

The Nordic countries in Asia

by Stein Tønnesson, University of Oslo

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are competitors on the Asian markets. Finnish and Swedish transnational companies, with Nokia and Ericsson in the lead, compete fiercely on the volatile markets for electronic appliances. Advanced industrial products also form a significant part of Danish and Norwegian exports, although for these countries, as well as for Iceland, agricultural products and fish remain essential products. Through political contacts and development aid the Nordic countries also compete in promoting their political values: Peace, social and gender equity, welfare, participatory democracy, human rights and free trade. There is much informal contact between the various Nordic nationals abroad, and in some Asian countries their embassies are located in the same building.

In the 1980s, the « Scandinavian model » lost some of its attraction worldwide, but with the Asian crisis of 1997-98 there was a renewed interest in the Nordic welfare states, as an alternative to excessive market liberalism and the authoritarian traits of so-called « Asian values ». However, the renewed interest did not get much attention from Nordic politicians whose main preoccupation was European integration. Cooperation between the Nordic countries in Asian and global affairs was hampered by the fact that three of the countries were members of the European Union and thus took part in developing the EU's bilateral ties with Asian countries, the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM) and the EU's representation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), while Iceland and Norway (and also Greenland) remained outside.

In 1994, Norway initiated and publicised an 'Asia plan' with the principal aim of promoting Norwegian business interests in the world's main growth region, but the plan brought only modest results. Finland made a similar plan, but this was an internal foreign ministry document. Sweden, the largest Nordic country, launched a more ambitious 'Asia strategy' in 1998-99 which not only aimed at promoting trade and direct investments, but also at enhancing 'soft links' in fields such as academia, culture and 'people-to-people co-operation'. The strategy which was discussed and endorsed by the National Assembly (Riksdagen) in June 1999, defined a number of goals related to the promotion of democracy, children's rights, open civil societies, peace and security, environmental sustainability, free trade, increased knowledge, and intensification of bilateral relations with Asian countries on all levels. The plan was grounded in a series of studies of Asian developments and the status of Sweden's ties with Asia. As a response to the Swedish plan, Norway decided to concentrate its own planning efforts on the most significant countries (China, India, Indonesia, Japan) and to work with a few select issues of concern to the East Asian region. In 2000, the Finnish Foreign Ministry also started to revise its Asia plan. Finland has to a greater extent than the other Nordic countries seen its relations with Asia in a European perspective, and is a major contributor to the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). Denmark hopes to host the next ASEM summit in 2002. Denmark is not, however, in the habit of formulating general strategies of the Swedish kind. In Denmark commercial planning is left to the industry itself, while the government takes care of matters related to development aid, diplomacy and security.

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The Nordic countries have long standing ties with Asia, developed by explorers, protestant missionaries, scholars and East India companies. Swedes and Finns would travel to Central and East Asia through Russia. Denmark had trading colonies on the east coast of India from 1620 to 1845. Later Siam became important in Danish trade, and the Danish royal family has since maintained close links with the Thai royal family. Finland has maintained a special affinity for Japan. In 1950, the Nordic countries were the first outside the socialist camp to recognize the People's Republic of China, and this was later rewarded by China who sent high-ranking diplomats to the Nordic capitals. Denmark celebrated the 50 years of diplomatic ties in 2000 with a visit by its foreign minister to China. In the 1960s Sweden spearheaded ~~the~~ a substantial Nordic opposition to the US war in Vietnam, and Nordic youth and labour movements built strong solidarity organizations for the Vietnamese liberation struggle. There was also widespread sympathy for Mao's revolutionary course in China. These sentiments have been part of the cultural baggage of many Nordic academics and development agency officials. In the 1980s-90s, sympathy for Asian socialism gave way to awe for the 'economic miracle'. At first the rapidly rising imports from Japan and the NIEs (Newly Industrialized Economies) caused worries for Scandinavian competitiveness on the world market. Then instead East Asia became the leading growth market for Nordic exports. By the mid-1990s ~~the Nordic countries~~ Finland and Sweden had developed a trade surplus with Asia. The decline in exports during the Asian crisis 1997-98 was only temporary. In 1999 it grew once again, and Japan has now lost its former role as the only really significant Asian market for Nordic exports.

