

### **Preface**

The NordREG annual report presents the work undertaken by the Nordic Energy Regulators (NordREG) in 2021 to achieve the vision to facilitate efficient and advanced energy markets for the benefit of consumers. Our vision is guided by the strategic principles of giving correct price signals, activating consumers and establishing a dynamic regulatory framework that enables advanced energy markets.

NordREG has continued a fruitful and strong cooperation in the Nordic region in 2021 although it has been an exceptional year with the Covid-19 pandemic related challenges Europe was and is still facing.

In 2021 NordREG has continued the cooperation on EU's Clean Energy Package (CEP). We have also cooperated on the European network codes and guidelines that plays a significant role in the development of efficient energy markets and resilient energy systems. In 2021, we focused on efficient implementation in the Nordic area as well as influencing the decisions made on a European level.

The Nordic cooperation and coordination of the regulatory oversight of the new Nordic Balancing Model (NBM) has been a high priority. The NBM provides an extensive modernization of the existing Nordic balancing system and aims to enhance the robustness of the Nordic power systems and provide the TSOs with correct tools to manage a highly dynamic power system characterized by more frequent and rapid changes in production, consumption and power flows.

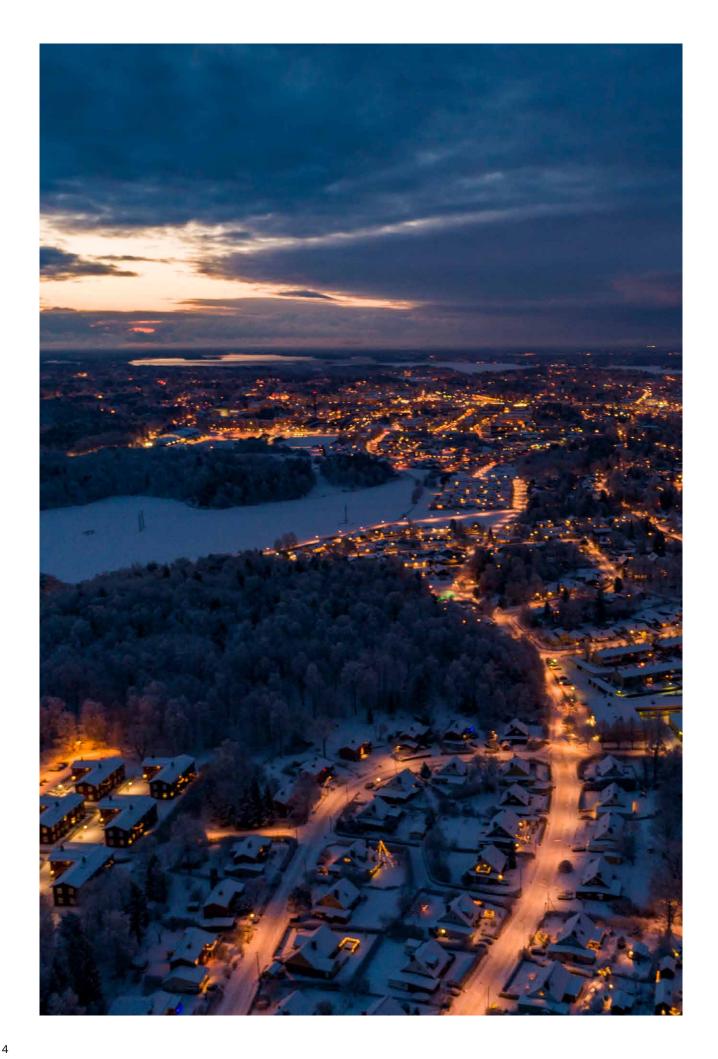
NordREG has continued the work to improve and harmonize the Nordic retail market for electricity. The demand side flexibility has also been identified as a new promising tool to manage local constraints and imbalances in the Nordic electricity system. By allowing flexibility providers to offer their services, we will also achieve our goal of activating consumers and give them the possibility to lower their energy bills when providing flexibility to the system. NordREG has continued to facilitate this new trend through national pilot projects, adjusting the existing regulatory framework and investigating the potential of new technical solutions. In the area of network regulation, we have focused on information exchange of best practices in the Nordic countries.

