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Nordic Council of Ministers

"WHEN NEO-NAZIS MARCH ON NORWEGIAN STREETS, YOU HEAR A LOT OF SWEDISH"

Pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of right-wing extremism

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"WHEN NEO-NAZIS MARCH ON NORWEGIAN STREETS, YOU HEAR A LOT OF SWEDISH"

Pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of right-wing extremism

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Summary

This report constitutes the first comprehensive review of right-wing extremism (RWE) in the Nordics (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden). In it, a team of 13 leading researchers have compiled and reviewed books, dissertations, journal articles, reports, master theses and other forms of academic texts written about the topic. The result is a descriptive and analytical report of how the Nordic RWE milieu has developed from 1918 until today, with a specific focus on the pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of the milieu. In the report, we also compile the practices used to prevent RWE in the Nordics and analyze how well they are situated to handle the threat RWE poses to society.

The report demonstrates how the transnational connections of the Nordic RWE groups have been a constant feature throughout history, both in ideas and practices. The ideas regarding pan-Nordic cooperation were put into practice in the 1930s. These connections became increasingly important during the Cold War period because internationalization provided an opening for domestically marginalized and stigmatized movements after the second World War. The Nordic Resistance Movement (NMR), the 21st century's dominant neo-Nazi organization with a lot of cross-border activities, sets rather seamlessly into this historical continuum. History matters greatly for the contemporary RWE milieu as historical imagination is a key reference point, stirring memories from a period when the Nordic countries were not multicultural and radical nationalism was an accepted ideal.

The RWE milieu has been much affected by the digitalization of society, not least in terms of how it is organized. RWE groups and movements have traditionally followed the *Führerprinzip* and have been built upon an authoritarian top-down hierarchical model. Although some current groups, for example the NRM, are still organized hierarchically and managed top-down, the milieu has become more diverse. Today, we more often see loose networks and individual activists, occasionally with broad social media presence or franchise-type organizations like Soldiers of Odin. This is not to say that organizations do not matter anymore—they are still important in accumulating ideas and propagating them—but greater focus should be in the ideas they represent. It is the ideas, unlike the forms, that has travelled into the mainstream discourse.

In terms of prevention, we have identified many initiatives aiming at preventing extremism, but very few practices have a specific focus on RWE. Even though there is an obvious presence and aspirations among RWE movements to expand pan-Nordic cooperation, there are few practices focusing on preventing this tendency. In practices that are described as preventing different forms of extremism, examples, aims, and actions are predominantly focusing on militant Islamism. We have also noticed a lack of practices for preventing adults' engagement in extremist activities, which is unfortunate since research indicate that most RWE activists are around their 30's when entering the milieu. Prevention initiatives focusing on online extremism are under development in the Nordics. There are good reasons for the Nordic countries to cooperate on this matter, especially because online extremism communication and propaganda are not restricted by national borders and physical mobility.

Based on these findings, we suggest the following:

- Integrate RWE as a special subject of the Nordic police cooperation: The Nordic police agencies should establish a specific unit of police officers who are responsible of, for example, continuously exchanging information about the pan-Nordic actions of RWE groups and actors, collaborate in cases of criminal offences, and exchange experiences of how to deal with RWE activists during, for example, demonstrations.
- Develop a Nordic forum for EXIT-work and workers: We recommend the Nordic Council of Ministers, or any other relevant administrative body, to facilitate or, alternatively, provide funds for other actors to establish a forum for information and experience exchange, training, methods development, and evaluation. The importance of EXIT-work motivates an organizational approach that take the transnational dimension into consideration.
- Problem-based municipal cooperation: To facilitate better information exchange, intermunicipal learning, and methods development, we suggest increased cooperation between those Nordic municipalities with a high degree of problem with RWE. Such cooperation could be facilitated through Nordic Safe Cities or other Nordic organization supporting municipalities and be given funds to ensure the stability and continuity of such a collaborative forum.

- Online prevention toward adults and elderly is missing: Today, from previously being spread mainly through manifestations, concerts, and street activism, the ideology and culture of RWE is spread and consumed digitally. The few online prevention initiatives existing are mainly focusing on youth. This is an important target group, but research has indicated that the problem of online radicalization among adults and the elderly are equally, if not more, concerning. Hence, we suggest the Nordic Council of Ministers and the respective Nordic national governments to provide additional funds for public and nonpublic actors to develop new prevention models and projects for online purposes directed at adults and the elderly.
- Research grants to studies of pan-Nordic RWE: We have noticed a general lack of studies on the pan-Nordic aspects of RWE. The main reason is that methodological nationalism is, to a large extent, the prevailing approach. This might be a reflection of how research grants are provided in the Nordic countries because they tend to be nationally focused, reactive, and (too) problem oriented, which can lead to a lack of historical and ethnographic depth. Here, specific research grants focusing on the pan-Nordic dimensions of extremism (i.e., also for militant Islamic and left-wing milieus) would be of great value and something that NordForsk could provide.

Introduction

Let us start by turning back the clock to mid-August 2019. In the aftermath of the attempted mosque attack in Baerum, Norway, by Philip Manshaus, an unusual political quarrel on the highest political level broke out between the Nordic countries. As Erna Solberg, the then Prime Minister of Norway, was asked about the status of right-wing extremism in Norway during the political week in Arendal, she stated, "When neo-Nazis march on Norwegian streets, both in Fredrikstad and in Kristiansand, you hear a lot of Swedish. Their [i.e., the Swedish, authors' clarification] neo-Nazis are also trying to organize in the neighboring countries" (Dahl, 2019). The comment was not appreciated by then Swedish Minister of Energy and Transport Anders Ygeman, who first responded on Twitter, "If you govern with Fremskrittspartiet (often labeled as right-wing populists, authors' remark) and appoint Sylvi Listhaug as minister twice, then maybe you should look at yourself in the mirror before glancing across the border" (Ygeman, 2019). Ygeman later developed the critique in media, stating, "We cannot escape the fact that two of the attacks (i.e., by Anders Bering Breivik and Philip Manshaus, authors' clarification) we have seen have been carried out by Norwegians" (Söderlund, 2019).

The quarrel did not end there. The attacked Listhaug, Minister of Elderly and Public Health at the time and member of *Fremskrittspartiet*, responded the following day: "We do not take any advice from Sweden, which has a documented much larger neo-Nazi environment than Norway" (Svensson, 2019). Deeply worried about the heated exchange of words between the high-ranking politicians, the well-known Swedish commentator Oisín Cantwell from *Aftonbladet* suggested the quarrel to be "unworthy" and the politicians' actions as "embarrassing" because "a Nordic joint effort is crucial in the fight against ideologically conditioned extremism in all its forms" (Cantwell, 2019).

The emotions seemed to have eased a bit the following week, and a more collaborative spirit emerged as Erna Solberg and former Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Löfven, met the press during a Nordic high-level meeting in Reykjavik. Löfven argued that the image of Swedish troubles with right-wing extremism spilling over to the other Nordic countries were wrong and that "all three (sic!) have this problem and that is why all three should collaborate" (TT, 21st of August 2019). Solberg elaborated on her previous comments and suggested that "the attacks in Norway had nothing to do with Sweden … but we observe how extremist groups in our countries collaborate and that we, which we have discussed today, must develop our collaboration further between our police agencies" (TT, 2019).

In line with the political quarrel, there have been developments in the right-wing extremism (RWE) milieu that suggest that RWE in the Nordic region is increasingly transnational in nature. The Soldiers of Odin emerged in Finland and later expanded to Sweden, Norway and beyond. The Nordic Resistance Movement emerged in Sweden and expanded to the rest of the Nordic countries. Stop Islamisation of Europe originated from the union of the Danish group Stop Islamisation of Denmark and English anti-Islam activists. Swedish activists are, moreover, instrumental to the growing movement referred to as the Identitarians. Finally, the terrorist attacks of Breivik have inspired extreme right activists elsewhere in the Nordics (e.g., Manshaus and the two school attacks in Eslöv and Kristianstad, Sweden). However, little research has hitherto been carried out on the pan-Nordic and transnational dimension of RWE in the Nordic region. Indeed, the literature on RWE in the Nordics either is outdated or lacking an analytical focus on this dimension of RWE.

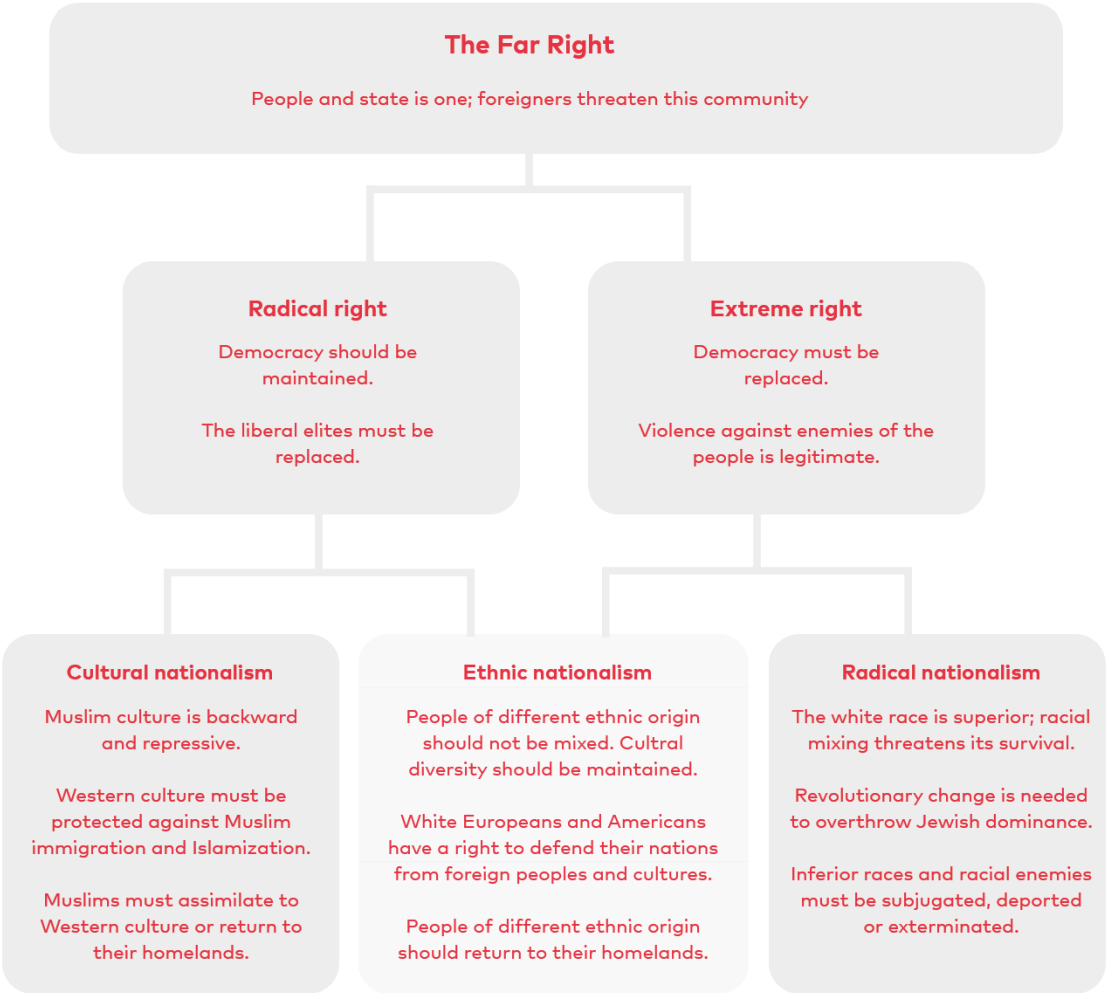
Taken together, the political quarrel, recent developments in the RWE milieu, and the insufficient status of knowledge all point toward a need to invest in research on the pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of RWE. Although we share the politicians' opinion that more cooperation between the Nordic countries is needed, we also recognize that such a cooperation must be built on an existing body of knowledge about RWE and the prevention of RWE. This is what the present report is about: outlining what we know so that we are better equipped to meet future concerns.

In the next section, we define what we mean by RWE.

What do we mean by right-wing extremism?

"Right-wing extremism" is commonly used in the academic literature and media to congregate a disparate environment under one etiquette, and defining it remains a notorious problem. The common use of RWE in the media often comprises both nonviolent and violent actors, groups, and ideologies that operate on different arenas: parliamentarian, city streets, and, increasingly, digital realms.

This type of broad definition of RWE is problematic. It lumps together two parts of the far-right milieu: (1) the radical right, here defined as anti-immigrant and nationalistic nonviolent actors who suggest democracy should be maintained and seek change within its premises, and (2) the extreme right, that is, explicitly racist and antisemitic violent actors who suggest democracy should be replaced and think violence is a legitimate means to achieve change (Bjørgo & Ravndal, 2019).



A family tree of the far right (Bjørgo & Ravndal, 2019; based on Berntzen, 2018; Mudde, 2002; Teitelbaum, 2017).

In relation to the family tree presented in the previous page, we focus on the extreme right and define RWE as *a milieu which includes movements, organizations, and other actors that are authoritarian and/or anti-immigrant and exercise violence in rhetoric and/or practice.* This will include more traditional national socialist groups, ethno-nationalistic movements, and so-called lone actors who share the same ideology.

Based on this definition, we now move on to give a short introduction of the type of threat that RWE poses for the Nordic countries, along with how it manifests itself organizationally.

Right-wing extremism in the Nordics

In the wake of the global "War on Terror" (Hodges, 2011), the potential deadly threat that RWE constitutes had been partially neglected. Historical data suggest, however, that such ignorance is misplaced. Ravndal (2018) has compared right-wing terrorism and militancy in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Between 1990 and 2015, a total of 141 events have been recorded. Of these, 89 took place in Sweden, 25 in Norway, 19 in Denmark, and eight in Finland. According to Ravndal (2018), there are indications of the Finnish dataset being flawed because of the lack of detailed information on further events in the 1990s and, to some extent, also the 2000s. As a more contemporary example of Finland not being spared from deadly RWE, a 28-year-old died in conjunction with an attack committed by an activist of the *Nordic Resistance Movement* (NMR) in 2016. Of the 141 events, 21 were deadly (17 in Sweden, three in Norway and one in Denmark). Between 1990 and 2015, the causalities of right-wing terrorism and militancy reached an aggregated number of 100 people (Ravndal, 2018). The most well-known incident of this kind is the Norway terror attacks of 22 July 2011, by Anders Bering Breivik. The attacks, which resulted in 77 dead, shocked not only Norway and the Nordic countries, but the world.

As in the previous mentioned cases of Manshaus and Breivik, most of the casualties have fallen victim to so-called "lone wolves" or, more precisely, "lone actors" in the right-wing milieu; these are individuals who are not formally organized and do not carry out their attacks in cooperation with others but rather perpetrate acts of violence alone while belonging to the same ideological milieu as other right-wing extremists (Gardell et al., 2017; Hemmingby & Bjørgo, 2016; Lööw, 2015). A contemporary characteristic of these actors is their preattack activity in digital, online right-wing environments that often feature a culture of glorification for terrorists and assailants (Kaati et al., 2019). The Swedes John Ausonius (shot 11 "nonwhites" and killed one between 1991 and 1992), Peter Mangs (attempted to kill 12 "nonwhites," of which two died, between 2003 and 2010). and Anton Lundin Pettersson (killed three "nonwhites" in a school in 2015) can also be included in this category of lone actors. Other, more recurring forms of physical and psychological right-wing violence include harassment and death threats against political opponents, violent clashes between opposing groups, arson attacks on housing for refugees, the possession of illegal weapons, combat training, and the propagation of right-wing ideologies (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019). The right-wing threat has transformed over time and so have the forms of violence. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Nordic countries faced a wave of murderous violence against LGBT persons, which peaked in the Gothenburg area (Lööw, 2004). Today, hate speech against the same group is still common, but the deadly violence seems, for the time being, less intensive. The same can be said of clashes between

right-wing extremists and their violent opponents during rallies. Even if there are disturbances of order during rallies, the situation is less heated than some 20 years ago, allowing groups like the NMR to dominate street scenes.

Apart from lone actors, the RWE milieu is also organized into formal groups. Turning the clock back to the 1990s, the milieu was local, scattered, and fragmented (Bjørgo, 1997; Fangen, 2001; Lööw, 2000; Pekonen, 1999). The twenty-first century has seen a homogenization of the milieu's organizational landscape, primarily through the NMR, but also as a result of increased interest in establishing and participating in the activities of alternative, less violence-prone right-wing political parties (Ravndal, 2018). Mattsson and Johansson (2019) described the NMR as the largest hub for neo-Nazis in the Nordic countries. The NMR is a traditional national socialist militant organization and party with roots that date back to the origins of the contemporary Nazi movement in Sweden (Mattsson, 2018). Originally named the *Swedish Resistance Movement* (SMR) at the time of its founding in 1997, the organization has gathered an increased number of violent and nonviolent activists. When *Svenskarnas Parti* (The Swedes' Party) fell apart after the Swedish national elections of 2014, the SMR expanded their organization to include a parliamentary political party and announced themselves as being a "mass-movement of the Nordics," hence forming the NMR (Lööw, 2017; Mattsson, 2018). Over the years, the NMR has included various national groups in Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden who share the aim of establishing a common, racially homogeneous Nordic state. The NMR uses extensive online propaganda resources, primarily through their website *Nordfront*, to connect the Nordic milieu. News, activities report, podcasts, and interactive discussion forums are gathered and, to a varying degree, translated into the different Nordic languages. According to EXPO, a civil society organization that records all activities by the NMR and other similar organizations, 2018 saw a record number of 3,558 activities carried out by the NMR in Sweden. Even if the absolute majority of these activities were nonviolent, that year also witnessed an increase in physical manifestations and combat preparation activities (Expo, 2018).

More loosely organized and temporal types of social movements have also played—and continue to perform—a role in the RWE milieu. A contemporary example of this phenomenon are vigilante movements—organized civilians that act in a policing role without any legal authorization and use or display a capacity for violence (Bjørgo & Mares, 2019; Lööw, 2017). These movements and their activities often target migrants and minorities, here upon the premise that such categories of people are a source of crime. Kotonen (2019) tracked how one prominent example of such a movement, the *Soldiers of Odin* , that emerged in Finland in 2015 and became a Nordic and, partially, international phenomena gathering extreme right sympathizers and members. Bjørgo and Gjelsvik (2019) followed the milieu as it spread to Norway, where it rapidly collapsed because of ideological inconsistency and disagreements. Gardell (2019) focused on the digital milieu underpinning the

establishment of the Soldiers of Odin in Sweden. He proposed that this "pop-up phenomenon" was linked to fake news in radical nationalist social media and their allegations of an ongoing "rape-jihad." This aligns with the findings of Kaati et al. (2019) on the digital environments of the extreme right: that hate speech, conspiracy theories, and dehumanization are some of the methods utilized to assign traits to migrants and immigrants, thus making them legitimate targets of violence.

To summarize, the RWE in the Nordic countries is, at a closer look, a diverse one, despite the NMR dominating media attention. It consists of formal organizations such as the NMR, loosely coupled and temporal social movements that mobilize under certain conditions, and individuals and lone actors. The subcultural structure is still vivid and affluent, resulting in a crossflow of members between various organizations. RWE operates in different arenas; it has a strong digital platform on which propaganda, hate speech, and threats are distributed; it occupies the streets to recruit new members, combat its alleged enemies, and spread its ideological message; and, finally, it has made several attempts to gain support in the parliamentary arena. If successful, RWE would pose an ideological threat to the basic democratic ideas that underpin Nordic societies. The threat is, however, more obvious on the nonpolitical societal, group, and personal levels. Annually, the SOM institute measures Swedes' level of concern over different phenomena, and their latest publication (SOM, 2019) showed a record level of 45% worried or very worried over political extremism. Among the groups targeted by right-wing terrorism, clear patterns have been occurring (Ravndal, 2018). Those most frequently targeted include immigrants (70 events), leftists (38 events), and homosexuals (nine events). Other targeted groups include government representatives, the police, Muslims, Jews, Gypsies/Roma, homeless people, and media institutions (Ravndal, 2018). According to national threat evaluations (see Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019), lone actors are increasingly seen as posing the greatest physical threat toward these groups.

In the next section, we outline the aim of the present report and the research questions guiding our activities within the project.

Aim and research questions

The overarching aim of the current report is to contribute with an up-to-date overview of the literature on pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of RWE and describe how RWE has been prevented in the Nordic countries. More specifically, we explore the material (e.g., physical meetings, common demonstrations, and shared organizational structures) and cultural dimensions (i.e., shared ideologies and symbols) of the historical and contemporary pan-Nordic organizing of RWE, exploring what preventive measures have been deployed to prevent it. Although our focus is on the "pan-Nordicness" of RWE, we also consider other transnational connections, if found relevant. This knowledge can inform the requested cooperation on both the national and local administrative levels and new prevention strategies while strengthening Nordic collaboration on the issue.

We pose three questions that guide the report's focus:

1. How transnational has the Nordic right-wing extremism milieu historically been?

The question is motivated by the fact that we lack an up-to-date overview of research exploring the historical dimension of the interconnectedness of RWE milieus in the Nordics (Lundström, 1983, is one of the few researchers to have explored the topic in his study on Nordic fascism). Even if research exists that includes descriptions of this interconnectedness, most studies have been carried out from a national-case perspective. Given the continuity and spatial stability of the milieus, to compile and review the existing historical research on a Nordic level would create an important outset for future research.

2. How pan-Nordic is contemporary right-wing extremism, and how is it connected to the global right-wing extremist milieu?

As part of the present report, we will also review the research on contemporary Nordic RWE, focusing on how it describes the interconnectedness of the milieu, along with how the Nordic milieu interacts with the global RWE milieu. Transnational activities are, as suggested by the introduction to section 2, an increasingly important component in contemporary RWE. An event on the 9 th of November 2019 exemplifies the Nordic component of this environment. A coordinated action was conducted by the NMR where anti-Semitic symbols were posted on synagogues and Jewish community buildings in all Nordic countries during the commemoration of the November program. Paradoxically, at the same time as we see a pan-Nordic trend in the milieu, threats and violence are becoming increasingly "local." Indeed, contemporary research and media reporting suggest that activists are, for example, targeting and abusing local politicians rather than national ones (Lööw, 2017). Surveys among Norwegian politicians in the parliament (Bjelland & Bjørgo, 2014; Bjørgo & Silkoset, 2017), for example, clearly indicate that

threats from extremist individuals cause fear and disrupt their work as elected representatives, as well as their private lives. The fact that politicians are concerned about their own safety and that of their loved ones to the extent that they consider leaving or actually do leave their positions (e.g., Pierre Esbjörnsson in Skurup, Sweden, victim of a right-wing arson attack) is proof of extremism posing a serious threat to local democracy.

3. With what measures is right-wing extremism prevented in the Nordic countries?

There has been a long tradition in the Nordic countries to instruct schools, youth work and social welfare departments to prevent racism, bigotry and anti-Semitism and to encourage democratic attitudes. This has also included the prevention of recruitment to racist subcultures and RWE (Carlsson & Fangen, 2012; Mattsson, 2018). From the turn of the millennium, these efforts have been gradually incorporated into the prevention of violent extremism while still being partly understood as a task for schools and social welfare departments (Mattsson, 2018). Despite a lack of evidence-based evaluation on how to prevent violent extremism by the use of "soft measures" (Pistone et al., 2019), interventions to prevent RWE and racism are being carried out. Also, evaluations of these exist, even if they do not meet the criteria for being evidence based. As part of this report, all prevention measures aimed at preventing RWE and racism that have been used for more than five years will be mapped and reviewed. Based on this effort, we will present suggestions for further research and policy recommendations based on existing research.

Based on the findings of activities 1–3, we will provide policy recommendations on how to prevent RWE and identify research gaps which need to be addressed.

Methodology

This report is divided in two parts: one focused on the historical and contemporary pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of Nordic RWE and a second centering the prevention practices used. The two parts are different in terms of their focus and data, so they need two different research designs. In the following sections, these approaches are described.

Literature review of pan-Nordic and transnational dimensions of right-wing extremism

As mentioned in the introduction, the current report has set out to compile existing research and data about the historical and contemporary transnational dimensions of Nordic RWE. Accordingly, we will not present any new empirical data as part of this report but analyze already existing research: that is, a so-called literature review.

