

Diploma thesis deals with local polity, politics and policies in the Nordic countries. The main aim of this thesis is to study local polity, politics and policies in the Nordic countries and then identify what are the most important common features of these countries and the most significant differences between them. The first chapter deals with known theoretical approaches to distinctions between local government systems. This chapter presents some typologies of local government systems. Another four chapters are dedicated to local politics in the Nordic countries. The second chapter is focused on Sweden. The third chapter deals with Denmark. The fourth chapter is focused on Norway, while the fifth chapter on Iceland. The each of these four chapters is split into several subchapters, which are focused especially on competencies, tasks and duties of municipalities, structure and functioning of municipal institutions, forms of intermunicipal cooperation, number and size of municipalities, structure of municipal earnings and expenditures and other financing matters, electoral and party systems at local level, neighborhood councils, user democracy and free commune experiments. The last chapter summarizes and compares findings. Conclusion presents the most evident common features of local polity, politics and policies in respective Nordic countries and draws attention to some differences.