All in all, 2021 has been an important year for NordREG. With the organizational structure of dedicated working groups for the retail market, the wholesale and transmission system, network regulation as well as demand flexibility, the NordREG cooperation is playing an important role in promoting efficient electricity markets and developing relevant regulation to benefit the Nordic area and especially the Nordic consumers.

Oslo, December 2021

**Tore Langset** 

Chair of NordREG 2021



## **Executive summary**

NordREG has over the years become increasingly influenced by the development of the electricity market at the EU level. The establishment of a common harmonised European electricity market has been in focus and the Clean Energy for all Europeans legislative package has had a big influence on the development.

During 2021 NordREG has continued to focus on the work of implementing the European network codes and guidelines in the Nordic region. Other major tasks have involved harmonisation of the Nordic retail market, network regulation, tariff design and flexibility issues, which also have prominent roles in the Clean Energy Package (CEP) regulation.

NordREG has had an important part to play in the coordination of the regulatory oversight of the new Nordic Balancing Model to ensure a timely and efficient implementation in compliance with the legislation. The various dedicated NordREG working groups and task forces carried out important tasks to reach the strategic goals. Several tasks have required close cooperation with stakeholders.

### **Retail Market**

The NordREG Retail Market Working Group (RMWG) follow the situation and share experience regarding the Nordic end-user markets in order to promote harmonization of rules and regulations.

In 2021 RMWG had a major focus on unfair business practices, an emerging problem in all Nordic markets where a few suppliers cause many complaints to the NRAs and Consumer authorities. Here, experience from monitoring activities and remedial actions has been discussed and compared to learn from each other and improve the customer's situation.

### Wholesale and Transmission

The Wholesale and Transmission Working Group (W&T WG) has been focusing on the continued development of well-functioning Nordic wholesale markets. A major part of the work relates to the implementation of the CEP and the European network codes and guidelines. W&T WG also forms the link between the Nordic National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) and the Nordic Transmission System Operators (TSOs) on Nordic wholesale market and operational issues. A large part of the work has been in line with the NordREG vision to achieve efficient and advanced energy markets in terms of promoting efficient price signals, competition and an efficient and advanced energy system.

### **Network Regulation**

Network Regulation Working Group has under 2021 focused on the implementation process of the CEP. The work has been concentrated to Network development plans and the use of flexibility in the distribution grid. The working group has also developed a common opinion on cost-reflective electricity network tariffs.

### Demand Flexibility

The Demand Flexibility WG has contributed to the coordination of implementation of the CEP, primarily through its proposal on the regulatory framework for independent aggregation and helped ensure a strong Nordic voice on issues concerning demand-flexibility.

### Strategy Group

In 2021 NordREG has continued the work to strengthen the organisational and procedural frame work in order to secure an efficient cooperation.

# **Table of content**

Preface	3
Executive summary  Retail Market  Wholesale and Transmission  Network Regulation  Demand Flexibility  Strategy Group	5 5 5 5 5 5
1.1 Mission and vision 1.2 Long term strategy 1.3 Priorities for 2021	8 8 9 9
<ul><li>2. Retail Market</li></ul>	<b>10</b> 10 11
3.1 Reports from the Wholesale and Transmission taskforces 3.1.1 Crosscutting and coordinating Task Force 3.1.2 Capacity Task Force 3.1.3 Single Market Task Force 3.1.4 System Operation Task Force 3.1.5 Electricity Balancing Task Force 3.2 Complete list of activities	
4. Network Regulation	<b>16</b> 17 17
<ul><li>5. Demand Flexibility</li><li>5.1 Highlighted activities from 2021</li><li>5.2 Complete list of activities</li></ul>	19 19
<ul> <li>6. Strategy group</li> <li>6.1 Highlighted activities from 2021</li> <li>6.2 Complete list of activities</li> <li>7 Uncoming work in 2022</li> </ul>	20 20 21





### 1. Introduction

This report presents the work undertaken by the Nordic energy regulators (NordREG) during 2021 in the areas of wholesale electricity markets, retail markets, network regulation and demand side flexibility.

The aim of the report is to describe how NordREG has dealt with each task during the year. The annual report presents challenges and success stories from 2021 on a general level.

### 1.1 Mission and vision

NordREG's objective is to promote and develop efficient electricity markets in the Nordic area, consistent with

and in the forefront of the development in the EU. The work within NordREG focuses on practical, relevant solutions to common challenges, e.g. in relation to the European network codes and guidelines.