The literature review as a method of research has two major advantages. First, by integrating empirical findings from a large number of studies about a specific phenomenon, a literature review can advance knowledge ("this is what we know") while helping show the gaps of knowledge ("this is what we do not know"). Second, a literature review is an effective tool to synthesize the research on particular dimensions of a certain phenomenon that have not been given attention previously (Snyder, 2019; Webster & Watson, 2002).

There are different types of literature reviews. In this report, we use what Snyder (2019) called an integrative review. An integrative review is typically used to "assess, critique, and synthesize the literature on a research topic in a way that enables new theoretical frameworks and perspectives to emerge" (Snyder, 2019, p. 335). As discussed by Torraco (2005) and in line with this report's aim, the integrative review is ideal for synthesizing data to develop new knowledge because it "weaves the streams of research together to focus on core issues rather than merely reporting previous literature" (p. 362). Such an analysis can lay the foundations for future research by exposing new interesting themes and gaps to direct.

Compared with systematic literature reviews, which typically are about collecting data about evidence and effect from mainly quantitative research designs, the integrative review incorporates all available data sources to inform the analysis about the topic of interest (Snyder, 2019). The collection of data in integrative

reviews is not limited to journal articles, but also covers books and "gray literature" such as research reports. In addition, the purpose of an integrative review is not to cover all research outputs ever published on the topic but rather to combine perspectives and insights from different fields or research traditions (Snyder, 2019). The data collection is similar to what has been called a targeted literature review, where experts in a field collect select high-quality data to present an informative, rather than all-encompassing, review of the literature on a topic (Huelin et al., 2015).

Research progress

We began our literature review by defining what type of organizations, groups, movements, or actor(s) were to be included: that is: *a milieu which includes movements, organizations, and other actors that are authoritarian and/or anti-immigrant and exercise violence in rhetoric and/or practice.* Based on this definition, the following criterion for inclusion was developed:

Does the highlighted organization, group, movement, or actor(s) fit the definition of RWE?

The second criterion was connected to the focus on transnational and pan-Nordic dimensions of RWE in the Nordic countries. We operationalized transnational connections as consisting of both material and cultural aspects. Material aspects involve the transnational cooperation between national RWE groups in the Nordics during, for example, demonstrations, or the organizing of RWE with the Nordic, not a specific country, as the geographical base (e.g., the NMR). By cultural dimensions, we refer to shared ideological or symbolic constructs about, for example, the Nordic as a common place for the white Nordic people. This leads to the following criterion for inclusion:

Does the publication contain data describing a transnational component?

The researchers involved in the project thereafter identified and conducted searches for literature that fit the two criteria within their country of focus. The literature gathered was then structured according to a template where the following variables were examined:

- Title
- Year
- Author(s)
- Type of literature
- Keywords
- Aim/research question

- Main research context(s)
- Research design
- Data
- Method of analysis
- Discipline
- Transnational component (describe in-depth)
- Organizational type and name of study object
- Actions/practices of focus in the study
- Type of threat posed for society

Data were then categorized into three periods, which differ from each other in several decisive ways. The first period of the Nordic RWE, covering years from 1918 until 1945, was influenced by the German national socialism and, to a lesser extent, Italian fascism. Nordic movements both imitated them and tried to produce their own national or pan-Nordic interpretations of RWE. During this period, their political influence was at its peak. The second period, the period of the Cold War (1945–1990), the milieu had to adapt to the stigma of Hitler's regime. This kept RWE in a marginal position, causing the milieu to find partners and support across the borders and somewhat revise their ideology. The third period, starting from the end of the Cold War and continuing until today, has been characterized by the opening of new avenues for political activities. Along with the growing extremist youth culture, the new means of communication have considerably increased the political opportunities of the milieu.

Literature review of prevention strategies and practices in the Nordics

The overview was carried out in accordance with an inductive approach trying to single out the most prevalent strategies and practices with the explicit goals of preventing or hindering recruitment to violent ideologies and groups. We have used the term strategies in a broad sense when referring to identified and utilized methods or practices for handling a specific problem. Accordingly, the practices and interventions are the operational aspects of the strategies. The national action plans in the Nordic countries are touched upon as overarching national strategies and as sources for information about national practices but are not regarded as practice or intervention.

Interventions against extremism takes many forms: national strategies, municipal prevention, and projects carried out by civil society organizations. To identify relevant data, we have used a combination of strategic selection and snowballing (Cohen et al., 2011). Initially, we consulted the national action plans for preventing violent extremism and the publications found on the websites of authorities and governmental institutions that handle the issue. We also consulted the Radicalization Awareness Network's (RAN) collection of approaches and practices to find some of the Nordic initiatives. Following this step, we consulted researchers and policy makers in their respective Nordic countries, asking for initiatives that, to the best of their knowledge, were the most prevalent or well-known in their country. Finally, we searched the research literature on preventive measures and mentioning of specific initiatives.

Selection of practices

The possibility of mapping all the existing practices intended to prevent right-wing violent extremism is an intricate task. First, there are a lacuna of initiatives made with the mission of preventing antidemocratic tendencies and attitudes at different levels of society, yet there are no reliable registers or definitions that make such an endeavor likely to succeed. Second, initiatives and projects may have a broader scope than just preventing racism and RWE, meaning that initiatives to promote democracy or prevent violence in general can include the above-mentioned groups. Accordingly, we have chosen some inclusive and exclusive criteria for this overview.

The practices included the following:

- Needs to be carried out in Denmark, Finland, Norway, or Sweden and have a preventive approach against recruitment to violent extremism
- Have been used during the last five years (2017–2022)
- Should focus on prevention against racism and/or extremism (especially RWE)

Some of the practices that were identified have a pan-European or Nordic geographical span, and we have included them if one or more Nordic countries are involved. In cases where practices have been updated, redeveloped, or have changed names, we have regarded them as long term if the overarching objectives are centering preventive actions against extremism. It is quite common to lump different forms of violent extremism together in plans and policies aimed at prevention. It has also been recognized that the terms extremism and radicalization tend to refer to militant Islamism (Sivenbring, 2016; Tiilikainen & Mankkinen, 2020). This has also been the case for the current review because most of the practices

and strategies that we have identified have a broader scope than only RWE. If there is a specific focus on an extremist milieu, it is most often a violent Islamic one [1]. We have included strategies and practices that have a wider scope, that is, if racism and RWE is explicitly mentioned or implied in introductory texts, descriptions, or examples.

The inclusion criteria that specify a focus on the prevention *of recruitment* to violent extremism means that prominent practices such as *EXIT Sweden* (designed to support people who leave a white supremacist milieu) that has been running for more than 20 years or the long-lived Danish *Radicalisation Prevention and Deradicalisation in Prison and Probation* (that focuses on support for young extremists in prison) are not included in the review. Neither are we including practices not targeting extremism or racism in its current description, even if they have a history of addressing these issues at some point in time. This entails for instance KPU Norway,[2] which was facilitated in Kristiansand to handle neo-Nazi youths in the early 2000s.

We have certainly not succeeded in identifying all the efforts that have been made in the past five years, but in contact with stakeholders in the various Nordic countries, we have achieved a level of empiric saturation.

Coding

The identified practices have been coded on an Excel sheet according to the following categories: project owner; target groups; overarching aims; activities; active mechanisms; theory of change; evidence base; and evaluation. These were selected to provide readers with a sense of how the practice is structured, how it is believed to preventive, and the evidence supporting its effects.

- **Project owners:** Identifies the authority or organizing body responsible for the practice; this is relevant for scrutinizing the placing of responsibilities of preventive measures, for instance, how they are financed and governed.
- **Operationalizing responsibility:** Shows who carries out the preventive and activities and actions. This information can highlight ideas about expertise and resources.

1. This is also recognized in practices where violent extremism and radicalization are "lumped together" in introductory texts and, in formulating objectives, is often leaning toward militant Islamism, e.g., the Norwegian *Basic training for correctional officers* (RAN, 2019, p. 714-715) that train resource persons within correctional services. The training is designed to raise awareness among the participants of concepts and theories such as radical, extreme, terrorist, radicalization processes, various forms of violent extremism and terrorism, and the prison as an arena for radicalization and deradicalization. The description of the practice describes the relevant content, e.g., radicalization, phenomena, definitions, terms (1h), forms of violent extremism and terrorism (1h), radical Islam (2h), radicalization in prison (1-2h), mini-case work "Ismail" (6h), understanding religion in prison (2h), and foreign inmates (2h).
2. KPU = *Kirkens ungdomsprosjekt*, in English = the Church Youth Project.

- **Target groups:** Describes the individuals who are to be included in the practice, both who are the beneficiaries and the ones who are to be prevented from engaging in racist or extremist groups and actions.
- **Overarching aims:** Lists the intended outcomes of the practice. This categorization can shed light on the discourses of development, what is perceived as gaps in the current "state of affairs."
- **Activities:** The actions and measures performed within the project to reach the intended results; this helps to analyze the perception of active mechanisms.
- **Active mechanisms:** The specific aspect that is believed to spark the effect or the positive change in the participants.
- **Theory of change:** A theory of change (ToC) is connected to the active mechanisms in interventions and denotes a way to discern the intended model for the mechanisms that bring about the change (Bowen et al., 2020; Mayne, 2005). It is embedded in the statements that relates the activities and assumptions with the desired change or goal (Harrington, 2015). As Davies (2018) formulated, it is the logic of "If…then…because…" (p. 12). In this sense, ToC is generally used as a theory for evaluating the efficacy of interventions rather than mapping, analyzing, and comparing different kinds of interventions. However, we use ToC to identify the underlying assumptions about the pragmatic, cognitive, or emotive impact intended as an outcome and that leads to the change needed to prevent racism and violence.
- **Evaluation and evidence base:** This category concerns the extent and kind of evaluation and eventual evidence base of the practice. As recognized in a systematic review of research on initiatives taken to prevent violent extremism, there have been interesting results, but no initiatives that can be considered as evidence based (Eriksson et al., 2018; Pistone et al., 2019). This is especially important in a future perspective for identifying the mechanisms that are the drivers of positive change and for activating them in preventive practices.

The findings from the two literature reviews are presented in the following chapters.

World Wars and Interwar Period (1918–1945)

The diversity of RWE in the Nordic countries is one of RWE's dominant features and has always been such. This applies both to their modes of organizing activities, as well as their ideologies, ideas, and the arenas they are active at. Looking at the whole Nordic extreme right scene, differing historical paths also contribute to this diversity, and the effects of this historical diversity are, to some extent, still visible today (see, e.g., Bjørgo, 1995; Sallamaa & Malkki, 2022). Years of occupation characterize the Norwegian and Danish research, whereas in Finland, its distinctive role as a German ally also appears in topic selection. The Finnish Civil War in 1918 also affected the formation of RWE. Attempts to overcome the diversity had also been made regularly, including initiatives for building a pan-Nordic milieu. These initiatives were partly hampered by differing nationalist interests, including an anti-Swedish attitude of a large part of the Finnish RWE milieu. On the other hand, especially in the new nation-states Norway and Finland, anticommunism united RWE groups in their transnational endeavors, most important of which was the formation of Waffen-SS volunteer troops. Continuities and ruptures extend beyond this historical period. For example, certain local strongholds of extreme right groups that formed in 1930s hold importance as centers of activism today (Mattsson and Johansson 2019).

In this chapter, covering period from early twentieth century until the end of the Second World War in 1945, we first produce an overview of the earliest period of the RWE scenes in different Nordic countries, proceeding country-wise and then reviewing and analyzing the available literature from the perspective of pan-Nordic cooperation and entangled histories. The chapter gives an up-to-date overview of research exploring the historical dimension of the interconnectedness of right-wing extremist milieus in the Nordics, showing which aspects are missing, need reviewing or updating, and areas for further research.

Background

Denmark

Danish right-wing extremist groups did not appear considerably successful in the pre-1945 period. Nevertheless, during the period of 1929–45, no less than 29 party organizations sprung up, and many of these splinter parties pre-existed the occupation. Out of these, only the National Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark (*Danmarks National-Socialistiske Arbejderparti*, DNSAP) managed to gain seats in parliament. Their vote share was not impressive either. In the elections in 1939, they got less than 2% of the votes and three seats in parliament. They managed to repeat this modest achievement in the 1943 election.

Typical for the smaller parties was that they were very fragmented, constantly splitting up. Before Hitler's rise to power, minor local groups mostly imitated Italian fascism. After Mussolini's fascist takeover in Italy in 1922, a number of small fascist groups became more visible. Targeting social democrats and labor unions, they received a lot attention in the press, though they otherwise lacked any political significance or influence. Among the most notable groups was the National Corps (*Nationalkorps*), established in 1925, which had a strong focus on protecting "fascist mothers." These minor groups disappeared by the end of the 1920s.

At the wake of the success of the national socialists in Germany, the Danish right-wing extremists re-emerged in the political field. The first national socialist organization, the Danish National Socialist Party (*Dansk Nationalsocialistisk Parti*), was nevertheless established already in 1928 by Ejnar Vaaben, who also had contacts with his ideological counterparts in Germany. However, the DNSAP was the first formal national socialist party organization. The party was founded by Cay Lembcke in 1930, who was replaced by Frits Clausen 1933. The party mimicked the German Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) in many respects, including taking the Swastika as the party symbol and having the right arm raised in a traditional Nazi salute.

Unlike in Norway, the years of German occupation in Denmark between 1940 and 1945 were not characterized by a growing influence of domestic national socialist groups. Until 1942, the Danish government was led by social democrat Thorvald Stauning and after him by Erik Scavenius, representing Danish Social Liberal Party (*Radikale Venstre*). Although the governments were built as national coalitions, initiating cooperation with the occupiers and including all the major parties, DNSAP was left outside the cabinet alongside the outlawed Communist Party.

Although not reaching its goal, a Danish Nazi government, DNSAP, played central role in forming the Danish volunteer unit of the Waffen-SS in 1941, which consisted around 6,000 men and was in operation until 1943. One quarter of men belonged to

the German minority in Denmark. It has been estimated that around 50% of the volunteers were members of the DNSAP, and many of the rest also were national socialists but not party members. After the war, most of the surviving volunteers served prison terms for their collaboration with their Nazi occupiers.

Finland

The Finnish Civil War in 1918 was an overwhelmingly important formative experience for Finnish RWE. The field of battle offered a concrete arena for violent struggle, and the reprisals and purges following the war gave an opportunity to try to create a new society through redemptive violence. The career and writings of such right-wing authors as Kyösti Wilkuna (1879–1922) or Martti Pihkala (1882–1966) offer clear examples of proto-fascist thought in the making.

With the victory of the Whites, the right-wing extremists in their ranks were, in many instances, able to move on to governmental and administrative positions of the new state. Another of the legacies of the Finnish Civil War—and a conspicuous feature of the interwar Finnish society—was that the white militias, the Civic Guards raised for the war, were not disbanded. They continued in existence alongside the armed forces as paramilitary auxiliaries that could be mobilized in support of the army. The right-wing extremists of the period invariably were overwhelmingly members of the Civic Guards and saw the organization as their powerbase.

Throughout the first decade of the country's independence, the political right was particularly unhappy of the continuing ability of the left, including the Finnish communists, to continue their political activities through the party system and trade unions. A counterstrike materialized in late 1920s through the introduction of strike-breaker organizations to combat the trade unions, here through the country-wide organization of white veterans of the Finnish Civil War (*Vapaussodan Rintamamiesten Liitto, Frihetskrigets Frontmannaförbund*) and finally through the organization of a popular movement against communism.

The Lapua (Swe. *Lappo*) movement gained mass support by a simple anticommunist appeal, but its background was more complex. The leadership and support groups included fascist and right-wing extremists and prominent trade and industry magnates. At its core, the movement claimed to be a "Christian and moral" movement aiming to defeat socialism and lead Finland to new period of harmony. Its heyday came in the summer of 1930 as thousands of movement supporters from the countryside marched to Helsinki in imitation of Mussolini's March on Rome. The government defused the potentially threatening situation by making political concessions. Contemporary publicity abroad also noted the Lapua movement across Scandinavia and Germany.

By late 1930, the escalating violence, kidnappings, beatings, and homicides of the Lapua movement began to erode their mass support, and the movement slid into a crisis. Its final culmination came in early 1932 when part of the leadership was able to incite a partial rebellion among the Civic Guards. After a few days of tense standoff between the mutinous guardsmen and government troops, the situation was brought under control and the mutiny quashed. The Lapua movement was thereafter banned. Its loyalists formed a political party, IKL (*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*, translated into Patriotic Movement), and continued their activities in a parliamentary setting.

Among the right-wing extremists not active within the state apparatus, there were a few noteworthy attempts to organize themselves during the 1920s. Mussolini set an example for Finnish RWE, with the idea of a forceful takeover of power through a march to Helsinki being its most lasting legacy. After Hitler's accession to power in 1933, Hitler soon superseded Mussolini as the image of a successful fascist leader, and national socialism, instead of fascism, became the preferred label of self-identification used by Finnish RWE.

Overall, RWE was almost entirely contained in the existing, legal organizations of the first republic during the interwar years. This had a calming effect because motivation for campaigns of violence or coups remained weak. As a result, the interwar period coup plots hatched among the ultranationalist circles, usually involving a march on Helsinki in some form, invariably came to lack mass support.

The period of the Second World War (1939–1945) opened with a shock for the right-wing extremists. The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in August 1939 was a clear signal that Hitler's Germany would not take on the role of a guarantor of Finland's independence. The Finnish right-wing extremists were thrown into confusion, and several Finnish national socialists traveled to Germany to seek clarification and support from the Nazi's top hierarchy. This clarity would not be found. Also, during the Finnish–German alliance against the Soviet Union in 1941–1944, Hitler's Germany preferred to deal with Finland's existing government and authorities and not support the plans for a political revolution circulating within the right-wing extremist groups. It was only in the very last stage of the German–Finnish alliance that Germany made an effort to mobilize the right-wing extremist circles into a resistance movement operating both outside and inside Finland to continue the war against the Soviet Union and, in time, to gaining political control in Finland.

The armistice accords between Finland and the Soviet Union called for Finland to disband all "Fascist-natured" organizations. From late 1944 onwards, all the conspicuously right-wing extremist organizations, such as the numerous small Finnish national socialist and the Finnish Waffen-SS veteran's organization, but also broad umbrella organizations such as *Frihetskrigets Frontmannaförbund* and

the Civic Guards in their entirety, were dissolved, and their public activities were terminated.

Norway

In the period between national independence in 1905 and beginning of World War I, the Norwegian nation state had emerged as a relatively consolidated unit, one characterized by liberal and democratic nationalism. After World War I and the subsequent economic crisis and political polarization, Norwegian nationalism shifted more toward the radical right. The perceived threat of a communist revolution spurred the establishment of several counterrevolutionary and paramilitary organizations, and a new right-wing activism emerged in the form of groups calling for a national, bourgeois unity against the radicalized labor movement, which the nationalists claimed put the very existence of the new nation state in jeopardy. The Fatherland League (*Fedrelandslaget*), cofounded in 1925 by national hero Fridtjof Nansen and with over 100,000 members around 1930, became the main organizational expression of this right-wing activism. By the end of the 1920s, the lack of active support from the traditional bourgeois parties drove many right-wing activists toward fascism. The attempt of establishing a self-proclaimed fascist movement in Norway in 1927, however, failed.

Vidkun Quisling achieved national notoriety in 1932 when he, as the minister of defense, launched a massive attack on the social democrats and communists. This made him the rallying figure of the right-wing activists and furthered plans of him heading a new, radical nationalist and antisocialist party. This party, *Nasjonal Samling*, was established in May 1933. From the onset, it was a fragile alliance, encompassing both right-wing authoritarians calling for a strong, autocratic government directed against the labor movement, paternalistic Christians calling for a "national revival" against the moral and cultural decay of modernity, and radical national socialists calling for an all-encompassing, national, and racial revolution.

Nasjonal Samling came too late to substantially capitalize on the now waning wave of right-wing nationalism. Hence, the party did not manage to establish itself properly within Norwegian political life, and it never gained parliamentary representation and no more than about 2% electoral support. Because of this failure, the political tensions, which the party harbored from the onset, flared up in open conflict. This resulted in a subsequent split, where *Nasjonal Samling* lost a large number of its members. The decline and marginalization of *Nasjonal Samling* continued during the last years of the 1930s, and by 1940, the party was reduced to a minuscule sect around Vidkun Quisling, with no political impact in Norwegian society. The only reason for its later rise to prominence and Quisling to international

infamy as the archetypical traitor was the occupation of the Norway by Nazi Germany and the subsequent decision by Hitler to appoint *Nasjonal Samling* as his formal collaborationist partner.

On April 9, 1940, Nazi Germany invaded Norway. The main objective was to establish a military stronghold and secure control at the lowest possible costs. Otherwise, as much as possible of the daily administration of the country should be left to the Norwegians. Because of the military resistance and the flight of the Norwegian king and government to England, this arrangement, much in line with what Hitler had achieved in Denmark, failed. Because the Norwegian population, according to Nazi racial ideology, was considered of almost pure "Nordic" stock, the occupation conditions differed widely from those in most other German-occupied countries. Consequently, Hitler placed Josef Terboven as *Reichskommissar* in Norway with instructions to "win the Norwegians over to me."

By the summer of 1940, Terboven's endeavor to establish a semilegal Norwegian collaborationist government had failed. This prompted Hitler to empower *Nasjonal Samling* as his Norwegian partner. This unique arrangement granted Quisling and his party more political influence and power than that of any other local fascist party in the occupied "Germanic" countries. When the so-called "New Order" was established on September 25, 1940, the Nazification of Norwegian society became the main task of *Nasjonal Samling*, by now the only legal party. As a result, *Nasjonal Samling* received some support from Norwegians motivated by sympathy for national socialism or by more pragmatic and self-serving interests.

In April 1940, the party probably had only a few hundred members. By November 1943, its numbers topped out at 43,400 members. Assuming that *Nasjonal Samling* would convince most Norwegians to embrace national socialism, Hitler underestimated the popular resistance to the "traitor" party and deeply embedded democratic sentiment within the large majority of the population. *Nasjonal Samling* lacked all legal legitimacy, and most Norwegians considered membership in the party to be treasonous.

Sweden

The Swedish national socialists never won any parliamentary seats, nor did they play a central role in Swedish politics. Nevertheless, they were a constant part of the political life of the 1930s, and they came because of their relatively many municipal mandates to have some influence at the local level. The Swedish national socialist and fascist parties were also divided for most of the interwar period. It was only between the years 1930 and 1933 that it was possible to speak of a united milieu.

In 1924, the veterinarian Birger Furugård formed Sweden's first national socialist party, Swedish National Socialist Freedom Association (*Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Frihetsförbundet*). In 1929, the party changed its name to the Swedish National Socialist Peasant and Workers' Association (*Svenska Nationalsocialistiska Bonde- och Arbetarpartiet*). During the 1920s, the Swedish Fascist Fighting Organization (1926) (*Sveriges Fascistiska Kamporganisation*) was also formed. In 1930, the first attempt was made to create a united movement, when the New Sweden National Socialist Party (*Nysvenska nationalsocialistiska förbundet*) was formed through a merger of the above-mentioned organizations. The national leader for the new organization was Birger Furugård. In 1932, the party ran in a parliamentary election for the first time and won 15,188 votes. In 1932, an ideological and personal conflict arose within the party's leadership, which, in 1933, resulted in the party splitting and a breakaway group led by Sven Olof Lindholm founding the National Socialist Workers' Party (*Nationalsocialistiska arbetarepartiet*). In 1933, a third national socialist party was founded—the National Socialist Bloc (*Nationalsocialistiska Blocket*)—under the leadership of Colonel Martin Ekström. The bloc disappeared from the political scene after the 1936 election to reappear for a short period at the beginning of the Second World War. In the 1936 parliamentary election, Ekström's and Furugård's parties formed an electoral alliance yet lost most of their support, and Furugård decided to close down his party.

