

*Homo Nordicus? About Danish, Norwegian and Swedish civil servants' and politicians' identities.* (Swedish title: *Homo Nordicus? Om danska, norska och svenska tjänstemäns och förtroendevaldas identiteter.*) Swedish text. English summary. Göteborg Studies in Politics 72. Printed in Sweden, Kompendiet – Göteborg 2001. 291 pages. ISBN 91-89246-01-2, ISSN 0346-5942.

### **Abstract**

Theoretically, the dissertation is written in a constructivist tradition. The theoretical aim is to contribute to the discussion regarding the construction and deconstruction of identities and these identities' explanatory power when states are choosing with which group of countries to co-operate.

The cases cover two main topic areas, first, international environmental negotiations and second, the Nordic Passport Union's relevance for the Schengen co-operation. Methodologically, the empirical studies are based on an extensive use of official documents and forty-two interviews with Ministers, Parliamentarians and senior officials in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

In the dissertation it is assumed that for the continued existence of a state, its inhabitants have to be aware of their state as separate from other states. Such a distinct awareness of separateness from other actors is considered as a core-identity. Through the assumption that a state has a core-identity, it is possible to derive certain basic interests of security and economic welfare. In the case of the international environmental negotiations is shown that this is a solid assumption. However, in the dissertation it is also assumed that states can have an identity that embraces other states, i.e. a conception that "we – the states X and Y" are different from "they – the other states". In the dissertation it is shown that in the case of the Nordic Passport Union and the Schengen co-operation the states' actions are explained from a Nordic identity.

In the dissertation it is postulated that a state is made up of different institutional spheres that can be more or less sensitive to external changes. Recognising a difference in the intensity in the processes of socialisation, in the dissertation there is a distinction between the civil servant's sphere (the case of the international environmental negotiations) and the politician's sphere (the case of the Nordic Passport Union and the Schengen co-operation). Since the studies carried out show a considerable difference between the two spheres, the distinguishing of institutional spheres seem to be a useful way to identify in what situations certain identities are of importance.

Another aspect investigated is if states' identities are constructed step by step, i.e. that as a reaction to structural changes states' cognitive direction will change. Following such a cognitive redirection, the state's representatives will meet new actors and new identities will be constructed and old ones deconstructed. The results show that in the case of the international environmental negotiations the elder civil servants seem to cling to the identity that embraces a more "historic" grouping of states. Thus, while individuals seem to not change identity step by step, states do. States shift identities when they change the individuals that represent them.

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**Key Words:** states' identities, core identities, identities that embrace other states, states' interests, cognitive direction, constructivism, the Schengen co-operation, the Nordic Passport Union, international environmental negotiations.