In 1998, the Nordic countries imported for 18 billion ECU from Asia and exported for well over 20 billion ECU. The imports from Asia represented 13% of the Nordic countries' total imports from non-Nordic countries, the exports 12%. (Most of Nordic trade is with other European countries.) 4% of Nordic imports came from Japan, 2% from China and 4% from the six NIEs (Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand). On the export side the six NIEs also represented 4% and China 2% while Japan retained a trade surplus, and thus absorbed less than 3% of Nordic exports. Although there has been much political contact with India, who is also a major beneficiary of Nordic aid, India remains an insignificant trading partner with less than 0,4% of Nordic exports and imports. The 1990s brought a tremendous increase in Nordic tourism to Asia, with Bangkok as the main destination.

The prominent role of China as a Nordic export market is mainly explained by the success of a few large Finnish and Swedish corporations (Nokia, Ericsson, Volvo, ABB, Tetra Pak, Alfa Laval). In 1998 Finland exported more to China than to Japan, and Sweden exported as much to China as to Japan. For the oil, fish, beer, medicine and food-producing nations (Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Denmark) Japan remains the most important Asian market.

Figures for investments are difficult to come by, but Nokia and Ericsson have invested heavily in plants and offices in Asia. So have paper and forestry companies from Finland and Norway (UPM Kymmene and Norske Skog) and companies such as the Danish Carlsberg, NOVO and Danfoss, the Swedish ABB and the Norwegian Kvaerner and Norsk Hydro. Norway is also a major shipping nation in Asia, but earnings from shipping are not included in statistics of foreign trade since the ships belong to an international register.

The Nordic countries do not have cultural institutes with a system of permanent offices in Asia, such as the British Council, Goethe Institut or Centre Culturel Français. A preparatory study for the 1999 Swedish Asia Strategy complained that the Swedish Institute (Svenska Institutet) spent less than 4% of its budget on promotion of Swedish culture in Asia. The promotion of cultural contact is

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one of the responsibilities of the embassies. The Nordic Council of Ministers has no permanent programme for promoting Nordic or Scandinavian culture in Asia. Ad hoc campaigns have mainly focused on Japan. A Finnish ~~institute~~-Institute in Japan was founded in 1998. The Swedish Asia Strategy aims at developing close links between Asian and Swedish popular movements (folk rörelser), notably such as trade unions. Such cooperation is also stimulated by the other Nordic governments. NGOs who engage themselves in Asia receive funding under the official foreign aid budgets.

A significant part of the Nordic profile in Asia is connected with development aid. At least this is what Nordic politicians believe. Although Africa receives more than twice as much Nordic aid as Asia, some Asian countries are given a high priority. The Nordic donor countries tend to target the same recipients for bilateral programme aid. Thus Vietnam, Bangladesh and Nepal are given special priority by no less than three Nordic countries, and Sri Lanka by two. India and Pakistan used to be major recipients of Nordic aid, but aid to these countries was scaled down in relative terms during the 1990s, partly because it was difficult to influence their utilisation of the aid, partly because they spent so much on the military. Aid to India and Pakistan was further downgraded (at least temporarily) when they tested nuclear arms in 1998. China and Indonesia have mainly received aid in the form of mixed credits, but with the fall of Suharto, Indonesia also became a target for aid projects. Denmark has pioneered aid to Aceh, and is considering to make Indonesia a Danish programme country. An increasing proportion of Nordic aid is being channelled through non-governmental organizations, but the Nordic countries have been more reluctant than the big powers to tie their aid to their own commercial interests : Recipient countries should in principle be free to place their orders where they want no matter where the funding comes from. This policy, which is promoted by Nordic governments in multilateral fora, is often criticised by spokesmen for the business community, who cannot understand why their governments should be more altruistic than others. Their misgivings seem to have gained some influence on government policies.

