



KVARKENRÅDET
MERENKURKUN
NEUVOSTO

The Kvarken Council

Mathias Lindström

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The Kvarken Region

The narrowest part of the Gulf of Bothnia is called **Kvarken**.

- Distance from coast to coast:
Ca 80 km
- Distance between the outmost islands: Ca 25 km

The largest water depth in Kvarken is only 25 metres.



Regional facts

The Kvarken Region in Finland:

- The region of Ostrobothnia
- The region of Southern Ostrobothnia
- The region of Central Ostrobothnia
- 35 municipalities
- Area: 28 248 km²
- Ca 22 % of the population Swedish speaking

The Kvarken Region in Sweden:

- Västerbotten County
- Örnsköldsvik Municipality
- 16 municipalities
- Area: 61 822 km²
- 10 universities
- 8 hospitals
- 10 airports
- 8 harbours



Common history

Historically one region

Trade

Communications

Family and relatives

Commuting

Studies

Culture

Tourism



Infrastructure

Railroad

- Botniabanan
- Vaasa-Seinäjoki-Helsinki

Ferry traffic

- 8 larger ports
- Regular ferry traffic Vaasa-Umeå

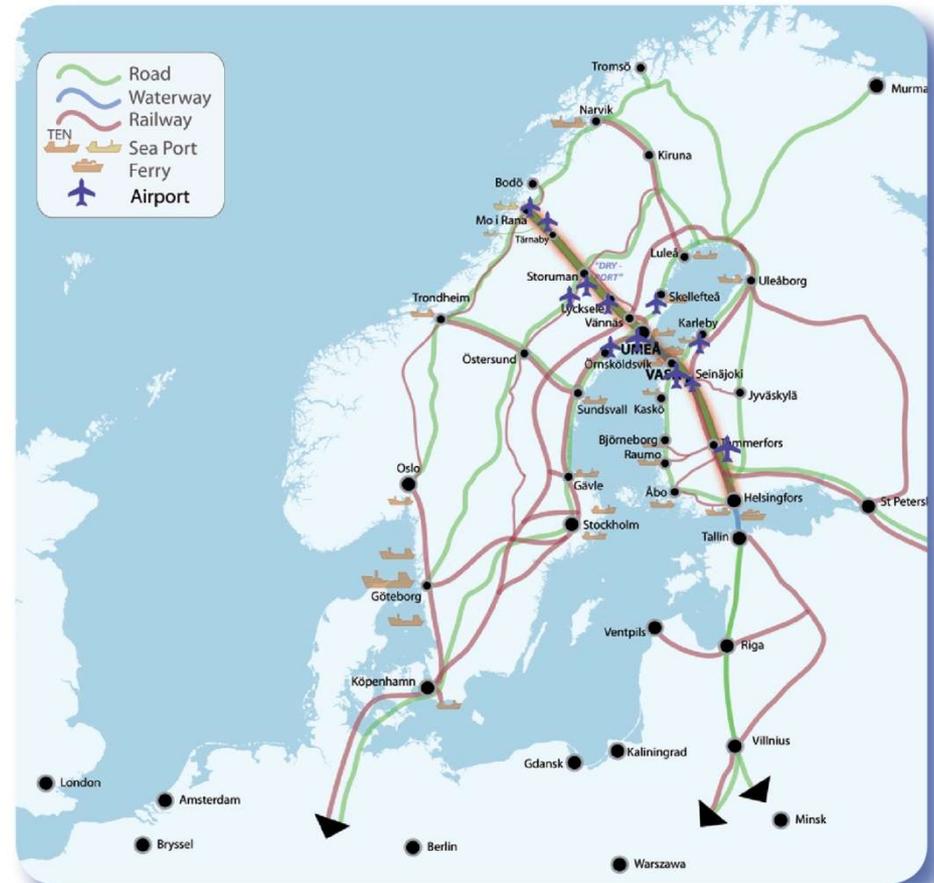
Air traffic

- 10 airports
- AirBaltic/FinnComm
- Jonair

Roads:

- E12, E4, Highway 8

Logistic centers in Umeå and Vaasa



UNESCO World Heritage

High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago

"High meets low"



Foto: Casse Klaucke/Heli-Foto

- The High Coast on the World Heritage list in 2000, Kvarken Archipelago in 2006
- One of only 19 transboundary world heritages in the world
- The world's most rapid land rise, 8,5 mm/year

Business sector



Interreg Botnia-Atlantica 2007-2013

European Regional Development Fund

- Cross-border cooperation between Finland, Sweden and Norway
- One of several European territorial Cooperation programmes

The programme finance projects within six themes:

- environment
- communications
- cohesion
- competence
- business
- society



The Kvarken Council

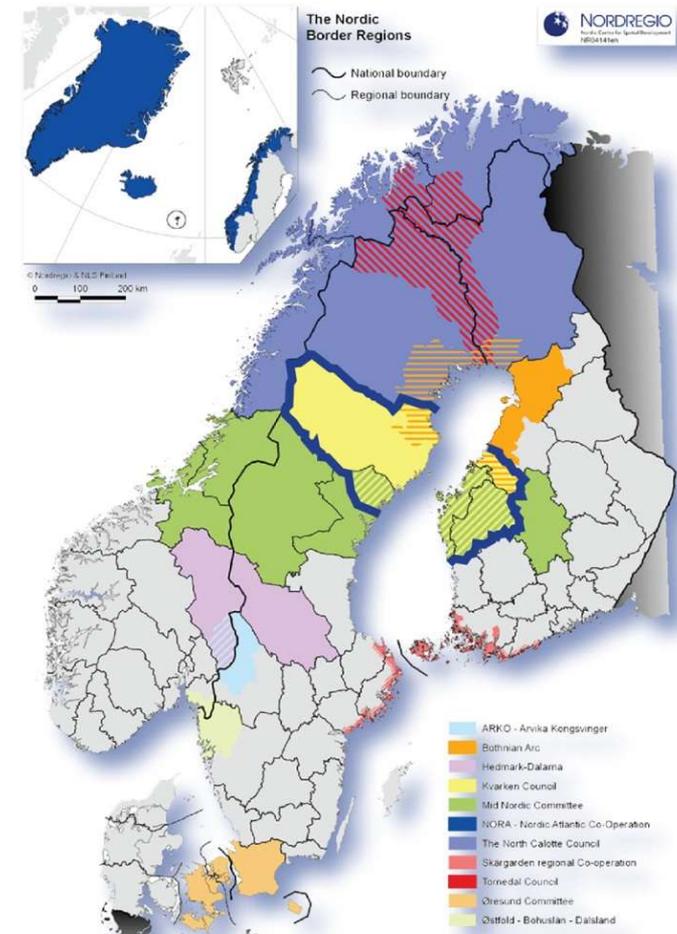
www.kvarken.org

The **Kvarken Council** is one of the Nordic Council of Minister's official border regional organisations.

Main members:

Örnsköldsvik municipality, Region of Västerbotten
Vaasa, Seinäjoki, Kokkola, Pietarsaari, Regional
Councils of Ostrbothnia, Southern Ostrobothnia
and Central Ostrobothnia

Founded in 1972



The Kvarken Council

- The Kvarken Council is registered in Finland, Finnish law is applied.
- Staff in both Finland and Sweden
- 6 board members from each country
- Majority rule, in case of a tie the Chairman's vote decides.
- 4-6 board meetings/year, active cooperation with the board members.
- The board consists of higher civil servants from the member regions, which ensures good regional cooperation.

The Chairmanship is circulating between Vaasa and Umeå, 2 years each.



Financing of the Kvarken Council

The Kvarken Council is financed partly by the **Nordic Council of Ministers**, and partly by **member fees**.

- **The member fees** are used for the basic functions and administration of the Kvarken Council
- **The Nordic Council of Ministers** financing is used for managing cross border cooperation projects.



Österbottens förbund
Pohjanmaan liitto



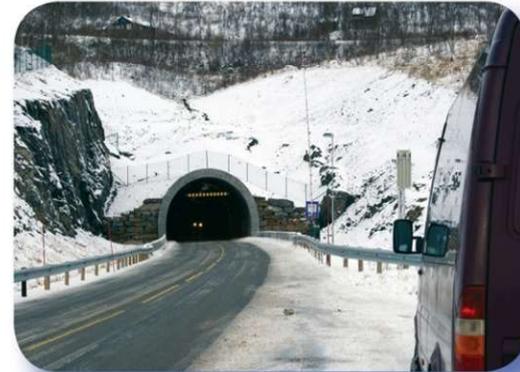
Etelä-Pohjanmaan liitto



The aims of the Kvarken Council

- to work for regional integration
- to promote cooperation in the Kvarken region within both public and private sector organisations and companies
- to eliminate border barriers
- to develop regional assets and promote regional development within the following areas:

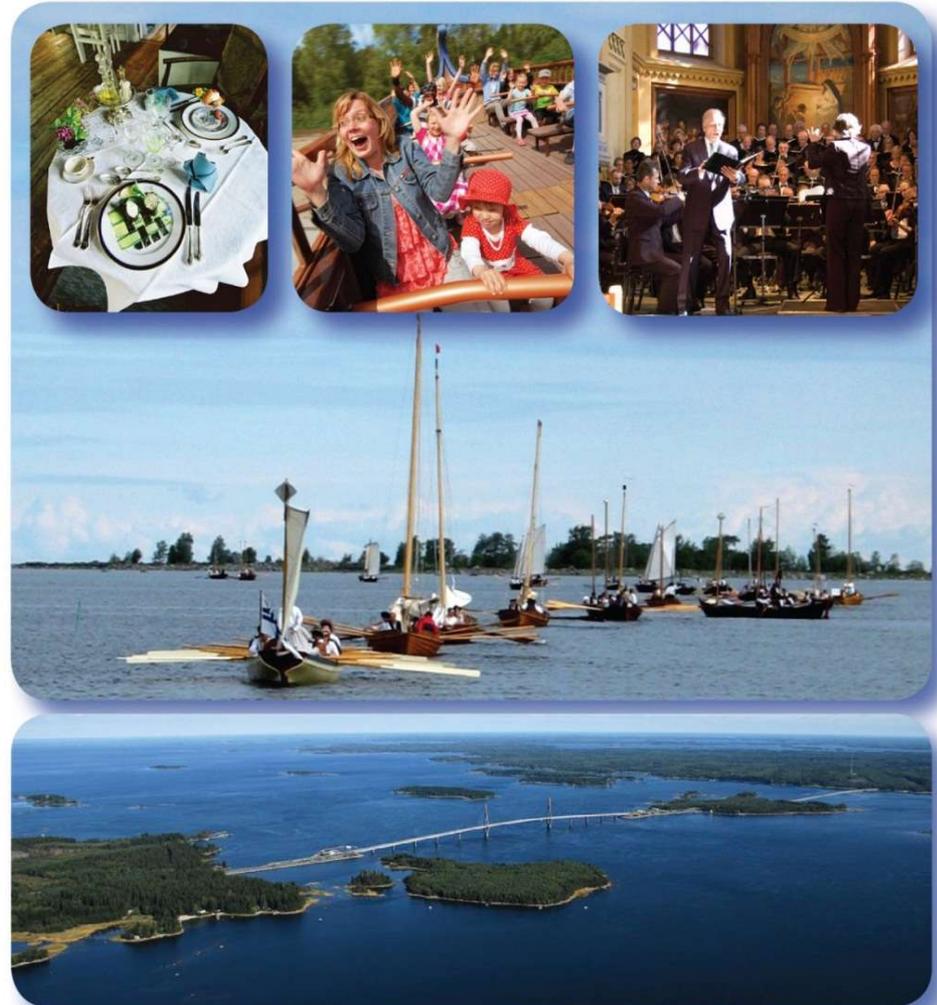
- communications and transport
- business
- research, development and education
- culture
- sustainable energy solutions
- environment and recycling
- tourism
- children and youths
- healthcare etc.



The aims of the Kvarken Council

The Kvarken Council is working for:

- Securing and developing the ferry traffic over the Kvarken Strait
- Developing the regional infrastructure
- Strengthening the region's businesses and higher education
- Eliminating border obstacles
- Developing tourism and culture
- Strengthening the popular cooperation on a grass-root level
- Preserving and developing the UNESCO World Heritage Area High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago



The aims of the Kvarken Council

How the Kvarken Council works?

- Networking
- Lobbying activities
- Meeting forums
- Conferences
- Cooperation groups for infrastructure, culture etc.
- Regional authority cooperation
- Border regional projects
- Project incubator: Helping organisations to initiate border regional cooperation
- Information
- etc.

The Kvarken Council is investigating the possibilities of becoming an EGTC area, which would be the first in Northern Europe



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The aims of the Kvarken Council

The Kvarken Conference

Every second year the Kvarken Council arrange an extensive conference concerning current themes.

Initiating cooperations, conveying contacts

Project incubator, networking

Studies and reports.

Primarily infrastructure studies

Interpretation services

The Kvarken Council provide interpretation services and translation equipment for conferences

Travel grants

The Kvarken Council grants travel subsidies to schools, voluntary organisations, sports clubs etc. for trips within the Kvarken Region



Project activities

The Kvarken Council's projects:

