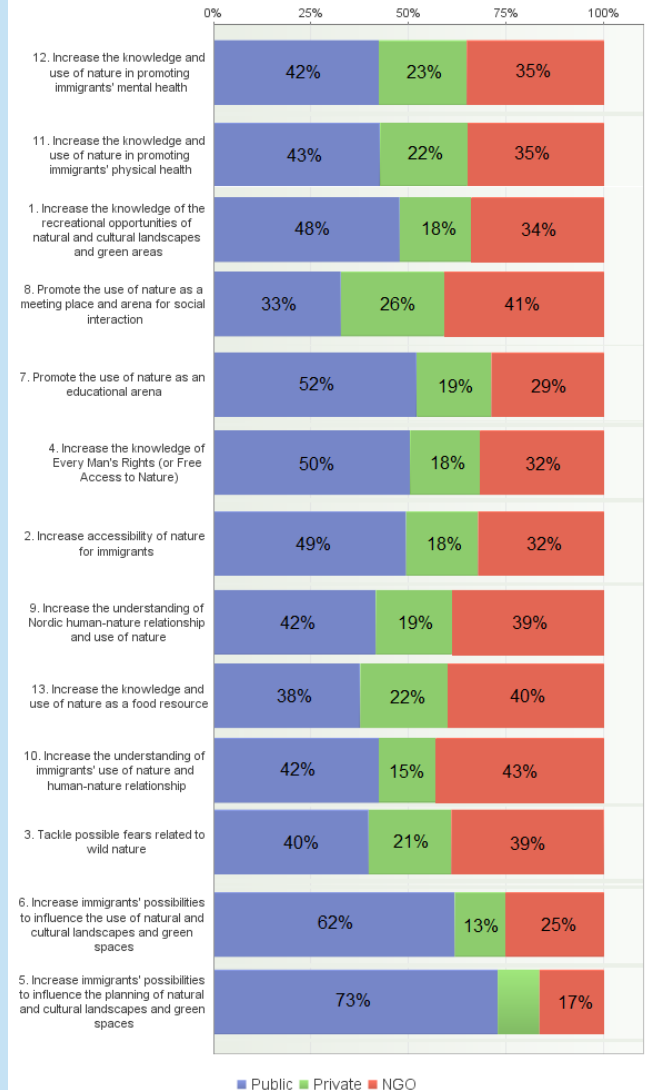
To what extent the following aspects of nature-based integration should be emphasized?  
(N=112)



# Whose responsibility?

- Public sector:
  - Education
  - Every Man's Rights
  - Knowledge on recreational opportunities
  - Health
- NGOs:
  - Social interaction
  - Food from nature
  - Immigrants' human-nature relationship
  - Tackling fears
  - Health
- Private:
  - Social interaction
  - Health

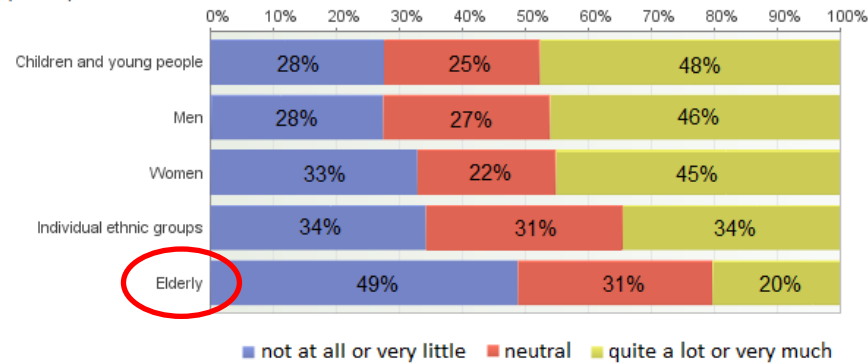
Please evaluate also whose responsibility each of the aspects should be. Are these aspects for the public, the private or the NGO to consider? (N=94)



