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**Scandinavia**[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) is a [historical](/wiki/Historical_region) and [cultural](/wiki/Culture) region in [Northern Europe](/wiki/Northern_Europe) characterized by a common ethno-cultural North Germanic heritage[Template:Dubious](/wiki/Template:Dubious) and mutually intelligible [North Germanic languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages).[[1]](#cite_note-1) The term *Scandinavia* always includes the [mainlands](/wiki/Mainland) of the three [kingdoms](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy#Modern_constitutional_monarchy) of [Denmark](/wiki/Denmark), [Norway](/wiki/Norway), and [Sweden](/wiki/Sweden). Norwegian dependencies, including [Svalbard](/wiki/Svalbard) and [Jan Mayen](/wiki/Jan_Mayen), are usually not seen as a part of Scandinavia, nor is Danish [Greenland](/wiki/Greenland). However, the Danish [Faroe Islands](/wiki/Faroe_Islands) are sometimes included, as sometimes are [Iceland](/wiki/Iceland) and [Finland](/wiki/Finland), because of their historical association with the Scandinavian countries and the Scandinavian peoples and languages.[[2]](#cite_note-2) This looser definition almost equates to that of the [Nordic countries](/wiki/Nordic_countries). In [Nordic languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages), only mainland Denmark, Norway and Sweden, are commonly included in the definition.

In English usage, *Scandinavia* sometimes refers to the geographical area, also known as the [*Scandinavian Peninsula*](/wiki/Scandinavian_Peninsula).[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4) The name Scandinavia originally referred vaguely to the formerly Danish, now Swedish, region [Scania](/wiki/Scania). The terms *Scandinavia* and *Scandinavian* entered usage in the late 18th century as terms for Denmark, Norway and Sweden, their Germanic majority peoples and [associated language](/wiki/Scandinavian_languages) and culture, the term being introduced by the early linguistic and cultural [Scandinavist movement](/wiki/Scandinavism).

The majority of the population of Scandinavia are descended from several [(North) Germanic tribes](/wiki/Germanic_peoples) who originally inhabited the southern part of Scandinavia, and spoke a [Germanic language](/wiki/Germanic_language) that evolved into [Old Norse](/wiki/Old_Norse). [Icelanders](/wiki/Icelanders) and the [Faroese](/wiki/Faroese_people) are to a significant extent descended from the Norse, and are therefore often seen as Scandinavian. Finland is mainly populated by [Finns](/wiki/Finns), with a significant minority of [Swedish speakers](/wiki/Swedish-speaking_population_of_Finland). A small minority of [Sami people](/wiki/Sami_people) live in the extreme north of Scandinavia.

The [Danish](/wiki/Danish_language), [Norwegian](/wiki/Norwegian_language), and [Swedish languages](/wiki/Swedish_language) form a [dialect continuum](/wiki/Dialect_continuum) and are known as the [Scandinavian languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages)—all of which are considered [mutually intelligible](/wiki/Mutual_intelligibility) with one another. [Faroese](/wiki/Faroese_language) and [Icelandic](/wiki/Icelandic_language), sometimes referred to as insular Scandinavian languages, are intelligible in continental Scandinavian languages only to a limited extent. [Finnish](/wiki/Finnish_language) and [Meänkieli](/wiki/Meänkieli) are closely related to each other and more distantly to the [Sami languages](/wiki/Sami_languages), but are entirely unrelated to the Scandinavian languages. Apart from these, [German](/wiki/German_language), [Yiddish](/wiki/Yiddish) and [Romani](/wiki/Romani_language) are recognized minority languages in Scandinavia.

The southern and by far most populous regions of Scandinavia have a [temperate climate](/wiki/Temperate_climate). Scandinavia extends north of the [Arctic Circle](/wiki/Arctic_Circle), but has relatively mild weather for its latitude due to the [Gulf Stream](/wiki/Gulf_Stream). Much of the Scandinavian mountains have an [alpine tundra](/wiki/Alpine_tundra) climate. There are many lakes and [moraines](/wiki/Moraines), legacies of the [last glacial period](/wiki/Last_glacial_period), which ended about ten millennia ago.

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## {{anchor|terminology}}Terminology and use[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|right|Satellite photo of the](/wiki/File:Scandinavia_M2002074_lrg.jpg) [Scandinavian Peninsula](/wiki/Scandinavian_Peninsula), March 2002 [thumb|left|250px|Scandinavia originally referred vaguely to](/wiki/File:Original_meaning_of_Scandinavia.svg) [Scania](/wiki/Scania), a formerly Danish region that became Swedish in the 17th century

Scandinavia usually refers to Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.[[5]](#cite_note-5) Some sources argue for the inclusion of the Faroe Islands, Finland and Iceland,<ref name=eb/>[[6]](#cite_note-6)[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9) though that broader region is usually known by the countries concerned as *Norden* (Finnish *Pohjoismaat*, Icelandic *Norðurlöndin*, Faroese *Norðurlond*), or the [Nordic countries](/wiki/Nordic_countries).[[10]](#cite_note-10)[thumb|](/wiki/File:Map_of_Scandinavia.png)[Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend)