Kvarken Short Cut System

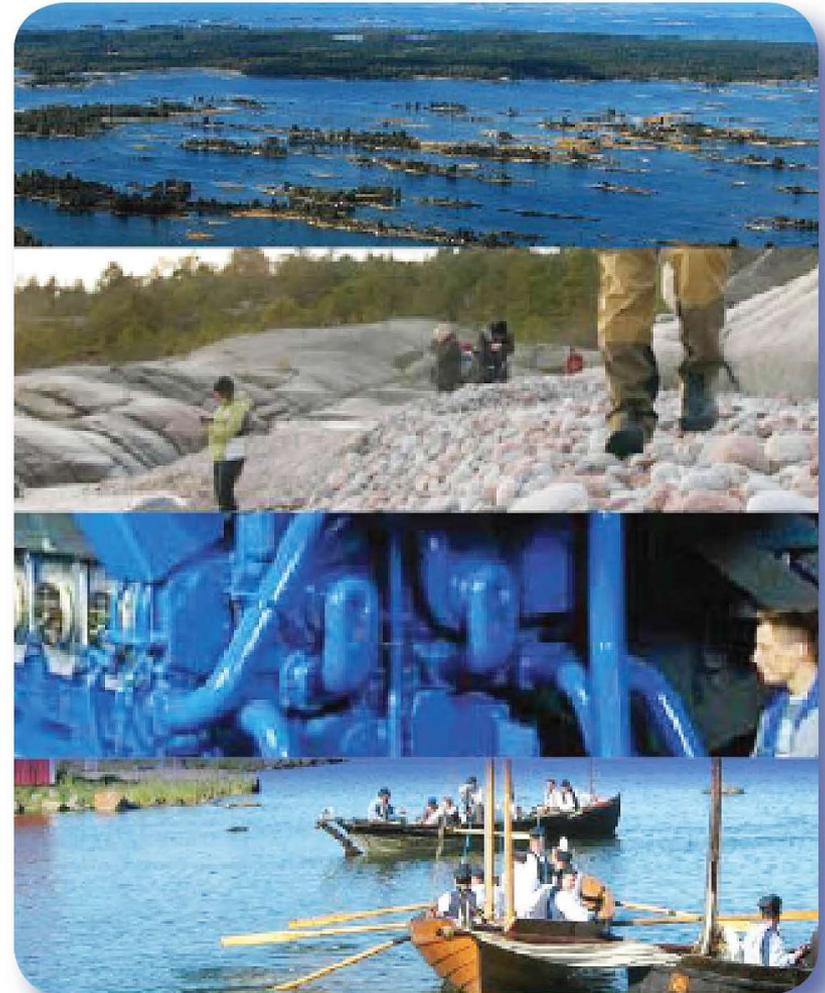
NLC – Nordic Logistics Corridor

- NLC Cooperation
- NLC Investments

SELLING - Regional growth by culture

World Heritages in Cooperation – World Heritage Ambassadors

- The Kvarken Council also participate in And finance several other cross border projects
- The Kvarken Council also functions as a Project incubator, helping businesses and organisations to start regional Cooperation projects

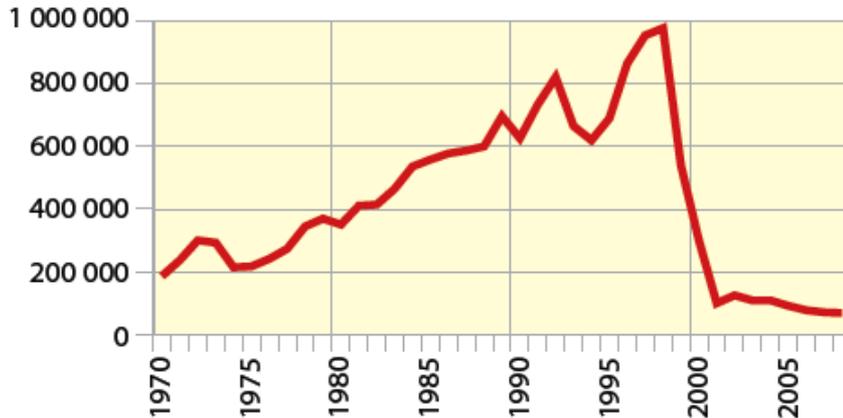


The Kvarken ferry traffic

Passenger traffic

Before the ending of the tax-free system between Finland and Sweden in 1998 the Kvarken ferry traffic transported over a million passengers yearly

