

# NOS-M and Nordic Medical Research

| 31.1.2013 |

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ACADEMY OF FINLAND

# NOS-M

## The Joint Committee of the Nordic Medical Research Councils

NOS-M is a **collaborating body** for the Nordic research councils

### AIMS to

- **coordinate and promote medical research** in the Nordic countries
- to **monitor its progress**, and to facilitate information exchange among the countries
- to **promote and initiate concrete, collaborative Nordic projects** in medical research
  - e.g. by regularly funding various types of workshops or research seminars that give PhD students opportunity to discuss their research with senior researchers in a particular field



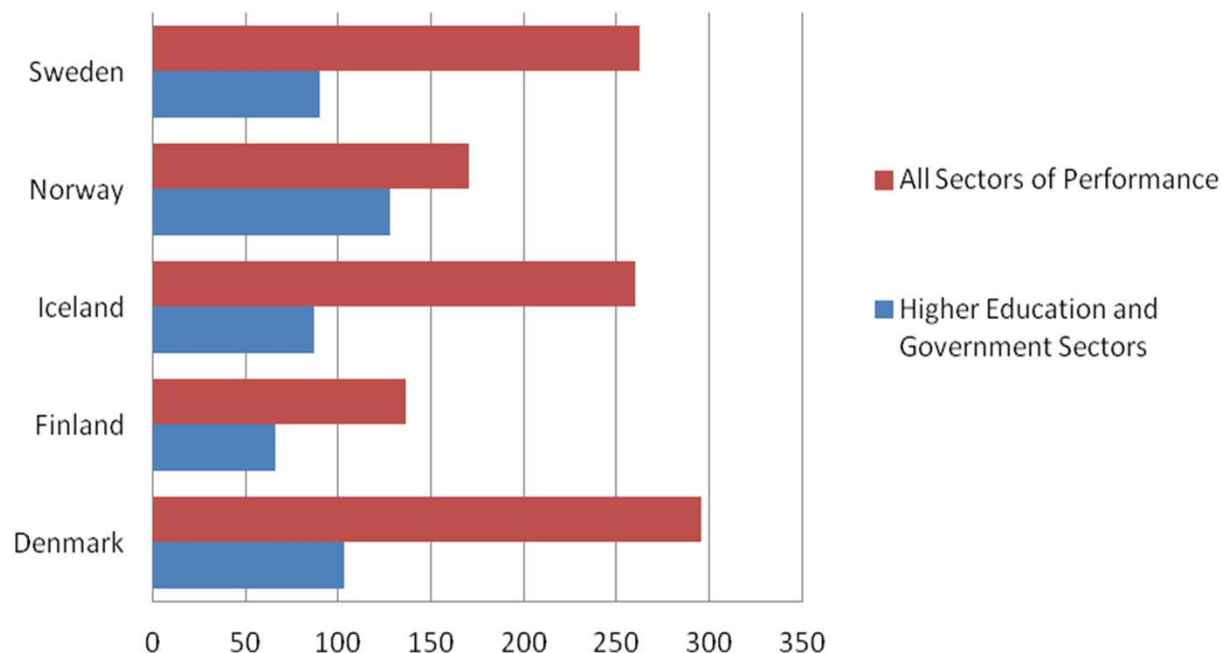
## Present Status and Future Potential for Medical Research in the Nordic Countries

