



# NJMR: Over 10 Years of Commitment to Publishing Excellent Research

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*When Nordic Migration Research (NMR) was launched in 2008, there was total agreement among the founding members that one of the primary objectives of the organization was to establish a high-quality, interdisciplinary Nordic journal for research on international migration and migration-related issues in an international and transnational setting. Accordingly, the NMR statutes define the aim of the Nordic Journal for Migration Research (NJMR) as “devoted to publishing high-quality, peer-reviewed research in different aspects of international migration and ethnic relations, such as integration, ethnicity/race, culture, religion, marginalization, citizenship, nationalism, discrimination and racism”. The statutes further specify that the NJMR aims to develop into “a forum for both applied and theoretical research, seeking to attract high-quality, original contributions from both Nordic and non-Nordic countries”, and that an important part of its mission and raison d’être would be to focus particularly, although not exclusively, on the areas mentioned above with respect to their relevance to and impact on “the Nordic countries in a global perspective” (Hedetoft & Sicakkan 2011: 1).*

This was the opening paragraph of the first editorial of NJMR published in 2011. Celebrating over 10 years of commitment to publishing high quality research, and in recognition of the contribution of the several editors to bringing the journal to the prominent status it occupies at present, we outline the NJMR’s journey and successes. In particular, we wish to highlight the work by Lena Näre, who is sadly also leaving NJMR in January 2023 after serving as editor-in-chief for almost 10 years. Hakan G. Sicakkan, who worked with Lena for a year, describes her as ‘very thorough, extremely

## EDITORIAL

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knowledgeable, hardworking, perfectionist' and stresses her efforts to internationalize and index the journal among her key contributions to NJMR. Synnøve Bendixsen who served alongside Lena as co-editor-in-chief for much of their time in this role describes their collaboration as 'a fantastic way to know a colleague ... We were both very devoted to the journal and wanted to improve it in the sense of making it visible and ensuring a really high quality for the articles published'.

The vision shared by Lena and Synnøve was to elevate the journal's status to being the journal of choice among researchers working on migration in the Nordic region. Their commitment to the journal paid off and they were able to see the status of NJMR transform during their years as co-editors. Through their tireless work, Lena and Synnøve have developed NJMR into a highly successful double anonymous peer-reviewed, international open access journal, which continues to be free of cost for both authors and readers. This is no small accomplishment in a climate where Article Processing Charges (APCs) are becoming increasingly common, and it shows NJMR's commitment to de-commodifying knowledge and to providing open access to high quality research.

In addition to their commitment to open knowledge, Lena and Synnøve shared an interest in working closely with junior scholars, and especially PhD candidates, to improve and publish their work in NJMR. Despite being junior scholars themselves when they first started, and lacking the security of a tenured academic position, they worked diligently to strengthen the status of migration research in the region in general, and in particular NJMR's position as a platform for important debates taking place within the community of researchers. Such was the rationale behind introducing calls for special issues to develop significant areas of research. They also introduced the Best Article Award recognized during the NMR conference to promote the research and the researchers behind it. An occasional section that includes discussions and commentary on timely issues was also introduced to create an ongoing dialogue among researchers working on migration in the region.

Against this backdrop NJMR has thrived. After experiencing challenges with its former publisher in 2019, Lena and Synnøve led a tender process that saw NJMR change publishers for the first time in its history. They led negotiations with several open access publishers and decided on giving the journal a home with Helsinki University Press (HUP). Since transferring NJMR to HUP in early 2020, the journal has been published on time every quarter and it benefits from a close working relationship with an excellent, proactive journal team at HUP. Indeed, this can be seen as NJMR continues to be positively evaluated in Nordic journal rankings: for example NJMR has received a level 2 (the highest) in the Danish list and a level 2 in the Finnish list (out of a possible 3 levels) – *up from level 1 in 2021!* NJMR's acceptance into the international SCOPUS list by its Content Selection and Advisory Board (CSAB) in April 2022 also shows how the hard work of the editorial team and close relationship with our publisher are paying off.

Shortening the time from submission to publication was an important priority for Lena and Synnøve, but the COVID-19 pandemic presented serious challenges especially with regards to securing peer-reviewers. The current editorial team continues to be committed to this endeavour, and we call on members of the NJMR's community for support in realizing that goal. The peer-review process is the backbone of high-quality research, and it is a valuable service to the research community. We certainly hope that members of the research community share the commitment to strengthening

the NJMR platform and that they would not hesitate to provide their reviews of manuscripts submitted. Furthermore, in an effort to strengthen NJMR's mission to open knowledge, the journal will be moving a continuous publishing model to expedite the availability of articles after they have undergone the peer-review process.


Editorial work is a voluntary service on behalf of the community of researchers that can be simultaneously challenging and rewarding. When asked about the motivation for their voluntary work and commitment to the journal, Synnøve remarked that reviewing manuscripts 'gives an amazing insight into the developments in the field, and a chance in influencing the development of important themes'. This does not only apply to the work done by the editorial team, but the peer-reviewers as well. Synnøve reminds us that through peer-reviews 'I became a better writer myself, and a better supervisor to my students. You become really good at reading texts, with a particular eye to how the argument develops and can be improved'.


Looking ahead, the current editorial team would like to endorse the journal's mission to publishing high quality research from different disciplines in the field of international migration and ethnic relations that is relevant for 'the Nordic countries in a global perspective'. Towards this end, we welcome Nordic and non-Nordic contributions alike that relate their findings to the Nordic contexts and beyond by reflecting on both the unique and comparative elements of their research.


## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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