- In 2010 less than 60 000 passengers



Number of passengers/year



The Kvarken ferry traffic

Freight

The freight traffic has been growing steadily

- 53% growth between 1998-2008
- Potential for further growth



Number of lorries/year



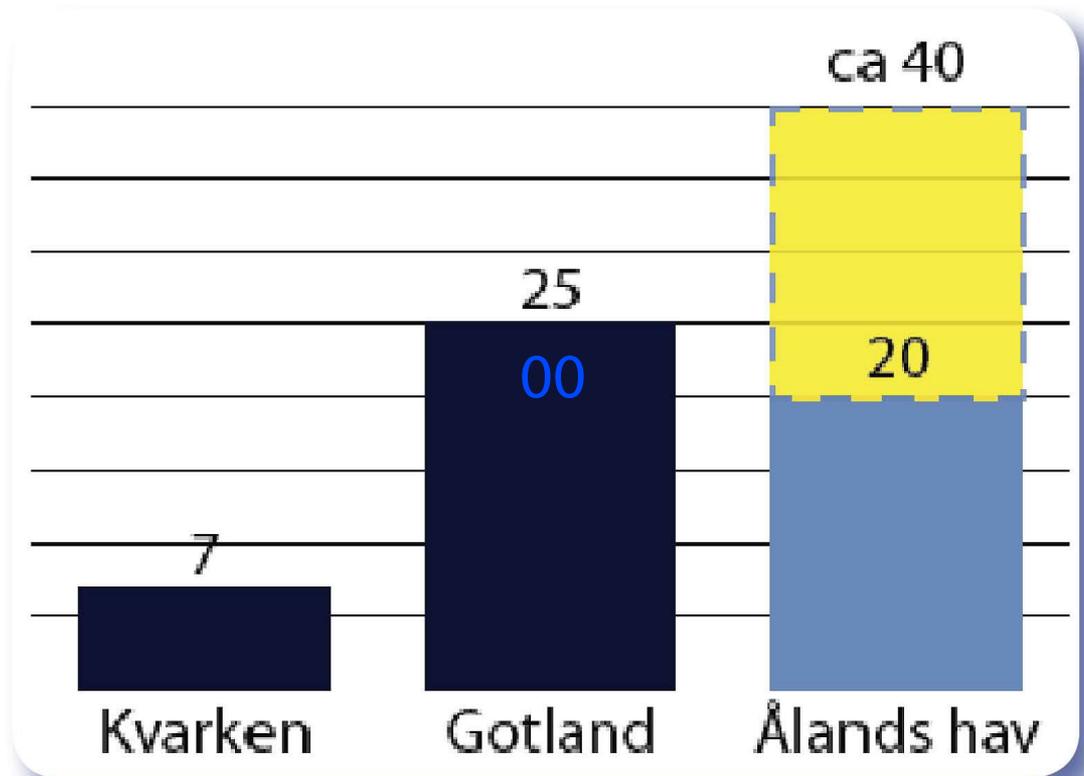
The Kvarken ferry traffic

Community support

The community support for the Kvarken traffic is about 7 € / passenger

The community support for the Gotland traffic is about 25 € / passenger

The community support for the traffic via Åland Islands is about 40 € / passenger (including tax losses)