# Opportunities of nature-based integration (2)

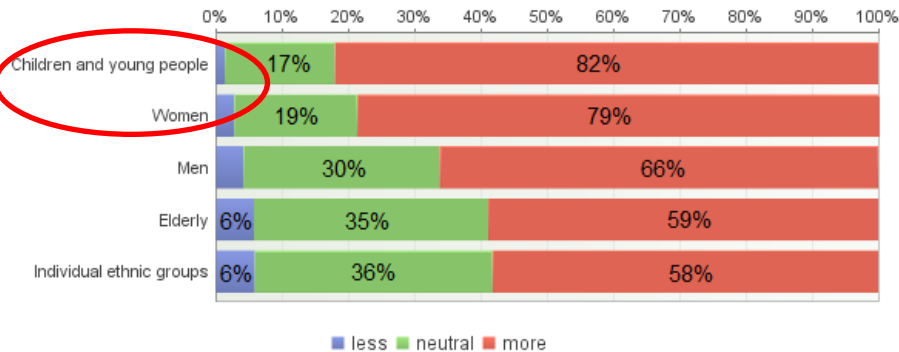
**To what extent do you work with the following groups' specific needs in nature-based integration?**

(N=104)



**In your opinion, should the focus be more or less on these groups in the future in relation to nature-based integration?**

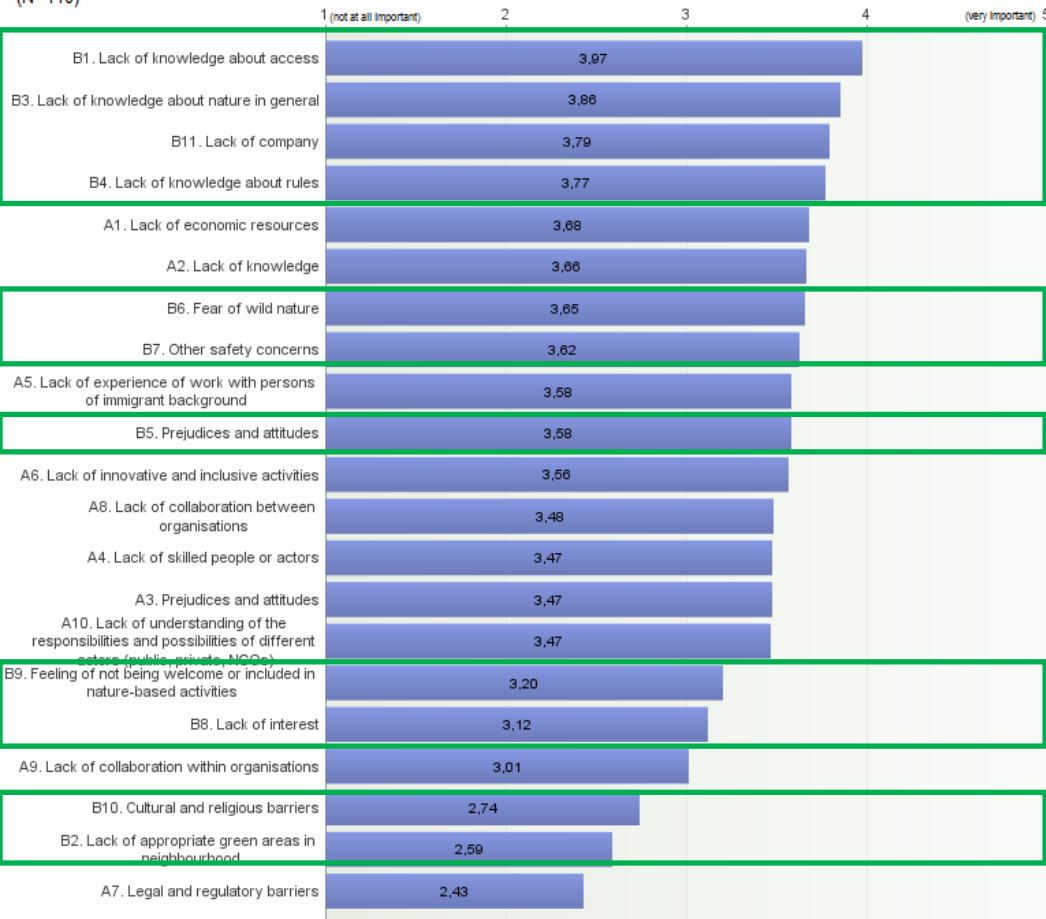
(N=74)



# Barriers in nature-based integration

Based on your own experiences, please assess how important the following barriers are for nature-based integration at present?