### NordREG's mission

"In cooperation, we actively promote legal and institutional framework and conditions necessary for developing the Nordic and European electricity markets."

### NordREG's vision

"Actively promoting efficient and advanced energy markets, for the benefit of consumers towards a decarbonised society."

### 1.2 Long term strategy

The report explains what various NordREG Working Groups have done to achieve the goals set in the NordREG Long Term Strategy, which was prepared and adopted in 2019. The aim of the strategy is to provide clear guidance for the development during the years up to 2030. NordREG's mission is to actively promote legal and institutional framework and conditions necessary for developing the Nordic and European electricity market. NordREG's strategy consists of three strategic principles:

- 1. Correct price signals
- 2. Active consumers
- 3. Dynamic framework

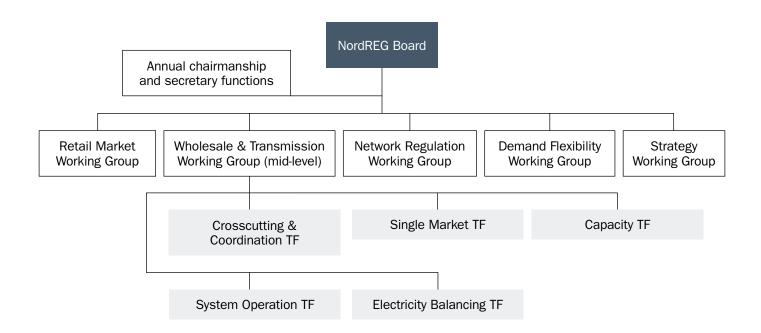
NordREG's Strategy is supported by a Road Map that outlines the activities needed in the short-, mediumand long run to accomplish the target items set in the Strategy. The Road map guides Working Groups and Task Forces to plan their work for the next 12 months. NordREG has five active working groups as seen in the chart below.

### 1.3 Priorities for 2021

The implementation of the CEP will introduce new areas of regional cooperation, and NordREG sees benefits according to our vision in streamlining the way the new legal acts are implemented in the Nordic countries. Additionally, when performing national

tasks, NRAs increasingly encounter matters of regional concern and crossborder implications. Following the vision and the strategy, the seven priorities for 2021 are as follows:

- 1. Implementation of the CEP regulation and ensuring a common, harmonised understanding and application of the rules.
- 2. Continue effective implementation of European network codes and guidelines on Forward Capacity Allocation Guideline, Capacity Allocation and Congestions Management Guideline, System Operations Guideline, Electricity Balancing Guideline, Requirements for Grid Connection of Generators Network Code, Demand Connection Network Code and High Voltage Direct Current Network Code.
- Continue cooperation and coordination of the work regarding the common Nordic end-user market and market conditions for customers in the Nordic retail markets for electricity.
- 4. Cooperate and coordinate the work regarding flexibility issues with a special focus on the implementation of the CEP.
- Maintain a close dialogue with Nordic Transmission System Operators (TSOs) on issues of importance for the internal market.
- 6. Deepen the Nordic cooperation in CEER and ACER.
- 7. Continue to enhance the strategic as well as the day-to-day cooperation in NordREG.





### 2. Retail Market

This chapter describes the work that NordREG has done within the Retail Market Working Group (RMWG) and the current state of affairs nationally looking specifically at the implementation of data-hubs and the situation regarding unfair commercial practices in the Nordic retail markets.

### 2.1 Highlighted activities from 2021

RMWG has continued to follow the implementation of data hubs. In the annual publication "Implementation of data hubs in the Nordic countries - Status Report, November 2021", it was concluded that data hubs are up and running in Denmark and Norway and under development in Finland, with a scheduled start around February 2022. In Sweden, the legislation is not yet in place and the TSO has put the work on hold waiting for the government's decision.

In March 2021, NordREG published a study that investigated if a closer integration between Nordic data hubs might deliver benefits for Nordic end customers. The study concluded that the Nordic countries should preserve current similarities between retail markets and explore if data sharing on a Nordic level could promote new business models related to flexibility services. However, in the current market situation, benefits from creating interoperability between data-hubs did not outweigh investment costs.

