

# Increasing Interest in Nordic Cooperation

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2012.06.28 9:47

Over 700 applications were submitted to Nordplus this spring, an increase of 17 per cent compared to 2011.

Four out of five Nordplus sub-programmes have received more applications this year than last. The Baltic countries are more active participants than ever. These are some of the findings from this year's pile of applications.

Vidar Pedersen, Head of Department of Higher Education at Norwegian Centre for Internationalisation of Education (SIU), attributes the increase to the work of the Nordic and Baltic Nordplus Offices.

“For several years, they have been working to spread information about the possibilities within Nordplus. We are pleased to see that these efforts are now bearing fruit,” Pedersen says.

Nordplus is the Nordic Council of Ministers' (NCM) largest education cooperation programme within lifelong learning. SIU holds the function of Main Coordinator for the Nordplus administration.

About 55 per cent of this year's applications have been approved, which is slightly lower than previous years. The total frame of allocations remains at nine million Euros.

## Horizontal doubling

Nordplus Horizontal is experiencing the biggest increase, with the number of applications more than doubled from 2011, from 34 to 71. The sub-programme supports innovative projects that transcend traditional categories and sectors within the field of education.

“Horizontal is the youngest sub-programme, established in 2008. It has gradually become better known, as the Nordplus offices have promoted it more actively,” Vidar Pedersen says.

## Increased Baltic participation

The four biggest Nordic countries – Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark – have the highest number of institutions involved in Nordplus-applications, and the participation of these countries is relatively stable. Participation of the three Baltic countries has seen an even increase since they joined Nordplus in 2008.

“New to the Nordic-administered programme, there was a fair uncertainty in the beginning. The Baltic countries have gradually acquired more knowledge about Nordplus and are now a lot more involved,” Pedersen says.

“The EU education programmes are important to the Baltic countries as well, but for employment opportunities they often look to the Nordic region. This dynamic, of course, is linked to the

financial crises in Europe,? he adds.

### **New call for Nordplus Nordic Languages applications**

Nordplus Nordic Languages (formerly Nordplus Languages and Culture) is the only sub-programme experiencing a decline in the number of applications this year. According to Pedersen, this can be explained through changes implemented with the new programme period starting this year. The mobility-part of the programme has been transferred to Nordplus Junior. The sub-programme now follows the same structure as the others, where an application needs to be made on behalf of three cooperation institutions from three different countries. Consequently, the total number of institutions involved in applications for Nordplus Nordic Languages is the same this year as last year, but they are distributed in fewer and bigger applications.

?Many applicants, however, have not been aware of this change and applied on their own. The administration has not been able to approve these applications,? Pedersen says.

As a result, the Nordplus Programme Committee has decided to launch a supplementary call for Nordic Languages applications during fall 2012.

?The Programme Committee wanted to go an extra round in this transitional period, as the changes in the programme were not sufficiently clear for the sector,? Pedersen concludes.

The call for applications will be made in September, with an expected deadline in October.

More information will follow on [nordplusonline.org](http://nordplusonline.org).

### **Below you find overviews of the granted projects:**

- [Nordplus Junior \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Nordplus Higher Education \(.pdf\)\(.xls\)](#)
- [Nordplus Adult \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Nordplus Horizontal \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Nordplus Nordic Languages \(.pdf\)](#)



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