The use of the name Scandinavia as a convenient general term for the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and Sweden is fairly recent; according to some historians, it was adopted and introduced in the eighteenth century, at a time when the ideas about a common heritage started to appear and develop into early literary and linguistic [Scandinavism](/wiki/Scandinavism).[[4]](#cite_note-4) Before this time, the term *Scandinavia* was familiar mainly to classical scholars through [Pliny the Elder's](/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder) writings, and was used vaguely for Scania and the southern region of the peninsula.[[4]](#cite_note-4) As a political term, "Scandinavia" was first used by students agitating for [Pan-Scandinavianism](/wiki/Scandinavism) in the 1830s.[[4]](#cite_note-4) The popular usage of the term in Sweden, Denmark and Norway as a unifying concept became established in the nineteenth century through poems such as [Hans Christian Andersen's](/wiki/Hans_Christian_Andersen) "I am a Scandinavian" of 1839. After a visit to Sweden, Andersen became a supporter of early political Scandinavism. In a letter describing the poem to a friend, he wrote: "All at once I understood how related the Swedes, the Danes and the Norwegians are, and with this feeling I wrote the poem immediately after my return: 'We are one people, we are called Scandinavians!'"[[11]](#cite_note-11)

### Finland[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

The clearest example of the use of the term "Scandinavia" as a political and societal construct is the unique position of Finland, based largely on the fact that most of modern-day Finland was part of the Swedish kingdom for hundreds of years, thus to much of the world associating Finland with all of Scandinavia. But the creation of a Finnish identity is unique in the region in that it was formed in relation to two different imperial models, the Swedish[[12]](#cite_note-12) and the Russian,[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) as described by the [University of Jyväskylä](/wiki/University_of_Jyväskylä) based editorial board of the Finnish journal *Yearbook of Political Thought and Conceptual History*;[[15]](#cite_note-15) The term is often defined according to the conventions of the cultures that lay claim to the term in their own use.[[16]](#cite_note-16) When a speaker wants to explicitly include Finland alongside Scandinavia-proper, the geographic terms [Fenno-Scandinavia](/wiki/Fenno-Scandinavia) or [Fennoscandia](/wiki/Fennoscandia) are sometimes used in English, although these terms are hardly if at all used within Scandinavia. More precisely, and subject to no dispute, is that Finland is included in the broader term 'Nordic countries'.

### Societal and tourism promotional organizations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

Various promotional agencies of the Nordic countries in the United States (such as [The American-Scandinavian Foundation](/wiki/The_American-Scandinavian_Foundation), established in 1910 by the [Danish American](/wiki/Danish_American) industrialist Niels Poulsen) serve to promote market and tourism interests in the region. Today, the five Nordic heads of state act as the organization's patrons and according to the official statement by the organization, its mission is "to promote the Nordic region as a whole while increasing the visibility of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in New York City and the United States."[[17]](#cite_note-17) The official tourist boards of Scandinavia sometimes cooperate under one umbrella, such as the [Scandinavian Tourist Board](/wiki/Scandinavian_Tourist_Board).[[18]](#cite_note-18) The cooperation was introduced for the Asian market in 1986, when the Swedish national tourist board joined the Danish national tourist board to coordinate intergovernmental promotion of the two countries. Norway's government entered one year later. All five Nordic governments participate in the joint promotional efforts in the United States through the Scandinavian Tourist Board of North America.[[19]](#cite_note-19)

## Use of ''Nordic countries'' vs. ''Scandinavia''[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Details](/wiki/Template:Details) While the term *Scandinavia* is commonly used for Denmark, Norway and Sweden, the term *the Nordic countries* is used unambiguously for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, including their associated territories ([Greenland](/wiki/Greenland), the Faroe Islands, and the Åland Islands).[[20]](#cite_note-20) Scandinavia can thus be considered a subset of the Nordic countries. Furthermore, the term [Fennoscandia](/wiki/Fennoscandia) refers to Scandinavia, Finland and [Karelia](/wiki/Karelia), excluding Denmark and overseas territories; however, the usage of this term is restricted to [geology](/wiki/Geology), when speaking of the [Fennoscandian Shield](/wiki/Fennoscandian_Shield) (Baltic Shield).

In addition to the mainland Scandinavian countries of:

* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) ([Constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Denmark) with a [Parliamentary system](/wiki/Folketing))
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) ([Constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Norway) with a [Parliamentary system](/wiki/Storting), independent since 1905)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) ([Ceremonial monarchy](/wiki/Monarchy_of_Sweden) with a [Parliamentary system](/wiki/Riksdag))

the Nordic countries also consist of:

* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) ([Parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic), independent since 1917)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) ([Parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic), independent since 1944)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) (an autonomous province of Finland since 1920)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) (an [autonomous](/wiki/Autonomous) [country](/wiki/Constituent_country) within the [Danish Realm](/wiki/Danish_Realm), self-governed since 1948)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry) (an autonomous country within the [Danish Realm](/wiki/Danish_Realm), self-governed since 1979)
* [Template:Flagcountry](/wiki/Template:Flagcountry), which is under Norwegian sovereignty, is not considered part of Scandinavia as a cultural-historical region; but as a part of the Kingdom of Norway (since 1925), it is part of the Nordic countries (Norden).