Nordic White Paper  
on Medical Research



The Joint Committee of the Nordic Medical Research Councils

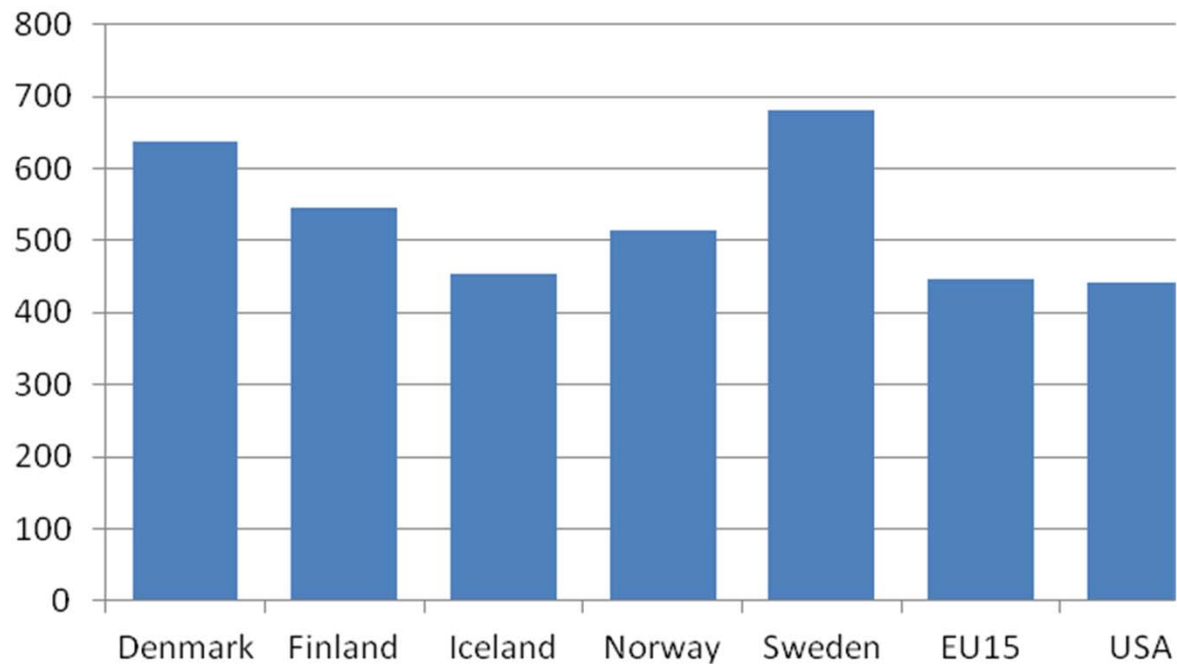
## Expenditure for Nordic Research and Experimental Development in the Medical Sciences in 2007. kEUROS per capita.



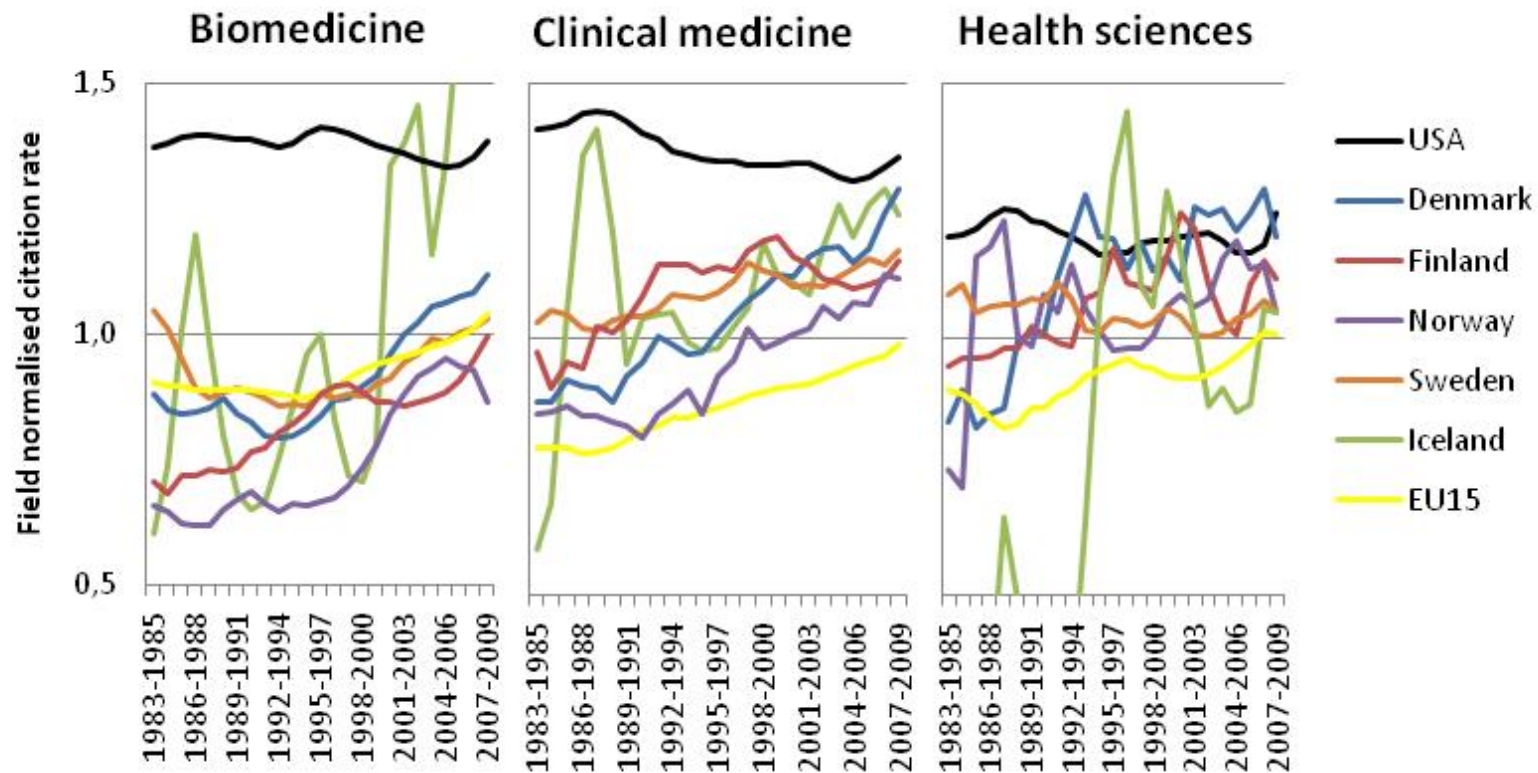
**Figure 2:** Expenditure (kEUR) per 1000 population for research and experimental development in the medical sciences in 2007. All sectors of performance, including Private Sectors, Higher Education and Government Sectors, indicated in red, and total of Higher Education and Government Sectors in blue.

