



Foreword by the President

2014 was a rich and eventful year for the Nordic Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic. Continuing our initiative from previous years, we progressed in our work to broaden the Chamber's activities, with more focus on directly enhancing trade and commercial relations between the Czech Republic and the Nordic countries. Despite the loss of several large companies and the difficulties that still prevail in Czech economy, we managed to keep our membership base stable; our Transparency Working Group launched a practical guide that received very positive feedback; while both the staff at our head office and the Chamber's media presentation team have been significantly strengthened.

This year, the Nordic Chamber celebrates its 20th anniversary, and I believe we have justified reason to be proud. Since our foundation as the Swedish Chamber in 1995, we have become one of the larger foreign chambers in the country, uniting almost 140 Nordic-related companies that give work to around 59,000 people all over the Czech Republic. I am really looking forward to a number of special events

Staff, Organisation and Media

During 2014, the Nordic Chamber's administration continued to feel the positive impact of its two student trainees, who were employed on a part-time basis. In addition, the Chamber in October last year employed an Event Coordinator, Zuzana Kanioková, who has also been assigned administrative tasks.

As a result of these staff additions, the Chamber's administration has been running with great efficiency. This has in turn enabled Executive Director Lea Turcarová to focus more on recruiting new members and organising the Chamber's Working Groups, as well as developing the Chamber's relations with various ministries and trade organisations.

As in the previous year, the Nordic Chamber in 2014 also applied considerable energy to ensuring smooth communication between its

that we will arrange throughout the year to mark our 20th jubilee. Let me also sincerely thank **Nilfisk-Advance** for becoming the Chamber's General Partner in 2015.

In parallel with the festivities, we will continue our ambitious strategy to make the Nordic Chamber an ever stronger and more visible organisation. In 2015, we will use our favourable financial situation to focus more on business development that will generate a broader base of services for you, our members. Let me also assure you that the Chamber will continue its two decades-long work to promote Nordic values – transparency, equal opportunities and sustainability – in the Czech Republic.

I look forward to continuing our fruitful co-operation in 2015.

Stefan Lager
Chamber President

head office and members and potential members. To make our information services faster and more up to-date, our electronic newsletter, *eNews*, has been published monthly, while the printed *Nordic News* was reduced to two issues.

Efforts to increase the Nordic Chamber's visibility among the Czech public last year yielded favourable results. In addition to our attracting a large number of unique visitors to our new and modernised website, local media repeatedly reported on Chamber events, and the *Business Soirée* magazine in October published a large-scale interview with the Chamber's President.

Hopefully, our new webpage will further boost the Chamber in the field of communication. So far, it mainly lists Chamber events, but in the future we would like to transform it into a source for important busi-

ness information. As in 2014, we will continue our dedicated efforts to become more visible in other media.

Long-term Strategy

Continuing an initiative that was launched two years ago, the Nordic Chamber in 2014 implemented a long-term Strategic Plan encompassing the following key areas of activity:

- **Trade promotion**
- **Business support**
- **Sustainable business**
- **Corporate social responsibility**
- **Social and sports events**
- **Working groups – Transparency; Green Activities; HR & Management**

As an additional element to the Chamber's long-term strategy, the Board in 2014 decided to establish cooperation with trade unions in the Nordic countries. This cooperation is still in its initial phase (with the focus on information sharing), but our intention is that the cooperation will develop into organised visits from Nordic trade union delegations to the Czech Republic.

To the Nordic Chamber, this is a welcome addition to our existing activities aimed at enhancing trade and commercial relations between the Czech Republic and the Nordic region.

Moreover, in 2015, we intend to implement our planned expansion to Bohemia's and Moravia's regional centres – Brno, Ostrava and Plzeň. In practical terms, the Chamber will (in cooperation with local city councils and regional business organisations) arrange information meetings about Nordic business culture and opportunities for Czech exporters in Scandinavia.