[Estonia](/wiki/Estonia) has applied for membership in the [Nordic Council](/wiki/Nordic_Council), referring to its cultural heritage and close linguistic links to Finland, and historical connections to both Denmark and Sweden, although normally Estonia is regarded as one of the [Baltic countries](/wiki/Baltic_countries). It is similar to the situation of Finland around the 1920s as Finland was considered to be one of the [Baltic States](/wiki/Baltic_States) as well,[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) as it too had emerged from Russian domination along with the other three countries under similar circumstances. While Finnish and Estonian are [Finnic languages](/wiki/Finnic_languages), Latvian and Lithuanian are [Baltic languages](/wiki/Baltic_languages).

It should be noted that whereas the term "Scandinavia" is relatively straightforward as traditionally relating to the three kingdoms of Denmark, Norway and Sweden there exists some ambiguity as regards the ethnic aspect of the concept in the modern era. Traditionally, the term refers specifically to the majority peoples of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, their states, their Germanic languages and their culture. In the modern era, the term will often include minority peoples such as the [Sami](/wiki/Sami_people) and [Meänkieli](/wiki/Meänkieli_dialects) speakers in a political and to some extent cultural sense, as they are citizens of Scandinavian countries and speak Scandinavian languages either as their first or second language. However, Scandinavian is still also seen as an ethnic term for the Germanic majority peoples of Scandinavia, and as such, the inclusion of Sami and Finnish speakers can be seen as controversial within these groups.

## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

|  |
| --- |
| [thumb|The original areas inhabited (during the Bronze Age) by the peoples since known as Scandinavians included what is now Northern Germany (particularly](/wiki/File:Nordic_Bronze_Age.png) [Schleswig-Holstein](/wiki/Schleswig-Holstein)), all of Denmark, southern Sweden, and the southern coast of Norway. Namesake [Scania](/wiki/Scania) found itself in the centre. |
| [thumb|right|Late](/wiki/File:LateBalticIceLake.jpg) [Baltic Ice Lake](/wiki/Baltic_Ice_Lake) around 10,300 years [B.P.](/wiki/Before_Present), with a channel near Mount [Billingen](/wiki/Billingen) through what is now central [Sweden](/wiki/Sweden) (political boundaries added) |

Scandinavia and [Scania](/wiki/Scania) (*Skåne*, the southernmost province of Sweden) are considered to have the same etymology. Both terms are thought to go back to the [Proto-Germanic](/wiki/Proto-Germanic_language) [compound](/wiki/Compound_(linguistics)) \**Skaðin-awjō*, which appears later in [Old English](/wiki/Old_English) as *Scedenig* and in [Old Norse](/wiki/Old_Norse) as *Skáney*.[[21]](#cite_note-21) The earliest identified source for the name Scandinavia is [Pliny the Elder's](/wiki/Pliny_the_Elder) [*Natural History*](/wiki/Natural_History_(Pliny)), dated to the first century A.D.

Various references to the region can also be found in [Pytheas](/wiki/Pytheas), [Pomponius Mela](/wiki/Pomponius_Mela), [Tacitus](/wiki/Tacitus), [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy), [Procopius](/wiki/Procopius) and [Jordanes](/wiki/Jordanes), usually in the form of [Scandza](/wiki/Scandza). It is believed that the name used by Pliny may be of [West Germanic](/wiki/West_Germanic_languages) origin, originally denoting Scania.[[22]](#cite_note-22) According to some scholars, the Germanic stem can be reconstructed as \**Skaðan-* meaning "danger" or "damage" (English *scathing*, German *Schaden*, Dutch *schade*).[[23]](#cite_note-23) The second segment of the name has been reconstructed as [\**awjō*](/wiki/Wikt:Appendix:Proto-Germanic/awjō), meaning "land on the water" or "island". The name Scandinavia would then mean "dangerous island", which is considered to refer to the treacherous sandbanks surrounding Scania.[[23]](#cite_note-23) [Skanör](/wiki/Skanör-Falsterbo) in Scania, with its long Falsterbo reef, has the same stem (*skan*) combined with -*ör*, which means "sandbanks".

In the reconstructed Germanic root \**Skaðin-awjō* (the [edh](/wiki/Edh) represented in Latin by t or d), the first segment is sometimes considered more uncertain than the second segment. The American Heritage Dictionary[[24]](#cite_note-24) derives the second segment from [Proto-Indo-European](/wiki/Proto-Indo-European_language) *\*akwa-*, "water", in the sense of "watery land".

The [Old Norse](/wiki/Old_Norse) goddess name [*Skaði*](/wiki/Skaði), along with *Sca(n)dinavia* and *Skáney*, may be related to [Gothic](/wiki/Gothic_language) *skadus*, [Old English](/wiki/Old_English) *sceadu*, [Old Saxon](/wiki/Old_Saxon) *scado*, and [Old High German](/wiki/Old_High_German) *scato* (meaning "shadow"). Scholar John McKinnell comments that this etymology suggests that the goddess Skaði may have once been a personification of the geographical region of Scandinavia or associated with the underworld.[[25]](#cite_note-25)

### Pliny the Elder's descriptions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

Pliny's descriptions of *Scatinavia* and surrounding areas are not always easy to decipher. Writing in the capacity of a Roman admiral, he introduces the northern region by declaring to his Roman readers that there are 23 islands "*Romanis armis cognitae*" ("known to Roman arms") in this area. According to Pliny, the "*clarissima*" ("most famous") of the region's islands is *Scatinavia*, of unknown size. There live the [Hilleviones](/wiki/Hilleviones). The belief that Scandinavia was an island became widespread among classical authors during the first century and dominated descriptions of Scandinavia in classical texts during the centuries that followed.