Until 1936, Lindholm's party's leadership was dominated by the party's left wing, which advocated a more socialist policy. After the 1936 election, which was regarded by the left phalanx within the party leadership as a major defeat, several left or were purged. This was the start of a long series of internal conflicts and an orientation to the right. When the municipal elections of 1938 were also disappointing, Lindholm began to consider a change in the party's political profile. In October 1938, the party changed its name to the Swedish Socialist Assembly (*Svensk socialistisk samling*) (SSS), and the Swastika disappeared as a party symbol and was replaced by *Wasakärven*. After the name and symbol change, which did not involve any ideological change in the party's policy, small groups left the party in protest and formed their own more militant organizations. Lindholm's activity during the war years was limited both in terms of public and internal activities. The people of Lindholm ran in the parliamentary elections in 1944, even though the planned electoral coalition with the Swedish National Union and the Swedish Socialist Party (*Svenska Socialistiska partiet*)—which had switched to national socialism—broke down. The election result was a disaster for the party, which, by the end of the Second World War, had lost most of its members and sympathizers.

After 1938, several attempts were again made to create a national unity movement. However, none of these succeeded. The reasons for a large number of groups and organizations were many. There was a fundamental conflict between left- and right-wing organizations, and the relationship with Nazi Germany was another stumbling block, along with continuous rivalry for leadership.

The Swedish national socialists were, as has been seen, divided into a large number of different parties, associations, and small groups. The number of organizations and the fact that certain groups of members and sympathizers often changed parties makes it difficult to determine exactly how many members and sympathizers the different orientations had. It is estimated, however, that the national socialist parties in the mid-1930s had about 30,000 members.

Literature review

The studies on RWE in general and on fascism and national socialism more specifically started to appear sporadically in the Nordic countries in the 1960s; however, based on our literature review, serious scholarly attention started to grow more only during the 1980s. The growing availability of the archival material considerably contributed to the growth of research. However, here, too, the Nordic countries differ from one to the other. Norway has produced more literature than the other Nordic countries regarding this period. In Finland and Denmark, the topic has been taken up by only a few scholars, which has somewhat also shown in the lack of continuity in research efforts. For example, in Finland, four important studies (Alapuro, 1973; Ekberg, 1991; Nygård, 1982; Siltala, 1985) on pre-1945 RWE in Finland were published as dissertations between the 1970s and early 1990s. Most of these scholars did not, however, continue with the topic or specialize in it, even though they studied the same historical period in their subsequent works. In Sweden and Norway, the situation has not been that regrettable and more scholarly work has been conducted on this topic.

Furthermore, methodological nationalism has been a prevailing aspect of research in all Nordic countries, with most of the studies stemming from national concerns and settings. The lack of cross-border archival collaboration has certainly contributed to the lack of comparative or transnational studies. Considering the number of publications with some elements of pan-Nordicism or transnationalism, either from an entangled history perspective or comparative analysis, Denmark and Finland have produced less than 10 publications each. A review of the literature on Sweden and Norway, on the other hand, identified more than 30 such publications for this period. Despite growing research efforts, other gaps in the literature still exist, as well in all countries, affecting our understanding of the pan-Nordic aspects

of RWE. The history of German occupation has overshadowed some minor groups and parties in Norway and Denmark, which have only been studied recently, to some extent. The lack of local studies is also considerable in all countries.

Denmark

Compared with the other Nordic countries, the research on Danish RWE before 1945 has been relatively limited. The research has been primarily concerned with the years of occupation, 1940–45, and regarding the national perspective, most research was conducted within the bounds of political history. The predominant field of research was related to the DNSAP, the only Danish Nazi party to acquire seats in parliament.

The first fascist movements emerged in the 1920s and were markedly influenced by the political situation in Italy. However, research into the early fascist movement has been practically nonexistent. It is limited to one scholarly work which, anyhow, does not deal with Nordic matters. The character of the early Danish fascists' interactions with similar movements in other Nordic countries remains unresearched.

In Denmark, in modern times, no period receives more public attention than the years of occupation, hence the great volume of publications. Many of these have included discussions on the Danish national socialists, although from a national perspective. The bulk of Danish RWE research has focused on these five years. In the late 1990s, a new generation of occupation researchers began scrutinizing the collaborators, including the Nazis and volunteers of the SS.

One chief work of Danish RWE research was Henning Poulsen's doctoral dissertation, published in 1970, concerning the DNSAP's political role during the years of occupation, with emphasis on the year of 1940, when a power takeover like the one that happened in Norway appeared realistic. His dissertation, however, included a chapter on the interwar years—characteristically of the trend—entitled "Before the Occupation." It contained some comparative observations on voter support in the other Nordic countries and on mutual meetings between the Nasjonal Samling in Norway, SSS in Sweden, and DNSAP in Denmark (Poulsen 1970).

Also, the historian Malene Djursaa used a comparative approach in her thesis on the make-up of DNSAP members from 1930 to 1945. Primarily, her examination was based on statistics providing insights into the membership over time. One chapter was dedicated a comparative analysis of NS in Norway and the DNSAP in Denmark, focusing on gender, age, and occupation. The author concluded that before, as well as during, the Second World War, there was a marked difference

between the two parties concerning social structure and the country-versus-town geographical centers of gravity (Djursaa, 1981).

The reasons behind a national lack of success of RWE in the Nordic countries was the theme of a discussion in a comparative study by Henning Poulsen, in which he criticized antimodern theory as an explanation for the lack of political clout in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. He concluded that the primary challenge was not that RWE was linked to antimodernism. As a counterargument, he emphasized that, after 1933, many saw Germany as a modern society and that the explanation for the absence of success was rather that the Nordic national socialists were seen as an imitation of the German phenomenon in the respective countries (Poulsen, 1987).

During the interwar years, the leader of the national socialist Dansk Socialistisk Parti, Wilfred Petersen, developed an ideology with an emphasis on a pan-Nordic perception, and a monograph on his endeavors had elements of both comparative and entangled approaches on similar groups in Sweden and Norway. His party, the Danish Socialist Party, was to become the only real challenger to the DNSAP, and it was notorious for its activism and its criminal methods. This party had a marked revolutionary appearance and was inspired by both Norwegian and Swedish Nazis. It had concrete cooperation with Sven Lindholm's party in Sweden (Christensen, 2022).

As far as the research on Danish fascism is concerned, so far, Rebecca Wennberg's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "National Socialist Discourse among Nazi Intellectuals in Scandinavia" has demonstrated the most consistently transnational and comparative approach. She did this through a survey of a number of trendsetting Danish national socialists of the interwar years. These individuals never represented more than a few miniature parties, but they established an ideological pan-Nordic trend opposing the DNSAP and Germany. She designated them as Nazi heretics and placed them on par with similar groups in Norway (Wennberg, 2016).

Historian John T. Lauridsen's magnum opus on Danish Nazism from 1930 to 1945 was a broadly founded analysis placing itself at the cross-section of political and cultural history. The focus of his monograph was the DNSAP, but here and there, it dealt with the contacts with the other Nordic parties, including the DNSAP's national congress, where representatives of the other parties were also present. In the book's abstract, there was a comparative analysis concerning other European countries including Norway (Lauridsen, 2002).

After the turn of millennia, more examinations of the DNSAP party organizations appeared, including a monograph on the party's youth division. Here, during the interwar years, contacts with Nazi youth organizations in Sweden and Norway

were extant, resulting in mutual visits at camps and other gatherings (Kirkebæk, 2004). In a biography on the DNSAP leader, Frits Clausen, there was also a comprehensive description of his relationship with Vidkun Quisling, but apart from that, no transnational or comprehensive approach on the Nordic aspect can be found (Ravn, 2007).

The transnational aspect of these studies has been obvious, even though they dealt with Germany rather than the Nordic countries. Because there was a considerable over-representation of Nazis in the voluntary corps and because the DNSAP took care of recruitment for the SS, there is reason to consider these endeavors as fascism research. A few of the studies showed a pan-Nordic dimension, though this was not their primary focus. The Nordic aspect was most pronounced in the examinations of the volunteers of the Waffen-SS signing up for the war on the eastern front. More studies of the Danish volunteers of the Waffen-SS have had a comparative aspect vis-à-vis Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish soldiers (Christensen et al., 1998, 2014, 2017). A study of the Dano-German auxiliary police provided a comparison with the police in Norway (Lundtofte, 2014).

The studies of the DNSAP have had an obvious focus on Germano–Danish relations. One exception was an examination of the occupation policy in Denmark and Norway, where the NS and DNSAP were treated in parallel (Dahl et al., 2010).

Finland

In Finland, the most attention in postwar scholarship has been dedicated to interwar RWE and the Lapua movement. The earliest work was Marvin Rintala's (1962) study of interwar Finnish RWE, followed by Lauri Hyvämäki's (1971) essays on the Swedish-speaking Finnish far right and Risto Alapuro's (1973) doctoral dissertation on the ultranationalist, expansionist, and pro-Finnish (*äktfinsk*) student society *Akateeminen Karjala-Seura* (Academic Karelia Society, AKS).

The 1980s also saw the publication of Toivo Nygård's (1982) doctoral dissertation on interwar Finnish right-wing extremist movements, as well as Mikko Uola's studies of IKL (Uola, 1982) and the *Frihetskrigets Frontmannaförbund* (Uola, 1988). The Lapua movement remains the most studied interwar right-wing extremist movement, of which Juha Siltala's (1985) doctoral dissertation still is the most authoritative work. A growing body of literature has been partly related to the opening of the security police archives for research purposes in the early 1990s, although the number of active researchers has remained rather low.

A milestone was Henrik Ekberg's (1991) doctoral dissertation on Finnish interwar national socialist groups. The original work came out in Swedish in 1991 but did never receive a Finnish translation. The most recent studies of Finnish RWE, either

on the interwar or wartime periods, have been Oula Silvennoinen, Marko Tikka, and Aapo Roselius's (2018) study on Finnish fascism in 1918–1945 and Aarni Virtanen's (2015) doctoral dissertation on the thematical evolution of Vihtori Kosola's speeches.

Biographical studies on the key figures of right-wing extremist movements and groups have included a recent study of Elias Simoki, leader of the fascist youth organization Blue-Blacks (Siironen, 2017), and of Vilho Helanen, the leader of the Akateeminen Karjala-Seura (Roiko-Jokela & Seppänen, 1997). In these studies, as well as the majority of other studies focusing on this period, the approach has been mostly national, without explicitly emphasized Nordic or international aspects. However, links to Germany have been referred to in several works.

Ekberg's study (1991) can be seen as standing out among early studies in its explicitly transnational and partly also Nordic approach regarding theoretical framework and literature used. In his analysis of the *Samfundet Folkgemeskap*, a right-wing extremist group founded by Swedish-speaking Finns in 1940, Nordicism was shown as a founding principle and was combined with practical level cooperation with Swedish activists, along with Viking symbolism. *Samfundet Folksgemenskap* belonged also to one of the organizers of the Finnish Waffen-SS volunteers, whose ideological backgrounds were recently studied by André Swanström (2018).

Although building largely upon previous studies, Markku Jokisipilä and Janne Könönen (2013) explored the Finno–German relationship during Hitler's regime, also including a short analysis of the Nordische Gesellschaft and racial ideas of common Nordic heritage shared by its Finnish members. Silvennoinen, Tikka, and Roselius (2018) set the Finnish movement into a historical continuum of fascist movements, tracing the ideological evolution starting from the nineteenth century.

Norway

The amount of literature on the history of domestic fascism and radical right has been far larger in Norway than in any other Scandinavian country, as historian Hans Fredrik Dahl (2004) concluded in his research overview. This has held true even to the present day. The obvious reason for this is that Hitler decided to put a local fascist party in power as a collaboration partner. This unique arrangement has spurred a large amount of research dealing with the history, ideology, and social composition of the "traitor party" *Nasjonal Samling*.

Hence, historical research on fascism and the radical right in Norway in the interwar period has mainly focused on the history of this future collaboration party and its leadership. Not much attention has been paid to other Norwegian fascist

and radical right organizations, which usually only are mentioned as part of the prewar history of *Nasjonal Samling*. The connections between *Nasjonal Samling* and other fascist organizations in the Nordic countries in this period have also usually only been mentioned in passing, often in biographies on leading Norwegian national socialists. Prominent examples have included Hans Fredrik Dahl's (1991) first volume on Vidkun Quisling, and Ivo de Figureido's (2002) biography on the former deputy leader of *Nasjonal Samling*, Johan B. Hjort. Dahl (2015) later collected his main findings regarding Quisling's networks in a monograph.

In addition, Ida Blom's (1976) anthology chapter on young Norwegian conservatives' sympathies for fascism can be mentioned. Even though this chapter had no transnational or entangled approach, it named early contacts between these conservatives and international fascists in the 1930s.

Fascism studies were first introduced as an academic discipline in Norway in 1966 with a special issue of the journal *Kontrast*, where fascism as a broader phenomenon in Norwegian history—not only limited to *Nasjonal Samling*—was established as a subject for research. This was followed up by several studies on the radical right and contra-revolutionary and paramilitary organizations in the 1920s. At the same time, the radical conservative Fatherland League was the focus of one monography. However, because none of these studies included transnational, Nordic perspectives, we did not include them in our report.

The first attempt of employing a comparative approach to Norwegian fascism appeared in the pioneering international study *Who Were the Fascists,* which aimed at exploring "comparative European fascism." Here, Stein Ugelvik Larsen's (1980) introduction to the section on fascism in the Nordic countries must be mentioned. Ugelvik Larsen (1990) later also contributed with a comparative anthology chapter on fascism and the radical right in the Nordic countries.

For a long time, other self-proclaimed fascist and national socialist organizations and milieus in the interwar years were not a subject for specific studies. However, in recent years, the research in this field has developed. Here, Terje Emberland's (2003, 2004) works on national socialist milieus in opposition to *Nasjonal Samling* in the 1930s (Emberland, 2015), and a recent study (Emberland, 2022) of Norway's National Socialist Workers' Party *(Norges Nasjonalsosialistiske Arbeiderparti)* can be mentioned. All these studies included sections with comparative, transnational, and entangled perspectives, encompassing both Germany and the Nordic countries.

In addition, a pioneering work regarding the networks between Norwegian and German national socialists and the *völkisch* –Nordic movement in the interwar years was completed in the last decade by Nicola Karcher (2012). She also contributed with several academic articles on the entangled and transnational history of Norwegian–German fascism and the radical right before and during the

Second World War (Karcher, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2019).

International contacts of Norwegian national socialists were also mentioned in Kenneth Kreppen's (2015) master's thesis. However, his main focus was on the political strategies of his protagonists, not on their cooperation outside Norway. The involvement of Norwegians in the Finnish Winter War has been little investigated so far, with one monograph in this field by Torstein Strømsøe (2000), published at the University of Trondheim. Beside studies on fascism, there exist a few studies on the development of race research as an academic discipline in Norway. Jon Kyllingstad (2004), Nicola Karcher (2009), and Torgeir Skorgen (2002) have taken into account the transnational "scientific" exchange that took place but did not have a specific focus on Nordic cooperation in this discipline.

In general, the studies focusing specifically on Norwegian fascist and far-right cooperation with movements in the other Nordic countries have been missing and not identified as an important field of research. It is significant that Dahl's historiographical overview from 2004 called for more comparative research employing theoretical insights from international fascist studies but did not mention transnational and entangled studies on Nordic fascism as a research deficit. This is particularly noteworthy in view of the fact that previous research conducted in both Norway and Sweden by, for example, Heléne Lööw (1990), Terje Emberland (2003), Matthew Kott (Emberland & Kott, 2012), and Nicola Karcher (2012) has shown that these networks existed during the interwar period.

Virtually, all works dealing with the period of the German occupation of Norway have employed a somewhat transnational perspective, in so far as dealing with the relationship between the Nazi leadership in Berlin, the local German rulers under Reichkommissar Terboven, and *Nasjonal Samling*. Here, Hans Fredrik Dahl's (1992) second Quisling volume must be mentioned, as well as Tore Pryser's (2001) study on Norwegian national socialists working as agents for the German SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*/Security Service of the SS), along with Øystein Sørensen's (1989) study on ideological conflicts in *Nasjonal Samling* during the German occupation period.

In recent years, two research projects were started at the University of Trondheim and University of Tromsø. Although the first one had its main focus on *Organisation Todt* and published some of its findings in a special issue (*Historisk tidsskrift*, 2018), the second mainly focused on the occupation history in Northern Norway.

One of the most comprehensive studies on the Norwegian occupation regime was written outside Norway by the German historian Robert Bohn (2000). In addition, Tore Rem's (2015) work on the relationship between Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun and Hitler offered an interesting perspective. However, none of these studies investigated transnational or entangled Nordic cooperation.

Terje Emberland and Matthew Kott's study (2012) on the SS's role during the occupation of Norway offered transnational and entangled parts on SS activities in Scandinavia before the war. This aspect has also been thematized by Emberland (2009a, 2009b) in two anthology chapters. The history of the pan-Germanic thought in Norway, which partly also became relevant for the SS—even though a transnational or entangled perspective is lacking—has been described by Øystein Sørensen (2009) in a chapter in the same anthology. Sigurd Sørlie's (2015) study on the recruitment of Norwegian volunteers to the Waffen-SS included comparative sections on the recruitment in Denmark and in the Netherlands.

To understand the specific character of the German occupation regime in Norway, in recent years, more attention has been paid to a comparative perspective, in particular mapping out the differences and similarities between the situation in Norway and Denmark. However, the foremost work on this subject—an anthology published by Norwegian and Danish researchers and edited by Hans Fredrik Dahl et al. (2010)—contained no systematic comparative studies, only parallel treatments of subjects from a Danish and Norwegian perspective.

Regarding the character of the German occupation regime and relations to its collaboration partners, for example, local fascist parties and leaders and the domestic police force, a comparison with the Netherlands was also highly relevant and partly conducted by Nicola Karcher (2018) in a scientific monograph, Øystein Hetland (2020) in his PhD thesis, and more concretely by Sindre Mensink (2020) in his master's thesis.

Sweden

In the analysis of the Swedish literature on fascism and national socialism before 1945, 38 publications concerning the interwar and war years were identified. With very few exceptions (most notably Lindström, 1985; Lööw, 1990; Wärenstam, 1970), most works analyzed for this review date after 1990, and most were published after 2000. This partly reflects the more relaxed archival policies of the authorities, as well as the growing research interest in the early years of these ideologies.

Most of the works were conducted from national perspective, and only 12 of these publications had a Nordic dimension. However, the Nordic perspective was present to a lesser degree among several other studies as well. In these studies, contacts between different movements in the Nordic countries were mentioned but rarely studied in more detail. One of the monographs, Ulf Lindström's doctoral dissertation from 1985 fascism in Scandinavia 1920–1940, was a comparative study of the Scandinavian countries. The study mainly consisted of an analysis of voter patterns to identify regions in each country where fascism had a foothold.

The predominant part of the research consisted of studies of various national socialist, fascist, and antidemocratic right-wing nationalist parties and groups, that borders to national socialism (Berggren, 2014b; Hagtvet, 1980; Lööw 1990, 2004; Lundberg, 2014; Wärenstam, 1970). In these studies, with a focus ranging from 1920s to the 1940s, Nordic contacts and collaborations were sometimes discussed but not touched on in detail.

Another part of the research consisted of studies of idea organizations, prominent national socialists and fascists, and so-called one-man activists who mainly worked as publicists (Berggren, 1999; Berggren, 2014a; Blomkvist, 1999; Lööw, 2004, 2021; Stenfeldt 2019). Some of these activists were also very much focused on building international networks, though these became more notable in the post-WWII period. In these works, certain Nordic contacts and collaborations come to the fore as well. Some research also concerned the surrounding society's reaction to the national socialist and fascist challenge (Flyghed, 1992; Lööw, 1990, 2004).

In 1996, Sverker Oredsson's book on Lund University during the interwar period and Second World War was published and can be seen as a very important contribution to the understanding of Swedish anti-Semitism, racism, and the history of national socialism because it touches on a part that has been mostly unexplored: the Swedish academics' position. Their relation to national socialism and Nazi Germany has also been analyzed in the anthology *De intellektuellas förräderi* (Björkman et al., 2016). Although Swedish national socialists never got broke through at the national level, they may have been an essential part of the local political life (Lööw, 2015). However, the local aspect was still understudied, but in recent years, some local history research has been added (see, e.g., Dammberg, 2009). Nevertheless, this research has concerned the pan-Nordic dimension but to a very limited extent.

The studies on the subjects were overwhelmingly historical studies based on archival materials such as movement, private, and police archives. The primary data collection method has been archival research, with occasional utilization of interview material and analyses of movement literature, newspapers, leaflets, and magazines. Official data have also been used for, among other things, study voting patterns.

Today, most of police and military material is available for research at both the national and local levels. In the case of private archives, there may be restrictions in some cases. It should be emphasized that archival material from national socialist, fascist movements, activists, publicists, and cultural associations are very fragmentarily preserved. There are no collective party archives, whether at a local or national level. Membership registers are very fragmentarily preserved. The material is also found in many different archives, and there is no national compilation of the archive material.

Themes, Research Methods, and Designs

Initially, this literature review was planned with three periods in mind covering first the "proto-fascism" period until Hitler came to power in 1933, then the period of Nazism before the Second World War, and finally "fascism in power," 1940–1945. However, as soon became obvious, this division did not apply evenly between countries, especially regarding the initial period, which lacks almost any research, for example, in Denmark. The focus has been mostly on the third period, which is also reflected in a selection of the research themes. Most of the studies have been based on archival research and archival material, with only a few exceptions. Especially the earlier studies have also often been conducted from a strictly national perspective, and in only a few analyses has comparative setting also been utilized. A transnational or entangled approach has been rarely used until recently. In some countries, the problem has also been a lack of continuity, causing, along with the absence of cross-national archival collaboration, somewhat sporadic and fragmented research.

The Finnish studies on the subjects have been overwhelmingly historical studies based on archival materials. The primary data collection method has been archival research, with occasional utilization of interview material. Works of this period until the collapse of the Soviet Union can generally be characterized by a preponderance to theoretical reflection and categorization regarding the proper place of Finnish far-right movements regarding transnational fascism. This also reflects the state of contemporary international theoretical debate among historians on the nature of fascism and the far right.

The fact that, up to 1944, there was room for RWE, also within the state and administrative apparatus, the armed forces, and the Civic Guards, has made it difficult for scholars to differentiate and recognize RWE when it has been acting under state authorization. For instance, in 1941–1944, the security police and army counterintelligence were engaged in close cooperation with the German security police, which culminated in Finnish participation in the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Silvennoinen, 2010).

The opening of the Finnish security police archives for public use in the early 1990s has meant a great step forward for the research on the interwar and wartime RWE in Finland. On the materials level, this has made an inter-Nordic viewpoint a natural one because the *Säkerhetspolisens arkiv* under the *Riksarkivet* in Sweden formed an obvious counterpoint to the Finnish material. The same individuals were often monitored by the authorities on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia, and both the Swedish and Finnish authorities were accustomed to seeking each other's help.

As in Finland, most studies on fascism and the radical right in Norway in the interwar and war years have been mostly historical studies based on archival material and with a national perspective. Especially the older generation of Norwegian researchers showed little interest in theoretical reflections, mainly focusing on empirical investigations and built on sources collected at the Norwegian national archive (*Riksarkivet,* RA) and the archive of Norway's Resistance Museum (*Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum,* NHM). Sources from outside Norway were only used to a negligible extent.

The main topics had been the history and development of *Nasjonal Samling* before and during the war, with a major focus on the party's collaboration during the German occupation, and the role and activities of the Norwegian resistance movement, with several studies produced by former resistant fighters. The emphasis had only a few modifications until the 1990s, with the Holocaust in Norway being one of the topics gradually moving from the periphery into the center of academic interest.

Starting in the 2000s, Terje Emberland and later Nicola Karcher conducted studies, taking into account fascist and far-right groups beside and/or in opposition to *Nasjonal Samling*. These two scholars were also the first who employed transnational and entangled perspectives. Archives outside Norway such as the German national archive (*Bundesarchiv*, BA) have been used to a larger extent in recent years. However, a lack of language skills has often constituted a problem for younger scholars working in the field of occupation history.

In line with the research in other Nordic countries, most works on Danish groups and actors have approached the topic from the perspective of political history and been based on archival studies, drawing material both from public and private archives. However, in some studies, the research data used comprised statistics, interviews, and surveys. Certain studies, such as John T. Lauridsen's work on Danish Nazism 1930–1945 included elements from cultural history as well. Historical studies have typically been written from a national perspective, a transnational angle can be seen, for example, in comparative settings, as well as in few cases, where a more entangled history approach was present. In the latter cases, for example, in Rebecca Wennberg's PhD thesis, the pan-Nordic elements were explored (see also Christensen, 2022). Thematically, the focus of research that included transnational viewpoints has especially been in the only Danish Nazi party elected to the parliament, DNSAP, as well as in years of occupation and the Danish volunteers of the SS.

