



norden

Nordic Council of Ministers

## Nordic-Baltic-Polish ministerial meeting November 1, 2004

Store Strandstræde 18  
DK-1255 København K  
Tel +45 3396 0200  
Fax +45 3396 0201  
www.norden.org

### Declaration

1 November 2004  
j.nr. 53001.15.001/04

### Increased exchange in the building sector between countries in the Northern Dimension region

The Nordic Council of Ministers for Housing and Building together with the Ministers for Housing and Building Issues in Estonia, Latvia and Poland,

**recalling** that cross-border co-operation in the Northern Dimension area is important to contribute towards an increased exchange in the building sector in order to improve the Single Market of the European Union.

**recalling** that high housing costs inter alia depending on high construction costs and building prices are a problem in many countries today, this effects for example weak groups in the society,

**noting** imperfect competition for both contractors and materials, due to among other reasons various types of entry barriers to the market, as causes of high costs,

**underscoring** that reducing entry barriers and stimulating competition in order to reduce construction costs, will enable a more successful housing policy,

**welcoming** the enlargement of the European Union and of the European Economic Area as an opportunity to increase the cross border exchange and thereby promoting competition on the national markets for housing construction,

**acknowledging** that the European Unions Internal Market is not yet complete and that additional efforts and the development of new instruments are required to reduce barriers to the free movement of goods, services, people and capital,

**welcoming** the initiative by the Nordic countries, within the framework of intergovernmental Nordic cooperation, to cooperate with new Member States especially in the Baltic region, aiming at transferring knowledge and best practices between the collaborating countries,

**underscoring** that the governments concerned intend to strengthen their collaboration within the framework of regional cooperation in the European Union and the European Economic Area and with all respect to the European Unions legislation,

**welcoming** other governments as well as research institutions, authorities in concern, non-governmental organizations and representatives for the industry to take part in this, collaboration

**decide to undertake necessary steps during the period 2005-2007 to implement the action plan for increased exchange in the building sector between countries in the Northern Dimension region, notably:**

- to make market information and information on national regulations accessible to potential actors on the market,
- to expand the basis of experience and newfound knowledge in housing construction,
- to undertake a comparative analysis of regulations within the building sector intended to serve as a basis for deliberations on possible harmonization
- to make it possible to compare competency requirements imposed on certain actors in the building process, and
- to establish a network for joint research and development on issues relevant to the plan of action

**The Ministers also decide:**

- to appoint a project coordinator with the task, together with a steering group, to undertake the necessary steps during the period 2005-2007 to implement the action plan and to report the results to the Ministers
- to establish a steering group with participation from all participating countries
- to ask the coordinator together with the steering group, to propose further measures for cross-border co-operation to remove entry barriers to the national markets for housing construction.