Pliny begins his description of the route to *Scatinavia* by referring to the mountain of Saevo (*mons Saevo ibi*), the Codanus Bay (*Codanus sinus*) and the Cimbrian promontory.[[26]](#cite_note-26) The geographical features have been identified in various ways; by some scholars "Saevo" is thought to be the mountainous [Norwegian](/wiki/Norway) coast at the entrance to [Skagerrak](/wiki/Skagerrak) and the [Cimbrian](/wiki/Cimbri) peninsula is thought to be [Skagen](/wiki/Skagen), the north tip of [Jutland](/wiki/Jutland), Denmark. As described, Saevo and Scatinavia can also be the same place.

Pliny mentions Scandinavia one more time: in Book VIII he says that the animal called *achlis* (given in the accusative, *achlin*, which is not Latin), was born on the island of Scandinavia.[[27]](#cite_note-27) The animal grazes, has a big upper lip and some mythical attributes.

The name "[Scandia](/wiki/Scandia)", later used as a synonym for Scandinavia, also appears in Pliny's Naturalis Historia, but is used for a group of Northern European islands which he locates north of [Britannia](/wiki/Britannia). "Scandia" thus does not appear to be denoting the island Scadinavia in Pliny's text. The idea that "*Scadinavia*" may have been one of the "*Scandiae*" islands was instead introduced by [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy) (c. 90 – c. 168 AD), a mathematician, geographer and astrologer of Roman Egypt. He used the name "*Skandia*" for the biggest, most easterly of the three "*Scandiai*" islands, which according to him were all located east of [Jutland](/wiki/Jutland).[[23]](#cite_note-23) Neither Pliny's nor Ptolemy's lists of Scandinavian tribes include the [Suiones](/wiki/Suiones) mentioned by Tacitus. Some early Swedish scholars of the Swedish [Hyperborean](/wiki/Hyperborean) school[[28]](#cite_note-28) and of the 19th-century [romantic nationalism](/wiki/Romantic_nationalism) period proceeded to synthesize the different versions by inserting references to the Suiones, arguing that they must have been referred to in the original texts and obscured over time by spelling mistakes or various alterations.[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30)

### Germanic reconstruction[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

The Latin names in Pliny's text gave rise to different forms in medieval Germanic texts. In Jordanes' history of the [Goths](/wiki/Goths) (AD 551) the form [*Scandza*](/wiki/Scandza) is the name used for their original home, separated by sea from the land of Europe (chapter 1, 4).[[31]](#cite_note-31) Where Jordanes meant to locate this quasi-legendary island is still a hotly debated issue, both in scholarly discussions and in the [nationalistic](/wiki/Nationalistic) discourse of various European countries.[[32]](#cite_note-32)[[33]](#cite_note-33)The form *Scadinavia* as the original home of the [Langobards](/wiki/Lombards) appears in [Paulus Diaconus'](/wiki/Paulus_Diaconus) *Historia Langobardorum*;[[34]](#cite_note-34) in other versions of *Historia Langobardorum* appear the forms *Scadan*, *Scandanan*, *Scadanan* and *Scatenauge*.[[35]](#cite_note-35) Frankish sources used *Sconaowe* and [Aethelweard](/wiki/Æthelweard_(historian)), an Anglo-Saxon historian, used *Scani*.[[36]](#cite_note-36)[[37]](#cite_note-37) In [Beowulf](/wiki/Beowulf), the forms *Scedenige* and *Scedeland* are used, while the [Alfredian](/wiki/Alfred_the_Great) translation of [Orosius](/wiki/Paulus_Orosius) and [Wulfstan's](/wiki/Wulfstan_of_Hedeby) travel accounts used the [Old English](/wiki/Old_English) *Sconeg*.[[37]](#cite_note-37)

### Sami etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:This_is_the_center_of_the_sami_town_Kautokeino.jpg)[Kautokeino](/wiki/Kautokeino), the main [Sami](/wiki/Sami_people) city in [Norway](/wiki/Norway) The earliest [Sami](/wiki/Sami_languages) [yoik](/wiki/Yoik) texts written down refer to the world as *Skadesi-suolo* (north-Sami) and *Skađsuâl* (east-Sami), meaning "[Skaði's](/wiki/Skaði) island" (Svennung 1963). Svennung considers the Sami name to have been introduced as a [loan word](/wiki/Loan_word) from the [North Germanic languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages);[[38]](#cite_note-38) "[Skaði](/wiki/Skaði)" is the [giant](/wiki/Giant_(mythology)) stepmother of [Freyr](/wiki/Freyr) and [Freyja](/wiki/Freyja) in [Norse mythology](/wiki/Norse_mythology). It has been suggested that Skaði to some extent is modeled on a Sami woman. The name for Skade's father [Thjazi](/wiki/Thjazi) is known in Sami as *Čáhci*, "the waterman", and her son with Odin, [Saeming](/wiki/Saeming), can be interpreted as a descendent of *Saam* the Sami population (Mundel 2000),[[39]](#cite_note-39) (Steinsland 1991).[[40]](#cite_note-40) Older joik texts give evidence of the old Sami belief about living on an island and state that the wolf is known as *suolu gievra*, meaning "the strong one on the island." The Sami [place name](/wiki/Place_name) *Sulliidčielbma* means "the island's threshold" and [*Suoločielgi*](/wiki/Saariselkä) means "the island's back."