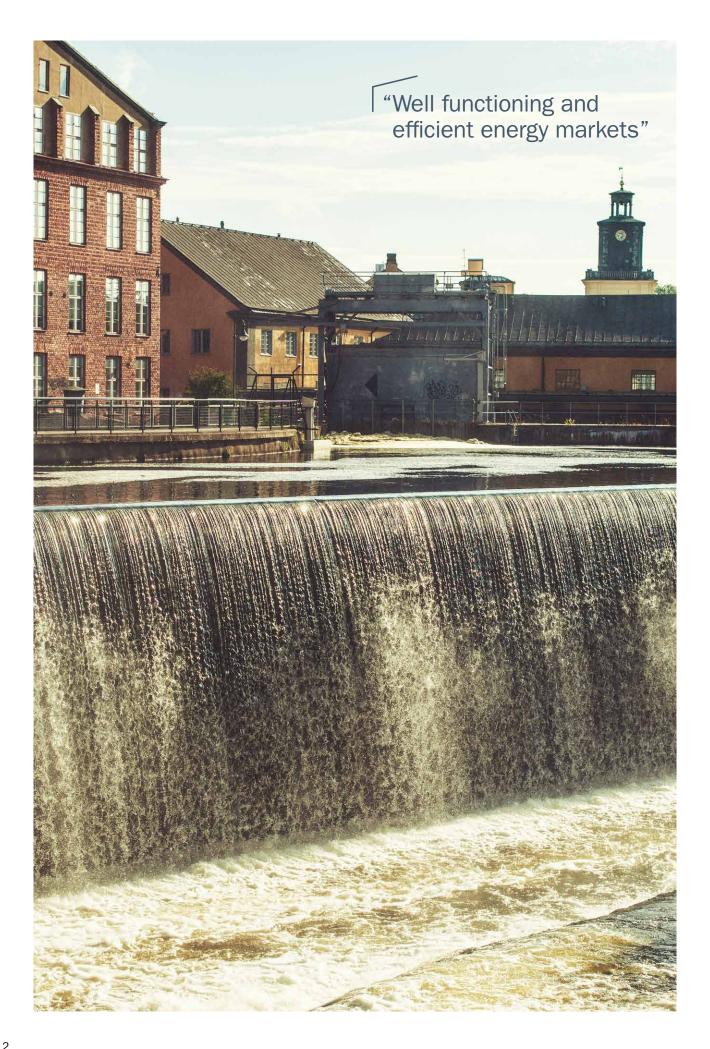
In 2021, RMWG mapped and compared the situation regarding unfair commercial practices in the Nordic retail markets. Unfair commercial practices is an emerging problem in all markets where a few suppliers cause many complaints to both the NRAs and the Consumer authorities. NordREG will continue to follow and share experience about this issue in 2022.

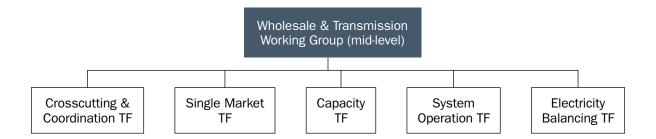
In November 2021, RMWG arranged a fourth annual monitoring workshop where monitoring experts from the Nordic NRAs participated. Here, national cases were presented, and the overall conclusion was that NRAs faces similar challenges and therefore can benefit from sharing experience with each other. Experience from monitoring suppliers using unfair commercial and how to monitor the information in public comparison tools were discussed.

Following a request from the Nordic Electricity Forum, RMWG has started to map remaining asymmetries and gaps in terms/conditions in Nordic retail markets. Publication was scheduled to June 2021, but was postponed to 2022, due to the fact that the CEP were not yet implemented in the Nordic EU-countries. By the end of 2021, Denmark had implemented the new EU-legislaton, Finland will implement early 2022 and Sweden will later in 2022.



	Activities from 2021	Description
1	Information exchange regarding the ongoing national work to implement national data hubs.	RMWG follows the implementation of Nordic data hubs and publish an annual status report. In 2021, RMWG has also published a study about interoperability between the Nordic data hubs.
2	Coordination of current and future European activities.	At each meeting, RMWG discuss the need for common standpoints on upcoming European activities.
3	Follow implementation of Clean Energy Package.	RMWG follows the implementation of the CEP, with a special focus on the NordREG-recommendations from 2019 regarding the Electricity Directive's article 10, 12, 14 and 18.
4	Monitoring work shop 2021.	Annual workshop where experiences regarding monitoring were shared and discussed by monitoring experts.
5	Status report on remaining asymmetries and gaps in terms/conditions in Nordic retail markets.	Following a request from the Nordic Electricity Forum, RMWG has started to map remaining asymmetries and gaps in terms/conditions in Nordic retail markets.