Swedish research has had its focus especially on various groups and movements, reflecting also the diversity of the field of RWE itself. There has not been any single group dominating the field or research efforts to a similar extent as in Norway or

Denmark. During the early years, it was also impossible to speak of any unified movement, despite the fact that, by the mid-1930s, national socialist parties had more than 30,000 members. Another research trend, also partly echoing the diversity of the target of research, has been the studies of individual activists and ideological leaders. Along with these, a handful of scholarly works have also explored societal responses to the RWE milieu, though typically only as parts of some larger studies. The research methods have been more or less similar as in other Nordic countries, with the focus being on archival studies, occasionally also employing interview and statistical methods.

Many of the works mentioned in the present study have come from scholars of an older generation, who often have already retired or did not continue with the topic later in their careers. Among the active researchers on the field in Sweden can be counted Heléne Lööw, Victor Lundberg, Johan Stenfeldt, Lars M. Andersson, and Lena Berggren. Regarding Finland, among the active researchers in the field are Juha Siltala, Oula Silvennoinen, Marko Tikka, Aapo Roselius, and Aarni Virtanen. The group of active researchers in the field of the history of Norwegian fascism and occupation history is large, consisting of both scholars belonging to the older generation and younger researchers. The group of scholars who investigated transnational perspectives and pan-Nordic approaches covering the first, second, and third periods is, however, much smaller, with Terje Emberland and Nicola Karcher as the main contributors. In Denmark, active researchers publishing studies include Sofie Lene Bak and Claus Bundgård Christensen.

Pan-Nordic and Transnational Dimensions

In Sweden there has been, with two exceptions (Hagtvet, 1980; Lindström, 1985) a lack of more systematic comparative studies that place the Swedish milieu in both a Nordic and transnational perspective. This reflects the overall situation with the current research in other Nordic countries. Some of the reasons are methodological, some to scattered and unconnected archival sources, and some the differing national histories. Regarding archives, the material has been fragmented also on a national level, and no compilation of the archive material has been done on a national, let alone pan-Nordic, level. Thus, any pan-Nordic approach would depend on the initiatives of individual researchers.

Although also scarce, comparative approaches still have much more common than transnational or entangled one, but even these have been partly methodically underdeveloped. The national empirical approach has still been the dominating method. In Finland, the postwar isolated and strategically vulnerable position of country encouraged a tendency to inspect Finnish matters from a narrowly

nationalist viewpoint. A particular difficulty, here accentuated as long as the Soviet Union was in existence, has been the classification of Finnish RWE and its proportioning to its transnational points of comparison. Therefore, the works cited here do not reflect a theoretically or terminologically uniform approach to their subjects, nor has pan-Nordicism been a natural starting point for pre-1990s studies.

A notable exception to this tendency can be found in the 1980 anthology *Who Were the Fascists*, written by an international group of scholars and in which an attempt to put also the Lapua movement into the transnational picture was made (Heinonen, 1980). The anthology can be seen as holding relevance also for other Nordic countries. Ideological similarities between RWE in Finland and elsewhere in Europe came up in the aforementioned books by Silvennoinen et al. (2018) and Virtanen (2015). Silvennoinen et al. also placed the development of fascist movement in Finland into a larger European context by connecting it to the shared experiences and sentiments among those who witnessed the battlefields of the First World War.

In Norwegian and Danish research, here stemming from their historical experiences of occupation during the Second World War, the transnational aspect has largely focused on contacts with German national socialists and collaborationist individuals and parties, as well as volunteers of the Waffen-SS. Some of the scholarly works extended beyond Nordic national boundaries but were mostly comparative by nature or only parallel studies.

So far, studies with a pan-Nordic transnational or entangled dimension as a main approach do not exist. However, the recently published anthology edited by Nicola Karcher and Markus Lundström (2022) on Nordic fascism, conducted by the Network for Nordic Fascism Studies (NORFAS), offers a collection of empirical research chapters dealing with both transnational and entangled perspectives of the period discussed in this chapter. Thus, this anthology constitutes a first Nordic step away from the dominant methodological nationalism, instead moving toward joint Nordic research.

Cold War Period (1945–1990)

This period was characterized with a growing interest in transnational cooperation and networking, which naturally existed also before the Second World War but became more salient because of the politically marginalized positions of the right-wing extremist groups in their home countries. The cooperation included, besides ideological and cultural exchange, more practical elements arising from joint events and publications to, for example, mutually used propaganda designs. This also partly reflects the other important element in the Cold War period's right-wing extremist activism, which was often more focused on metapolitics, that is, on cultural activism and propaganda instead of direct political influencing (see Kotonen, 2022).

Transnational networks reached Norway and Denmark, too, with individual activists sometimes playing an important role within these networks. Varying historical experiences and events also affected the evolution of the right-wing extremist scenes. In officially neutral Sweden, the effects of Hitler's legacy differed from those countries that were either occupied or were brothers in arms with Germany. For understanding the current cross-border cooperation, the Cold War period can be seen as an, to some extent, essential research topic because many of the networks that still exist, had, to certain extent, their roots in that period. To take just one example, NMR has counted the Swedish *Nordiska Rikspartiet* (Nordic Reich Party), which was founded in 1956 and active at times in all Nordic countries, among its most important predecessors. Organized RWE movements formed by post-Second World War generations, typically small neo-Nazi groups, started to re-emerge during the 1970s in Finland, Denmark, and Norway. Both in ideology and practice, these groups were more open to international influences than the nationally oriented, more conservative groups.

Background

Denmark

In Denmark, the postwar reorganization of the right-wing extremists appeared burdensome because the ideology itself was largely stigmatized in Danish society, and many of the supporters and members of the RWE parties were also condemned in courts as traitors. DNSAP, the only national socialist party in Denmark with representation in parliament, was not, despite such demands,

banned after the war, as it disintegrated by itself. Loose national socialist networks remained, and the remnants of the party continued its existence under the leadership of Svend Salicath until the early 1980s. In the early 1960s, the party had, according to information given to the police by the party leader, around 25 members (Heiberg, 2009).

The National Socialist Movement of Denmark (*Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Bevægelse*, DNSB), founded in its current format in 1991, considering itself a successor of the DNSAP. However, already in the early 1970s, Povl Riis-Knudsen had founded an organization to replace the DNSAP of Salicath, which also used name DNSB. Many of the neo-Nazis active in the 1970s represented a kind of a second generation. Riis-Knudsen, for example, was the son of a SS officer.

The new activist cadre also started to create international links, occasionally combined with some pan-Nordic ideas. Riis-Knudsen also acted as a leader of the World Union of National Socialist (WUNS), with which also Salicath previously had contacts. WUNS was an international, cross-Atlantic umbrella group for neo-Nazis, founded in 1962 by Colin Jordan from the UK and George Lincoln Rockwell from the USA. The Danish contacts also benefited the foreign activists as the material, which was illegal in Germany, was produced in Denmark and could be easily smuggled there across the border.

Besides continuing ideological work and spreading leaflets and propaganda, by the 1980s, the Danish national socialists became more visible in the streets. The membership figures started to slowly rise, although staying in marginal numbers, and the DNSB expanded its organization to some new cities. During the Cold War period, the Danish national socialists did not participate in national elections. In 1989, however, a small splinter group of DNSB, *Partiet De Nationale*, took part in municipal election, gaining less than 100 votes.

Finland

After the Second World War, in the Paris Peace Treaty, Finland committed to ban the existing fascist organizations and prevent founding new ones. The Finnish government followed these commitments by banning most of the organizations, and several former leaders of national socialist and other right-wing organizations were also arrested or placed under surveillance. Because of these circumstances, RWE was very limited, and activism was mostly clandestine. Characteristic to the activism and organizations during the Cold War period was also that they were mostly short lived and sporadic, and there was no clear continuum between organizations or forms of activism.

Right after the war, however, there were already a handful of groups founded

mostly by schoolboys inspired, for example, by the semimythical German resistance groups; these schoolboys collected guns and shared propaganda. The security police, in the hands of the communists after 1945, saw these groups as a breach of the peace treaty, and their activism also gave communists a handy propaganda tool against right-wing political groups because many of the schoolboys were also members of the Youth League of the National Coalition Party. These groups disappeared within few years, and the activism did not continue.

Few former activists and leaders of, for example, national socialist groups tried to continue limited activism during the 1950s, when the imminent fear of Soviet occupation started to vanish and, during the so-called "thaw," the Soviet system also appeared to change into a less aggressive direction after the death of Stalin. With open activism still being impossible in Finland, former activists, mostly Swedish-speaking Finns, revitalized their contacts abroad, especially in Sweden. These connections, however, were discontinued when the activists retired.

Post-Second World War generations started limited activism during the early 1960s, founding groups imitating the far-right organizations of the 1930s, such as the Lapua movement and Patriotic People's Front. Some of the groups, led by schoolboys and students, had clear-cut fascist programs and were keenly followed by the security police. Typical for the period was that these groups disappeared when the organizers grew up, and no new groups appeared to continue their work.

More visible and organized activism appeared only during the 1970s when a few neo-Nazi organizations were founded by the Finns, and one Swedish group, *Nordiska Rikspartiet* (NRP) also landed in Finland. As a leader and founder of one neo-Nazi party called Patriotic People's Front (*Isänmaallinen Kansanrintama*), occultist and photographer Pekka Siitoin dominated the field from the mid-1970s until the mid-1980s.

Norway

The end of the Second World War did not only mark the breakdown of the collaboration regime in Norway. National socialism in general was discredited in the overwhelming part of Norwegian society. However, this did not necessarily mean a total end to the dissemination of extreme right ideas or activities promoted by some organizations. Certainly, fascist groups had never been many or politically very successful in Norway, but this did not hinder them from making attempts to rebuild and restructure their organizations after 1945. Working in close cooperation and having an ideological exchange with their "Nordic brothers" was probably an important aspect of their political agenda. At the same time, the social exclusion and political and juridically persecution of members of *Nasjonal Samling* made it far more difficult to restart political far-right activities in Norway than, for

example, Sweden. Especially the first period after 1945 was characterized by the so-called treason trials against collaborators, most of them members of *Nasjonal Samling* and Norwegian SS volunteers. Accordingly, veteran groups spent most of their efforts restoring their social and political credibility. Their status as a traitor to the nation played a central role in their self-perception.

Very few studies existed on these groups and their Nordic cooperation. An example of early postwar activities can be seen in the magazine *Folk og Land* (People and Land), edited by former members of *Nasjonal Samling*. This group also tried, in cooperation with *Nordiska Rikspartiet* (Nordic Reich Party, NRP), to establish a common Nordic organization under the name *Nordisk Samling* (Nordic Unity). Several Norwegian fascists participated in a "Nordic" meeting in Copenhagen in 1947, organized by Per Engdahl and *Nysvenska Rörelsen* (New Swedish Movement, NSR). In 1951, Norwegian fascists also participated in a similar meeting in Malmö, which was the starting point for Engdahl's Malmö movement, officially called the *European Social Movement.* However, we know very little about the role of Norwegians in this movement and their political activities in general. An exception is the earlier cooperation between Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian fascists in helping collaborators from Denmark and Norway to exile, which has been partly investigated.

Organized ultra-nationalism re-emerged in Norway in early 1970s, partly as a far-right backlash against the radical left mobilization and partly because of the mainstreaming of the Conservative party, which held office between 1965 and 1971. The main goal was to establish a political party that could represent the interests of the Nazis. As a result, *Norsk Front* (NF) was founded in 1975, headed by the media-savvy leader Erik Blücher. The party had approximately 1,400 members. The key issue was no longer the legal purge in Norway after the Second World War but rather the fight against communism. The party's predecessors were the youth organization *Nasjonal Ungdomsfylking* and smaller groups mobilizing against communism, such as *Anti-kommunistisk allianse*. The activists were younger than before, and many of them had a more bourgeoisie background. Initially, the milieu mainly mobilized at the universities but eventually adopted a more violent strategy. In the late 1970s, activists affiliated to or inspired by NF carried out several severe attacks against "enemies," most notably those associated with the left, including a left-wing bookstore in Tromsø and trade unionist march on May 1. The trials following these events resulted in the dissolution of NF in 1979. The group was replaced by *Nasjonalt Folkeparti*, but this party was also heavily affected by the fact that several of its key party activists were sentenced to prison for bombs, vandalism, and other criminal acts in 1985.

Sweden

In the years immediately following the Second World War, the Lindholm movement dwindled until the party was disbanded in 1950. Of the pure national socialist parties of the interwar period, only various small local groups remained. The Swedish National Association and New Swedish Movement ceased to function as political parties and transformed themselves into idea unions, which mainly conducted their political activities in the form of metapolitics. They downplayed anti-Semitism and antidemocracy in favor of anticommunism, which was considered more politically viable during the Cold War. In 1956, however, the Nordic Reich Party was founded, which was the mediating link between the interwar national socialist parties and contemporary ones. The party existed during the years 1956 to 2009. The NRP had, except for the period 1975–1978 (when Oredsson's wife Vera was party leader), Göran Assar Oredsson as the party leader. For most of its existence, the party came to operate in a political vacuum.

During the first half of the 1980s, the NRP was again able to note some successes. The party had its premises in the Stockholm suburb of Årsta. During the first half of the 1980s, parts of the party became more violently radicalized, and in the mid-1980s, several members, sympathizers, and officials were convicted for serious violent crimes. After the trials, much of the focus on the party disappeared, both in the mass media and, among potential activists and sympathizers, in favor of the new groups created in the wake of the lawsuits. The trials against the NRP members and sympathizers followed a period characterized by the search for new forms of organization and a new ideological base. The American strategies and ideas, especially the white power subculture, were making their entrance and mixed with the domestic tradition of European national socialism. The thoughts of the holy "race war" and the view of themselves as part of an "international resistance movement against the Jewish occupying power" began to take hold.

Literature Review

The Cold War period has been the most understudied period in all countries included in this literature review. This applies both to the general overviews of the period, as well as pan-Nordic aspects within literature. There have been more comprehensive studies on the situation in Sweden and Finland, though these have been made by individual researchers, and no ongoing research projects exist. The focus of the Cold War period historiography in general has been more on the East–West relations and on how the tensions between two superpowers affected domestic politics. In these studies as well, right-wing extremists occasionally may have played a minor role because they were, for example, active in building transnational anticommunist networks.

Denmark

The research into Danish fascism after 1945 has been sparse. Primarily, the reorganization during the years of 1945–2022 of the extreme right was conducted by veterans of the Nazi milieu present during the Second World War. There was never a prohibition of having joined a Nazi party, but many of those who were punished in the judicial reckoning after the occupation were former members of the DNSAP. Consequently, many of the early postwar Nazi groups appeared to be veteran support or aid communities.

The most important examination of Danish fascism after the war appeared in a volume of the comprehensive report by the commission of enquiry into the Police Intelligence Service (PET) published in 2009; the aim was not charting right-wing activities, but the intelligence service's surveillance, for which reason a Nordic dimension was generally nonexistent. It is mentioned, however, that in the 1960s, the Danish Nazis had some liaisons with Sweden (report by the commission of enquiry, see Heiberg, 2009).

A journalistic examination of the Nazi escape network organized after the Second World War includes a transnational dimension concerning a support structure set up in Sweden, Spain, and Argentina., This, however, did due to the journalistic methods not live up to basic academic standards (Foged & Krüger 1985).

In 2020 and 2022, the prominent Danish national socialist Povl H. Riis-Knudsen published his memoirs, covering the years 1949–1977. The volumes offered insights into the Danish national socialist scene of the 1960s and 1970s. Knudsen's memoirs are of general interest because he played a prominent role in the international national socialist milieu in the 1970s (Riis-Knudsen, 2020, 2021).

Finland

The Cold War period for RWE in Finland has come under scholarly scrutiny only recently, and the research is still quite scarce. The lack of research can be explained, at least partly, by the general understanding that there was nothing much to research and no active groups were known besides the notorious Pekka Siitoin and his parties (cf. Kullberg, 2011; Kestilä, 2006; Pekonen, 1999). During the period, there were no scholarly studies dealing with the topic, and only a few contemporary left-wing pamphlets have analyzed the RWE in any more detail. Besides leftist literature, the earliest period, which entailed activism by the schoolboys right after the war, has been mentioned in a few contemporary articles and books by conservative writers.

New research material, especially the opening of the security police archives for researchers, has somewhat changed the picture, though there are still not many

active researchers studying the RWE of the period. The only scholarly study delving deeper into the evolution of the scene after the Second World War was Kotonen's monograph covering the entire Cold War period. Mari Kalliala's work covered the later period, focusing especially on the activities of Pekka Siitoin. In addition, Kotonen's (2022) recent article focused internationalization and Nordic connections of the Finnish movement. The literature focusing on Cold War period conservative anticommunism with occasional links to RWE groups also provided some insights into the salience of the Nordic connections and ideas (Vesikansa, 2011).

In Swedish or other Nordic academic literature Finnish Cold War period groups or activists have been barely mentioned. Only exception has been the studies by Heléne Lööw (2004), in which activism of certain Finnish neo-Nazis living in Sweden have been analyzed, and one particular activist of Finnish origin active in Sweden, Nils Mandell, has also been interviewed for studies by Jeffrey Kaplan (2002; Kaplan & Weinberg, 1998). In these studies, though, the Finnish activists have been analyzed as part of the Swedish or international milieu.

The official histories of the Finnish security police, *Suojelupoliisi*, which is called colloquially Supo, have had a countering Soviet influence and espionage as their main focus, though they also include few remarks regarding RWE as well (Simola, 2009; Simola & Sirviö, 1999).

Norway

Regarding the Cold War period, the years up to 1973 must be considered the most understudied, with a clear need for research on the re-establishment of Nordic fascist and radical right networks, their ideological exchange, and their joint political activities. Especially the milieu of NS veterans and their Nordic cooperation in the first two decades after the end of the Second World War needs further investigation.

Because of the nature of the Nazi escape networks after the war, there exist two studies on Norwegian national socialist escapees. Both Anne Kristin Furuseth's (2013) book on the subject and master's student Eirk Øien's (2019) research employed a transnational and entangled perspective, showing a close cooperation between Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, as well as other Nazi milieus and networks across Europe and Latin America. In this respect, these studies constituted a positive exception to the dominant methodological nationalism.

Two master's theses, finalized in the 2010s, dealt with fascist and far-right ideology in the Cold War period. Although Espen Olavsson Hårseth (2010) covered the establishment of the journal *Folk og Land* by former members of *Nasjonal Samling* , Lars Preus (2014) discussed the ideological development of Norwegian neo-Nazism in 1967 (see also Hårseth, 2017). Both these partly refer to contacts with other like-

minded Scandinavian groups but do not have a transnational or entangled approach as such.

This is also the case regarding Kjetil Simonsen's (2020) research article that analyzed anti-Semitism on the Norwegian far right. Even though Simonsen partly discussed the inspiration stemming from like-minded organizations in other Scandinavian countries, he did not further employ a transnational or entangled perspective.

Until today, the most comprehensive treatment on the emergence of the far right in Norway during the immediate postwar period can be seen in a monograph written by journalist Per Bangsund and published in 1984. Here, postwar fascism and far-right extremism in Norway was perceived—although not comprehensively investigated—as a part of a transnational network, where organizations and individuals in Sweden played the seminal role. Even though this monograph has been well researched, it lacked source references and therefor lacked reliability and did not live up to academic standards.

In other words, the lack of research on inter-Nordic fascist and far-right networks from the end of the war and up to the early 1970s is remarkable: there exists no academic and systematic study investigating neo-Nazi networks, ideological exchange, and activities as a Scandinavian-Nordic phenomenon.

Sweden

In our analysis, we have identified 11 Swedish studies touching on the Cold War period. None of these studies specifically concerned Nordic cooperation between different fascist or national socialist groups. However, this does not necessarily mean that this was not addressed in any form in the current studies. The period 1945 to 1990 has been, like in other Nordic countries, heavily under-researched. This is probably related to the collapse of the milieu after 1945, when, in many countries, it was banned and, in others, was pushed to the extreme political margins. There is a large research gap here, which somewhat has affected the understanding of the movements born during the 1990s. Part of the history is simply missing.

However, one major work focused on Swedish national socialism and fascism from 1945 to 1979. The study by Lööw concerned the continued development of the Swedish National Association and New Sweden Movement, as well as the above-mentioned Nordic Reich Party. In connection with the NRP, which had the ambition of becoming a Nordic party, Nordic cooperation is also raised to some extent (Lööw, 2004). Some research concerned international networks and right-wing extremists within the so-called "stay-behind organizations" during the Cold War (Deland, 2010).

The first academic work in Sweden concerning the skinhead culture of the 1980s in Stockholm was a sociological study by Julio Ferrer (1983), after which several reports and journalistic works were published. Some research starting from the 1980s and early 1990s regarding the so-called 30th November celebrations in Lund and Stockholm can be found (see, e.g., Brink Pinto & Priers, 2013; Lööw, 1998; Lundström, 1995). The 30th November celebration went by the name of the Nordic riot night because activists from all over the Nordic countries in both the white power world and antiracist side participated. This also emphasized the importance of the common rituals and gatherings for the pan-Nordic cooperation of the extreme right milieu.

Themes, Research Methods, and Designs

The studies of the Cold War period have been historical and mostly based on archival sources, though the material has become richer when approaching the 1980s and regarding its inclusion of ethnographic elements. This turn into a richer pool of research appeared because of the rising youth subcultures, which also had a strong transnational aspect (see, e.g., Kotonen, 2022; Lööw, 1998). Thematically, the prevailing approach has been organizational and biographical. Youth culture, especially the skinhead movement, became more salient issue only in the 1990s, when it was growingly seen also as a societal problem.

The focus of studies concerning Finland has typically been either on organizations or individuals, occasionally with an emphasis on the intellectual history and conceptual history of nationalism (Kotonen, 2017). Case studies on the Cold War period Finnish RWE have especially focused on neo-Nazi leader Pekka Siitoin (Kalliala, 1999, 2015; Kotonen, 2015). Along with these studies, brief discussions of societal and political responses (Kotonen, 2018) and state measures (Kotonen, 2020) are available. The primary data collection method has been archival research. No studies have used interviews as a data collection method, with the exception of Mari Kalliala's case studies on Pekka Siitoin. Additionally, the studies have used newspaper sources and material produced by the right-wing extremist organizations. In her studies, Kalliala (1999) has additionally analyzed Siitoin using the cultic milieu as a framework to discuss his politics, along with the effect of his politics in unpolitical space. The occult ideas of Siitoin have also been a target of one popular publication (Häkkinen & Iitti, 2015).

The security police archives in different Nordic countries have been a central source for many studies. Most of the scholarly research focusing on the Cold War period RWE in Finland used security police (Supo) archives as their primary source. Scholars have also extensively used the archives of Pekka Siitoin, a collection which was donated to the National Library of Finland after his death in 2003 and opened

for researchers during the 2010s. Additionally, the archives of certain Swedish far-right leaders Rütger Essen and Per Engdahl, stored in the National Archives in Stockholm, have been used (Kotonen, 2017, 2018).

Norwegian scholars largely showed no or only very little interest in the establishment and re-establishment of fascism and neo-Nazism in Norway and their ideological perspectives. The research focused on two themes: Ideology (Simonsen, Hårset, and Preus) and the escape of collaborators from legal persecution (Furuseth and Øien). Of the six studies, we have listed in our overview, four are master's theses that have been finalized in the last decade. Two of them have a transnational and Nordic approach. This is an interesting start into a research field that needs further investigation.

The Swedish studies on the subjects were overwhelmingly historical studies based on archival materials such as movement, private, and police archives. The primary data collection method has been archival research, with occasional utilization of interview material, field studies, and analysis of the movement literature, newspapers, and magazines. With the rise of the right-wing extremist subcultures in the 1980s, music recordings and other related items were included as a part of research material (see Lööw, 1998). It should be emphasized that very little material from the movements themselves was preserved in some public archives. The material preserved mainly applied to the Swedish National Association and New Sweden movement.