In recent [substrate](/wiki/Substratum) studies, Sami linguists have examined the initial cluster sk- in words used in Sami and concluded that sk- is a [phonotactic](/wiki/Phonotactic) structure of alien origin.[[41]](#cite_note-41)

### Other etymologies[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

Another possibility is that all or part of the segments of the name came from the [Mesolithic](/wiki/Mesolithic) people inhabiting the region.[[42]](#cite_note-42) In modernity, Scandinavia is a peninsula, but between approximately 10,300 and 9,500 years ago, the southern part of Scandinavia was an island separated from the northern peninsula, with water exiting the [Baltic Sea](/wiki/Baltic_Sea) through the area where [Stockholm](/wiki/Stockholm) is now located.[[43]](#cite_note-43) Some [Basque](/wiki/Basque_language) scholars have presented the idea that the segment *sk* that appears in *\*Skaðinawjō* is connected to the name for the [Euzko](/wiki/Euzko) peoples, akin to Basques, that populated [Paleolithic](/wiki/Paleolithic) Europe. According to some of these intellects, Scandinavian people share particular [genetic markers](/wiki/Genetic_marker) with the [Basque people](/wiki/Basque_people).[[42]](#cite_note-42)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:GaldhøpiggenFromFannaråki.jpg)[Galdhøpiggen](/wiki/Galdhøpiggen) is the highest point in Scandinavia, and is a part of the [Scandinavian Mountains](/wiki/Scandinavian_Mountains) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The geography of Scandinavia is extremely varied. Notable are the [Norwegian fjords](/wiki/List_of_Norwegian_fjords), the [Scandinavian Mountains](/wiki/Scandinavian_Mountains), the flat, low areas in Denmark, and the [archipelagos](/wiki/Archipelago) of Sweden and Norway. Sweden has many lakes and moraines, legacies of the [ice age](/wiki/Last_glacial_period).

The climate varies from north to south and from west to east; a marine west coast climate ([Cfb](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification#GROUP_C:_Temperate/mesothermal_climates)) typical of western Europe dominates in Denmark, southernmost part of Sweden and along the west coast of Norway reaching north to 65°N, with [orographic lift](/wiki/Orographic_lift) giving more mm/year [precipitation](/wiki/Precipitation_(meteorology)) (<5000 mm) in some areas in western Norway. The central part – from [Oslo](/wiki/Oslo) to [Stockholm](/wiki/Stockholm) – has a [humid continental climate](/wiki/Humid_continental_climate) (Dfb), which gradually gives way to [subarctic climate](/wiki/Subarctic_climate) (Dfc) further north and cool marine west coast climate (Cfc) along the northwestern coast. A small area along the northern coast east of the [North Cape](/wiki/North_Cape,_Norway) has tundra climate (Et) as a result of a lack of summer warmth. The Scandinavian Mountains block the mild and moist air coming from the southwest, thus northern Sweden and the [Finnmarksvidda](/wiki/Finnmarksvidda) plateau in Norway receive little precipitation and have cold winters. Large areas in the Scandinavian mountains have [alpine tundra](/wiki/Alpine_tundra) climate.

The warmest temperature ever recorded in Scandinavia is 38.0 °C in [Målilla](/wiki/Målilla) (Sweden).[[44]](#cite_note-44) The coldest temperature ever recorded is −52.6 °C in [Vuoggatjålme](/wiki/Vuoggatjålme) (Sweden).[[45]](#cite_note-45) The coldest month was February 1985 in Vittangi (Sweden) with a mean of −27.2 °C.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Southwesterly winds further warmed by [foehn wind](/wiki/Foehn_wind) can give warm temperatures in narrow Norwegian fjords in winter; [Tafjord](/wiki/Tafjord) has recorded 17.9 °C in January and [Sunndal](/wiki/Sunndal) 18.9 °C in February.

## Languages in Scandinavia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Two language groups have coexisted on the [Scandinavian peninsula](/wiki/Scandinavian_peninsula) since prehistory—the [North Germanic languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages) (Scandinavian languages) and the [Sami languages](/wiki/Sami_languages).[[46]](#cite_note-46) Due to later migrations, [Finnish](/wiki/Finnish_language), [Yiddish](/wiki/Yiddish) and [Romani](/wiki/Romani_language) have also been spoken for over a hundred years. Denmark also has a minority of [German](/wiki/German_language)-speakers. More recent migrations has added even more languages. Apart from Sami and the languages of minority groups speaking a variant of the majority language of a neighboring state, the following minority languages in Scandinavia are protected under the [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](/wiki/European_Charter_for_Regional_or_Minority_Languages): [Yiddish](/wiki/Yiddish), [Romani Chib, Romanes](/wiki/Romani_language) and [Romani](/wiki/Scandoromani).