### 3. Wholesale and Transmission

This chapter describes the work done by NordREG within the W&T WG and the current state of affairs. In 2021, the W&T WG work has been focusing on the continued development of well-functioning Nordic wholesale markets. A major part of the work relates to the implementation of the Clean Energy Package and the European network codes and guidelines. W&T WG also forms the link between the managerial level of the Nordic NRAs and the Nordic TSOs regarding the Nordic wholesale markets and operational issues. W&T WG thus acts as a link between the Nordic NRA/TSO discussions at technical level and the Nordic NRA/TSO discussions at Director General /CEO level.

A large part of the work undertaken in 2021 supported NordREG's vision to achieve efficient and advanced energy markets in terms of promoting efficient price signals, competition and an efficient and advanced energy system.

# 3.1 Reports from the Wholesale and Transmission taskforces

W&T WG is supported by five task forces and two ad hoc groups on Forward Capacity Allocation and Legal issues respectively. In the following subsections, the work carried out in 2021 by various W&T WG Task Forces is described below.

# 3.1.1 Crosscutting and coordinating Task Force

The Crosscutting & Coordinating TF (C&C TF) was established in the spring of 2021 as a secretariat to the W&T WG. The C&C TF coordinates closely with the chair of the W&T WG and is the point of contact for the TSOs, EMG, ACER and CEER on wholesale and transmission issues. The C&C TF is also responsible for hosting and chairing the yearly meeting with the market players.

Moreover, and on an ad hoc basis, the C&C TF deals with issues of a more horizontal character that cannot be undertaken by the other Task Forces reporting to the W&T WG.

In 2021 the task force worked on the approval of a Nordic regional coordination center which is to be established by 1 July 2022. Furthermore, the task force prepared the NordREG seminar on Wholesale and Transmission Developments that was held on 19 November 2021.

### 3.1.2 Capacity Task Force

The Capacity Task Force (Capacity TF) focuses its' work on issues related to implementation of the capacity calculation and redispatch/countertrading methodologies according to European regulations in the Nordic region. The Task Force is also involved in processes on a European level in instances where topics with potential implications for CCR Nordic are under consideration.

In 2021, the main task of this TF has been to support in the implementation of Nordic TSOs' new capacity calculation methodology for the Day Ahead and Intraday timeframes.



### 3.1.3 Single Market Task Force

In 2021 the Single Market TF (SM TF) has exchanged views and coordinated the ongoing work related to the Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/1222 of 24 July 2015, establishing a guideline on capacity allocation and congestion management (CACM GL).

On the work on the revision of CACM GL, the SM TF has worked closely together with exchanging views and coordinating our common interests. The TF has written and published a position paper on the revision of CACM GL. Where beneficial, the SM TF has been coordinating national decisions according to the CACM GL.

The task force has coordinated our work on the cost decisions on the Costs of establishing, amending and operating single day-ahead and intraday coupling for 2017. The SM TF has also coordinated the work on the approval of the sharing the regional costs regarding single day-ahead and intraday coupling in the intraday coupling. The first proposal from the Nordic TSOs was rejected by the NRAs because the proposal did not fulfil the procedural rules of CACM GL.

### 3.1.4 System Operation Task Force

Pursuant to the SO GL the Nordic TSOs have submitted two proposals for approval by all NRAs of the Nordic Synchronous Area or Nordic LFC-block in 2021.

The following regional decision have been made by Nordic NRAs in 2021:

1. For the Nordic synchronous area, the minimum activation period to be ensured by FCR providers in accordance with SO GL Article 156(10).

In addition, the following regional methodology have been submitted by the Nordic TSOs in 2021:

 For the Nordic LFC-block, ramping restrictions for active power output in accordance with Article 137(3) and (4). This proposal has been approved before but is amended due to the development of the Nordic power system.

In addition, the Nordic TSOs have submitted reports and documents in accordance with SO GL and decisions made by the Nordic NRAs.

The task force has also exchanged views on the interpretation of ER NC, RfG NC, DCC NC and HVDC NC. This work is conducted in the Task Force, but decisions are made separately by each national regulator.