The Nordic countries have held a high profile in promoting peace, democracy and human rights in some countries, and less in others. The Nordic countries have been careful to develop their relations with Taiwan as discretely as possible so as not to disturb their good relations with China. With regard to Tibet, this has been more difficult. The Dalai Lama, who was awarded the Nobel peace price by a committee elected by the Norwegian National Assembly (Stortinget) in 1989, is extremely popular in Scandinavia. His visits have on several occasions disturbed relations between the Nordic countries and China. When China's President Jiang Zemin toured Europe in 1996, there was an outcry in the local media when a Tibetan monk was taken away by the Oslo police in order to prevent him from being seen by the President. Denmark spearheaded a motion to adopt a United Nations resolution condemning human rights violations in China in 1997. Since then the general line has been to keep a low profile, but launch human rights dialogues with representatives of the PRC.

During the 1990s, the main target for Nordic criticism was the military junta in Burma (Myanmar). The Burmese exile government was authorized to make broadcasts to their home country from Norway, and the Nordic countries did their best to isolate Myanmar internationally. It may perhaps seem a paradox that the undemocratic Vietnam is the top recipient of Nordic aid, while the undemocratic Myanmar, which has close and friendly ties with Vietnam, is being treated as an outcast. The main reason is that Burma has a legitimate leader who is being repressed (Aung San Suu Kyi, who was awarded the Nobel peace price in 1991). Another reason is that the Burmese

junta exerts its monopoly of power through naked violence whereas the Vietnamese Communist Party retains a substantial degree of legitimacy and social control. The brutality of the Burmese regime became a matter of much attention in 1996 when the Danish and Norwegian consul in Yangôn died in prison. A third reason is the legacy from the solidarity movements for the Vietnamese people during the American War. There is no similar legacy of support for Burmese « socialism ».

The Nordic countries were also active in criticizing Indonesia's policies in East Timor, particularly after Bishop Ximenes Belo and José Ramos Horta were awarded the Nobel peace price for 1996. Norway's special role as peace-broker in the Middle East and Latin America has not so far yielded major results in Asia, although Norway did play-assume a major role as a go-between for the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers in 2000.

In the media sector there is relatively little co-operation between the Nordic countries. Although Danish, Norwegian and Swedish are mutually intelligible languages, the readers, listeners and viewers are reluctant to read or listen to another tongue than their own (except English). Nordic broadcasting companies do not have shared offices in Asia, yet they are too small to maintain a qualified network of correspondents. The few journalists who are sent to Asia have to cover a vast geographical area, and the Nordic media depend heavily on the Internet and the international news agencies.

Departments for the study of Asian societies, history and languages can be found in nine-ten Nordic universities, and the Nordic Council of Ministers funds a Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen. This is the region's main centre for the study of contemporary Asia, with conferences, workshops and a useful library. It also co-ordinates a number of Nordic associations for the study of the main Asian countries and regions. There are relatively few paying Asian students in higher Nordic institutions of learning. The universities are only starting to become competitive in offering English-language courses.

Although immigration from South and East Asia into the Nordic region as a whole has been less significant than from the Balkans and the Middle East, it has been large enough since the 1970s to expose the local societies to Asian cultural influences both in terms of new habits and religious and social conflict. All the Nordic countries have made elaborate efforts to settle immigrants and refugees in all parts of the country, so as to avoid their concentration in ghettoes-of the major towns. Immigrants often move into the towns after having spent some years in the periphery. The Nordic governments and labour movements have rejected the idea of letting immigrants work for less pay than the minimum salary, or reduce the minimum salary. Theat established in wage agreements between trade unions and employers' federations. I-result is that immigrants therefore have great difficulties in finding work and have a higher rate of unemployment-than-others. This has led to acrimonious debates and political struggles. The main countries of origin for Asian immigrants and refugees are Vietnam and Pakistan-and-Vietnam. The largest groups of Pakistani and-Vietnamese and Pakistanese live in Norway, while in Denmark and Sweden there are many more immigrants from the Middle East and Eastern Europe. It is noteworthy that Vietnam, the top recipient of Nordic aid, is also the country of origin for the largest group of Asian immigrants (refugees).

