

Editorial

The security environment in the Nordic region is rapidly changing as a result of Russia's war of aggression, which has various political, social, and economic ramifications. The most obvious implications are to do with hard security arrangements including increasing military spending and updating security strategies across the Nordics and the Baltics. There are also identity-related implications as the Nordics need to re-think their collective identities and relations to the neighbouring regions. The second issue of *The Nordic Review of International Studies* (NRIS) investigates the Nordics from the perspective of identity.

The question of identity is at the core of international politics and represents a key theme in the study of International Relations. When it comes to the Nordic region, there are various identities that influence political developments and cultural meanings: local, regional, institutional, global. Despite the waves of globalisation, the European integration process, and the fluctuating political environment, Nordic identity has remained a meaningful identification within the region.

In this issue, identity is examined from various theoretical and empirical perspectives. In their study of Finnish UN policy in the 2000s, Hanna Tuominen and Anna Kronlund investigate the policy from the perspective of Nordic identity, focusing specifically on how the Finnish approach reflects the common identity within the three pillars of the UN system. They find that Nordic identity is essential for Finnish UN policy, even if there is variation in time and in policy areas.

In her article on the scales and phases of Nordic resilience, Johanna Ketola identifies common denominators and factors that are believed to produce resilience across the Nordic countries, regions, and communities. Henri Vogt reviews the Finnish approaches towards European integratory processes since the early 1990s and argues that rather than as an effort to develop a new kind of westernised identity, one should perceive this orientation as an affirmation of the traditional Finnish and Nordic, pragmatic and protestant values.

In their discussion article, Minna Ålander and Sanna Salo examine Sweden's foreign policy identity after 200 years of neutrality and non-alignment. They argue that the failure of Sweden's moral superpower in both domestic and foreign policy has led to a profound identity crisis. Iro Särkkä studies the interplay between three overlapping geographically driven state identities – the Nordic, European, and Atlanticist – in Finland's official foreign policy discourse during the post-Cold War period. She shows that geographically driven state identities are used as means to achieve both physical and ontological security as part of state identity politics.

Finally, Brendan Humphreys explores Scandinavian penal exceptionalism as an identity marker, asking whether the prison estate of the Nordic countries is reflective of their broader societies, and if so, how does this relate to the idea of a pan-Nordic identity. All the articles in this issue foreground the role of identity in the study of the Nordics, increasing knowledge on the intricate nature of collective identity.

We are very pleased that NRIS has been enthusiastically received by the scholarly community. The first issue has been actively read and distributed, which is also reflected in the number of submissions we have received this year. We are happy to see that NRIS is evolving into a vibrant forum for debates on and in the Nordics as we initially envisioned.

Johanna Vuorelma, Ville Sinkkonen, Sanna Salo