Denmark had the most comprehensive and, more or less, also only study on the Cold War period study, one commissioned by the Police Intelligence Service (PET). In the study, the used research material consisted largely of their own archives, as well as other police archives, which have not been accessible in a similar manner to the other researchers. The likewise scarce Finnish literature also included two edited volumes produced by Finnish Security Intelligence Service, which also used their own archival sources and briefly charted RWE among other issues (Simola, 2009; Simola & Sirviö, 1999).

The number of researchers studying this period has been very limited. In Finland, the only active researcher focusing on the Cold War period was Tommi Kotonen, publishing most of the scholarly articles and books dealing, to some extent, with the pan-Nordic aspects of the RWE. In Norway, as well as in Denmark, there have been no active researchers focusing on this period. There are no ongoing research projects in Sweden about the period either. The NORFAS anthology (Karcher & Lundström, 2022) nevertheless included chapters focusing on or discussing in more limited manner the Cold War period.

Pan-Nordic and Transnational Dimensions

Because research on Nordic RWE during the Cold War period has also generally been relatively scarce and conducted by only few scholars, it is not surprising to notice that the pan-Nordic aspects were almost nonexistent in research. This is also because of the fact that the focus of the milieu was generally on anticommunism, and "Nordic" phantasies regarding, for example, race theories were often nonexistent until the 1970s. Most of the studies analyzed here have scrutinized the pan-Nordic aspect only in passing, and in most cases, they did not go beyond describing existing networks, let alone studying entangled history.

Of the Finnish studies, although, for example, Kotonen's studies stressed the importance of the contacts with Swedish activists for the evolution of the Finnish scene, the approach was not pan-Nordic and the analysis was made from the Finnish perspective. In a similar manner, Kalliala's studies also explored Siitoin's international networks, including the Nordic ones, without taking them as a special theme or analyzing their importance. In the most detail, the pan-Nordic aspect was present in Kotonen's monograph (2018), which especially described the activities of the *Nordiska Rikspartiet* beyond Finnish borders.

In Sweden, and in addition to the above-mentioned studies concerning the 30th November riots and the Nordic Reich Party, there has been some research concerning the Nordic Reich Party's role in the international organization WUNS (Simonelli, 2002). Thus, there has been a large gap in the research here. This can also be applied to Denmark and Norway. None of the studies mentioned in this review used an entangled or transnational method, and the period has been understudied and characterized by a general lack of in-depth studies.

Post-Cold War Period and Contemporary Right-Wing Extremism (1990–)

The evolution of the right-wing extremist milieu was, in broad terms, similar in all Nordic countries after the Cold War. In all countries, a growing skinhead movement, with security concerns and the violence brought by it, was one of the key issues in the 1990s. The milieu also internationalized in tandem, building transnational connections based on RWE youth culture, also marking a shift from anticommunism to anti-immigration issues. Organizations, especially the skinhead group Blood and Honour, which was originally from the UK, also built pan-Nordic or Scandinavian networks. Internationalization of the milieu was shown in their culture, not least via white power music that was actively delivered from Sweden and other Nordic countries into the international markets. Despite connections abroad, in practice, however, many groups had national or even just local focal points because nationwide activism was time and resource consuming. This changed when the internet emerged, providing them with easy and cheap resources for linking similar minded activists across the globe. Certain key events, especially the 9/11 attacks in the US, also changed the RWE landscape simultaneously in all Nordic countries in the twenty-first century. Besides loose networks, more traditional organizations such as NMR continued to strive for growth and visibility. The Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM), a pan-Nordic national socialist movement, has had its national chapters in every Nordic country. The evolution at the national level will be summarized in more detail below. The changing constellations at the RWE scene have also affected research, as well as preventive- and countermeasures by the authorities, as will be analyzed later in this chapter and in a separate section of this report.

Background

Denmark

The anti-immigration youth group, locally called the green jackets (*Grønjakkerne*), emerged in the late 1970s. Later, the elements of an international youth culture and subculture evolved also as a part of the RWE scene. From this subculture came

several, typically short-lived neo-Nazi groups, which also occasionally brought some members to the minuscule RWE parties. Of the latter, the newly formed DNSB (1991), which often allied with like-minded groups in Sweden, Norway, and Germany, held demonstrations and marches, which attracted a relatively large amount of media attention. International neo-Nazi organizations, such as Blood and Honour and Combat 18, landed in Denmark during the 1990s. More action-oriented members of the DNSB sometimes shifted to these more violence-prone groups.

By the early 2000s, neo-Nazi groups started to lose ground to other actors. These included, especially after 2001, different anti-Muslim groups, which were also called "counterjihadists." New groups were modeled after the international format and joined European networks. These included the short-lived Danish Defence League (DDL) and longer-lasting group *Stop Islamiseringen af Danmark* (Stop the Islamisation of Denmark) (SIAD), which also had their counterparts, among others, in Norway and Finland, though in the latter case mostly as an online phenomenon. The focus of these extremist groups was on culture and religion instead of race. SIAD has claimed to have around 1,000 members, though the figures are probably exaggerated (Holmsted, 2018).

Along with DNSB, which gradually became less street oriented, Danmarks Nationale Front (DNF), founded in 2007, represented the new wave of national socialist groups in Denmark, bringing together openly neo-Nazi activist with other extreme right actors. DNF has sometimes resorted to violent activism, among others, in cooperation with German groups. More recently, the short-lived transnational phenomena worth mentioning here is also the vigilante organization Soldiers of Odin, founded in 2015, which did not prove very successful in Denmark, and the national chapter already closed down in 2016. Of the most central pan-Nordic movements, national socialists NMR also established a Danish chapter in 2013. However, this appeared also as a short-term endeavor, ceasing its activities in 2016.

The Danish neo-Nazi groups have, in general, not appeared recently as violent as in other Nordic countries, though in the 1990s, they were suspected and convicted for several violent acts. They have also been involved in international plots. In 1997, several Danish C18 members were arrested and later convicted for sending letter bombs to the UK, to whom they considered their political opponents, and during the arrest, they also shot and wounded one police officer. The group also sent a letter bomb to the Swedish Minister of Justice.

The Danish milieu, in cooperation with Swedish and Norwegian activists, has also produced a considerable amount of propaganda, including music and propaganda videos. A Finnish activist, living then in Southern Sweden, was, for example, in the

late 1990s, their video producer, and his material was spread also in Germany via Danish networks. Because of legal reasons, the international skinhead movement Blood and Honour, which formed in the late 1990s also a joint Scandinavian chapter, had a contact address in Denmark for propaganda consumers in the UK and Germany.

Finland

The image of RWE in the post-Cold War period Finland that emerged from research is a variegated one and might be characterized as comprising two distinct periods of mobilization. Although the 1990s saw a handful of organized groups, such as the Patriotic National Alliance (PNA), their impact remained limited, with parliamentary politics furthermore witnessing little success by right-wing radicals. It was rather the skinhead movement, a subcultural phenomenon, that came to define Finnish RWE in the 1990s. Some groups that would later prove to be significant, such as *Suomen Sisu*, began to form at the turn of the millennium, but the first decade of the 2000s was, to a large extent, a time of lesser activity for right-wing extremists in Finland.

The situation began to change toward the 2010s, however. The NRM's Finnish chapter was established in 2008 and the Finnish Defence League (FDL) in 2011. Meanwhile, the Finns party scored the first of their major electoral victories in 2011. The 2010s, indeed, proved to be a decade of strong mobilization for right-wing extremists in Finland. The large-scale influx of asylum seekers into the country during late 2015 particularly provided impetus to the formation of new groups and the proliferation of public activism. Protest groups such as *Rajat Kiinni!* (Close the Borders!) and its follow-up, *Suomi Ensin* (Finland First), organized a series of demonstrations throughout Finland during 2015–2017. The Soldiers of Odin similarly emerged as a defining phenomenon of this wave of mobilization and evolved into one of Finnish RWE's most transnational manifestations, with chapters of the organization founded in several countries outside Finland. The right-wing extremist music subculture furthermore saw increased activity in the 2010s, with Rock Against Communism and National Socialist Black Metal groups producing new material and performing live.

Whereas the right-wing extremist violence of the 1990s was primarily perpetrated by skinheads and evolved into a rather sustained phenomenon in the city of Joensuu, right-wing extremist violence in the twenty-first century has been more sporadic, albeit occasionally quite serious in nature. Members of the NRM have committed ideologically motivated acts of violence both during and outside the group's activities, with the most serious incident taking place in September 2016 when a passer-by protesting against the group's demonstration in Helsinki suffered

serious injury to the head after being assaulted by a senior NRM activist. The victim died a week later after exiting the hospital against the recommendations of medical staff. Demonstrations by other groups have similarly witnessed scuffles, though such altercations have occasionally been initiated by counterdemonstrators. Finland also saw a series of arson attacks against asylum seeker centers during the autumn of 2015, yet these incidents did not result in casualties and usually inflicted limited material damage.

Verbal violence, rather than physical, has been more characteristic of Finnish RWE in the twenty-first century. Apart from the proliferation of hate speech on social media platforms, several Finnish-language fake media websites were established in the 2010s. Some of these sites have been instrumental to initiating and maintaining campaigns of targeted hatred against ethnic minorities, journalists, politicians, researchers, and human rights activists.

The internet and social media have also contributed toward rendering Finnish RWE a more transnational phenomenon than before. Ideological influences such as counterjihadism, alongside various concepts, terms and items of digital culture have found their way into the Finnish right-wing extremist scene via the online environment. The internet and social media platforms have also enabled Finnish groups—the Soldiers of Odin in particular—to expand beyond Finland's borders and maintain contact with their foreign chapters. This growth of transnational interconnectedness in the online environment has not, however, fully translated into offline cooperation between Finnish and foreign groups. Such activity has remained sporadic, with the exception of the NRM's Finnish and Scandinavian chapters.

Norway

In the late 1980s, the revolutionary anticommunist agenda of the extreme right was gradually replaced by anti-immigration mobilization and the emergence of relatively large racist and extreme right youth subcultures. An important backdrop to this development was significant growth in labor immigration from Pakistan and Morocco in the 1970s and 1980s, along with a new wave of refugees and asylum seekers in the 1980s. Initially, the skinhead subculture consisted of loosely organized youth gangs across the country, but eventually, it adopted a more distinct skinhead profile and became more organized.

In Norway, this subculture was represented by groups like Boot Boys and Viking, as well as white power music bands and concerts, along with neo-Nazi organizations that appealed to some marginalized and vulnerable youths (e.g., Vigrid). Most participants were recruited into these scenes as teenagers, the groups themselves fulfilling some basic social needs such as friendship, identity, protection, excitement, and group belonging. Their visual style was easily recognizable in the street, which

frequently led to violent clashes with opponents, such as left-wing and antifascist militants. Compared with the previous period, the violence was less part of a revolutionary strategy and more driven by local group dynamics, youth revolt, and militant rivalry in the streets, though some of the groups developed more terrorist tactics toward the end of the period.

The skinhead mobilization ended somewhat abruptly with the killing of a 15-year-old boy, Benjamin Hermansen, in the eastern parts of Oslo on January 26, 2001. Both perpetrators were affiliated with the Boot Boys. The killing resulted in massive countermobilization in Norwegian society, and through police efforts and antiracist mobilization, most extreme right groups disappeared. Vigrid was one of few groups that continued to exist, though with limited capacity.

A new phase started with the terrorist attacks on September 11 in New York. These attacks contributed to the rise of the so-called counterjihad movement across many countries in the West, including in Norway with groups like Stop Islamisation of Norway (SIAN), Norwegian Defence League, and, more recently, also PEGIDA (Berntzen, 2019). Except for SIAN, these groups have proven to be short-lived, but some of the anti-Muslim sentiments have been channeled by far-right parties like *Demokratene* and alternative media like Human Right Service and Document.no.

These new anti-Islam-oriented extreme right movements were different from previous organizations. For this movement, internet and social media became an important platform for extreme right activism (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2018; Haanshuus & Jupskås, 2017). The new groups typically consisted of adults and elderly, and there were hardly any youths to be seen in these organizations. In fact, there were no attractive social arenas that could pull youths into extreme right or racist movements, and neither was there a white power music scene, as there was during the 1990s. The main neo-Nazi organization, which has emerged during the past decade, the NMR, has some 30–40 activists in Norway, far less than in Sweden and Finland and Denmark. However, the members of this organization are adults, typically between the ages of 20 and 50, and at least in Norway, there are hardly any teenagers. Apparently, the group's very strict rules and way of life does not seem to appeal to many young people. Seemingly, to the younger generations, the national socialist ideology appears outdated.

As in many other countries, including Sweden and the UK, there have also been less extreme right violence compared with the 1990s, but the counterjihad movement has inspired perpetrators to carry severe violent attacks against Muslims and/or those perceived to be supporting Muslim communities and immigrants. All three attacks with a fatal outcome were carried out by so-called lone actors, who, despite executing the attacks on their own initiative, had been active on various online platforms with extreme right content (e.g., Stormfront, Gates of Vienna,

EndChan). The deadliest attack took place on July 22, 2011, when a 32-year-old man detonated a bomb in the government district of Oslo before carrying out a shooting spree at the summer camp of the Labor youth wing. In total, 77 people were killed, most of them teenagers, and several hundreds were wounded. In his manifesto, the perpetrator showed that he was clearly inspired by the counterjihad movement, and the justification for attacking the left was that these so-called "cultural Marxists" were responsible for the "Muslim invasion of Norway" (Hemmingby & Bjørgo, 2016).

In recent years, new groups have emerged, and there has been a growing mobilization in the streets. SIAN is still one of the dominant actors, but some of the demonstrations and other forms of unconventional activism have been carried out by actors like the neo-Nazi group NMR, the vigilante group Soldiers of Odin, and the extreme right party Alliansen. Generation Identity, however, an ethno-nationalist movement that has succeeded in recruiting students and other resourceful youths in some European countries, has not yet been able to gain any significant foothold in Norway.

Sweden

Swedish neo-Nazi milieu, or militant race-ideological underground culture, in the late 1980s consisted of smaller organizations and countless local groups. Although parties such as *Nordiska Rikspartiet* (NRP) still existed, the activities of the new generations took freer format and likened more a lifestyle than an organized political party. The journal *Vit Rebell* (White Rebel), focusing on music culture, became the media platform for new activists. The movement was also growingly international by nature, not least because of the influence of the white power music. In the early 1990s, a group around revolutionary RWE journal *Storm,* started to congregate the milieu into a more unified front, trying to overcome the ideological differences. They also collaborated with older groups, such as NRP, and started to expand. Building on the ideas of racial war, these ideas were also put in practice during the 1990s, when several serious crimes were conducted by the milieu members.

The network members around Storm and Vit Rebell came to public awareness in 1991 after series of armed bank robberies, other robberies, and arms caches were connected to the group. Media started to use name *Vit Ariskt Motstånd* , or abbreviation VAM, of the network, which had no official name at that time. VAM soon became notorious, and several bomb threats and attentats were connected to it. Oftentimes, some minor violent groups were built, which later would try to affiliate with VAM. In 1992 and 1993, several of the leading activists of the network were convicted for armed robberies. VAM, however, continued underground, with a

growing number of local groups formed by new activists previously unknown to the scene followers, as well as a propaganda channel, and as a myth for others to follow. The network had links, among others, also to other Nordic countries.

Of the more organized and relevant groups, *Nationalsocialistisk Front* (NSF), a party founded in 1994, stands out, because it arranged public demonstrations and activities, and unlike many others, its members did not hide behind the false names of masks. By the late 1990s, NSF was the most rapidly growing militant and revolutionary extreme right group.

If the organizations had become less relevant in the 1990s and a more network-oriented approach was favored, this process was accelerated by the growing importance of a new means of communication. Forums, websites, and web blogs were founded by almost every relevant group or groupuscule. After the 9/11 attacks in the US, this was especially important for the growing counterjihad movement, which was internationally well networked. For the early 2000s, different counterjihadists groups and rising nationalist parties turned the focus away from the militant national socialist scene. On the other hand, they managed to organize large, international gatherings, such as the Salem marches in 2000s, with participants from all Nordic countries.

From a pan-Nordic perspective, however, a more traditional, hierarchical, and militant group soon became an even more salient issue. Klas Lund, former convicted VAM activist, founded in 1997 the Swedish Resistance Movement (SRM), which first consisted, besides movement itself, also of the youth organization and journal *Folktribunen*. One of the goals of the movement was to build a united Nordic national socialist state. Compared with NSF, the SRM acted more anonymously and was stricter in its ideology and more elite like in the spirit of the German SS movement. On the other hand, new forms of communication gave them more potential to reach wider audiences than previous movements.

In the early years, before stabilizing its position, the SRM was faced with several splits and heavy competition from groups like NSF, as well as from so-called identitarian groups that would take a less orthodox position, regarding the promotion of cultural, nativist nationalism, and abandoning national socialism and its race ideology. The SRM also built international networks outside Nordic countries, especially with German groups. In the early years, it even rented premises for its head quarter from German Holocaust denier and Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) politician Jürgen Rieger.

National socialist groups did not utilize only propaganda and public shows of force but continuously also offered more radical party alternatives to other nationalist political parties such as Sweden Democrats. Among these was *Svenskarnas Parti* (Party of Swedes), which was founded when NSF was disbanded in 2008 after an

ideological reorientation and abandonment of open national socialism. The new party also managed to gain a seat in the municipal elections in 2010. After a few years, in 2015, *Svenskarnas Parti* ended its activism, leaving the field for the SRM, which had also had some modest electoral success, as they gained a mandate in the municipal election in 2014.

When a Norwegian chapter was founded in 2003, the SRM changed its name officially to the NRM, and despite Norway not even continuously having a chapter, the name stayed the same. In 2007, a new chapter was founded in Finland, and Denmark followed in 2013. Since 2015, the NRM has been, to some extent, pan-Nordic, although Swedes still occupy leading positions. All national chapters have since then been considered as parts of the same organization, no longer using their national names. In its pan-Nordic approach, the NRM reminds of *Nordiska Rikspartiet*, which the NRM also considers as one of its important predecessors.

The NRM also took part in the national elections in 2018. Before the election, they had already changed leadership, with Klas Lund stepping down and being replaced by Simon Lindberg. The elections did not become a huge success, which caused friction within the movement concerning the chosen strategy of reaching wider audiences and trying a parliamentary approach. In 2019, Klas Lund and some of his closest allies decided to leave the movement and founded a new organization, *Nordisk Styrka* (Nordic Strength). The new group has been very clandestine, however, and the NRM, although weakened, continues to hold a leading position and remains the public face of the Nordic neo-Nazism in the media. The NRM was banned in Finland in 2020 by the decision of the supreme court, which also affected the movement and its prospects as a whole.

Literature Review

Studies of the post-Cold War period have generally followed similar trends in all Nordic countries. In the 1980s, especially the skinhead youth culture was the main focus of the studies. The increasing violence and visibility of these groups during the 1990s brought them onto the public agenda, and a growing number of government-commissioned studies and reports were published. Typically, these were, and somewhat still are, snapshot studies describing the scene at a given moment, without historical depth, often launched after some spectacular event with broad media attention. Government repressions were also often the result of some violent event (Kotonen, 2021), and the research has followed in its wake, when government programs and action plans emphasize the need for knowledge about the movements, groups and violent individuals. Considering the later phases of the RWE in Nordic countries, the focus toward counterjihadism and general anti-

Islamism, especially after the 9/11 attacks in the US, have also shaped the research agenda. Even more important event in this respect was the July 22 attacks in Norway in 2011, which led in Norway, as well as to minor extent elsewhere, to more concerted efforts to build more permanent research infrastructures, which appears also in increased research efforts.

However, there is still a lack of continuity or more established schools of research, reflecting to some extent the situation in international research. Approaches are still somewhat individualized, methodologically underdeveloped, and the approach often problem oriented. Partly for these reasons, there is no sufficient accumulation of historical knowledge of the extreme right milieu, and especially, the transnational aspects are understudied. These aspects have been present perhaps most often in those studies focusing on the cultural aspects of the RWE. At the wake of British research tradition of cultural studies, culture has been seen as a key to pan-Nordic and transnational exchange of ideas while providing an inside-out view of the milieu. Ideas and culture are, arguably, what knits the milieu together across the national borders, not so much the practices or formal organizations. In general, nevertheless, many of the studies and reports analyzed for this review often also lacked ethnographic depth, using in general newspapers, webpages, and other relatively easily available sources for data collection.

Denmark

The research into Danish fascism after 1990 has been sparse and with a limited focus on transnational or comparative approaches regarding the Nordic countries. The most important investigation of Danish fascism in the 1990s was a historical and sociological overview of various groups on the far right. The publication sporadically described transnational contacts between Germany and the Nordic countries (Karpantschof, 1999), along with a description of the networks opposing neo-Nazi movements. Besides scholarly works, some antifascist groups produced overviews of the RWE in Denmark, occasionally with insights into their transnational networks as well (see e.g., Demos, 2005). Although published and compiled by anonymous authors and often with no references, with a lack of scholarly publications, such works may have largely influenced the general awareness of the existence of extreme right groups. Their data were later used also for the purposes of an academic study (Karpantschof, 1999).

In the aftermath of Anders Breivik's terrorist attack in 2011, several reports commissioned by the authorities and aimed at preventing radicalization were published in Denmark. These reports, which often were problem oriented, included few overviews of the Danish far right (CERTA, 2015; Christensen & Mørck, 2017; Hemmingsen & Gemmerli, 2014; Hemmingsen & Holmsted, 2017; Holmsted, 2012,

2018). Although typically relatively descriptive studies, some studies dove deeper into the roots of radicalization. For example, a report focusing on radicalization processes and community resilience also explored the local aspects in forming of the RWE milieus and, besides a literature analysis, was also based on a small scale interview data (CERTA, 2015).

Generally speaking, however, these reports provided finite insights because the empirical basis of the reports were limited. None of them used an entangled or transnational method. The post-Cold War period can be understudied and characterized by a general lack of in-depth studies. Recent studies by Christoffer Kølvraa (2019a, 2019b) have approached the RWE in Denmark and other Nordic countries from the perspective of pan-Nordic cultural imagination, also studying Viking imagery as signifier of a pure Nordic racial community (Kølvraa, 2019b; cf. also Vuorinen, 2019). Outside Denmark, other Nordic scholars have also carried out some comparative studies, including analyses of Danish milieu (see, e.g., Ravndal, 2018).

Finland

The corpus of research on post-Cold War period RWE in Finland included nine items with transnational aspect that cover the years after 1989 and one that spans both the Cold War period and the 1990s. Of these items five were chapters in edited volumes, two were reports, one was an academic book, and one was a book aimed for the general public.

The scope of research on post-Cold War period RWE in Finland extended from those works that cover specifics actors and themes to more extensive overviews of the scene and its evolution post-1989. Among the items of the former kind are Hynynen's (1999) study of the PNA and Kotonen's (2019) book chapter on the Soldiers of Odin. Works with a wider scope have included Sallamaa's (2018) report on the extraparliamentary right-wing and anti-immigration scene in Finland during the 2010s, as well as Koivulaakso's, Brunila's and Andersson's (2012) book on RWE in twenty-first-century Finland. Jokinen's (2011) book chapter similarly discussed a number of right-wing extremist groups and movements in post-Cold War period Finland, but also material on other milieus such as eco-radicals.

A mere two researchers have authored more than one item. Tommi Kotonen published a book chapter on the Soldiers of Odin while also authoring a monograph covering Finnish RWE during both the Cold War period and the 1990s (Kotonen, 2018, 2019). Pertti Hynynen has meanwhile coauthored a book chapter on Finnish right-wing radicalism in the 1990s with Kyösti Pekonen and Mari Kalliala (Pekonen et al., 1999) while also authoring a book chapter on the PNA in the same volume (Hynynen, 1999).

It should be noted, of course, that the corpus of research would be more voluminous if items without a pan-Nordic dimension were also included. Studies on Finnish skinheads in particular have been numerous, yet many have approached the topic from an exceedingly local perspective and focused on the situation in Joensuu during the 1990s. Although the transnational nature of the skinhead subculture has, more precisely, been acknowledged by these studies, the cross-border dimension and its relevance to Finland did not constitute a focus of research in itself (Hilden-Paajanen, 2005; Perho, 2010; Puuronen, 2001).

Recent studies focusing partly or fully on the NMR in Finland have also brought pan-Nordic dimension into the research, though the approaches still stemmed mostly from national perspectives and concerns. Recent works included the report by Sallamaa (2018), analysis of the NRM proscribing process by Kotonen (2022), and a study on ethnocultural and racial ambiguities of national socialist state-building by Sallamaa and Malkki (2022).