√List of Nordic Embassies and Consulates in Asia (Abbreviations: E=Embassy, CG= Consulate General, RO= Representative Office (aid agency or export council), D= Denmark, F= Finland, I= Iceland, N= Norway, S= Sweden)

Afghanistan : Kabul (S : E)

Bangladesh : Dhaka (D+N+S : E, F : CG)

Bhutan : Thimphu (D : RO)

Burma (Myanmar) : Rangoon (Yangôn) (D+S : CG)

Cambodia : Phnom Penh (S : CG and RO)

China : Beijing (D+F+I+N : E), Guangzhou (D : CG, F : RO), Hong Kong (D+F+N+S : CG), Shanghai (D+F+N+S : CG)

India : New Delhi (D+F+N+S : E), Mumbai (Bombay) (D+S : CG)

Indonesia : Jakarta (D+F+N+S : E)

Japan : Tokyo (D+F+I+N+S : E)

Korea (North) : (S : E)

Korea (South) : Seoul (D+F+N+S : E)

Laos : Vientiane (S : RO)

Malaysia : Kuala Lumpur (D+F+N+S : E)

Nepal : Kathmandu (D+F+N : E) (S : CG)

Pakistan : Islamabad (D+F+N+S : E), Karachi (D+F : CG)

Papua New Guinea (S : E) (S : CG)

Philippines : Manila (D+F+N+S : E)

Singapore : (D+F+N+S : E)

Sri Lanka : Colombo (D+F+N : CG) (S : RO)

Taiwan : Taipei (D+F+N+S : RO)

Thailand : Bangkok (D+F+N+S : E) (D : CG)

Vietnam : Hanoi (D+F+N+S : E), Ho Chi Minh City (D+S : CG)

√List of Asian destinations for ~~direct flights from Nordic airports~~ with Nordic airlines

Finnair :

Helsinki-Bangkok : 4 flights a week

Helsinki-Beijing : 3 flights a week

Helsinki-Singapore : 4 flights a week
Helsinki-~~Yokyo~~Tokyo : 2 flights a week

Scandinavian Airline Systems (SAS) :

Copenhagen-Bangkok : 7 flights a week
Copenhagen-Beijing : 6 flights a week
Copenhagen-Delhi : 5 flights a week
Copenhagen-Tokyo : 7 flights a week

√Top ten markets for Nordic exports to Asia in 1998 (Middle East not included)

Japan : 4,9 billion ECU
China : 3,6 billion ECU
Hong Kong : 2,0 billion ECU
Singapore : 1,4 billion ECU
South Korea : 1,3 billion ECU
Taiwan : 1,2 billion ECU
India : 0,6 billion ECU
Malaysia : 0,6 billion ECU
Indonesia : 0,6 billion ECU
Thailand : 0,5 billion ECU

√Official priority partners in Asia for Nordic development aid

Denmark : Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Vietnam
Finland : Nepal, Vietnam
Norway : Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka
Sweden : Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos

√Top ten recipients of Nordic bilateral aid in Asia, 1998 (Middle East not included)

Vietnam : 91 million USD

Bangladesh : 83 million USD
India : 53 million USD
China : 40 million USD
Nepal : 38 million USD
Afghanistan : 29 million USD
Sri Lanka : 26 million USD
Thailand : 24 million USD
Cambodia : 23 million USD
Laos : 23 million USD

√Main countries of origin for Asian immigrants in Nordic countries (Middle East not included)

Vietnam : 36 000
Pakistan : 34 000
Sri Lanka : 21 000
India : 19 000
Thailand : 18 000
China : 15 000
Philippines : 14 000