Source: OECD (2010), "Main Science and Technology Indicators", OECD Science, Technology and R&D Statistics (database), European Central Bank and Danmarks Statistik. Appendix 3, NIFU STEP.

### Number of Medical Publications per Million Inhabitants and Year



**Figure 3:** Per capita production of medical publications; mean number of medical publications per year 2007-2009 and million inhabitants. Population statistics from OECD.



**Figure 5:** Field normalised citation rates in biomedicine, clinical medicine and health sciences in the Nordic countries, EU15 and the US in 1983–2009 (moving three-year averages, world average citation impact is 1). Source: Thomson Reuters Science Citation Index Expanded, Swedish Research Council 2010. For details on bibliometry, see Appendix 4.



## Nordic Medical Research

- Medical research is considered strong in Nordic countries
- New and increasing challenges
  
- Nordic collaboration has long traditions
- Nordic countries have enormous potential for synergy
- Same socio-economic background, strong healthcare registries, publicly owned universities and university hospitals, and high appreciation for medical research
  
- Population approximately 26 Million

# Clinical Research Requires Increased Attention

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## Nordic strengths

- Well-educated researchers
- Public healthcare system well organised and well equipped
- Health registries and biobanks
- Integration of research and clinical care

## Finnish strengths

- Long and strong competence in medical research
- Postdoctoral researchers have good employment possibilities outside academic field



## Nordic weaknesses

- Career opportunities: salaries, lack of defined tenure track
- Constraints on time available for clinical research
- Ratio of positions for doctoral students vs postdoctoral and young investigator positions
- Funding for medical research infrastructures inadequate
- Funding specifically for Nordic co-operation inadequate