Norway

Compared with the previous period, there has been more comprehensive and original research on the rise of the skinhead subculture. Most of the research was carried out by the anthropologist Tore Bjørgo and sociologist Katrine Fangen. Toward the end of the 1980s, Bjørgo published a report that studied violence against immigrants and asylums-seekers.

The findings from this report became the point of departure in Bjørgo's doctoral dissertation on racist and extreme right violence in Scandinavia, a project that started in 1991. The project, which was entitled "Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia: Patterns, Perpetrators and Responses" (Bjørgo, 1997), was based on numerous interviews with activists and formers, various documents produced by the groups and others, and some participant observation of demonstrations (see also anthologies Bjørgo & Witte ,1993; Bjørgo, 1995; Kaplan & Bjørgo, 1998).

In one of the chapters in the dissertation, which discussed the most ideological and militant groups in Scandinavia (mainly Sweden) at the time, Bjørgo elaborated on the international dimensions of militant racist movement and network (Bjørgo, 1997). More specifically, he showed how local 'nationalist' groups often find ideological inspiration from kindred groups in faraway countries. In Scandinavia, American racist groups and movements were particularly important as role models and ideological inspiration. However, there was also extensive contact with German and British milieus, whereas French and Italian connections were less salient.

Two years after Bjørgo, Katrine Fangen began working with her dissertation project entitled "Pride and Power –A Sociological Interpretation of the Norwegian Radical

Nationalist Underground Movement" (1999). The dissertation included a comprehensive introduction, an appendix of 60 pages, and seven published articles (in the overview of publication, Fangen's work was counted as one scientific monograph). Some of the most impressive parts of Fangen's work included her yearlong fieldwork among nationalists and neo-Nazis as she joined activists when they carried out various forms of activism, went to concerts, demonstrations, trips to Sweden, and other social gatherings (see also Fangen, 1995).

In parallel with Bjørgo's and Fangen's dissertations, several other researchers carried out smaller research projects that were more oriented toward practitioners. Quite often, the backdrop was that some cities or towns had experienced problems of racist violence and milieus and that these places now were looking for knowledge-based input on how to deal with the challenges. Particularly, Yngve Carlsson, but also Thomas Haaland and Frøydis Eidheim, made important contributions to this type of knowledge. Two master's theses especially made important contributions to the scholarly field within this period. Hilgunn Olsen (2001) wrote about the experiences of being parents to a neo-Nazi, while Tom Olsen (2011) analyzed patterns of joining and leaving neo-Nazi milieus. All these more empirically grounded contributions and theses, however, had—for obvious reasons—a very national focus.

There was not much research on RWE in Norway during the first decade of the new millennium. One reason was that the killing of Benjamin Hermansen and subsequent disintegration of the milieu had made the extreme right a less-potent force in Norway. Another reason was that some of key researchers from the previous period shifted their research focus from the extreme right and (prevention of) racist violence toward crime prevention and terrorism more generally (Bjørgo), immigration, and integration related research (Fangen) and research on gangs (Carlsson and Haaland). As a result, there is, for example, no solid account of the neo-Nazi group Vigrid, which was the only significant group during these years.

Since the terrorist attacks on July 22, 2011, however, there has been numerous studies looking at ideology and tactics of the July 22 terrorist, as well as the patterns of mobilization, and the Islamophobia of the extreme right in Norway more generally. Following the attacks, the research center C-REX has strengthened and internationalized remarkably the research conducted in Norway.

The third bulk of contemporary research on RWE focused on anti-Islam mobilization and Islamophobia. The most comprehensive contribution is the book by Lars Erik Berntzen (2019) that explored the anti-Islamic turn and expansion of the far right in Western Europe, including Norway, North America, and beyond, from 2001 onwards. This book was perhaps the only publication with a clear entangled perspective in the sense that it studied the anti-Islamic turn of the far-right beyond

specific nation-states. Instead, it showed how this milieu "has undergone four waves of transnational expansion in the period since 2001" and that this political mobilization in Western Europe and the US takes "form a transnational movement and subculture characterized by a fragile balance between liberal and authoritarian values" (Berntzen 2019, p. ii).

Other important contributions studying the anti-Islamic turn included one article discussing the development from neo-Nazi ideology in the 1990s to contemporary Islamophobic sentiments (Fangen & Nilsen, 2020) and one article that looked more closely at the political ideas of the key anti-Islam group in Norway: SIAN (Bangstad, 2016). The latter article included a few paragraphs about the international inspiration of SIAN. Using a comparative framework, a third article explored why the group PEGIDA mobilized to some extent in Austria and Norway while failing in Sweden and Switzerland (Berntzen & Weisskircher, 2016). Some of the articles analyzing the political subculture of the July 22 terrorist were also important contributions to our understanding of the counterjihad movement. Finally, two MA theses contributed with original research on the worldview of contemporary anti-Islam activists in Norway (Berntzen, 2011) and the socio-demographics and motivation of members of SIAN (Tranøy, 2020). However, both these theses focused on Norwegian groups and activists only.

Researchers have not been the only ones making important contributions to field in recent years. Most importantly, Øyvind Strømmen (2011, 2013, 2014) has published three books in the year the after the terrorist attack. All these books contain elements of both transnational and entangled history but not in a very systematic and explicit manner.

Sweden

Out of the 63 Swedish publications focusing on post-Cold War period analyzed for this review, most were written either from national or local perspective. However, a great many of them also had an international aspect, whereas explicit pan-Nordic dimension appeared in only a handful. This is somewhat surprising considering one of the main targets of the studies has been the NRM, which aims to form a unified Nordic state. Most of the studies discussed the NRM at least briefly, though there were a few studies focusing solely on the movement. No pan-Nordic studies simultaneously covering all NRM chapters exist. Much of the research, which in some way touches on RWE, has also focused on right-wing populism and ethnic relations (Lööw, 2015).

Thematic selections in Swedish research on RWE have followed the evolution of the field. During the 1980s and 1990s, a center of scholarly attention was on subculturally oriented groups, movements, and activists or on the culture itself.

RWE extreme right culture, traditions, and networks have been explored especially in the studies by Heléne Lööw (2000, 2004, 2015). Her published works over almost 40 years have covered the whole Swedish RWE history, analyzing the evolution of Nazism in Sweden from the 1920s until mid-2010s and have become the standard works of the milieu's history.

When the political violence caused by these groups reached a certain level and they became an important societal issue, studies focused increasingly on different countering and preventive means. Reflecting the growing public interest in RWE in Sweden, there have also been a relatively large number of official studies or reports commissioned by the authorities, as well as related action plans, which have often been launched after some spectacular events. As Mattsson and Johansson (2019) have argued, this approach was especially active in the early 2000s and was rather individualized, so not much attention was given to the movement-level reasons and ideas behind radicalization.

Among the disciplines, although contemporary history has been broadly represented, there has been a growing number of studies in the fields of political science and sociology. Additionally, few studies approached the topic from the perspective of ethnography, and some also stemmed from criminology or pedagogical science.

Especially after the terrorist attack in Norway in 2011, more emphasis in studies has been on terrorism instead of lower intensity political violence. This obviously has appeared especially in Norwegian literature but has had its effect also in Sweden. Mattias Gardell published studies on the racist serial killer Peter Mangs (2015), as well as lone-wolf terrorism (2022). Although his book *Gods of the Blood* (2003) focused on North American groups, Gardell's study also illuminated the role of the Nordic pagan ideas in RWE ideology.

Analyzing the threats caused by the milieu, which often target minorities or groups and individuals opposing the extreme right milieu, the growth of the milieu was also described in more recent studies as a threat to liberal democracy as a whole, but no comprehensive longitudinal studies have been conducted. Hate crimes and hate speech have been a topic of interest for researchers (see, e.g., Deland et al., 2010, 2013), and the aspect was present in most of the studies, although not as a main topic.

Christer Mattsson has studied extensively, among other issues, radicalization paths and disengagement and deradicalization. Contemporary events have affected his studies, starting from neo-Nazi violence at a local environment in the 1990s, which led to creation of a pedagogical methodology on how to deal with extremism in schools. Mattsson and Johansson (2019) have since studied how RWE has developed since the 1990s until the present. They have also combined, for example,

oral history approaches and social psychological perspectives into their analyses (Mattsson & Johansson, 2022).

Despite all these studies and an increased amount of research, there are still several gaps in knowledge about violent right-wing extremist milieus. In Sweden, as well as elsewhere, there is still a lack of detailed local studies, despite the fact that organizations tend to focus on certain areas, with certain strongholds remaining the same for decades (see Lööw, 2015; Mattsson & Johansson, 2022). Additionally, relevant information regarding the backgrounds of groups and activists is still missing. As Mattsson and Johansson stated, "Despite 25 years of continued, but scattered, studies of the Swedish white supremacist milieus, there has still not been a single attempt to quantify the size of the groups involved and their sociocultural, socio-economic or demographic background" (2019, p. 140). Snapshot studies or reports, often conducted as a response to some urgent, current matter at the national level, cannot fulfill these gaps. Furthermore, most of the studies reviewed have been case studies, with only a few having a comparative setting. Those may have relevance beyond the selected case, but for understanding networking and the international nature of the ideology and movements, this research is not sufficient.

Themes, Research Methods, and Designs

Compared with previous, historical research on RWE, post-Cold War and contemporary studies employed more diverse methodology and research designs. To some extent, this is because the availability of archival sources and especially the data from the security authorities was more limited, and approaches such as online ethnography have become useful tools for data gathering. Thematically, the orientation has been more in questions related to social sciences and media studies. Additionally, preventing and countering efforts have appeared in research, with many studies being reports commissioned by the authorities for this purpose.

Denmark

The scarcity of research in Denmark regarding the period after the Cold War showed in limited variation regarding themes, research design, and methods. Most studies focused on groups and movements on a relatively descriptive manner, thematically focusing on their potential security threats, and were often based on sources provided by the authorities and newspapers. In our research material, there were no wider scope ethnographic studies, though a few reports have used data produced via interviews.

One sociological analysis from the 1990s stood out thematically as a study analyzing also opposing movements and the subculture (Karpantschof, 1999; see also Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2017). In a later study based on social movement theory, Karpantschof and Mikkelsen focused on forms of public actions via protest event analysis, here using public sources, and analyzed claim making by the Danish radical right and movement and countermovement dynamics. Their approach also included a transnational perspective and its effects on public campaigns, and the study offered data on how many events had international participation. Additionally, Christoffer Kølvraa (2019a, 2019b) has recently extended the scholarly analyses of Danish RWE by diving into their cultural imagination.

Any of the analyzed studies have not, however, gone deeper into any comparative setting, and transnational connections were also analyzed from the national perspective, despite heavy intermixing between Nordic activists in Denmark and Southern Sweden.

Finland

Most works on RWE in post-Cold War period Finland covered—to varying degrees—formal organizations, networks, and social movements. Although they largely focused on twenty-first-century groups like the NRM, FDL, and Soldiers of Odin, the PNA in particular was covered by studies that look at the 1990s. Political parties as such do not form the focus of any particular work but are referred to in a number of studies. Koivulaakso et al. (2012), for example, discussed the Finns party, while Jalonen's (2011) study similarly touched upon those members of the Finns party that supported a counterjihadist ideology. Also, while not constituting a full-fledged political party, the PNA was discussed as an extraparliamentary organization aiming to become a parliamentary one (Hynynen, 1999).

Apart from organizations, right-wing extremist ideologies have been discussed by several works. Jalonen (2011) and Paaso (2012) concentrated on counterjihadist ideology and its Finnish proponents in their research, while Koivulaakso et al. (2012) examined ethnopluralism and other ideologies that have influenced right-wing extremists in twenty-first-century Finland. Sallamaa (2018) furthermore discussed the ideological background of key right-wing extremist groups in the 2010s. Apart from the content of ideologies, their proliferation in the online environment was discussed by Jalonen, Paaso, and Sallamaa, among others.

The subcultural dimension of RWE was, on the other hand, covered to a lesser degree, though Sallamaa's report did include a section on the contemporary right-wing extremist music scene in Finland. The report, alongside Jokinen's (2011) book chapter, also discussed the Finnish skinhead movement. Lone-wolf actors have furthermore received a lesser degree of attention in research, although Anders

Behring Breivik in particular was discussed by Paaso (2012), Jalonen (2011), and Jokinen (2011).

The right-wing extremist practices and activities that different studies focused upon varied, with few concentrating on just one form. Sallamaa's report, for example, looked at public activities such as demonstrations and street patrols while also covering the various forms of online activity that the different groups engage in. Kotonen's (2019) book chapter on the Soldiers of Odin similarly discussed street patrols and demonstrations but also looked at the group's online presence.

Although political violence was not the specific focus of any single study, many have discussed the topic to varying degrees. Sallamaa's (2018) report, alongside the book by Koivulaakso et al. (2012), for example, examined the acts of violence and incitement to violence that twenty-first-century Finnish groups like the NRM and Suomi Ensin have engaged in. Those works that concentrated on counterjihadism meanwhile referred to Breivik's attacks in Norway, although Paaso's report on the terrorist's manifesto also discussed "Operaatio ulos!" which is an online Finnish-language handbook on how to plan and execute terror attacks. Jokinen's book article included a discussion on Finnish skinhead violence in the 1990s and its waning at the turn of the millennium.

It should also be noted that, although works such as Sallamaa's report provided descriptive accounts of right-wing extremist groups and ideologies, others have tried to answer more specific research questions. Pekonen et al.'s (1999) book chapter, for example, attempted to provide an explanation as to why Finland has lacked large-scale and successful manifestations of RWE after the Second World War. Paaso's report compared the ideological similarities between Breivik's manifesto and the opinions expressed by domestic right-wing extremists. Koivulaakso et al. (2012) furthermore elucidated on the relationship between parliamentary right-wing populism and extraparliamentary right-wing extremist movements in Finland.

Few studies employed a distinct methodology to charting their topic. Notable exceptions have been Kotonen's (2019) book chapter on the Soldiers of Odin, which used thematic content analysis as a methodological instrument, and the author's book (Kotonen, 2018) on Cold War period and early post-Cold War period RWE, which approached the topic through historical and content analysis. Also, most works lacked a specific research design. Those that have one typically aimed to construct a case study.

Although several studies such as Sallamaa's report, Jokinen's book chapter. and the book by Koivulaakso et al. (2012) used prior literature as a source type, the relative lack of earlier research on post-Cold War period RWE in Finland has limited the extent to which it has been possible to utilize such sources. This dearth of earlier

research has been partially remedied by the inclusion of media reports as an alternative secondary source.

Among the primary sources used, online material has been a popular choice. Online material has included data gathered from both conventional websites and from the social media. Sources of the latter type have been widely used by Sallamaa in particular. Archival sources, court records, and investigative material compiled by the police represent further types of primary sources and have been used by Kotonen (2018). Yet the primary sources utilized also included interviews with representatives of the right-wing extremist milieu. These data have been compiled by Kotonen (2020, 2019) and Koivulaakso et al. (2012), with Kotonen (2019) furthermore carrying out ethnographical online and offline observation among the Soldiers of Odin.

Norway

Studies of contemporary fascism and the radical right in Norway have focused on a variety of themes. When looking specifically at the publications with a pan-Nordic and/or transnational focus, they covered issues like (racist) violence, recruitment, mobilization, online networks, ideology, and strategy. Broadly speaking, the research in the 1990s was more internally oriented and characterized by fieldwork among activists, whereas more recent research was more externally oriented looking at ideologies and pattern of offline and online mobilization.

Most studies focused mainly on Norwegian groups and activists. In these studies, the transnational dimension was only sporadically discussed. At the same time, comparative, transnational, or even entangled perspectives were not completely absent. There were at least two comparative analyses on militant activity in the Nordic countries and on the mobilization by PEGIDA groups, respectively. Moreover, at least one article discussed the emergence of truly transnational groups like the NMR and Generation Identity, though only the former has been somewhat successful in Norway. Finally, one monograph on the counterjihad movement—arguably the most successful contemporary extreme right current in Norway—can be described as more entangled, though without being explicitly discussed as such by the author.

In contrast to what had previously been written about the Norwegian extreme right in the postwar period, Tore Bjørgo's analyses in his dissertation included both a comparative perspective and transnational dimension. A comparative perspective was used to explore the relationship between macro-level factors such as immigration, employment, and government responses, on the one hand, and levels of racist violence, on the other hand. Bjørgo also adopted a comparative perspective when assessing discursive and ideological similarities and differences

between Scandinavian extreme right groups and subcultures. In doing so, he showed how the national discourses of the extreme right was heavily influenced by historical experiences during the Second World War. A similar historical experience made it easier for Norwegian and Danish activists to adopt a similar rhetoric portraying the government as a traitor, like the collaborators during the war. Bjørgo (1997, p. 283) also noted how prominent Norwegian activists wrote regularly in Danish extreme right magazines.

Likewise, although Katrine Fangen's main focus was the Norwegian groups and activists, she emphasized the transnational dimension of the scene. In a book chapter that compared the beliefs of the Norwegian rightist underground, she noted that the Norwegian group Valkyria had a major impact on like-minded groups/people in Sweden and Denmark: Swedish girls were impressed by Valkyria's appearance at a concert, giving Valkyria the name "Death Squadron," and a Danish girl contacted Valkyria wanting to start a similar group. Similarly, in an article about the women and girls in the nationalist movements, Fangen showed how the Norwegian nationalist underground was embedded in an international white power underground, characterized by exchange of information between Norwegian activists and other activists from Europe and the US. Both meetings and concerts included representatives from a wide range of countries. The first white power concert held in Norway in 1995 brought activists from Germany, England, Denmark, Sweden, and the US. Most notably, there was extensive contact with Swedish activists, whom they visited every time they arrange concerts or marches. There was also some cooperation with British activists. The Norwegian division of the British Blood and Honor was founded in 1995, and the Norwegian Anti-AFA and the English Combat 18 collaborated through the printing of a list of Norwegian antiracists in Blood and Honor.

Several researchers have assessed the role of ideology (vs. psychiatry) in the case of the July 22 terrorist (Bjørgo, 2012; Fangen, 2012; Sørensen, 2012). In general, they concluded that ideology played an (important) role, though some aspects of the terrorist's writing and behavior seemed more related to mental health issues. The idea that ideology was important was also a key assumption in the contribution by Enebakk (2012), who focused on the writings of the blogger Fjordman, the key inspirational source on the manifesto of the terrorist committing the July 22 attack. Other contributions have focused less on ideology and more on target selection, tactical issues, and/or the process of radicalization (Hemmingby & Bjørgo, 2016; Ravndal, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). All these contributions rarely made use of a comparative, transnational, or entangled perspective, though some of them did include important information about the online networks in which the terrorist was embedded. The only three exceptions were two articles by Lars Erik Berntzen (Berntzen & Sandberg, 2014; Sandberg et al., 2014) and colleagues and a

monograph by Sindre Bangstad (2014). Although both these articles were single case studies of the July 22 terrorist attack, they explicitly situated the attack within a wider transnational political (i.e., the counterjihad subculture online) and cultural framework (i.e., school shootings as a cultural script for young men).

When looking at patterns of mobilization more broadly, key contributions have explored militant activity in the Nordic region (Ravndal, 2018), the rise of vigilantism with groups like the Soldiers of Odin (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2019), and online mobilization (Haanshuus & Jupskås, 2017). Two contributions have also looked at why extreme right activists in general (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2017), and the neo-Nazi group NMR in particular (Ravndal & Bjørgo, 2020) have usually refrained from engaging in violent activity—or at least engaging in much less violence than they could have and would like to, based on their ideology.

Sweden

Research in Sweden has covered a wide variety of issues, although the focus on certain organizations has still somewhat been prevalent. Studies, which we have identified as having a pan-Nordic dimension, also addressed, among others, such issues as engagement and disengagement from radical milieus, online activism and culture, and psychological aspects.

Research designs and methodologies have, compared with earlier periods, become more diverse. As an example, Mattsson and Johansson (2019, 2022) used a combination of text and document analysis, interviewing both former and current activists, and ethnographic approaches formed the basis of data collection in their studies. Both of their works focused much on the NRM and on the individuals within the movement. These aspects were both studied methodologically and as belonging ethnographically among the richest produced by the scholars on the current Nordic national socialist movements.

Diversity in research designs was, besides general methodological development, also ruled by research themes and limitations in the data. Coming to an analysis of the most recent movements, archival studies typically were not an option because authorities set limitations to their use in research. Ethnographically oriented field work, including typically both online and offline observations and combined with interviews (see Askanius, 2019; Mattsson & Johansson, 2019), has, to some extent, replaced archival approaches. Along with these, few attempts to specifically address the role of new media, such as podcasts, has been done (see, e.g., Lundström & Lundström 2021). Also, different kinds of big data methods, such as data mining or statistical approaches, have increased to some extent, though these were still not a main trend and have often been done only in student works.

Active Researchers

In the 1990s, the field in Norway was dominated by two to three researchers only. Since the terrorist attacks on July 22, there has been a growing number of researchers in Norway focusing on the extreme right. This has arisen mainly because of the establishment of a new research center, the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), at the University of Oslo. This center includes more senior scholars like Tore Bjørgo (who is also the director of the center) and Katrine Fangen, as well as a new generation of scholars, such as political scientist Jacob Aasland Ravndal, anthropologist Cathrine M. Thorleifsson, sociologist Lars Erik Berntzen, and political scientist Anders Ravik. C-REX also funds or hosts several upcoming scholars from various disciplines within the social sciences, including Birgitte Haanshuus, Christopher Fardan, Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik, Håvard Haugstvedt, and Astrid Rambøl, who are currently doing their PhD on the extreme right and/or related topics. In addition to C-REX scholars and affiliated, the field of research includes the anthropologist Sindre Bangstad Jupskås, historian Elisabetta Cassina Wolff, and the author Øyvind Strømmen, who have made important contributions to our understanding of the contemporary extreme right in Norway and beyond.

In Finland, the situation is to some extent the same as in earlier periods, and most of the studies have been produced by a handful of researchers, some of whom have not continued with the topic, though there is a growing number of master's level studies. Tommi Kotonen and Daniel Sallamaa are currently only active researchers of RWE, focusing partly or entirely on the post-Cold War period in Finland. Danish scholarly activities around the topic of RWE are even more limited, and most of the studies have been produced as commissioned reports by the authorities, with Anne-Sofie Hemmingsen and Chris Holmsted Larsen being the most active researchers. Also, both Finland and Denmark lack any academic research centers or institutions addressing RWE. In Sweden, the founding of the Segerstedt Institute at the University of Gothenburg, and, with a broader focus, the Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies on Racism (CEMFOR) at the Uppsala University have, among other efforts, helped expand the field. The former is led by Christer Mattsson, and at CEMFOR, Mattias Gardell acted previously as a research director, with Michal Krzyzanowski currently holding the position. In Sweden, as identified in this review, the research field is still dominated by relatively few authors, with the most active ones being, along with several PhD students, Tina Askanius, Christer Mattsson, Helen Lööw, Mattias Gardell, and Mats Deland.

The Pan-Nordic and Transnational Dimensions

The pan-Nordic or transnational dimensions are more visible in studies of post-Cold War period than in earlier periods, though most of studies have been conducted from a national perspective. This development is at least partly because of certain Nordic movements explicitly aiming to form organizations beyond their national borders. Studies on the Soldiers of Odin and NMR exemplified this, though the milieu have also generally become international with the help of the internet and social media. What this development means for the RWE activism has not been thoroughly analyzed so far, though some studies have addressed bigger trends (see, e.g., Ravndal, 2021), and the right-wing terrorism and violence dataset advanced the possibilities for comparison (Ravndal, 2016).

Except for Ravndal's (2018) analysis of extreme right militancy in the four Nordic countries, which is a truly comparative study aiming to explain why there is consistently higher levels of activity in Sweden compared with the other three countries, the other contributions were mainly single case studies focusing on (Norwegian) individuals and individual groups. However, when analyzing the groups, the authors explicitly highlighted the transnational dimension (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2019).

