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Traces of the North start in your backyard

A worldwide initiative from The Nordic Council of Ministers is aiming to show the Nordic countries as a whole by focusing on the way, Nordic ideas influence everyday life all over the world.

In a mountain in the Norwegian island group of Svalbard is a vault, which contains thousands of seeds from all over the world. Some people refer to it as the doomsday vault because it is intended as a backup in case of a catastrophe, that devastates the world's food crops. Right now, it is preserving the food diversity of Syria for future generations in spite of the ongoing civil war. This is one way, in which the Nordics play an active role in the world.

In a new place branding strategy, The Nordic Council of Ministers has decided to turn traditional place branding upside down by not showcasing the beautiful Norwegian fjords, the breathtaking lakes of Finland or the unique design products of Denmark. Instead, the project sets out to highlight the fact, that there are traces of North all over the world. Like the zipper, the seat belt and the inflatable bike helmet.

"People might not realise it, but Nordic ideas and inventions are present wherever you look. The branding of the Nordics does not have to start in the Nordic countries. By showing traces of North all over the world, we hope to present the Nordic countries in a new way and to share our ideas with the rest of the world," says Margot Wallström, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs and acting President of The Nordic Council of Ministers

The Nordics are defined as Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. However, the Nordic Council of Ministers has decided to redefine and expand this definition by presenting the region as a whole, since the outside world generally does not distinguish between the Nordic countries. And because of the fact that The Nordics often function as one, since the region practices the oldest regional political collaboration in the world. This has to do with citizens of the Nordics sharing both history, culture, languages and not least a set of mutual ideas and values.

The conceptual idea Trace of North has been put together by Danish communication agency Mensch together with architect Bjarke Ingels, designer Ole Lund and tech company Area9. Together they came up with the idea of showing the Nordics *in* the world rather than showing the Nordics *to* the world.

Besides from increasing the awareness of the Nordic countries, the purpose of the project is to share traces of North and ideally to expand the already existing database of interesting Nordic impacts on the world. This will happen through the website Thenordics.com and on [Twitter.com/The_nordics](https://twitter.com/The_nordics). Furthermore, The Nordic Council of Ministers is offering all cases, photos, films and learnings from the project to anyone with a desire to promote Nordic interests anywhere in the world.

The Nordics are the world's 11th largest economy. The region is larger than India, even though the population of 27 million only amounts to 2 percent of India's population.

PRESS RELEASE



Caption: Traces of North are present all over the world. Among them Bluetooth and Spotify, both originating from Sweden. Photo: TheNordics.com.

Download press photos [here](#).

About “The Nordics”

“The Nordics” is a joint branding project by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The strategy lays down strategic guidelines on how to brand the region and its stakeholders around the world and is designed for use by all – not just by official Nordic bodies. The conceptual idea Traces of North turns traditional place branding upside down by showing the Nordics *in* the world instead of *to* the world. This approach is meant as an attempt to share ideas with the outside world and, ultimately, to learn from others through dialogue. Furthermore, the project addresses the Nordic countries as a whole since the outside world generally does not distinguish between the Nordic countries. Read more about project “The Nordics” [here](#).

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