### North Germanic languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|250px|**Continental** Scandinavian languages:](/wiki/File:Nordiska_språk.PNG) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) **Insular** Scandinavian languages:[Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) The North Germanic languages of Scandinavia are traditionally divided into an [East Scandinavian](/wiki/East_Scandinavian) branch ([Danish](/wiki/Danish_language) and [Swedish](/wiki/Swedish_language)) and a [West Scandinavian](/wiki/West_Scandinavian) branch ([Norwegian](/wiki/Norwegian_language), [Icelandic](/wiki/Icelandic_language), and [Faroese](/wiki/Faroese_language)),[[47]](#cite_note-47)[[48]](#cite_note-48) but because of changes appearing in the languages since 1600, the East Scandinavian and West Scandinavian branches are now usually reconfigured into Insular Scandinavian (*ö-nordisk*/*øy-nordisk*) featuring [Icelandic](/wiki/Icelandic_language) and [Faroese](/wiki/Faroese_language)[[49]](#cite_note-49) and Continental Scandinavian (*Skandinavisk*), comprising Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish.[[50]](#cite_note-50) The modern division is based on the degree of mutual comprehensibility between the languages in the two branches.[[51]](#cite_note-51) The populations of the Scandinavian countries, with a Scandinavian mother tongue, can—at least with some training—understand each other's [standard languages](/wiki/Standard_language) as they appear in print and are heard on radio and television.

The reason Danish, Swedish and the two official written versions of Norwegian (*Nynorsk* and *Bokmål*) are traditionally viewed as different languages, rather than dialects of one common language, is that each is a well established standard language in its respective country. Danish, Swedish and Norwegian have, since medieval times, been influenced to varying degrees by [Middle Low German](/wiki/Middle_Low_German) and standard German. A substantial amount of that influence was a by-product of the economic activity generated by the [Hanseatic League](/wiki/Hanseatic_League).

Norwegians are accustomed to variation, and may perceive Danish and Swedish only as slightly more distant dialects. This is because they have two official written standards, in addition to the habit of strongly holding on to local dialects. The people of [Stockholm](/wiki/Stockholm), Sweden and [Copenhagen](/wiki/Copenhagen), Denmark, have the greatest difficulty in understanding other Scandinavian languages.[[52]](#cite_note-52) In the Faroe Islands and Iceland, learning [Danish](/wiki/Danish_language) is mandatory. This causes Faroese people as well as Icelandic people to become bilingual in two very distinct North Germanic languages, making it relatively easy for them to understand the other two Mainland Scandinavian languages.[[53]](#cite_note-53)[[54]](#cite_note-54) Although Iceland was under the political control of Denmark until a much later date (1918), very little influence and borrowing from Danish has occurred in the Icelandic language.[[55]](#cite_note-55) Icelandic remained the preferred language among the ruling classes in Iceland; Danish was not used for official communications, most of the royal officials were of Icelandic descent and the language of the church and law courts remained Icelandic.[[56]](#cite_note-56)

### Finnish[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

The Scandinavian languages are (as a language family) entirely unrelated to [Finnish](/wiki/Finnish_language), [Estonian](/wiki/Estonian_language), and [Sami languages](/wiki/Sami_languages), which as [Uralic languages](/wiki/Uralic_languages) are distantly related to [Hungarian](/wiki/Hungarian_language). Owing to the close proximity, there is still a great deal of borrowing from the Swedish and Norwegian languages in the Finnish and Sami languages.[[57]](#cite_note-57) The long history of linguistic influence of Swedish on Finnish is also due to the fact that Finnish, the language of the majority in Finland, was treated as a minority language while Finland was part of Sweden. Finnish-speakers had to learn Swedish in order to advance to higher positions.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Swedish spoken in today's Finland includes a lot of words that are borrowed from Finnish, whereas the written language remains closer to that of Sweden.

Finland is officially bilingual, with Finnish and Swedish having mostly the same status at national level. Finland's majority population are [Finns](/wiki/Finns), whose mother tongue is either Finnish (approximately 95%), Swedish or both; the Swedish speaking minority lives mainly on the coast from the city of Porvoo, in the Gulf of Finland, to the city of Kokkola, up in the Bothnian Bay. The Åland Islands, an autonomous province of Finland, situated in the Baltic Sea between Finland and Sweden, is entirely Swedish speaking. Children are taught the other official language at school; for Swedish-speakers, this is Finnish (usually from the 3rd grade), and for Finnish-speakers, Swedish (usually from the 3rd, 5th or 7th grade).

Finnish speakers constitute a [language minority](/wiki/European_Charter_for_Regional_or_Minority_Languages) in Sweden and Norway. There are also languages derived from Finnish, having evolved separately, known as [Meänkieli](/wiki/Meänkieli) in Sweden and [Kven](/wiki/Kven_language) in Norway.

### Sami languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|Historically verified distribution of the](/wiki/File:Sami_languages_large_2.png) [Sami languages](/wiki/Sami_languages) — ([legend](/wiki/File:Sami_languages_large_2.png)) The [Sami languages](/wiki/Sami_languages) are indigenous minority languages in Scandinavia.[[59]](#cite_note-59) They belong to [their own](/wiki/Sami_languages) branch of the [Uralic language family](/wiki/Uralic_languages) and are unrelated to the [North Germanic languages](/wiki/North_Germanic_languages) other than by limited grammatical (particularly lexical) characteristics resulting from prolonged contact.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Sami is divided into several languages or dialects.[[60]](#cite_note-60) Consonant gradation is a feature in both Finnish and northern Sami dialects, but it is not present in south Sami, which is considered to have a different language history. According to the Sami Information Centre of the [Sami Parliament](/wiki/Sami_Parliament) in Sweden, southern Sami may have originated in an earlier migration from the south into the Scandinavian peninsula.[[57]](#cite_note-57)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:For](/wiki/Template:For) [thumb|The](/wiki/File:map_swedish_lands.png) [area of Sweden](/wiki/Lands_of_Sweden) when Finland was a part of it from ca. 1249 until 1809. During a period of [Christianization](/wiki/Christianization) and state formation in the 10th–13th centuries, numerous [Germanic](/wiki/Germanic_peoples) [petty kingdoms](/wiki/Petty_kingdoms) and [chiefdoms](/wiki/Chiefdoms) were unified into three kingdoms:

* Denmark, forged from the [Lands of Denmark](/wiki/Lands_of_Denmark) (including [Jutland](/wiki/Jutland), [Zealand](/wiki/Zealand_(Denmark)) and [Scania (Skåneland)](/wiki/Skåneland) on the Scandinavian Peninsula.[[61]](#cite_note-61))
* Sweden, forged from the [Lands of Sweden](/wiki/Lands_of_Sweden) on the Scandinavian Peninsula (excluding the provinces [Bohuslän](/wiki/Bohuslän), [Härjedalen](/wiki/Härjedalen), [Jämtland](/wiki/Jämtland) and [Idre & Särna](/wiki/Älvdalen_Municipality), [Halland](/wiki/Halland), [Blekinge](/wiki/Blekinge) and [Scania](/wiki/Scania) of modern-day Sweden, but including most of modern Finland.)
* Norway (including [Bohuslän](/wiki/Bohuslän), [Härjedalen](/wiki/Härjedalen), [Jämtland](/wiki/Jämtland) and [Idre & Särna](/wiki/Älvdalen_Municipality) on the Scandinavian Peninsula, and its island colonies Iceland, Greenland, Faroe Islands, [Shetland](/wiki/Shetland), [Orkney](/wiki/Orkney), [Isle of Man](/wiki/Isle_of_Man) and the [Hebrides](/wiki/Hebrides).)

[thumb|left|The](/wiki/File:Kalmar_Union_ca._1400.svg) [Kalmar Union](/wiki/Kalmar_Union) c.1400. The three Scandinavian kingdoms joined in 1387 in the [Kalmar Union](/wiki/Kalmar_Union) under Queen [Margaret I of Denmark](/wiki/Margaret_I_of_Denmark). Sweden left the union in 1523 under King [Gustav Vasa](/wiki/Gustav_Vasa). In the aftermath of Sweden's secession from the Kalmar Union, civil war broke out in Denmark and Norway. The [Protestant Reformation](/wiki/Protestant_Reformation) followed. When things had settled, the Norwegian [Privy Council](/wiki/Privy_Council) was abolished—it assembled for the last time in 1537. A [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union), entered into by the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway in 1536, lasted until 1814. Three sovereign [successor states](/wiki/Successor_states) have subsequently emerged from this unequal union: Denmark, Norway and Iceland.

The borders between the three countries got the shape they have had since in the middle of the seventeenth century: In the 1645 [Treaty of Brömsebro](/wiki/Second_Treaty_of_Brömsebro_(1645)), [Denmark–Norway](/wiki/Denmark–Norway) ceded the Norwegian provinces of Jämtland, Härjedalen and Idre & Särna, as well as the Baltic Sea islands of Gotland and [Ösel](/wiki/Saaremaa) (in Estonia) to Sweden. The [Treaty of Roskilde](/wiki/Treaty_of_Roskilde), signed in 1658, forced Denmark–Norway to cede the Danish provinces Scania, Blekinge, Halland, [Bornholm](/wiki/Bornholm) and the Norwegian provinces of [Båhuslen](/wiki/Bohuslän) and [Trøndelag](/wiki/Trøndelag) to Sweden. The 1660 [Treaty of Copenhagen](/wiki/Treaty_of_Copenhagen_(1660)) forced Sweden to return Bornholm and Trøndelag to Denmark–Norway, and to give up its recent claims to the island [Funen](/wiki/Funen).[[62]](#cite_note-62) In the east, Finland, was a fully incorporated part of Sweden since medieval times until the Napoleonic wars, when it was ceded to Russia. Scandinavia has, despite many wars over the years since the formation of the three kingdoms, been politically and culturally close.

### Scandinavian unions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Denmark–Norway](/wiki/Denmark–Norway) as a historiographical name refers to the former political union consisting of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, including the Norwegian dependencies of Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. The corresponding adjective and [demonym](/wiki/Demonym) is [Dano-Norwegian](/wiki/Dano-Norwegian_(disambiguation)). During Danish rule, Norway kept its separate laws, coinage and army, as well as some institutions such as a royal [chancellor](/wiki/Chancellor). Norway's old royal line had died out with the death of [Olav IV](/wiki/Olav_IV)[[63]](#cite_note-63) in 1387, but Norway's remaining a [hereditary kingdom](/wiki/Hereditary_Kingdom_of_Norway) became an important factor for the [Oldenburg](/wiki/Oldenburg) dynasty of Denmark–Norway in its struggles to win elections as kings of Denmark.