In the chapters on the Soldiers of Odin, which appeared in an edited volume on similar groups across the globe, the chapters on the Soldiers of Odin in Finland, Sweden, and Norway built upon cross-national interactions (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2019; Gardell, 2019; Kotonen, 2019). Regarding Norway, the authors stressed the initial interaction between Finnish and Norwegian branches. They also noted that the Norwegian SOO chapter distanced itself from the Finnish SOO, though it regained its ties with the international SOO organization, which was controlled by a Finnish and Maltese leader. Similarly, in the article about the NMR, the authors both discussed not only what they referred to as "the emergence and *transnational* evolution" (our italics) of the NRM, but also how the NRM's current leader reacted to a significant international event, namely the mass shooting of Muslims in Christchurch, New Zealand, in March 2019 (Ravndal & Bjørgo, 2020). Moreover, the transnational dimension of the NMR was further elaborated upon in another contribution, which looked at a rare phenomenon: nationalist organizations operating transnationally (Ravndal, 2020).

Several Finnish works also included a discussion on the pan-Nordic and transnational dimension of RWE, although it has seldom been the specific focus of research. Kotonen's (2019) book chapter on the Soldiers of Odin looked at how the organization spread beyond Finland's borders, paying special attention to the

group's Swedish chapter and the role that Finns have held within that chapter. Sallamaa's (2018) report similarly looked at the Soldiers of Odin's Finnish and foreign chapters while also shortly describing the forms of interaction between them. The NMR, as a pan-Nordic organization, furthermore figured as a topic in several studies. Sallamaa's report included the most extensive academic Finnish-language assessment of the organization to date and also featured a section on the international connections of the NRM's Finnish chapter. The Finnish chapter's ties to Sweden in particular were discussed by the report, as was the organization's strategic objective of establishing a Nordic national socialist state. The NRM was also widely covered by Koivulaakso et al. (2012), with the Finnish chapter's international ties being discussed in the book. Jokinen's (2011) book chapter furthermore featured an account of the NRM's Finnish chapter and the organization's overall Nordic structure.

The pan-Nordic and international ties of other twenty-first-century organizations were also brought up in a few works. Sallamaa's report featured a discussion on the international connections of FDL, with the group's participation in counterjihadist events in Sweden and Denmark noted by the author. Koivulaakso et al. similarly discussed the FDL's ties to other chapters of the defense league movement.

The transnational nature of ideologies and cross-border flow of right-wing extremist rhetoric furthermore formed a part of some studies. Paaso's (2012) report on Breivik's manifesto compared the ideas expressed in the text with those professed by Finnish counterjihadists while also identifying certain websites and online blogs, such as Jihad Watch, Gates of Vienna, and Brussels Journal, that have acted as central nodes in the transnational proliferation of counterjihadism. The transnational nature of counterjihadism was similarly discussed in Jalonen's (2011) book chapter, which examined the emergence of the ideology in Finland and abroad and counterjihadist movement's connections to domestic parliamentary politics.

Although the topic of pan-Nordic and transnational connections was largely covered by works focusing on the twenty-first century, certain studies also looked at the transnational ties of Finnish right-wing extremist organizations during the 1990s. *The New Radical Right in Finland*, a 1999 volume edited by Pekonen, included two chapters that looked at the international connections of the PNA (Hynynen, 1999; Pekonen et al., 1999). The group's participation in a 1996 May Day rally by France's Front National was, for example, mentioned in the book, as were the transnational ties of the Finnish neo-Nazi leader Pekka Siitoin. The subcultural dimension of transnational ties was, yet again, covered to a lesser degree. Sallamaa touched upon the topic when describing the international connections of the post-Cold War right-wing extremist music scene in Finland, but the topic was largely ignored by other studies.

Danish research, as noted above, has been relatively scarce compared with other Nordic countries. Previous studies on RWE subculture and organizations did not have explicit transnational or comparative approaches and have been relatively descriptive by nature, especially regarding the reports commissioned by the authorities. However, analyzing the right-wing extremist landscape (Karpantschof & Mikkelsen, 2017) have produced some research data regarding pan-Nordic cooperation, and studies focusing more on the ideological and cultural aspects have extended our understanding of the pan-Nordic dimension (see Kølvraa, 2019a, 2019b).

To a greater extent, research conducted in Sweden has focused on the NMR (see, e.g., Askanius, 2019; Mattsson & Johansson, 2020), so it has had a pan-Nordic element, though this is often approached from the national perspective. Along with these, the studies on the Soldiers of Odin mentioned above have explored the Swedish part of the network and their linkages with other Nordic countries (Gardell, 2019). A recent study by Mattias Gardell (2021) on lone-wolf terrorists extended the Nordic aspect beyond geographically defined Nordic countries, analyzing the Nordic ideas in writings of North American authors while exploring the global movement.

Prevention Strategies and Practices in the Nordic Countries

This chapter is dedicated to a review of the practices used for prevention purposes in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. The basis of inclusion has been described in the introductory chapter. The presentation of the results is initiated by some general remarks on the Nordic model (if there is one) of prevention, along with some of the commonalities and differences in the national strategies for handling RWE. This is followed by a review of the practices and initiatives in the respective countries and national approaches that are characteristic for how the problem is being tackled. The country-specific reviews are then followed by an analysis of emerging Nordic collaboration practices and a broader discussion of the results.

Identified practices

Based on the inclusion criteria, the following practices have been identified and selected for this overview:

DENMARK

DK1.	SSP/PSP/KSP collaboration	Multiagency work
DK2.	Info-houses	Multiagency work
DK3.	Hotline for radikalisering [hotline for radicalization]	Telephone support
DK4.	Democratic unity: Preventing polarization and exclusion in Danish schools	Teacher training
DK5.	Danish National Corps of Mentors and Parent Coaches	Mentoring

DK6.	Aarhus model: Prevention of radicalization and discrimination in Aarhus	Multiagency work
DK7.	Unge4unge [Youth4youth]	Mentoring
DK8.	Removing parents' benefits	Sanctioning practice
DK9.	Train-the-trainer awareness	Educating practitioners
DK10.	Helhedsorienteret forebyggelse af ekstremisme [Holistic prevention of extremism]	Training mentors
DK11.	Back on track	Mentoring in prison

FINLAND

FI1.	Ankkuri/Anchor	Multiagency work
FI2.	Building resilience in support of democracy education	Compilation of methods
FI3.	Aggredi program	Therapeutical work with offenders
FI4.	Web constables	Online presence
FI5.	Community seminars	Seminars for training and creating cve infrastructures for practitioners
FI6.	Preventive police unit	Collaboration between security services in safeguarding society
FI7.	RadicalWeb-project	Educating professionals on online extremism

NORWAY

NO1.	SLT cooperation	Multiagency work
NO2.	Demokrativerkstad Utøya [Democracy workshop Utøya]	Citizen education
NO3.	Family support Sarpsborg	Family support
NO4.	Bekymringssamtale [Police empowerment conversations]	Dialogue between police and at-risk youth
NO5.	Family counseling center	Family support
NO6.	DEMBRA demokratisk beredskap mot rasism och antisemitisme [democratic preparedness against racism and antisemitism]	Citizen education
NO7.	Demos: demokrati og medborgerskap [democracy and citizenship]	Citizen education
NO8.	C-Rex [Center for Research on Extremism]	Academic research on primarily RWE
NO9.	The 22 July center	Citizen education
NO10.	RVTS – Utveier [ways out]	Online resources
NO11.	Mentoropplaæring radikalisering.no [mentor training]	Mentor training
NO12.	Plattform	Multiagency work and research

SWEDEN

SW1.	Agera Värmland	Knowledge and resource center
SW1.	EXPO	Journalism and education
SW3.	Rädda Barnens orostelefon för radikalisering	Telephone support
SW4.	SSPf collaboration	Multiagency work
SW5.	Unga mot extremism [Young against extremism]	Community work
SW6.	New Connexion	Citizen education
SW7.	The Tolerance project	Youth prevention through education
SW8.	Safe Space	Mentoring
SW9.	The Segerstedt Institute	Academic research and education
SW10.	Institutet för demokrati och dialog	Online resource, raising awareness

NORDIC COOPERATION

NoC1.	Nordic safe cities	Network
NoC2.	Save the children	Telephone support and education
NoC3.	DEMBRA	Citizen education

EUROPEAN COOPERATION

EU1.	Living with controversy: Teaching controversial issued through education for democratic citizenship and human rights (Norway and Sweden)	Citizen education
EU2.	CoPPRA. Community policing and the prevention of radicalization (Denmark, Finland and Sweden)	Online self-training for practitioners
EU3.	Radicalization Awareness Network: train-the-trainer program (Norway)	Workshop training for practitioners
EU4.	ReccoRa institute (Denmark and Sweden)	Modules, self-training package for practitioners and students
EU5.	Improving security by democratic participation (Sweden)	Modules, self-training package for practitioners

A Nordic model for preventing RWE?

On the national level, the four Nordic countries that are the focus in the present report have all developed national action plans to prevent and handle violent extremism and radicalization. The plans center on the need for more collaboration between authorities, professionals, and local resources (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019). Furthermore, all four countries place the main responsibility for handling RWE at the municipal level (i.e., the local administrative level). The main rationale behind this approach is that recourses are tied to first line practitioners who understand the local conditions and resources. Accordingly, many Nordic municipalities and agencies have installed a coordinating function, for example, the

Norwegian radicalization contact within the police or Swedish municipal coordinators against violent extremism. In line with the localized approach, municipal action plans are recommended in all four countries where the national strategies are to be translated and adapted into local conditions and circumstances. In 2018, 62% of the Danish municipalities had a local action plan for handling extremism (Rambøll, 2018), and 67% of the Swedish municipalities by 2022 had a plan (SKR, 2022).

The main targeted group for the prevention practices is young people in school environments, in youth centers, or social services and various multiagency approaches in cases of "at-risk youth." However, it is not primarily the young who are the first beneficiaries of the identified practices, but the practitioners working with children and youth. Indeed, most of the initiatives are targeting first line practitioners. By strengthening their knowledge, competence, and awareness, their actions are meant to have a beneficial impact on their students, participants, clients, or the like. This is a seemingly rational and common way to handle societal challenges: the ones who, in their everyday job, interact with young people are in a privileged position to affect a desired change. However, the practices that are implemented to prevent extremism are generally broadly defined and might miss the specific mark of preventing or handling RWE as a unique problem.

It is noteworthy that, except for C-REX (the Norwegian Center for Research on Extremism; NO8), and the EXPO foundation (SW2),[3] none of the identified practices have RWE as an exclusive focus. The extremist milieus (i.e., militant Islamism, left-wing extremism, and RWE) are either lumped together under a unified "violent extremism umbrella" or as two separate but dominant categories that are categorized as a threat to democracy, that is, political extremism and religious extremism. This might be because of the changing landscape in the Nordic countries and the emergence of a "new extremist category": militant Islamism that calls for initiatives and practices that can aid in the understanding of this (in a Nordic perspective) new phenomena. Subsequently, the more "well-known" RWE falls into the background, or the practices that were previously aiming at preventing RWE are now utilized for a broader purpose. Occasionally, this means including all and excluding none.[4]

The Norwegian C-REX has the mission to contribute with research-based knowledge on RWE, hate crime, and political violence. The center functions as an international hub and has the aim to disseminate knowledge to relevant actors.

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3. It could also be added that EXPO is "the odd one out." It is a journalistic organization with the intention of monitoring and informing the public about the right-wing movement, mainly as material published in the journal and online. It can be discussed if this includes a preventive element. However, the workers of EXPO are regularly giving lectures and lessons in schools and civil society organizations—with the purpose of contributing to knowledge and prevention.
4. Examples of this include SW1, No3, SW7, and No12.

Such initiatives not only have a (potential) pragmatic value but can also be symbolically important for accentuating the significance of protecting democracy from antidemocratic tendencies such as RWE. The Swedish Segerstedt Institute (SW9) lies under the auspices of the University of Gothenburg and has a similar function: to be a national resource center with the mission to contribute to increased knowledge about preventive work against violent ideologies, violent structures, antisemitism, and racist organizations. Besides the research on these issues, the institute is collaborating with other authorities and municipalities in developing knowledge and methods. The institute also affords university courses for teachers, police, and other relevant first line practitioners on how to prevent extremism and intolerance. A similar type of organizational platform, though not university based, is the Plattform initiative (NO12), which acts as a coordinating hub connecting 25 Norwegian municipalities in Agder County. Through action research and counseling, academic knowledge of the platform is meant to enforce the local foundation of prevention.

As we will see in the following section, there are influential actors in the respective country that have had a notable impact on the practices against RWE. In Denmark, Preben Bertelsen's life psychology theory and the Aarhus model have been influential. In Finland, the ministries have had a strong impact on initiatives and actions. In Norway, the *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* is highly influential, building bridges between the different practices, authorities, and organizations, keeping them focused on a joint objective. The Swedish practices are more reliant on the services performed by civil society organizations (CSOs). The influence of specific actors, or certain approaches, can be the reason for some of the national streamlining. Practices and approaches that have been considered successful in one preventive area are translated to another local area with the purpose of handling similar challenges.

When comparing the different national discourses, there is a pattern that separates the Danish–Finnish practices from the Norwegian–Swedish. The former (DK–FI) seems to be in favor of interventive practices that are put to practice when there is a concern of someone being at risk, that is, what we could denote as a countering perspective. The latter (NO-SW) are more prone to engage in early prevention practices that are meant to build a wide resilience against extremism before any risks have occurred.

Denmark

Strong government involvement, multiagency work, mentoring and life psychology

The present review has identified 11 practices that fit into the inclusive criteria. None of the 11 are explicitly focused on RWE. As previously noted in the overview of the post-Cold War period, Denmark has been less affected by violent right-wing extremist movements than its neighbors. When, for instance, the *Danish Centre for Preventing Extremism* in 2018 commissioned a research mapping, the challenges posited in the introduction was only mentioned for people traveling to combat zones and attempts to plan terrorist attacks (Rambøll, 2018b). Accordingly, the preventive practices mainly focused on militant Islamism.

In comparison with the other Nordic countries, the Danish strategy has been more focused on securitizing measures and the countering aspects of handling extremism. For instance, the police and PET (Danish security police) are the dominating actors in the policy on prevention (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019). The "hard measures" that come with this perspective are represented in, for example, the sanctions practiced by the Copenhagen municipality, where economic benefits (monthly child benefits given to all Danish families) are removed from parents who are reluctant to address radicalization concerns (DK8).

To some extent, all the Danish practices that we have identified are connected with authorities on either a national, regional, or municipal level. The approach is also characterized by its strong trust in multiagency collaboration and cooperation. This is probably a result of the early (successful) preventive strategies performed in the Aarhus model (Bertelsen, 2015) (DK6) and in the Deradicalization targeted intervention program. The Aarhus model is a cooperative multidisciplinary approach that entails both raising awareness among professionals and public, collaboration, and dialogue with actors in the local communities, management of individual cases, and counseling for professionals and affected individuals and their families.

Mentoring and coaching emerges as one of the pillars if the Danish practices (DK5, DK10, DK11). There is a national corps of mentors and parent coaches (DK5) working with those in or affiliated to extremist groups or at risk of radicalization and with their families or kins. The mentoring and coaching are based on "life psychology" (*tilværelsepsykologi*), a solution-focused method developed by the psychological researcher Preben Bertelsen for helping people handle challenges and find their way in life. It is focused on exploring and developing life skills (*tilværelsekompetence*) and the achievement of positive goals. Interestingly, life psychology and life skills are also an integral part in three of the 11 Danish practices (DK2, DK5, DK6).

Finally, the Danish practices in this overview have been characterized by its governmental control, in the sense that we have not found any practices that are entirely provided by CSOs. Nonetheless, there are services based on voluntary work. Even though the *National Center for Forebyggelse af Ekstremisme og Center for Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde* (2020) reviewed how civil society can contribute to the prevention against violent extremism, they concluded that CSOs have a limited, but important, task in democratizing society and building resilience. The review also suggested that municipalities can make use of CSO resources for mapping the local situation and identifying local actors that can be utilized for specific prevention purposes. CSOs can also contribute to building bridges between authorities and citizens in local areas. This can lead to an amalgamation of voluntary services and governing institutions. On that note, the network Youth4youth (Unge4unge) (DK7) is based on youth voluntary work; it is described as a governmental institution and is organized by municipalities. The volunteers are between 16 and 29 years old and arrange activities for 8–15-year-olds in their local area. The objective is to afford positive role models so that young people can support and inspire each other. The volunteers are trained, and there is a handbook based on training days and volunteering in general.

Finland

Tight governmental organizing, security focus, and online intervention

The present review has identified nine practices that meets the inclusion criteria. None of the nine are explicitly focused on RWE. The identified Finnish practices aiming at preventing violent extremism are tightly tied to the governing institutions. For instance, the Ministry of the Interior has been influential in forming both national strategies and single practices targeting extremism and terrorism. This gives the authorities the possibility to govern the initiatives and to control, observe, and assess whether they are efficient. In personal communication with the representatives from the Finnish ministries, it has also been confirmed that there is no precise division between extremist milieus. Nonetheless, the latest threat assessments show that the threat from RWE is now the most significant one and that the dissemination of RWE online propaganda and recruitment can be hard to identify and approach. Therefore, Finland is now intensifying their efforts to handle online extremism. Considering the transnational interconnectedness of RWE, this could be a reasonable approach.

The police and security sector are the dominating actors in the Finnish practices for preventing violent extremism, a finding that harmonizes with those in an extensive policy review of preventive policies in the Nordic countries (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019). The police are an evident contributor in preventing practices. For

instance, the web police officers (FI4) that have existed since 2011 are active on various social media platforms under their own name and affiliation. They participate in discussions, offer support, and are available for answering questions from participants in various media platforms. Furthermore, they are taking part in online forums where local issues are discussed. The web constable function is also used for monitoring risk behavior among minors, especially in cases where school shootings are discussed. In such cases, the web police officers have the mandate to carry out background checks and report to the local police. Interestingly, school shootings are an evident area of focus in Finland, which is not visible in the other countries practices. This is connected to the incidents in Tuusula in 2007 and Kauhajoki in 2008 that actualizes the need for such practices.

CSOs are also utilized for preventive purposes. For example, the Finnish branch of Save the children is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the RadicalWeb-project (FI7). Another prominent example of a CSO driven practice is the Aggredi program (FI3), which is offering individualized psychological support for at-risk individuals (or those already involved in extremism) and works under the auspices of the HelsinkiMissio. It stands out among the Finnish practices because it is not explicitly connected to or funded by any official authority but by a gaming company.

Norway

Democratic culture, building competencies, and family support

The present review has identified 12 practices that meet the inclusion criteria. Out of the 12, only a single practice is explicitly focused on RWE. In a review of prevention against violent extremism in Norway, Tore Bjørgo and Ingvild Magnæs Gjelsvik (2015) described how Norwegian research on RWE and racist violence had a great impact on the preventive actions between 1991 and 2005. The research and collaboration with first line practitioners and CSOs gave some valid knowledge on how to prevent RWE and racist gangs through the use of soft measures such as exit approaches, parent networking, prevention dialogue, and individual guidance. Bjørgo and Gjelsvik (2015) wrote that there are reasons to believe that the research-based measures contributed to a more efficient and goal-oriented strategy that, in turn, dismantled the RWE milieu in Norway. In the aftermath of this successful work, researchers turned their attention to other themes and problems. This means that in the period between 2005 and 2011, research on RWE was close to nonexistent in Norway (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2015).

The 22 July 2011, the terror attack on Oslo and Utøya certainly impacted the strategies and practices in Norway, both when it comes to those being developed and their content and focus. Several descriptions of the practices state that they

are initiated as a response to the antidemocratic message and ideas that the terrorist had. The attack on a mosque in Bærum in 2019 has become an incentive to further strengthen these practices. Accordingly, the Norwegian strategies and practices are generally less prone to lump together different forms of extremism and more explicit in their focus on RWE compared with other Nordic countries. It should also be noted that teaching about the 22 July attacks have been a mandatory theme in the Norwegian school curricula since 2020.

The Norwegian practices have a specific interest in promoting democratic attitudes and democracy as a term is lending itself to project titles (NO2, NO6, NO7). Thus, the Norwegian actions are more leaning towards a promotive perspective, in which the strengthening of democracy overshadows the repression of negative attitudes. The objectives of these initiative have been related to human rights education and the Council of Europe's *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* (2010). The charter focuses on working with educational initiatives together with teachers and youth to strengthen democratic competencies, values, knowledge, attitudes, and skills. One example of this is Democracy workshop Utøya (Demokrativerkstad Utøya, NO2), which is funded and organized by the European Wergeland center and the Council of Europe. There is no doubt that the 22 July terror attack has had an impact on the implementation on this specific site, but it is important to recognize that Utøya has a long tradition as a place for democratic resilience and education.

The Norwegian practices are also centering families as a resource (NO3, NO5). Family support Sarpsborg was initially focused on working with relatives affected by their near one's affiliation with RWE but has extended their target group and are now reaching out to other groups as well. The practice is focusing on empowering families, building networks around affected families, and supporting professionals to handle issues related to extremism.

Sweden

Voluntariness, knowledge, and empowerment

The present review has identified 11 practices meeting the inclusion criteria. Out of the 11, one explicitly focuses on RWE. Sweden stands out among the Nordic countries regarding the inclusion of CSOs (SW1, SW2, SW3, SW5, SW6, SW8, SW10, SW11). This might not come as a surprise because Sweden has (like Finland) a long tradition of advocacy and activities performed by citizen movements (*Folkrörelser*), which had a great importance for establishing democracy in Sweden during the late 1800s. Marcus Herz (2016) discussed how Sweden has been affected by an institutional deficit, steaming from the privatization of welfare services and segregation issues, which has resulted in social work by CSOs

becoming increasingly important. Thus, it can be regarded as a common practice in Sweden to use CSOs when societal unease occurs and there are many opportunities for associations and organizations to apply for funding and grants. The Swedish society's tendencies to lean toward a social care logic (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2019) also encompass voluntariness as a backbone for preventive actions.

The Swedish practices are also oriented toward the pedagogical realm, where knowledge about extremism and its drivers are integral parts of various initiatives. The so-called Tolerance project (SW7) has been running for more than 25 years, and its outreach has been constantly expanding. Dedicated teachers, social workers, youth workers, policemen, and church employees work with (mainly) secondary school students as part of the curricula for up to a year. The content is centered around giving the student tools to understand who they are in relation to their environment, and each project period is finalized with a study trip to Holocaust memorial sites. The past seven years leaders of the tolerance projects have been offered a university teacher training run by the Segerstedt Institute (SW9) at the University of Gothenburg.

The construction of web platforms offering online courses and tools is presented as a way to increase knowledge, awareness, and preparedness for action. Occasionally, this is the main practice (SW10), and it is sometimes offered as a supplement or alternative to other educational initiatives (SW1, SW3).

An orientation of the Swedish practices is the empowerment of individuals through self-reflection and awareness to develop tolerance (SW3, SW6, SW7, SW9, SW11). *Flamman – socialt förebyggande arbete* (Flamman, social preventive work), an organization situated in Malmö, has run a variety of programs for young people and, in recent years, has produced a line of projects focusing on aspects of extremism. For example, Flamman organizes the project *Unga mot extremism* (Youth against extremism) (SW5). By holding seminars and discussions about norms, masculinity, mental health and emotional resources, the project aims to empower young men in the Malmö area. This entails, among other things, an inventory made by the participants of who they can approach to initiate changes in their local communities.

An emerging pan-Nordic cooperation?

On the topic of pan-Nordic collaborative practices, we made the decision to make a minor bypass of our inclusion criteria specifying that practices need to have a life span longer than five years. The reason for this decision is that, besides the more long-lived *Nordic safe cities* network, we found some recently developed

cooperation and networking between the Nordic countries. These cooperations are based on practices that have been developed and tested in one of the Nordic countries and have now extended their reach. Nordic cooperation is important and suitable: besides the geographical closeness and language similarities, the Nordic countries share a comparable culture, structures for welfare, and characterization of a high trust in official authorities and democratic governance (Evs, 2021).

This is also noticed in the Nordic safe cities network (NOC1), initiated in 2016 by the Nordic Council of Ministers, currently consisting of 20 Nordic member cities. The purpose of the network is to facilitate Nordic cooperation between associations, practitioners, politicians, researchers, and so on. Nordic safe cities are supporting municipalities and local professionals to create safe and resilient cities standing against polarization, hatred, threats, and extremist violence (Nordic safe cities, 2022). By membership in the alliance, cities can, among other things, get access to new knowledge, attend meetings and assemblies with other municipalities, get advice on local projects from peers and experts, have the opportunity to receive financial support, and receive immediate support in case of a crisis.