The Nordic countries have long standing ties with Asia, developed by explorers, protestant missionaries, scholars and East India companies. Swedes and Finns would travel to Central and East Asia through Russia. Denmark had trading colonies on the east coast of India from 1620 to 1845. Later Siam became important in Danish trade, and the Danish royal family has since maintained close links with the Thai royal family. Finland has maintained a special affinity for Japan. In 1950, the Nordic countries were the first outside the socialist camp to recognize the People's Republic of China, and this was later rewarded by China who sent high-ranking diplomats to the Nordic capitals. Denmark celebrated the 50 years of diplomatic ties in 2000 with a visit by its foreign minister to China. In the 1960s Sweden spearheaded the Nordic opposition to the US war in Vietnam, and Nordic youth and labour movements built strong solidarity organizations for the Vietnamese liberation struggle. There was also widespread sympathy for Mao's revolutionary course in China. These sentiments have been part of the cultural baggage of many Nordic academics and development agency officials. In the 1980s-90s, sympathy for Asian socialism gave way to awe for the 'economic miracle'. At first the rapidly rising imports from Japan and the NIEs (Newly Industrialized Economies) caused worries for Scandinavian competitiveness on the world market. Then instead East Asia became the leading growth market for Nordic exports. By the mid-1990s the Nordic countries had developed a trade surplus with Asia. The decline in exports during the Asian crisis 1997-98 was only temporary. In 1999 it grew once again, and Japan has now lost its former role as the only really significant Asian market for Nordic exports.

In 1998, the Nordic countries imported for 18 billion ECU from Asia and exported for well over 20 billion ECU. The imports from Asia represented 13% of the Nordic countries' total imports from non-Nordic countries, the exports 12%. (Most of Nordic trade is with other European countries.) 4% of Nordic imports came from Japan, 2% from China and 4% from the six NIEs (Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand). On the export side the six NIEs also represented 4% and China 2% while Japan retained a trade surplus, and thus absorbed less than 3% of Nordic exports. India remains insignificant with less than 0,4% of Nordic exports and imports.

The prominent role of China as a Nordic export market is mainly explained by the success of a few large Finnish and Swedish corporations (Nokia, Ericsson, Volvo, ABB, Tetra Pak, Alfa Laval). In 1998 Finland exported more to China than to Japan, and Sweden exported as much to China as to Japan. For the oil, fish, beer, medicine and food-producing nations (Greenland, Iceland, Norway and Denmark) Japan remains the most important Asian market.

Figures for investments are difficult to come by, but Nokia and Ericsson have invested heavily in plants and offices in Asia. So have paper and forestry companies from Finland and Norway (UPM Kymmene and Norske Skog) and companies such as the Danish Carlsberg, NOVO and Danfoss, the Swedish ABB and the Norwegian Kvaerner and Norsk Hydro. Norway is also a major shipping nation in Asia, but earnings from shipping are not included in statistics of foreign trade since the ships belong to an international register.

The Nordic countries do not have cultural institutes with a system of permanent offices in Asia, such as the British Council, Goethe Institut or Centre Culturel Français. A preparatory study for the 1999 Swedish Asia Strategy complained that the Swedish Institute (Svenska Institutet) spent less than 4% of its budget on promotion of Swedish culture in Asia. The promotion of cultural contact is one of the responsibilities of the embassies. The Nordic Council of Ministers has no permanent programme for promoting Nordic or Scandinavian culture in Asia. Ad hoc campaigns have mainly focused on Japan. A Finnish institute in Japan was founded in 1998. The Swedish Asia Strategy aims at developing close links between Asian and Swedish popular movements (folkrörelser),

notably trade unions. Such cooperation is also stimulated by the other Nordic governments. NGOs who engage themselves in Asia receive funding under the official foreign aid budgets.

A significant part of the Nordic profile in Asia is connected with development aid. At least this is what Nordic politicians believe. Although Africa receives more than twice as much Nordic aid as Asia, some Asian countries are given a high priority. The Nordic donor countries tend to target the same recipients for bilateral programme aid. Thus Vietnam, Bangladesh and Nepal are given special priority by no less than three Nordic countries, and Sri Lanka by two. India and Pakistan used to be major recipients of Nordic aid, but aid to these countries was scaled down in relative terms during the 1990s, partly because it was difficult to influence their utilisation of the aid, partly because they spent so much on the military. Aid to India and Pakistan was further downgraded (at least temporarily) when they tested nuclear arms in 1998. China and Indonesia have mainly received aid in the form of mixed credits, but with the fall of Suharto, Indonesia also became a target for aid projects. Denmark has pioneered aid to Aceh, and is considering to make Indonesia a Danish programme country. An increasing proportion of Nordic aid is being channelled through non-governmental organizations, but the Nordic countries have been more reluctant than the big powers to tie their aid to their own commercial interests : Recipient countries should be free to place their orders where they want no matter where the funding comes from. This policy, which is promoted by Nordic governments in multilateral fora, is often criticised by spokesmen for the business community, who cannot understand why their governments should be more altruistic than others. Their misgivings seem to have gained some influence on government policies.