(N=110)



Greatest barriers are at **individual level**:

- Lack of knowledge about access and Nordic nature
- Lack of knowledge about rules
- Lack of company
- Fear and safety

But also: lack of economic resources and knowledge at organisational level

No excuses:

- Inclusive laws and regulations
- Plenty of green areas
- Cultural and religious barriers not important

## Sweden:

- Immigrants' knowledge on access
- Economic resources at organisational level
- Immigrants' knowledge on nature
- Lack of knowledge at organisational level

## Norway:

- Immigrants' knowledge on access
- Lack of knowledge in immigration work
- Immigrants' knowledge on nature
- Immigrants' lack of company
- Economic resources at organisational level

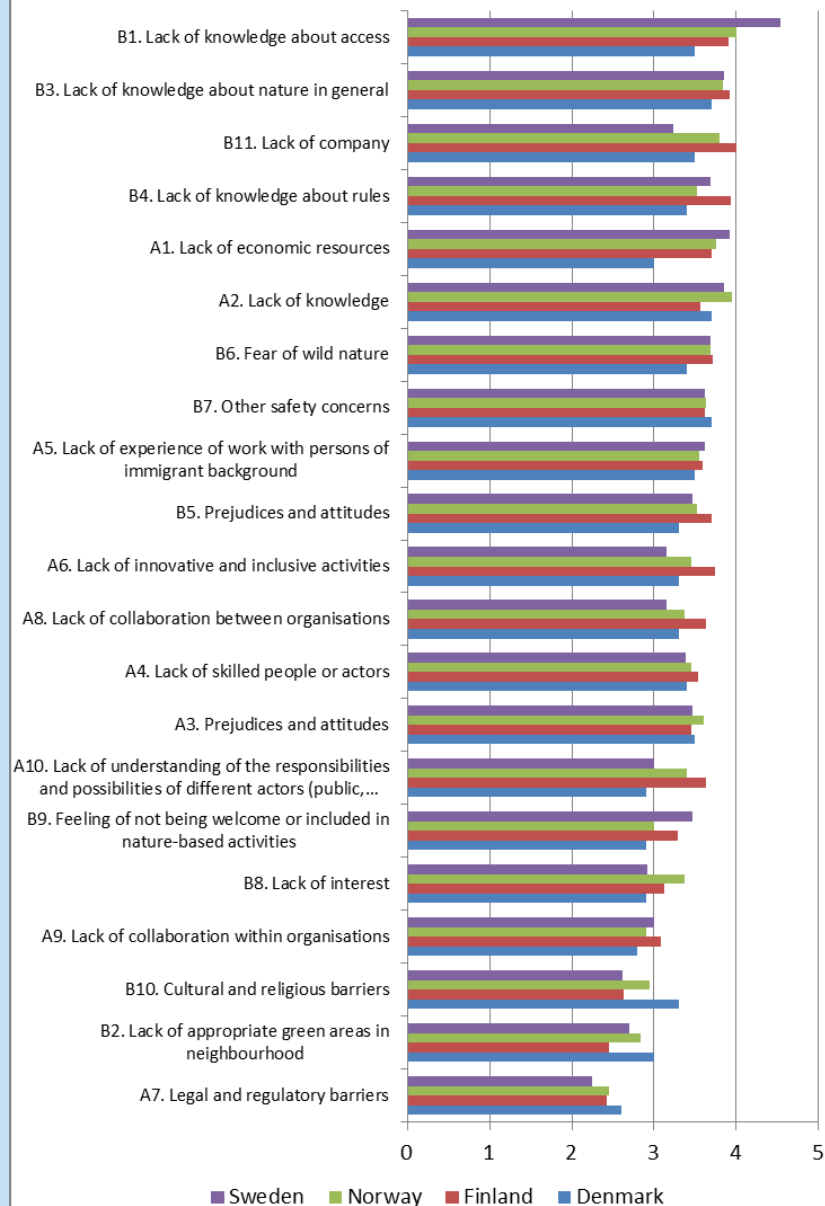
## Finland:

- Immigrants' lack of company
- Immigrants' knowledge on rules
- Immigrants' knowledge on nature
- Immigrants' knowledge on access

## Denmark:

- Lack of knowledge at organisational level
- Immigrants' knowledge on nature
- Immigrants' safety concerns

## Most important barriers by country



# Current knowledge needs

- Knowledge about & from the immigrants themselves
  - Understanding different cultural backgrounds and the customs of interacting with nature
  - Fears, hopes and needs
- Information between actors and organisations, where to turn?
  - Who does and what? Who needs & what? Who provides & what?
- Basic and deepened knowledge of nature & surroundings possibilities available, how to make use of environment
- Examples of methods & practices
  - What's been done & what works
- Language problem
  - Translated materials etc., learning & integration through language
- Building consciousness & understanding, transmitting knowledge & information
  - Research, education & information
- Funding, where from?