The Kvarken ferry traffic

Problem

Ice breaker capacity

The traffic, although part of the E12, is upheld by a private company

The shipping company in a difficult financial situation

Community support: Unbalance in level of financing between Finland and Sweden



The Kvarken ferry traffic

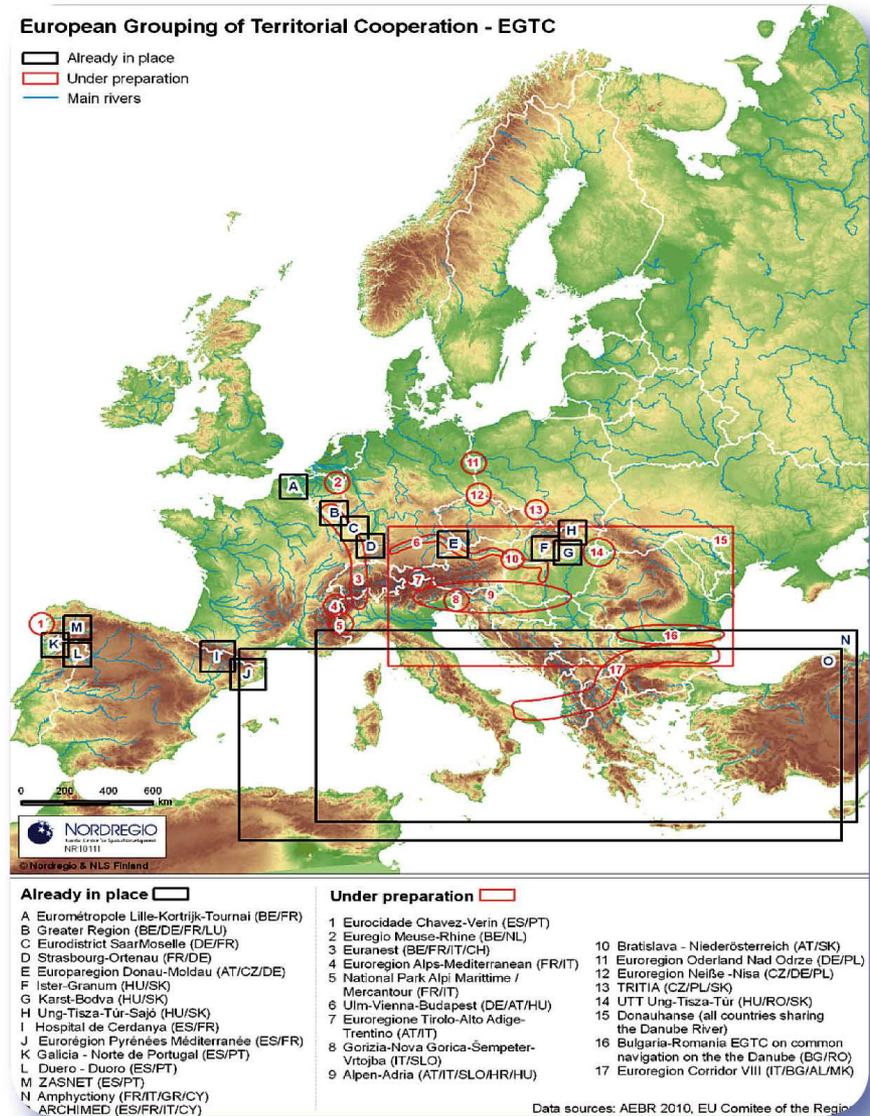
Possible solutions

The Kvarken traffic is a priority for the Finnish government during this electoral period

The Finnish government has nominated a working group for the Kvarken ferry traffic

T-ENT status

EGTC-area: European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation



The Kvarken Council and the Kvarken ferry traffic

- Maintaining and strengthening the Kvarken ferry is a high priority for the Kvarken Council.
- Kvarken Short Cut System
- NLC
- NOSTRA

- The community support for the Kvarken ferry traffic

- Several studies concerning the future preconditions for the Kvarken ferry traffic

- The Kvarken Council is working long term for a fixed connection over the Kvarken

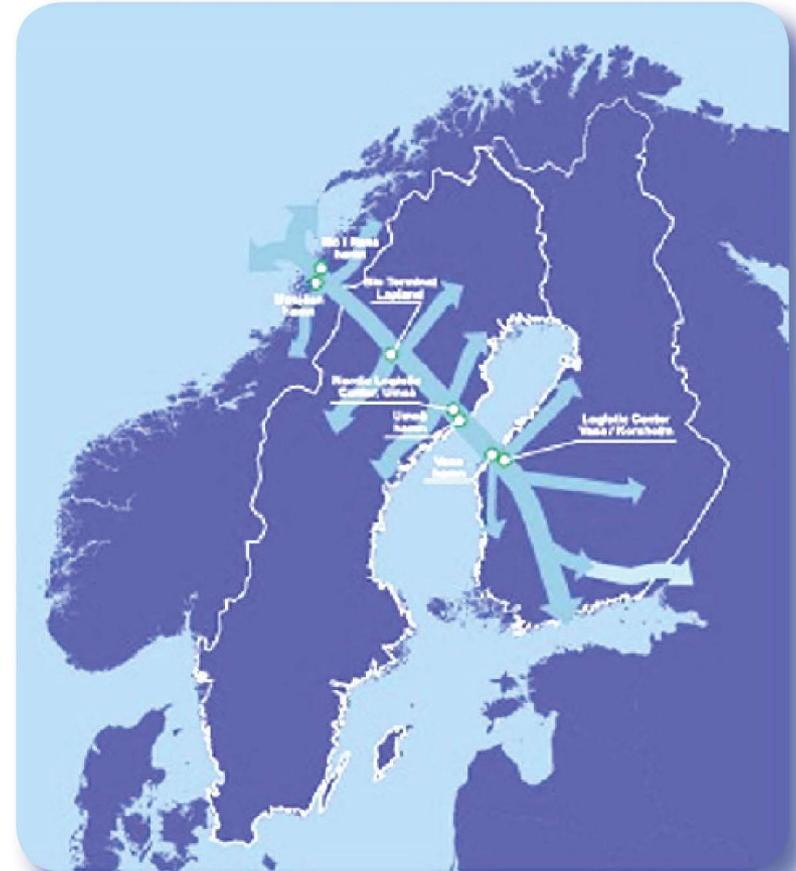


NLC Corridor

NLC Cooperation

NLC Investment

- Common project management
- Common steering group
- Common objectives:
 - > To develop and improve the region's most important communication strait from West to East - NLC-Corridor.
 - > A barrier-free transport corridor from the Atlantic coast to the St Petersburg area
- EU structural funding: Botnia-Atlantica programme.
- National co-financing from Norway, Sweden and Finland.
- **Budget: 4 099 150 €**

