

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis portrays Scandinavia, from the perspective of interpreting, as a fairly homogeneous unit. The countries that make up this part of Europe share the same historical, cultural, and political background, which is reflected in the region's development of, and current approach to, interpreting. Although originally very uniform in their demography, since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Nordic countries have become a final destination for immigrants from all over the world. This new reality focused attention on community interpreting. It is stipulated by the countries' laws that community interpreters must be used in certain situations.

Chapter 2 looks at the development of interpreting in the largest of the Nordic countries, Sweden. Early interpreter training, organized from the late 1960s by community colleges, specialised in community interpreting. Today, this type of interpreting is taught in community colleges all over the country. The central interpreting research institution in Sweden, the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies at Stockholm University, is the only institution that provides courses in conference interpreting. Sweden lacks a single register of interpreters and there is no regulation of interpreting agencies.

Chapter 3 describes the development of interpreting in Norway. Since the mid-1980s, interpreter training has taken place at major and regional universities. Over the course of more than two decades, this training has undergone significant changes: several universities have endeavoured to become the primary interpreting centre; the training of conference interpreters has stalled; but at the same time much has been achieved in interpreter training on-line. Both the National Register of Interpreters and a well-established set of interpreting exams can be counted among the achievements of Norwegian interpreting. Interpreting contracts in the public sector are awarded either to freelance interpreters, or county and private agencies. There is only limited state control over their services.

Chapter 4 deals with the development of interpreting in Denmark. Since its beginning, interpreter training has been centred in Copenhagen and Århus Business Schools. They focus mainly on conference interpreting, while community interpreter training has been allocated to community colleges. The number of students and languages taught on these courses cannot meet the urgent demand for trained community interpreters. There is no single credential-based register of interpreters in Denmark. Instead, the office of the National Commissioner of the Danish Police holds an official register of interpreters approved for police and court interpreting, which is effectively open to anyone willing to be registered.