Events and Working Groups

The Nordic Chamber last year arranged a total of 26 events, which included 11 Breakfast Meetings, 10 Social & Sports events and six Business Mixers. All in all, this was slightly more than the number of events arranged in 2014. The total number of participants in the gatherings – around 1,760 persons – grew by around 26 percent on the previous year (1,400).

True to tradition, our Social and Sport Events – most notably the Strawberry Party, the Nordic Chamber Golf Masters and the Lucia Christmas Party – were especially warmly received by our members; the Lucia Party had a record 200 participants – among them more than 100 children!

There is stable interest among Chamber members in our events; however, participation continues to be largely limited to the same group of people. Naturally, every member is cordially welcome at any event, but we need to reach out to those who seldom participate in a Chamber event with the message that each kind of event – be it a Breakfast Meeting, Social & Sports event or Business Mixer – represents a different platform for networking.

The Nordic Chambers' two Working Groups – Green Activities and the Transparency Group for Business Ethics – continued in 2014 the successful work they launched in the previous year.

The first, led by Miloslav Hloušek (SKF Czech), continued its campaign to encourage Chamber members to switch from costly and environmentally-unfriendly bottled water to tap water. At a press conference in November, the Nordic Chamber's Transparency Group, led by Dana Hrdinová (Skanska) and Zdeňka Voštová (ABB), presented their Transparency Document to the Czech public. The paper contains

a set of basic principles and practical guidelines on transparent business conduct, and is particularly intended to help smaller companies to grasp and implement the requirements in a professional manner. One more working group, HR & Management, is still under preparation.

As a new service, the Chamber in 2014 offered its corporate members the possibility to be divided into working groups according to their areas of industry – manufacturing, energy, construction, services, trade, etc. On the basis of each group's interests and preferences, the Chamber's intention was to lay on tailor-made events and other arrangements. This initiative, however, did not meet the expected interest among the Nordic Chamber's members.

Chamber Cooperation

Continuing our more than decade-long tradition, the Nordic Chamber also in 2014 enjoyed a smooth and fruitful collaboration with the Nordic embassies and their trade representations in Prague. When our Honorary Chairman, Norway's Ambassador Jens Eikaas, last autumn returned to Oslo, he was replaced by the longest-serving Nordic envoy resident at that time, Sweden's Ambassador Annika Jagander.

We cordially thank the two Ambassadors for accepting the honorary office and dedicating their time to the Nordic Chamber as Honorary Chairwoman/Chairman in 2014.

Last year, we also continued our long-time cooperation with other foreign chambers in the Czech Republic with several arrangements – including the first ever Nordic-Swiss Business Mixer – and the biggest inter-chamber event – Czech Beer Fest 2014 – co-arranged by the Nordic Chamber, which attracted more than 410 visitors.

Moreover, the Chamber in 2014 broadened its ongoing cooperation with NGO Reconstruction of the State to implement anti-corruption reforms in the Czech Republic. As a partner in the mentoring programme Men and Women in Political Balance, which runs until April 2016, the Chamber is also actively participating in enhancing Czech women's access to political life.

Membership Development

Unfortunately, six members of the Chamber's A segment – companies with more than 100 employees – last year decided to terminate their memberships. We deeply regret their decision, but respect that even the biggest companies are keeping a tight control on costs. Luckily, we managed to offset the outflow with a number of new members, some of them also in the A segment.

At the end of 2014, the Nordic Chamber had 138 corporate members (Chart 1) and ten Individuals. With a share of 35 percent, Sweden is still the country of origin of the largest group of corporate members (Chart 2); however, Czech companies with a Nordic connection, currently making up 32 percent, represented the fastest-growing group among our new members in 2014 – up six percentage points since 2013.

Currently, companies with up to 100 employees make up 83 percent of our corporate members (Chart 3), which corresponds to the situation from 2013. Companies with more than 100 employees currently constitute around 17 percent of the Nordic Chamber's membership base.

Throughout our 20-year history, our experience has been that the inflow and outflow of members come in waves, but that this is not a direct reflection on the Chamber's activities. However, the gradual rejuvenation of corporate members has a positive side effect, as new members tend to take more a more active part in the Chamber's events.

