

# Lessons from the North <sup>[1]</sup>

European affairs dossier: July 21st, 2005 issue of Cafébabel

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**Source:** Cafébabel <sup>[2]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Complete dossier <sup>[3]</sup>

Articles in the dossier are:

- Europe's star pupils in social responsibility
- "Official figures do not tell the whole story"
- Iceland's EU ageing remedy
- A model model?
- Exporting welfare to the world stage?
- Land of luxurious living?

Excerpts from "Europe's star pupils in social responsibility":

As continental Europe groans under the pressure of rising unemployment and as Britain battles with the problem of the 'working poor', Scandinavians can sleep soundly at night: a solid economy and social security have become mutually compatible.

Not so long ago, sceptics predicted the imminent death of the Scandinavian welfare system, then characterised by its financial problems and unprecedented levels of unemployment. A decade later, future estimations are much kinder and nowadays one even talks of the 'Scandinavian role model'. So what lies behind the legendary Scandinavian welfare state?

Social rights are held irrespective of your employment and family situation as everyone is included in one single, universal social security system. The results can easily be seen. The economic conditions and levels of employment seen in Sweden, Norway and Denmark place the Scandinavian trio high up European and world rankings: the highest levels of women in employment (at around 72% according to the OECD's Employment Outlook 2005, pdf), relatively low unemployment figures (between 4.4% and 6.4%) and exemplary policy on equality, education, the environment and debt cancellation.

**Region:** Europe <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** funding <sup>[5]</sup>

maternity and parental leave <sup>[6]</sup>

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