### 3.1.5 Electricity Balancing Task Force

The Electricity Balancing Task Force (EB TF) has been in dialogue and has carried out regulatory oversight and assessments of the Nordic TSOs' implementation of the Nordic Balancing Model (NBM), with a number of proposals following from the EB Regulation.

As such, the EB TF cooperated on analyzing the TSOs' national proposals for a derogation from the original deadline to implement a 15 minutes imbalance settlement period and subsequently granted an extension of the deadline until 22 May 2023. The EB TF also analyzed an additional imbalance settlement mechanism submitted by the TSOs to implement a single position/single price model for imbalances in the Nordic region by 1 November 2021. Moreover, the EB TF gave informal guidance to TSOs and stakeholders through, respectively, NRA/TSO NBM Coordination Group meetings and NBM Reference Group meetings.

	Activities from 2021	Description
1	NordREG Wholesale & Transmission Developments seminar 2021.	On the 19th November the seminar was virtually hosted including topics presented by the W&T TFs as well as various stakeholders.
2	Nordic TSOs proposal for amending the Flow-Based Capacity Calculation Methodology.	The proposal was approved October 2020, while also making changes in the implementation plan to ensure that flow-based capacity calculation works sufficiently well before go-live.
3	Nordic TSOs' proposal for sharing of regional day-ahead and intraday coupling costs for the period 31 January – 31 July 2020.	Assessment of the proposal and coordination for the national decision. The first proposal was rejected by the NRAs because the proposal did not fulfil the procedural rules of Regulation 2015/1222.
4	Follow and work on the revision of CACM. Publication of the Nordic Position Paper on the revision of CACM.	Discuss and closely follow the process on the revision of CACM, coordinate our common interests. Written and published the Nordic Position Paper on the revision of CACM.
5	Nordic TSOs' amended proposal on ramping restrictions for active power output in accordance with SO GL Article 137(3) and (4).	The proposal is currently under regulatory assessment. The NRAs issued a request for amendment.
6	Nordic TSOs' proposal for minimum activation period to be ensured by FCR providers in accordance with SO GL Article 156(10).	The proposal was approved.
7	Nordic TSOs' requests to derogate from 15 minute imbalance settlement period.	Derogations granted until 22 May 2023.
8	Nordic TSOs' terms and conditions for an additional imbalance settlement mechanism to implement a single position/ single price model for imbalances in the Nordic region.	Approvals granted allowing for a single price model by 1 November 2021.
9	Coordination, guidance and stakeholder involvement.	Chairing of NRA/TSO NBM coordination group and presentations at NBM reference group meetings with guidance to Nordic TSOs, i.a. on their upcoming requests to derogate from deadline to connect to aFRR and mFRR platforms.

"Cost reflective grid tariffs & connection fees"

## 4. Network Regulation

This chapter describes the work within the Network Regulation Working Group (NRWG) for 2021. NRWG contributes to the exchange of knowledge regarding current issues in network regulation. Through this work, the working group contributes to a dynamic framework within network regulation. The implementation of CEP and the issues that arise in this process has been a major focus for the working group during the 2021. NRWG also continued to work on cost-reflective tariff design and a common opinion was sent to the Board for approval in December 2021.