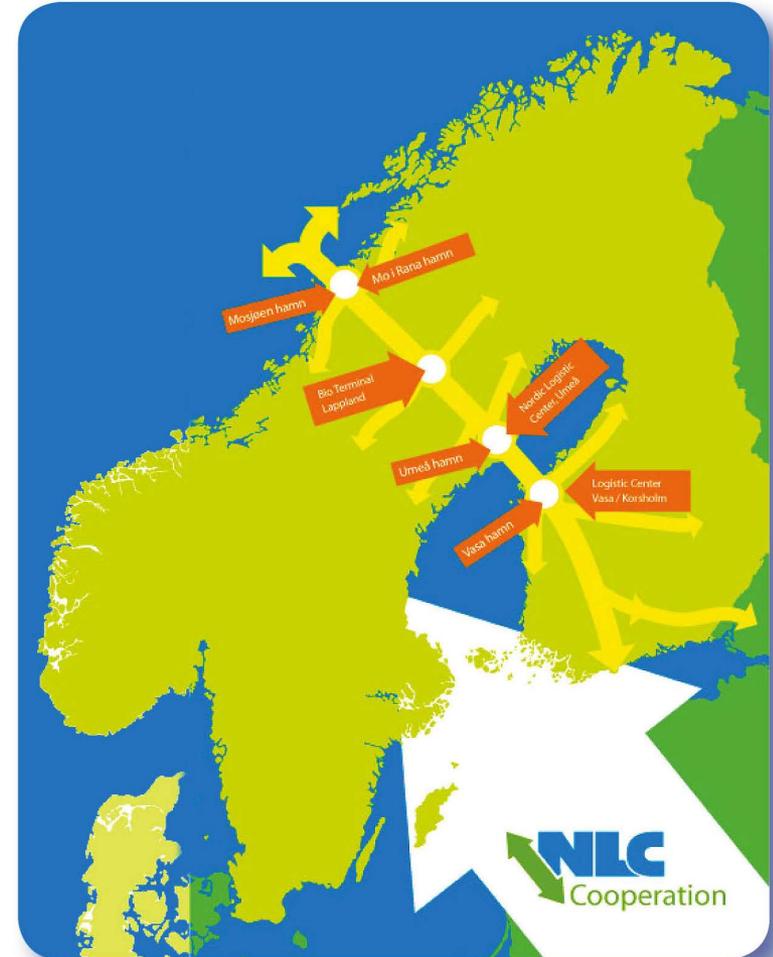


NLC Corridor

- NLC Corridor from the Atlantic Coast to Russia
- Green Corridors – energy efficient transport solutions.
- Intermodal transport route in east-west direction.
- TEN-T status.

Goals

- Development of multimodal transports
- Functioning infrastructure for logistic solutions
- Optimal use of existing transport modes
- Moving transports from road to rail and sea
- Eliminating border barriers
- Branding of NLC Corridor as a smooth, economical and environmentally friendly transport option