## Finnish weaknesses

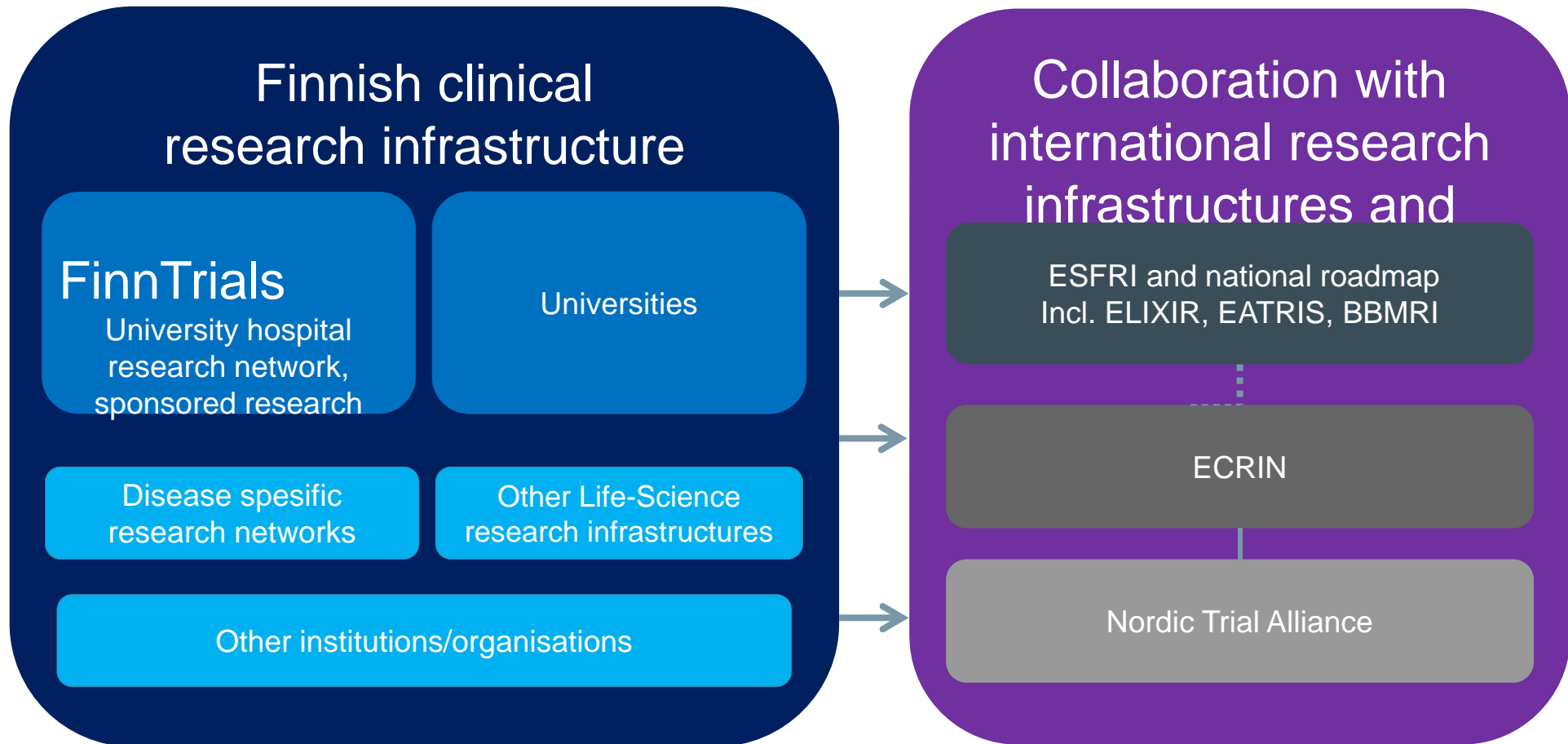
- Many top-level researchers are getting older, a wide gap to the next ones



## Finnish problems

- Funding problems:
  - Academy of Finland
  - Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
  - Pharmaceutical industry
  - Private Foundations
- Increased bureaucracy
- Importancy of academic view decreased in hospitals
- Time pressures in clinical work
- Declining number of clinical researchers
- Data protection legislation??

# Framework of the national infrastructure





## RECOMMENDATIONS (part 1)

- Efforts should be extended to increase and improve Nordic cooperation in medical research and research policy.
- Flexible funding opportunities should be made available to allow greater mobility among Nordic researchers.
- **There needs to be a recognised career path for clinical researchers.**
- Investigator-driven basic research is the key input to more applied science, ultimately producing new innovations and advances in healthcare: faith and trust in basic research should be the overriding issue in medical research policy.



## RECOMMENDATIONS (part 2)

- There is an urgent need at the political level to solve legal and ethical hurdles that are arising in areas such as biobanking and databases that could seriously hinder effective medical research in a number of key areas.
- There needs to be greater use of the Nordic biobanks and health registries to exploit their maximum potential, including greater cooperation between these infrastructures.



## RECOMMENDATIONS (part 3)

- Promotion of translational research (up to transformative approaches)
- Strategies to solve the funding problems
- Clinical professorships again as full-time positions
- International networking
  
- Foundation of Finnish Clinical Trials Centre



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