### 4.1 Highlighted activities from 2021

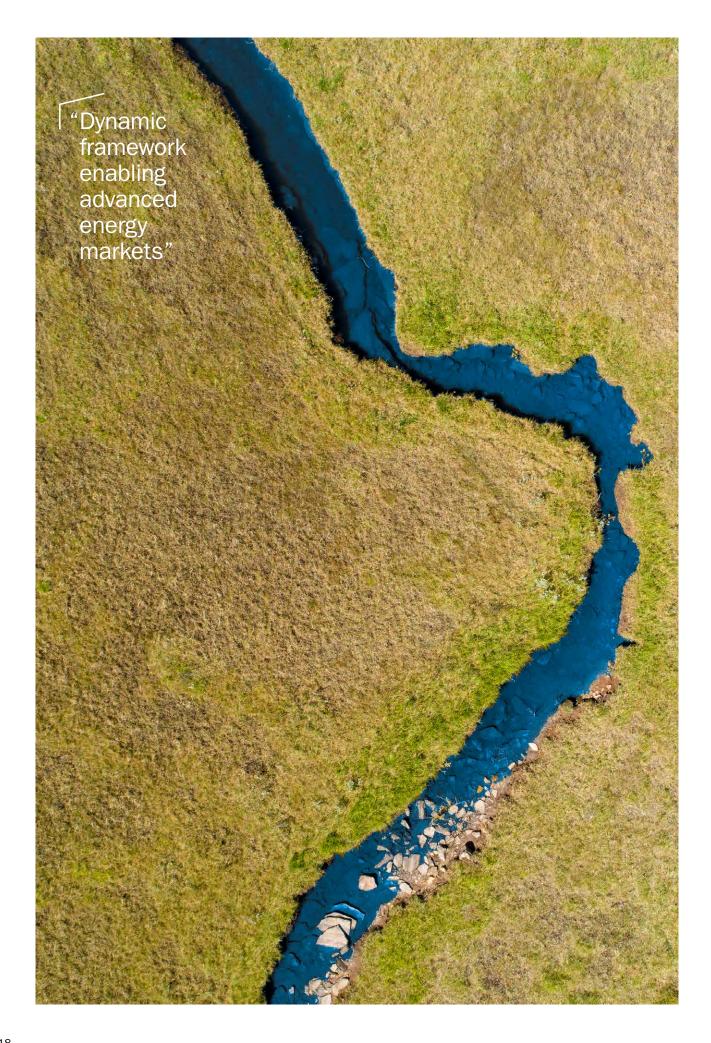
The aim of the work program for 2021 was to focus on the implementation of the CEP and tariff design.

An internal workshop was held in November with the aim of highlighting key issues for the implementation of network development plans. As the work with the plans is new to most regulators, the workshop provided an opportunity to share experiences and address new issues linked to both investments in infrastructure and procurement of flexibility services.

Flexibility services will play an increasingly important role in using the electricity grid in an economically efficient way. In November NRWG arranged a workshop on this topic for the members in NordREG. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss how incentives for procurement of flexibility can be regulated.

In 2020, the working group produced a report on price incentives and tariffs. This year we have continued this work with what is now NordREG's common opinion on general principles of tariff design.

	Activities from 2021	Description
1	Workshop on network development plans.	Internal workshop was held in November.
2	Workshop on incentives for procurement of flexibility.	Internal workshop was held in November.
3	Common opinion	The common opinion on tariff design was sent to the Board for approval in December.



## 5. Demand Flexibility

The WG on demand flexibility was established in January 2015, assess demand response in the Nordic electricity market and consider potential needs for Nordic initiatives that require coordinated actions at ministry level.

Over 2021, the WG has contributed to the coordination of implementation of the CEP, primarily through supporting the Electricity Working Group's implementation of provisions on independent aggregation, and helped ensure a strong NordREG voice on issues concerning demand-flexibility.

### 5.1 Highlighted activities from 2021

The key deliverable in 2021 was following up our recommendations on independent aggregation. NordREG has also engaged with the process on potentially developing a new European network code on demand flexibility.

The CEP has introduced the right for aggregators to operate independently of their customers' suppliers, in an attempt to increase the number of aggregators participating in markets and so raise the level of demand-response in Europe. This concept presents important opportunities for helping consumers support and benefit from the Energy Transition.

NordREG agreed that there should be a harmonised Nordic approach to how the idea of independent aggregators is introduced in the region, so as to avoid cross-border market barriers and increase the number of aggregators operating in Norden.

The WG therefore presented its recommendations on implementing independent aggregation in an optimal way for the Nordic market. The Flex WG has continued a dialogue with ministries, TSOs and the Nordic Electricity Forum to continue this implementation work through the year.

	Activities from 2021	Description
1	Implementation of independent aggregation in the Nordic region.	Follow-up work on how harmonised the independent aggregation rules are implemented in the Nordic region.
2	Coordination of flexibility issues within NordREG.	Established a coordination process within NordREG for flexibility related issues, outlining clear objectives for NordREG on enabling market-based flexibility for the benefit of Nordic consumers.



## 6. Strategy group

NordREG established in 2017 a dedicated strategy group with the mission to deepen our cooperation. The task of the strategy group is to revisit the vision of NordREG and present a future proof strategy for regulatory cooperation. In addition, the strategy group has tasks to coordinate cross cutting issues and handle issues not covered by the other NordREG working groups.

In 2021 NordREG has continued the work started in 2017 to strengthen the organizational and procedural framework in order to secure an efficient cooperation.

## 6.1 Highlighted activities from 2021

NordREG's Long-term Strategy prepared and adopted in 2019 provides a clear guidance for the development during the years up to 2030.