Save the children is an international nongovernmental organization with a longstanding tradition of pan-Nordic cooperation on various topics. Recently, the Swedish and Finnish branches have initiated a cooperation on preventing extremism and radicalization online (NOC2). The cooperation is new, but the branches have both been active in preventive work against extremism (Sweden longer than Finland, hence the absence of the Finnish Save the children work in this review). Since 2017, the Swedish practice (SW3) has primarily focused on supporting individuals affected themselves by extremism or who are a relative or friend of someone affected. They also offer information and workshops for professionals and relatives who need more knowledge or information on how to act or who to contact when they are concerned. The Finnish practice is focused on preventing violent extremism and radicalization on the internet and on building resilience among young individuals. During autumn 2022, a Nordic network for preventing violent extremism among children and youth was formed, where Save the children coworkers and researchers are meant to cooperate in bringing research and practice closer together.

Since 2012, the Norwegian DEMBRA practice has been oriented toward teachers, school managers, and other educational staff. DEMBRA is departing from the democratizing missions embedded in the Nordic education system, offering teacher education for developing teachers' skills to empower students to take an active role in their own lives and participate in society at large. The schools within DEMBRA are also offered guidance, discussions, and workshops with other schools on how to develop local strategies to empower democracy based on local situation and needs. In 2019, the one-year project "Nordic DEMBRA: Strengthening Work on Democracy

and Prevention of Group Hostility, Segregation and Radicalization in Nordic Schools" (NOC3) was initiated as a pilot project in all of the Nordic countries, including Iceland. The pilot gave insights into the possibilities and challenges of implementing a common Nordic model that could be fruitful for further development in future cooperations. The director of the HL Center in Norway, Guri Hjeltnes, wrote, "The project revealed the benefit of exchanging experiences and increasing awareness of the mechanisms behind various phenomena, from prejudice to extreme hatred" (Nustad et al., 2020, p. 5).

Theories of change in Nordic prevention of RWE

As described in the introductory parts of this chapter, the ToC reveals the underlying rationale of a practice and the connection between an intervention and its intended outcomes. For example, if a project has the objective of strengthening resilience against radicalization and the interventions focus on reading facts and learning by taking part in lectures about different extremist groups, its ToC would imply that factual knowledge (cognitive aspects) leads to resilience (emotive, social aspects), which, in this case, would imply a mismatch. The learning of facts would more probably change and expand the knowledge about different extremist groups. Thus, for a practice to have the possibility to succeed in reaching its objective, there must be an alignment between the problem, objective, and intervention.

Many of the practices in the current review that are based in Sweden and Norway are about ***empowerment, awareness, and the development of democratic competencies.*** The underlying assumption would be that by allowing conversations on controversial issues, exploring the implications of human rights, working with individual identity development, developing citizen competencies, and finding one's place in life and society, young people gain an understanding and will to contribute to a democratic and tolerant society. Thus, the Swedish and Norwegian practices are leaning more toward early prevention that concerns all participants, both students and clients.

Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis in all four countries on ***producing and disseminating knowledge about extremism*** and identifying radicalization. The rationale of this ToC is that, if professionals are better equipped to recognize symbols, styles, and other visible signs of extremism, they can recognize and respond to the needs of their clients. This would indicate that the prevention of extremism relies on knowledge about the individual signs of concern. Such an alignment comes with some problems because it is next to impossible to approach and prevent signs and symbols. However, knowledge about signs and symbol that are combined with its causes, consequences, and drivers facilitates a preparedness

on how to operationalize the knowledge. When one encounters a national socialist with a violent agenda, the knowledge about their ideology and appearance makes it possible to detect the problem and categorize it, but the key question remains on what the appropriate action is.

There is a strong emphasis of **collaboration between professional groups and institutions.** This form of multiagency collaboration is most developed in Denmark, where the construction of teams is a common practice in many areas of prevention and intervention. The ToC behind this prevention strategy is that efforts and knowledge are best used in a holistic approach that enables a problem to be attacked from various angles. It can be noted that this is closer to the countering perspective because prevention is focused on intervening and interrupting in a risk situation, such as an ongoing radicalization.

Evaluation and evidence

As stated in the introduction, the research on preventive practices around the world has shown that there is a lack of evidence of effects. This is also the case for those practices employed in the Nordic countries. Even though anecdotical evidence (in, e.g., DK8) says something about the success of a practice, without proper benchmarks and control groups, it is hard to discern what has caused the experienced success and if and how it is related to the practice. Nonetheless, practices can be motivated by numerous types of evaluations. Quantitative measurements and statistics presenting numbers of cases, participants, or lessons are occasionally used to validate a practice (e.g., FI4, DK11, EU2, EU3, EU5). Nonetheless, most of the projects have undergone some kind of evaluation consisting of either surveys focusing on user/participant satisfaction (e.g., FI1, NO5), evaluations conducted by external consultants (DK1, NO3), universities (DK4, SW1, SW5), or governing institutions (DK6, SW9, NO4).

There are examples of practices that have a firm foundation in research and proven experience that have successfully functioned for many years with positive results. Not the least, projects or initiatives that have had positive outcomes locally can be the reason behind some national streamlining.

The projectification of prevention

Our review has shown that projects that have a life span of more than five years are generally funded or supported by authorities or municipalities. Practices organized by CSOs with a longevity of more than five years are few in numbers and have formed partnership with the authorities. A prominent example of such

partnership is the Swedish support line for radicalization, run by Save the children (Sw3), in cooperation with the Center for Preventing Violent Extremism. Other projects that manage to last are prone to apply for renewed or new grants, so their focus and thematic approach tends to be constantly updated, redeveloped, renamed, rebranded, or divided into several subprojects (e.g., Swe1, Swe8).

Projects initiated and carried out by CSOs are many and stem from numerous different theories, deploying a plethora of different methods. Such initiatives are important because they often are in tune with local target groups and tendencies and have the advantage of being decoupled from the state. The latter can be an incentive for people to join projects and programs because it is voluntary and without any need for official registration. However, these advantages come with challenges: to get funding CSOs need to apply for short-term grants that limit their chances to evaluate and further develop their ideas and actions (Sivenbring & Andersson Malmros, 2022). Therefore, such initiatives seldom last more than a couple of years. This was also noted as a problem in Kylli et al.'s (2021) overview of deradicalization policy in Finland, and the authors stated, "policy has mainly consisted of projects funded for a limited time, which makes it hard to establish them especially in the case of third sector organizations whose funding differ from state institutions" (p. 21). Even if there are CSOs involved in preventive work in all four countries, they are more visible in Finland and Sweden. The Danish DIIs report (Hemingsen, 2015) point out that there are reasons to question the necessity of bringing civil society into prevention of violent extremism (p. 44). The reason for questioning their involvement is the risk of compromising the professionalization and institutionalization that has characterized the Danish approach and legitimizing actors with an unknown agenda.

Discussion

Transnational connections of the Nordic RWE groups have been a constant feature throughout history, both in ideas and practices. The ideas regarding pan-Nordic cooperation were put into practice in the 1930s. Especially salient was the transnational aspect that arose during the Cold War period because internationalization provided an opening for domestically marginalized and stigmatized movements (Kotonen, 2022). The NMR, with its cross-border activities, sets rather seamlessly into a historical continuum. Furthermore, it is not only at the practical level collaboration where we can see continuities.

The idea of a common Nordic racial origin has historically been one central cultural element of the RWE movements, which also extends beyond Nordic countries. These ideas, combined with the idea of a white resistance against multiculturalism, have brought together national socialist underground groups. Although many themes have remained the same, certain ideological and strategic reorientations have also taken place. Stigma of Hitler's movement and the Second World War caused trouble for the movement, so relaunching activism after the Second World War was burdensome. Some transnational projects, like the Malmö movement founded in 1951, abandoned explicit biological racism and mobilized under the umbrella of anticommunism, promoting the idea of a common, exclusive European culture. The focus on culture instead of race was even more manifest in anti-Muslim groups created under the concept of a counterjihad after 9/11. New communication channels, internet, and social media helped these movements spread and mobilize across borders.

As shown also in their online propaganda, history matters also for the contemporary RWE groups and movements in the Nordic countries, and sometimes, they take a point of reference even from the prewar period. A recent example of this is Blue-Black Movement in Finland, which will take part in parliamentary elections spring 2023. Its visual image is almost a carbon copy of the Patriotic People's Front (PPF) from the 1930s, and the name has been adopted from the PPF youth front. Recently, in Swedish elections, the party *Alternativ för Sverige* used a layout and slogans borrowed from the early 1980s RWE group *Bevara Sverige Svenskt*. For these groups, historical imagination is a key reference point, stirring memories from a period when the country was not multicultural and radical nationalism was an accepted ideal.

References to the 1930s also serve to remind of times when RWE movements had real political influence. Politically marginalized, the contemporary movements may

only rarely influence the political decision making. Here, these movements stand in stark contrast with the RWE movements of the 1930s and 1940s, especially in Finland and Norway. In the former, the PPF was a part of the war cabinet, and its predecessor, the Lapua movement, maintained extraordinary influence when pressuring government and parliament into passing anticommunist legislation. In Norway, although marginal before the war, Quisling's Nasjonal *Sammling* gained ruling position with the help of German occupiers.

Organizational forms are changing

Considering the organizational forms, historically, RWE groups and movements have followed the *Führerprinzip* and have been built upon an authoritarian top-down model. Although some current groups, especially the NRM, are still organized hierarchically, more often, we do not see that kind of structure but instead loose networks and individual activists, occasionally with broad social media presence or franchise-type organizations like Soldiers of Odin. Even very local groups may be also connected globally. This obviously presents challenges for the research as well, which has, especially historically, focused much on organizations and leading individuals. A cultural turn is indeed needed in this respect, although, as our review also shows, this has already happened to some extent. This is not to say that organizations do not matter anymore—they are still important, among others, in accumulating ideas and propagating them—but the focus should at least be in the ideas they represent. The ideas, unlike forms, travel also into the mainstream.

However, forms of public RWE activism tend to be similar year after year. Marches, demonstrations, and other ritualized events are, alongside with culture, what knits them together. NRM leader Simon Lindberg speaking in Helsinki in an Independence Day event in 2017 formally organized by the Soldiers of Odin but, in practice, arranged by a proscribed Finnish NRM chapter—bypassing the irony that realizing their goals would mean an end of Finland as an independent state—is one example of these connections realized through joint gatherings. Despite efforts to create unity, the differing historical experiences sometimes show also in current movements as internal frictions. This is clear, for example, in differing the ideas regarding nationalism and attitudes toward Russia between Finnish and Swedish parts of the NMR (see Sallamaa & Malkki, 2022). In Norway, the lessons drawn from the German occupation by the RWE groups has also split the milieu (Bjørgo, 1995). In a period arguably pregnant with hybrid influencing and disinformation, these differences matter. Without understanding the trajectories of these movements, based often on history, the countering and preventing measures may be mistargeted, and the threats posed by them may be overlooked.

Are we aiming correctly?

Following the overview of contemporary RWE in the Nordic countries and review of practices used to prevent RWE, we now have the data to reflect on how well the practices meet the nature of problem.

First, we look at the alignment between the threat assessments and occurrence of contemporary RWE in the north to see if there is a reasonable relation between the current situation and solutions or actions represented among the preventive practices.

All national threat assessments rank RWE, particulary the lone actors of the milieu, as a serious threat. The pan-Nordic NRM is more or less organized in the respective Nordic countries, and the Soldiers of Odin became a Nordic phenomena.

There are many initiatives aiming at preventing extremism, but no practices besides the Swedish EXPO foundation and the Norwegian C-Rex have a specific focus on RWE. The Swedish EXPO has an ongoing monitoring of the movement including mapping the Nordic branches and the pan-Nordic collaborations. There are no pan-Nordic collaborations or initiatives focusing on practices for preventing or countering the transnational aspects.

Hence, even though there is an obvious presence and aspirations among RWE movements to expand pan-Nordic cooperation, there are few resources focusing on countering this tendency. There are some Nordic resources for monitoring and studying RWE but a lack of sustainable solutions, practices, and initiatives that are actively aiming at prevention either at the national or pan-Nordic levels.

As the research review in the current report shows, even if there are gaps and room for improvement, important research is conducted, and insights have been afforded by studies on RWE in the north. If we agree that research and proven experience are relevant starting points for developing sustainable and efficient practices to prevent and counter RWE, there are reasons to investigate whether the research

that has been conducted on the topic is being utilized in the development of practices.

Nordic research on RWE seems to be sequential, problem, or incident oriented and primarily based on secondary empirical sources. Norway and Sweden have established academic institutions focusing on RWE, and they are also the two countries that have contributed with most research on the topic. The lack of ethnographic studies and insights makes it hard to draw reliable conclusions about eventual accumulation of milieus and their interconnectedness over space and time.

Few of the practices refer to contemporary research or the contemporary situation. They are occasionally referring to national events and incidents. Much like contemporary research, the practices are problem based, and they answer to resent rather than more contemporary problems. Even though many of the practices are based on theoretical models and methods and lean on long and proven experience, they tend to be evaluated on the assessments of outcome alone, user satisfaction, and anecdotical evidence.

Thus, the research on RWE milieus and practices available and that give insights and important clues that can be used for developing practices is not being utilized. Instead, it is a common approach to use the practices that have been successful in handling other issues or situations in the past and transferring them into the realm of extremism.

Since the start of the millennium and initiation of the war on terror (Hodges, 2011), RWE has been accompanied by militant Islamism and, as the research review shows, there is also an increased anti-Muslim discourse in the RWE milieus. Following this, it is relevant to highlight whether this tendency is being met and what the relations between the two milieus might be, especially because it is common to design preventive practices aiming at preventing both kinds of extremism.

Much like other regions in the Western world, the RWE discourse in the Nordics is anti-Muslim/counterjihad centered. Hence, movements like SIAN and SIAD that mainly perpetuate their message online or by local manifestations have gained ground. The NRM has likewise intensified their Islamophobic rhetoric and focused on the great replacement theory. These "new" anti-Muslim tendencies have been violently played out in the region, not the least in the 22 July terror attack. Furthermore, arson attacks on housings for refugees, shootings, and strategically placed bombs have cause fatalities, massive injuries, and, not to forget, fear in the Muslim community.

It is far more common to design projects aimed to prevent militant Islamism than RWE. In practices that are described as preventing different forms of extremism, examples, aims, and actions are predominantly focusing on militant Islamism. These preventive practices are often emphasizing activities for promoting integration and immigrants' knowledge and understandings of Westerners' democratic way of life, along with special initiatives that pinpoint equality and women's rights in society.

Thus, the attempt to lump different forms of extremism together to kill two birds with one stone have some unintended consequences. The prevention of RWE has fallen into the background of efforts to handle militant Islamism, while increasing Islamophobic attitudes are not gaining as much attention as the normalizing practices aimed at the Muslim community.

Besides needing to be focused on the correct milieu, prevention needs to target all types of individuals involved or consuming the narratives of extremism groups. Therefore, it is relevant to compare the demographics of right-wing extremists in order to focus on the relevant prevention practices.

The review of contemporary RWE and other research shows that antidemocratic rhetoric such as hateful anti-Muslim and antisemitic content is typically perpetuated online by adults and elderly individuals. Also, the NRM's way of life and strict rules does not seem appeal to young people

The identified preventive practices are dominated by initiatives aimed at young people: students in school or youth in youth clubs or civil society organizations.

Accordingly, there is a lack of practices for preventing adults' engagement in extremist activities. From a societal perspective, it is easier to impact the younger population because they are involved in institutions where professionals or designated leaders have a certain responsibility to maintain democratic practices and, therethrough, access to spaces and places where prevention can become an integral part of the ordinary activities. Contemporary prevention of RWE needs to expand its focus and target groups and, to a higher degree, focus on adults and the elderly.

The online sphere has rapidly gained ground, and extremist movements of all kinds have not been hesitant to exploit this medium to spread their ideas. Even if the online and social media forums sometimes are described as an opposite to real-life activities, what happens on the internet does not always stay on the internet.

Much of the contemporary RWE propaganda dissemination and communication is carried out online. The internet has made the transnational dissemination and exchange of ideas and information efficient. The possibilities to approach vulnerable individuals have increased. Researchers are in agreement that lone actors are supported or inspired by others with the same or similar agenda.

There are several practices in the review targeting online milieus. These practices are centering on the development of digital awareness, critical competencies, and abilities to respond to hate speech. There are also practices or functions that monitor and intervene in cases of hateful content. None are mentioning prevention aimed at adults and elderly individuals, even if they probably are involved and reached by, for instance, web constables in Finland.

Accordingly, initiatives focusing online extremism are in place and under development in the Nordics, even if they are focusing on different aspects of either preventing or countering the issue. There are good reasons to cooperate and learn from each other, especially because online extremism communication and propaganda are not restricted by national borders and physical mobility.

Recommendations and Areas for Future Research

This report has provided the research field with an up-to-date and comprehensive review of RWE in the Nordic countries. Furthermore, it provided new insights into how transnational the milieu has been and is today. A considerable change in the milieus is that the types of actors have become more varied than in the past. From being an organizational-based, authoritarian top-down managed milieu historically, RWE in the Nordics is a much more diverse milieu. Much of this development can be contributed to the digitalization of RWE, where RWE culture is spread to temporary social movements, social media groups, individuals, and, still very importantly, traditional organizations such as the NMR. We have also shown how the increased pan-Nordicness and digitalization of the RWE milieu still lacks corresponding preventive measures. Here, much work remains to be done.

In this section, we outline what we believe should be done to tackle some of the problems addressed in our report.

Policy recommendations

Based on our report, we suggest politicians and policymakers in the Nordic countries investigate and initiate the below actions. With the history and contemporary features of RWE in mind, there are strong reasons to believe that the ideology and actors of RWE will be a Nordic issue within the indefinite future. As we have shown in this report, the milieu is also becoming increasingly transnational and pan-Nordic. This development calls for new policies, structures, and practices to be formed, and efforts to increase the political and public awareness about the pan-Nordic nature of the problem are needed. A common thread in the recommendations below is that a Nordic problem must be dealt with using Nordic solutions.

Integrate RWE as a special subject of the Nordic police cooperation

The Nordic police cooperation has been strengthened gradually since the 1990s with the intention of combating and preventing serious cross-border crime that exploits the region's high level of integration and openness. Because RWE groups are traveling between the Nordic countries to demonstrate and/or participate in other

physical and public meetings, often with violent clashes with the police or counterdemonstrators as a result, we suggest RWE be integrated as a special subject of the Nordic police cooperation. The Nordic police agencies should establish a specific unit of police officers who are responsible of, for example, continuously exchanging information about the pan-Nordic actions of RWE groups and actors, collaborate in cases of legal trespassing, and exchange experiences of how to deal with RWE actors during, for example, demonstrations. An intensified Nordic police cooperation on RWE could also lead to the development of new policies to streamline police actions during RWE demonstrations or in cases where right-wing extremists who have been arrested in a neighboring Nordic country. A common Nordic police strategy during demonstrations could potentially contribute to less violence because both parties know what to expect from the other, so the room for misunderstandings diminishes. A common strategy of how to deal with those arrested in a neighboring Nordic country could also lead to a more effective and informed follow-up work by other governmental units, for example, the social services.

Develop a Nordic forum for EXIT-work and workers

EXIT-work to facilitate the disengagement and/or deradicalization of right-wing extremists exists, or is under development, to some degree in all Nordic countries, although being organized differently. Although the extremists speak different national tongues, they all speak the language of hate. This observation is of importance in relation to EXIT-work, which is to be considered an important preventive practice against RWE. We recommend the Nordic Council of Ministers, or any other relevant administrative body, to facilitate or, alternatively, provide funds for other actors to establish a forum for information and experience exchange, training, methods development, and evaluation. The importance of EXIT-work and the pan-Nordicness of RWE motivates an organization of EXIT-approaches that take the transnational dimension into consideration.

Problem-based municipal cooperation

Today, Nordic municipalities first and foremost collaborate based on geographics (i.e., border-close municipalities) or size (i.e., Nordic capitals). To facilitate better information exchange, intermunicipal learning, and methods development, we suggest increased cooperation between those Nordic municipalities with a high degree of problem with RWE. Such cooperation could be facilitated through Nordic Safe Cities or other Nordic organization supporting municipalities and be given funds to ensure the stability and continuity of such a collaborative forum.

Online prevention toward adults and elderly is missing

One contemporary feature of RWE in the Nordics is its digital transformance. The milieu has changed dramatically over the past 20 years or so. Today, from previously being spread mainly through manifestations, concerts, and street activism, the ideology and culture of RWE is today spread and consumed digitally. Consequently, we have seen an increased number of lone actors who have radicalized online. The societal response to this digitalized transformation has been slow, and to date, few online prevention initiatives exist. Of those existing, they are focusing on youth. This is an important target group, but research has indicated that the problem of online radicalization among adults and the elderly are equally, if not more, concerning. Hence, we suggest the Nordic Council of Ministers and the respective Nordic national governments to provide additional funds for public and nonpublic actors to develop new prevention models and projects for online purposes directed at adults and the elderly. Equally important is to enable researchers or other evaluators to study such projects so that we can learn more about what approaches are successful.

Future research

Based on our literature review, we have identified the following areas in need of more research.

Gaps in the story of RWE in the Nordics

First and foremost, we have noticed a general lack of studies on the pan-Nordic aspects of RWE. The main reason is that methodological nationalism is, to a large extent, the prevailing approach. This might be a reflection of how research grants are provided in the Nordic countries because they tend to be nationally focused, reactive, and (too) problem oriented, which can lead to a lack of historical and ethnographic depth. Here, specific research grants focusing on the pan-Nordic dimensions of extremism (i.e., also for militant Islamic and left-wing milieus) would be of great value and something that NordForsk could provide. We also have observed the following, more specific gaps:

- The Cold War period is seriously understudied, even though the groups of the period provide models and inspiration for the current movements.
- On the other side of the methodological spectra, there is also a lack of studies taking a serious local approach. This is equally important because specific places have been continuously centers of activism for decades.

- The media attention toward and visibility of a group does not necessarily correspond with its actual strength or the threat it poses. The focus of research is often too much on formal, nationwide organizations, whereas threat assessments stress lone actors or small local groups as being more dangerous.
- One distinctive area in need of more research concerns the NRM. There are several studies on the NRM regarding their national sections, but the studies have not shown how national sections interact, train together, exchange ideas, and form a pan-Nordic ideology. Additionally, because the research has stayed within the limits of the national borders, the entangled history of the group is ignored, and apparent frictions between national chapters remain unacknowledged. We also still know very little of who the NMR activist is on a somewhat aggregated level. Although case studies exist, we lack larger population studies that could enlighten us on where the activists originate from, their school successes, labor market connections, and moving patterns, to name a few variables of interest.

More evaluation on prevention practices

There is little doubt that the Nordic countries have engaged in the battle against extremism. There is a plethora of policies on the national, regional, and municipal levels promoting and encouraging public institutions and CSOs to contribute to the struggle. Nonetheless, the field has been incrementally developed and evidence on what works has been scarce or even nonexistent. The following aspects could benefit from more knowledge:

- The field would benefit from evidence-based practices. However, it is notoriously difficult to monitor and validate the efficiency of preventive actions because external factors cannot be ruled out and because of ethical considerations regarding the control groups. Research grant providers should encourage scholars from the field of terrorism and extremism to team up with the scholars of theory of science to develop new methods for evaluating prevention practices.
- In Norway and Sweden, the promotion of tolerance and democracy through education is dominating the prevention discourse. Considering the general character of these approaches, an evaluation and investigation of the active mechanisms to change can give important information on its efficiency and meaning.
- It is common to use already existing models and methods for preventing and countering RWE based on the foundation that they have been functional in other contexts. There is no evidence for this being correct. It is of interest to map out and research if such translations are fruitful and effective.

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Tommi Kotonen, Robin Andersson Malmros, Jennie Sivenbring, Claus Bundgård Christensen, Terje Emberland, Nicola Karcher, Heléne Lööw, Leena Malkki, Christer Mattsson, Anders Ravik Jupskås, Venla Ritola, Daniel Sallamaa & Oula Silvennoinen

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