

## **Comparison of development of selected demographic characteristics in the Nordic countries since 1990**

### **Abstract**

The objective of this study is to compare the development of selected demographic characteristics in the Nordic countries since 1990. In this paper the Nordic countries are defined as a five state formations in Northern Europe: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The analysis shows that the demographic development of Nordic countries is not the same and each state has its own specifics. As expected, the most distinct development had Iceland, which thanks to higher fertility rate had younger age structure. Different development had also Finland, which was aging the most and had a lower life expectancy at birth for men. Surprisingly low mortality rates were observed in Denmark, in particular for women. The curve of total fertility rate in Sweden, which was quite different from the rest of the Nordic countries, was following its rollercoaster pattern also in the period 1990–2011. The uniqueness in demographic behaviour of the Nordic countries was confirmed by the results of cluster analysis. In 1990 and 2011, these five states were in one cluster mainly due to the high percentage of live births outside marriage and in 2011 also due to higher total fertility rate. Because these states were driving the demographic trends in Europe, I believe that the study of these countries and their differences will be useful to understand the overall population development in Europe.

**Keywords:** Nordic countries, age structure, fertility, mortality, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, Norway