The [Treaty of Kiel](/wiki/Treaty_of_Kiel) (14 January 1814) formally dissolved the Dano-Norwegian union and ceded the territory of Norway proper to the King of Sweden, but Denmark retained Norway's overseas possessions. However, widespread Norwegian resistance to the prospect of a union with Sweden induced the governor of Norway, crown prince Christian Frederick (later [Christian VIII of Denmark](/wiki/Christian_VIII_of_Denmark)), to call a constituent assembly at [Eidsvoll](/wiki/Eidsvoll) in April 1814. The assembly drew up a liberal constitution and elected Christian Frederick to the throne of Norway. Following a Swedish invasion during the summer, the peace conditions of the [Convention of Moss](/wiki/Convention_of_Moss) (14 August 1814) specified that king Christian Frederik had to resign, but Norway would keep its independence and its constitution within a personal union with Sweden. Christian Frederik formally abdicated on 10 August 1814 and returned to Denmark. The Norwegian parliament [Storting](/wiki/Storting) elected king [Charles XIII](/wiki/Charles_XIII) of Sweden as king of Norway on 4 November.

The Storting [dissolved](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_union_between_Norway_and_Sweden) the [union between Sweden and Norway](/wiki/Union_between_Sweden_and_Norway) in 1905, after which the Norwegians elected Prince Charles of Denmark as king of Norway: he reigned as [Haakon VII](/wiki/Haakon_VII).

## Political Scandinavism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|right|Scandinavia as a 19th-century political vision (](/wiki/File:skandinavism.jpg)[Scandinavism](/wiki/Scandinavism)): A Norwegian, a Dane and a Swede. This image is considered emblematic of Scandinavism and is widely used in Scandinavian school books The modern use of the term *Scandinavia* has been influenced by [Scandinavism](/wiki/Scandinavism) (the Scandinavist political movement), which was active in the middle of the nineteenth century, mainly between the [First Schleswig War](/wiki/First_Schleswig_War) (1848–1850), in which Sweden and Norway contributed with considerable military force, and the [Second Schleswig War](/wiki/Second_Schleswig_War) (1864).

The Swedish king also proposed a unification of Denmark, Norway and Sweden into a single united kingdom. The background for the proposal was the tumultuous events during the [Napoleonic wars](/wiki/Napoleonic_wars) in the beginning of the century. This war resulted in Finland (formerly the eastern third of Sweden) becoming the Russian [Grand Duchy of Finland](/wiki/Grand_Duchy_of_Finland) in 1809 and [Norway](/wiki/Norway) (*de jure* in union with Denmark since 1387, although *de facto* treated as a province) becoming independent in 1814, but thereafter swiftly forced to accept a [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union) with Sweden. The dependent territories Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, historically part of Norway, remained with Denmark in accordance with the [Treaty of Kiel](/wiki/Treaty_of_Kiel). Sweden and Norway were thus united under the Swedish monarch, but Finland's inclusion in the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) excluded any possibility for a political union between Finland and any of the other Nordic countries.

The end of the Scandinavian political movement came when Denmark was denied the military support promised from Sweden and Norway to annex the (Danish) [Duchy](/wiki/Duchy) of [Schleswig](/wiki/Schleswig), which together with the (German) Duchy of [Holstein](/wiki/Holstein) had been in [personal union](/wiki/Personal_union) with Denmark. The Second war of Schleswig followed in 1864, a brief but disastrous war between Denmark and [Prussia](/wiki/Prussia) (supported by Austria). [Schleswig-Holstein](/wiki/Schleswig-Holstein) was conquered by Prussia, and after Prussia's success in the [Franco-Prussian War](/wiki/Franco-Prussian_War) a Prussian-led [German Empire](/wiki/German_Empire) was created, and a new [power-balance](/wiki/Power_(international)) of the [Baltic sea countries](/wiki/Baltic_sea_countries) was established.

Even if a Scandinavian political union never came about at this point, there was a [Scandinavian Monetary Union](/wiki/Scandinavian_Monetary_Union) established in 1873, lasting until [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I).

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Col-start](/wiki/Template:Col-start) [Template:Col-4](/wiki/Template:Col-4)

* [Baltic region](/wiki/Baltic_region)
* [Baltoscandia](/wiki/Baltoscandia)
* [Fennoscandia](/wiki/Fennoscandia)
* [Kvenland](/wiki/Kvenland)
* [Nordic Council](/wiki/Nordic_Council)

[Template:Col-4](/wiki/Template:Col-4)

* [Nordic countries](/wiki/Nordic_countries)
* [Nordic Cross Flag](/wiki/Nordic_Cross_Flag)
* [Scandinavian colonialism](/wiki/Scandinavian_colonialism)
* [Scandinavian family name etymology](/wiki/Scandinavian_family_name_etymology)
* [Scandinavian Peninsula](/wiki/Scandinavian_Peninsula)

[Template:Col-4](/wiki/Template:Col-4)

* [Scandza](/wiki/Scandza)
* [Vikings](/wiki/Vikings)

[Template:Col-end](/wiki/Template:Col-end)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary) [Template:Commons and category](/wiki/Template:Commons_and_category) [Template:EB1911 Poster](/wiki/Template:EB1911_Poster)

* [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)
* [Nordic Council](http://www.norden.org/) – Official site for co-operation in the Nordic region
* [Nordregio](http://www.nordregio.se/) – Site established by the Nordic Council of Ministers
* [vifanord](http://www.vifanord.de/index.php?id=1&L=1&rd=243343734) – a digital library that provides scientific information on the Nordic and Baltic countries as well as the Baltic region as a whole
* [Where is Scandinavia?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsXMe8H6iyc) - Video link

[Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Scandinavia](/wiki/Category:Scandinavia)