As for future growth, we see a certain potential in the regions outside of Prague. Last year, we strengthened our activities in Bohemia and Moravia; our event in Ostrava, co-arranged with Finland's honorary consulate, was particularly successful. We hope that our regional initiative in the long term will lead to a continued increase in the number of new members.

Board of Directors 2014

In the last election period, two of the 11 members of the Board of Directors were women, signalling that the Nordic Chamber is slowly improving its gender balance. Last year was the first time ever that not all Nordic nationalities were represented in the Board, as an Icelandic representative was missing.

The spread of industries represented by the Board members was deemed favourable, although a stronger presence of companies with more than 100 employees would have been welcome. Over the course of last year, the Nordic Chamber's Board had the following members:

H.E. Annika Jagander,

Ambassador of Sweden, Honorary Chairwoman (from October)

H.E. Jens Eikaas

Ambassador of Norway, Honorary Chairman (until September)

Stefan Lager

(SWE, representing Zenterio, SWE), President

Petr Lukášik

(CZ, representing Tieto Czech, FIN), Vice President

Marie Passburg

(SWE, representing Skanska Property, SWE), Vice President

Jiří Pech

(CZ, representing individual member), Treasurer

Andrea Colantoni

(SWE, representing Hudson Global Resources, USA), Board Member

Birger Husted

(DK, representing Husted s.r.o. – Human Capital, CZ), Board Member

Nils Jebens

(NOR, representing Kampa Group, CZ), Board Member

Hannu Kasi

(FIN, representing ABB, SWE), Board Member

Zdeněk Majer

(CZ, representing Škoda Transportation, CZ), Board Member

Marika Přinosilová

(CZ, representing SAAB Technologies/Gripen Int., SWE), Board Member

Radek Socha

(CZ, representing SKF, SWE), Board Member

Challenges for 2015

The Nordic Chamber's main challenges in the coming year will be to continue our membership drive and the effort to broaden our base of services for our members. We will also intensify our cooperation with business organisations, both in the Czech regions and in the Nordic countries. The goal is to bolster the Chamber's role as a practical vehicle for building Czech-Nordic business relations.

In addition, we will intensify our long-standing focus on an open dialogue between the Chamber and its members. This year, the Chamber's Board will for the first time be elected under an online election system. Hopefully, this important change will be followed by more novelties that will make communication even easier and faster. The voice of each and every member of the Nordic Chamber shall be heard.

Czech-Nordic Trade in 2014

Exports to	2013	2014	y/y index (%)
Denmark	26 096	41 411	158.6
Finland	15 249	19 084	125.1
Iceland	805	846	105.0
Norway	16 249	16 201	99.7
Sweden	47 433	52 975	111.6

Imports from	2013	2014	y/y index (%)
Denmark	16 817	18 861	112.1
Finland	8 045	10 296	127.9
Iceland	1 421	1 296	91.2
Norway	28 165	14 417	51.1
Sweden	26 333	27 692	105.1

in CZK bill.

Source: ČSÚ



Chart 1: Membership Development

MEMBERS	EXISTING	NEW	CANCELLED
2010	143	17	15
2011	145	20	16
2012	149	14	14
2013	149	18	16
2014	151	17	20
2015	148	Incl. Individuals	

Chart 2: Members – Country of Origin 2014

COUNTRY	MEMBERS 2014	% OF MEMBERS	TOTAL COMPANIES IN 2015	% OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATION OF TOTAL NORDIC COMPANIES
Sweden	48	35	195	47
Denmark	22	16	84	20
Norway	10	7	56	14
Finland	14	10	69	17
Iceland	0	0	10	2
Others	44	32		

Chart 3: Corporate Members – Number of Employees 2014

MEMBERS	2014	%	DESCRIPTION
A	24	17	over 100 employees
B	26	19	31-100 employees
C	25	18	11-30 employees
D	63	46	1-10 employees