NLC Corridor

NLC Cooperation

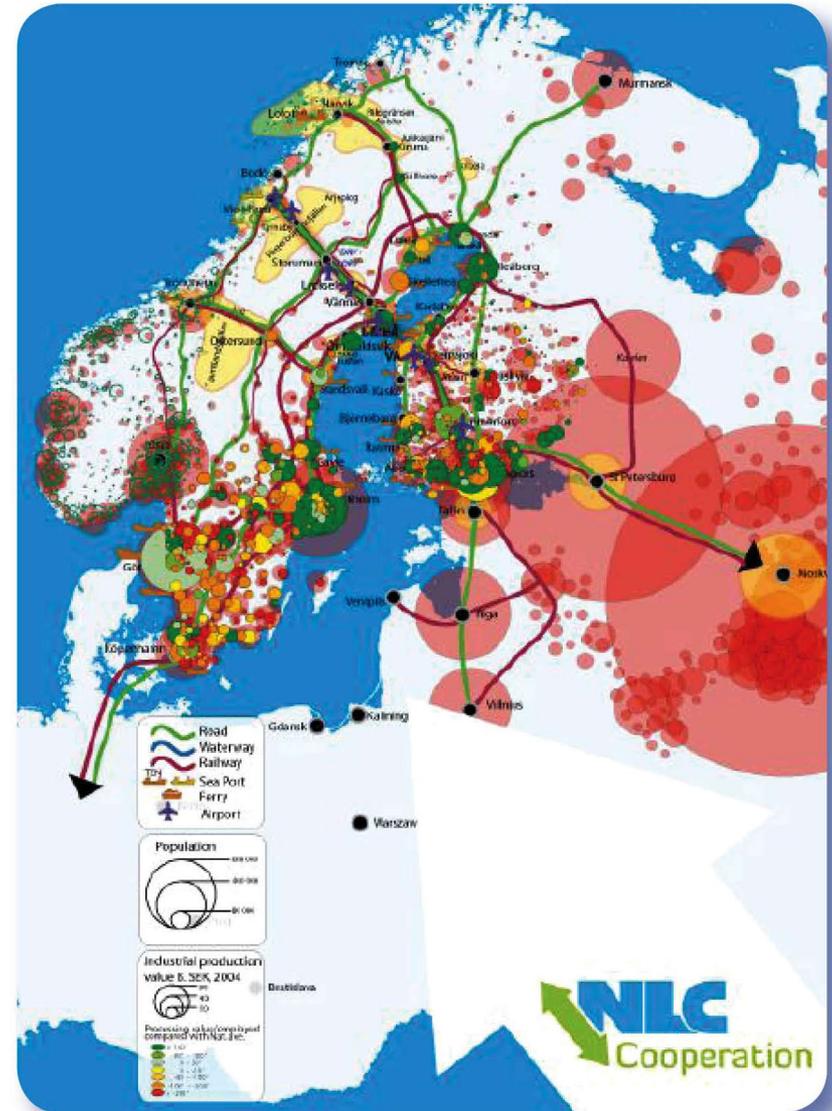
Structures for cooperation:

- Common booking system
- Flexible solution for goods handling
- Common branding and marketing etc.

NLC Investments

Extensive investments in the ports of Vaasa and Umeå.

Improvements of harbour infrastructure and service in order to meet future demands.



NOSTRA cooperation project

NOSTRA – Network of Straits

- Interreg IVC project
- 2012-2014
- Memorandum of Understanding signed by 15 local authorities and organisations bordering 8 European straits:
 - the Strait of Dover
 - the Strait of Messina
 - the Kvarken Strait
 - the Strait of Sicily
 - the Gulf of Finland
 - the Strait of Otranto
 - the Fehmarn Belt
 - the Strait of Bonifacio

Main objectives for the partnership:

- gaining recognition of the special situation and challenges of the European straits' at national and European levels
- enhancing cooperation projects between the partners



The Kvarken Council's vision

The Kvarken Council is working long term for a fixed connection over the Kvarken strait

Via Nordica/E12 – from the Atlantic Coast in the West through Sweden and Finland to the St Petersburg area.

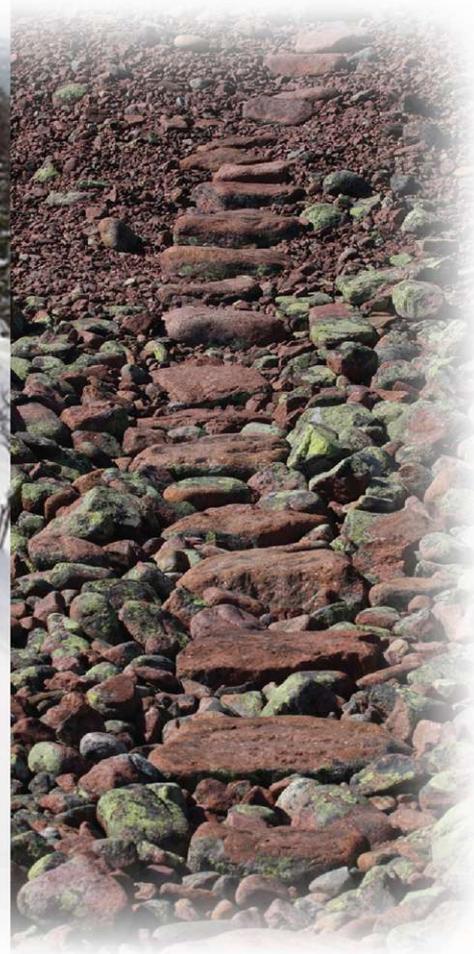
Huge effects on regional development and on the trade exchange between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

Bridge and tunnel combination
ca 60 kilometres

Similar projects Eurotunnel,
Fehmarn tunnel, Gibraltar bridge



www.kvarken.org



The Kvarken Council in Sweden
V Norrlandsgatan 13
Box 443, SE-901 09 Umeå
Tfn +46 (0)90 165731



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The Kvarken Council in Finland
Sandögatan 6
FIN-65100 Vasa
Tfn +358 (0)6 319 5500