# Nordic cooperation

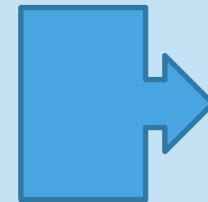
- Sharing practices and experiences, what works and why  
Käytäntöjen ja kokemusten vaihtaminen, ja siirrettävyys, mikä toimii ja mikä ei
  - collecting information and experiences from all around in one place
- Cooperation of organisations of different *sectors* and *levels*
  - e.g. nature experts and immigration professionals together to plan practices
    - > more functional activities
  - Uniforming the materials
  - Education & training
  - Research



Common planning  
Common activities  
Common concepts



Common forum for sharing  
information and cooperation



WHO  
HOW  
WHY ?

*"Voisi olla hyödyllistä yhdistää eri toimijoita Pohjoismaista kotoutumiseen ja luontoon liittyen. Mukana voisi olla julkisen ja kolmannen sektorin toimijoita. Olisi tärkeää ottaa mukaan maahanmuuttajia, jotka voisivat jakaa omia kokemuksiaan luonnosta ja luontokotoutumisesta. Eri toimijat voisivat jakaa tietoa ja mielipiteitä keskenään ja kyseessä voisi olla enemmänkin tiedonjakofoorumi, jossa toimijat voisivat jakaa hyviä käytäntömalleja, joita muut voisivat hyödyntää."*

*"Største utfordring er å ha disponible økonomiske resurser, både til å gjennomføre ønskede aktiviteter og disponible menneskelige resurser. Det trengs økonomiske rammer for å lønne engasjerte mennesker for å gjennomføre naturbasert integrasjon. Den økonomiske gevinsten med vellykka integrasjon er større enn hva kostanden er med å holde prosjektene i gang, Dette er investering i fremtiden og integrering i det nordiske samfunnet, svært viktig."*

*"Hvilken type aktiviteter appellerer til innvandrere? Hva skal til for at de blir med? Mer kunnskap om kulturelle begrensninger,- hva kan kvinner gjøre? Men målet må være at innvandrere integreres i norsk/nordisk kultur,- gjennom friluftslivet må vi foreta integrering,- ikke forsterke og videreføre kulturforskjeller som ikke er ønskelige. Språkvanser."*

*"Collaboration about what? Sharing knowledge, perspectives and ideas relevant to research, education and the development of activities and programmes can be shared among people representing the private, the public and the NGOs. Also the development of a joint policy, including financial support to run project on a local and regional scale is needed. Initiatives to engage and involve immigrant groups in outdoor activities on a practical level have to be organised locally and in collaboration with the immigrants themselves (their organisations) and in ways so that their voices are heard."*

*"Kontakt mellem kommunale naturforvaltere, med fokus på formidling og naturvejledning. Udarbejdelse af fælles materiale til integration på forskellige sprog. Opbygning af fælle udeskole-koncepter, der giver indvandre mulighed for at få en stærk og tryk kontakt med nature."*

*"Vi behöver få med många fler multikulturella personer som bott längre i Sverige som kan fungera som brobyggare för mer nyanlända. Vi behöver alltså öka kunskapen och intresset för natur- och friluftsliv bland personer med invandrabakgrund som redan är relativt integrerade i samhället."*

*"We need Nordic Collaboration to get a global perspective on nature-based integration. We need a broader perspective on what resources immigrants have about their nature. Global nature perspectives will give us a common perspective that we are all humans on the same Earth!"*

# Conclusions

- Untapped potential?
- Real need for Nordic cooperation
  - Best-practices, materials etc.
- Better integration of
  - research and practical work
  - immigrants' perspective: experiences, fears, hopes, motivations and needs