The Nordic countries have held a high profile in promoting peace, democracy and human rights in some countries, and less in others. The Nordic countries have been careful to develop their relations with Taiwan as discretely as possible so as not to disturb their good relations with China. With regard to Tibet, this has been more difficult. The Dalai Lama, who was awarded the Nobel peace price by a committee elected by the Norwegian National Assembly (Stortinget) in 1989, is extremely popular in Scandinavia. His visits have on several occasions disturbed relations between the Nordic countries and China. When China's President Jiang Zemin toured Europe in 1996, there was an outcry in the local media when a Tibetan monk was taken away by the Oslo police in order to prevent him from being seen by the President. Denmark spearheaded a motion to adopt a United Nations resolution condemning human rights violations in China in 1997. Since then the general line has been to keep a low profile, but launch human rights dialogues with representatives of the PRC.

During the 1990s, the main target for Nordic criticism was the military junta in Burma (Myanmar). The Burmese exile government was authorized to make broadcasts to their home country from Norway, and the Nordic countries did their best to isolate Myanmar internationally. It may perhaps seem a paradox that the undemocratic Vietnam is the top recipient of Nordic aid, while the undemocratic Myanmar, which has close and friendly ties with Vietnam, is being treated as an outcast. The main reason is that Burma has a legitimate leader who is being repressed (Aung San Suu Kyi, who was awarded the peace price in 1991). Another reason is that the Burmese junta exerts its monopoly of power through naked violence whereas the Vietnamese Communist Party retains a substantial degree of legitimacy and social control. The brutality of the Burmese regime became a matter of much attention in 1996 when the Danish and Norwegian consul in Yangôn died in prison. A third reason is the legacy from the solidarity movements for the Vietnamese people during the American War. There is no similar legacy of support for Burmese « socialism ».

The Nordic countries were also active in criticizing Indonesia's policies in East Timor, particularly after Bishop Ximenes Belo and José Ramos Horta were awarded the peace price for 1996. Norway's special role as peace-broker in the Middle East and Latin America has not so far yielded major results in Asia, although Norway did play a role as a go-between for the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers in 2000.

In the media sector there is relatively little co-operation between the Nordic countries. Although Danish, Norwegian and Swedish are mutually intelligible languages, the readers, listeners and viewers are reluctant to read or listen to another tongue than their own (except English). Nordic broadcasting companies do not have shared offices in Asia, yet they are too small to maintain a qualified network of correspondents. The few journalists who are sent to Asia have to cover a vast geographical area, and the Nordic media depend heavily on the Internet and the international news agencies.

Departments for the study of Asian societies, history and languages can be found in nine-ten Nordic universities, and the Nordic Council of Ministers funds a Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen. This is the region's main centre for the study of contemporary Asia, with conferences, workshops and a useful library. It also co-ordinates a number of Nordic associations for the study of the main Asian countries and regions. There are relatively few paying Asian students in higher Nordic institutions of learning. The universities are only starting to become competitive in offering English-language courses.

Although immigration from South and East Asia has been less significant than from the Balkans and the Middle East, it has been large enough since the 1970s to expose the local societies to Asian cultural influences both in terms of new habits and religious and social conflict. All the Nordic countries have made elaborate efforts to settle immigrants and refugees in all parts of the country, so as to avoid their concentration in ghettos of the major towns. Immigrants often move into the towns after having spent some years in the periphery. The Nordic governments and labour movements have rejected the idea of letting immigrants work for less pay than the minimum salary, or reduce the minimum salary. The result is that immigrants have great difficulties in finding work and have a higher rate of unemployment than others. This has led to acrimonious debates and political struggles. The main countries of origin for Asian immigrants and refugees are Pakistan and Vietnam. The largest groups of Pakistani and Vietnamese live in Norway, while in Denmark and Sweden there are many more immigrants from the Middle East and Eastern Europe. It is noteworthy that Vietnam, the top recipient of Nordic aid, is also the country of origin for the largest group of Asian immigrants (refugees).