To support implementation of the Long-term strategy NordREG has also prepared a road map which identifies concrete actions NordREG will make in coming three years. The road map forms a strategic basis for the preparation of annual work programs.

In 2021, NordREG has analysed needs to update and streamline NordREG's internal modus operandi and rules of procedure of the Nordic Energy Regulators Regional Forum (ERRF).

	Activities from 2021	Description
1	Implement and support NordREG Long-term Strategy	The Road map has been updated to cover actions NordREG will perform in years 2022-2024 and beyond.  Long-term Strategy and Road Map form a basis for the preparation of Work Program 2022. The Long-term Strategy will be revisited in 2022.
2	Efficient organizational and procedural structures and framework	Needs to update NordREG's organizational structure have been analysed. Special focus has been to clarify the role of mid-management vis-à-vis respective working groups and task forces.  NordREG's Modus Operandi and Rules of Procedure of the Nordic Energy Regulators Regional Forum (ERRF) have been streamlined and updated to support effective cooperation and to take into account changes in the recast of the ACER Regulation. Legal considerations of the ERRF document is ongoing and will be finalized in 2022.
3	Coordination of NordREG's work in connection to the Nordic Electricity Forum (NEMF)	NordREG has participated as an observer in the Nordic Electricity Market Forum Coordination Group (NEMF CG) set up by the EMG. Objective of this group is to monitor progress of NEMF Road Map at national and regional level, to monitor progress on NEMF WG deliveries and in cooperation with the NEMF WGs to recognize for annual NEMF Forum issues where Forum's discussions are deemed necessary to foster progress to achieve the (long and medium term) Electricity Market Vision.
4	NordREG Strategy Day	<ol> <li>This event has been arranged 8 December 2021.</li> <li>There were two inspirational sessions on:</li> <li>The Green Deal, hydrogen and decarbonization - coming regulatory development from the Commission's perspective. What will be the challenges and opportunities for the European regions during the coming 10 years.</li> <li>Regional decision making and sector coupling in the coming 10 years. This autumn ACER celebrates its 10 years anniversary. Looking forward during the next 10 years, how will ACER and regional decision making develop? Sector coupling is also now on ACER's standing agenda. How will sector coupling emerge and affect the energy system during the next 10 years?</li> <li>The inspirational sessions were followed by discussions regarding the need for revision of the NordREG Long-term Strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose.</li> </ol>

## 7. Upcoming work in 2022

NordREG WGs will continue coordinating the implementation of the EU's Clean Energy Package to ensure harmonised understanding and implementation of the rules and regulations. Additionally, focus will remain on the effective implementation of the European network codes and guidelines.

Decarbonisation of the society and transition towards clean energy system continues and requires adjustments in energy market design. The work within NordREG continues focusing on practical and relevant solutions to common challenges. Energy transition might bring also new topics, like sector coupling and power-to-x to be discussed within NordREG. NordREG tries to keep its organisation effective focusing on topics where cooperation of Nordic energy regulators will bring benefits to markets and consumers. We continuously strive for an efficient organisation fit for purpose; thus ad hoc working groups are started when needed.

In 2022 NordREG priority will be on the following:

- 1. Implementation of the Clean Energy Package regulation and ensuring a common, harmonized understanding and application of the rules.
- 2. Continue effective implementation of European network codes and guidelines
- Continue cooperation and coordination of the work regarding the common Nordic end-user market and market conditions for customers in the Nordic retail markets for electricity.
- 4. Cooperate and coordinate the work regarding flexibility issues with a special focus on the Clean Energy regulation.
- 5. Maintain a close dialogue with Nordic Transmission System Operators (TSOs) on issues of importance for the internal market.
- 6. Deepen the coordination of Nordic views and participation in CEER and ACER.
- Increase information and best practices sharing among Nordic NRAs and promote the common understanding as basis for the actual decisions
- 8. Continue to enhance the strategic as well as the day-to-day cooperation in NordREG.

Please see the NordREG Work Programme 2022 for more information on NordREG activities in 2022.









NordREG is a voluntary cooperation between the Nordic energy regulators. The presidency and secretariat rotate annually.

The presidency and secretariat of NordREG was during 2021 held by the Norwegian Energy Regulatory Authority (NVE-RME).

Please contact us if you have any questions.

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