√List of Nordic Embassies and Consulates in Asia (Abbreviations: E=Embassy, CG= Consulate General, RO= Representative Office (aid agency or export council), D= Denmark, F= Finland, I= Iceland, N= Norway, S= Sweden)

Afghanistan : Kabul (S : E)

Bangladesh : Dhaka (D+N+S : E, F : CG)

Bhutan : Thimphu (D : RO)
 Burma (Myanmar) : Rangoon (Yangôn) (D+S : CG)
 Cambodia : Phnom Penh (S : CG and RO)
 China : Beijing (D+F+I+N : E), Guangzhou (D : CG, F : RO), Hong Kong (D+F+N+S : CG),
 Shanghai (D+F+N+S : CG)
 India : New Delhi (D+F+N+S : E), Mumbai (Bombay) (D+S : CG)
 Indonesia : Jakarta (D+F+N+S : E)
 Japan : Tokyo (D+F+I+N+S : E)
 Korea (North) : (S : E)
 Korea (South) : Seoul (D+F+N+S : E)
 Laos : Vientiane (S : RO)
 Malaysia : Kuala Lumpur (D+F+N+S : E)
 Nepal : Kathmandu (D+F+N : E) (S : CG)
 Pakistan : Islamabad (D+F+N+S : E), Karachi (D+F : CG)
 Papua New Guinea (S : E) (S : CG)
 Philippines : Manila (D+F+N+S : E)
 Singapore : (D+F+N+S : E)
 Sri Lanka : Colombo (D+F+N : CG) (S : RO)
 Taiwan : Taipei (D+F+N+S : RO)
 Thailand : Bangkok (D+F+N+S : E) (D : CG)
 Vietnam : Hanoi (D+F+N+S : E), Ho Chi Minh City (D+S : CG)

√List of Asian destinations for direct flights from Nordic airports

Finnair :

Helsinki-Bangkok : 4 flights a week
 Helsinki-Beijing : 3 flights a week
 Helsinki-Singapore : 4 flights a week
 Helsinki-Yokyo : 2 flights a week

Scandinavian Airline Systems (SAS) :

Copenhagen-Bangkok : 7 flights a week
 Copenhagen-Beijing : 6 flights a week
 Copenhagen-Delhi : 5 flights a week
 Copenhagen-Tokyo : 7 flights a week

√Top ten markets for Nordic exports to Asia in 1998 (Middle East not included)

Japan : 4,9 billion ECU

China : 3,6 billion ECU

Hong Kong : 2,0 billion ECU

Singapore : 1,4 billion ECU

South Korea : 1,3 billion ECU

Taiwan : 1,2 billion ECU

India : 0,6 billion ECU

Malaysia : 0,6 billion ECU

Indonesia : 0,6 billion ECU

Thailand : 0,5 billion ECU

√Official priority partners in Asia for Nordic development aid

Denmark : Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Vietnam

Finland : Nepal, Vietnam

Norway : Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka

Sweden : Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos

√Top ten recipients of Nordic bilateral aid in Asia, 1998 (Middle East not included)

Vietnam : 91 million USD

Bangladesh : 83 million USD

India : 53 million USD

China : 40 million USD

Nepal : 38 million USD

Afghanistan : 29 million USD

Sri Lanka : 26 million USD

Thailand : 24 million USD

Cambodia : 23 million USD

Laos : 23 million USD

√Main countries of origin for Asian immigrants in Nordic countries (Middle East not included)

Vietnam : 36 000

Pakistan : 34 000

Sri Lanka : 21 000

India : 19 000

Thailand : 18 000

China : 15 000

Philippines : 14 000