

# Celebrating 40 years of Nordic collaboration

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The year 2023 is drawing to a close – but not before we have celebrated this journal’s 40 years of publishing. In this editorial, we take a look at our journal’s history of publishing peer-reviewed social science research of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, and other substance use and addiction-related phenomena.

## Some history

*Alkoholpolitik – Tidskrift för nordisk alkohol-forskning* was established in 1983. It was owned, published and funded by the Finnish alcohol monopoly Alko to serve as a Nordic peer-reviewed journal for social science research on alcohol. It was published four times a year with articles in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. The editorial board consisted of representatives from the five Nordic countries and a representative from the Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research (now the Nordic Welfare Centre [NVC]). In 1991, the journal was renamed *Nordisk Alkoholtidskrift* and began publishing

six times a year, thanks to support from the Norwegian Vinmonopolet, the Swedish Systembolaget and the Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research. In addition, from 1994, an annual English-language issue (English supplement) came out with selected translated articles. Around the same time, the journal was also given the English-language name of *Nordic Alcohol Studies*.

Alko’s research activities, including the journal, were integrated into the Research and Development Centre for Social Welfare and Health (Stakes, later the Institute for Health and Welfare, THL) in 1996. In 1997, the journal became the *Nordisk Alkohol- & Narkotikatidskrift* (*Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*) to better reflect the research conducted in the field of substance use in the Nordic countries. Two new funders came onboard, namely the Danish Ministry of Health (Sundhedsministeriet) and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health (Folkhälsoinstitutet,

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later Folkhälsomyndigheten or the Public Health Agency of Sweden). At this time, the main publisher was Stakes in collaboration with the Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research.

In the early 2000s, Alko ceased funding the journal. The Norwegian Vinmonopolet discontinued its contributions in the late 2000s, but the Norwegian Institute for Alcohol and Drug Research (SIFA, later SIRUS, now part of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health or Folkhelseinstituttet) became a contributor. The Swedish Systembolaget supported the journal with an extensive subscription scheme, including the company's stores nationwide, until the journal transitioned to Open Access with an Online First policy in 2017.

Between 2007 and 2009, the journal alternated between English-language and Scandinavian issues, but starting in 2010, the journal has published articles in English, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish in the same issue. English contributions have come to dominate the journal, but a few articles in Nordic languages are still published annually. Until 2010, Stakes, and later THL, provided approximately half of the journal's budget. The remaining funding came from the Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research, the Norwegian SIRUS, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health and the Danish Health Authority. In early 2009, Stakes and the National Institute of Public Health merged to form the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), which announced that it could no longer justify being the primary parent organisation for the journal.

The NVC took over the journal's ownership in 2010. At this point, the journal had already begun to emphasise its English-language name, *Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, and while we still publish texts in Scandinavian languages, the domination of English-language publications is overwhelming.

## Contemporary times

Today, the journal is still owned by the NVC, which also hosts the sibling project of NAD,

the popular science website *PopNAD*. The University of Helsinki is a co-publisher and has hosted the editorial office since 2020 at the University of Helsinki Centre for Research on Addiction Control and Governance (CEACG). In addition to the NVC and the University of Helsinki, the following institutions now fund the journal: the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (Folkhelseinstituttet); the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (Socialdepartementet); and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland. The Swedish alcohol monopoly Systembolaget co-funds a separate task, the gathering of the Nordic alcohol statistics, published by *PopNAD*.

Looking ahead, NVC wants to strengthen the academic support of the journal, and negotiations are in place for the Center for Rusmiddelforskning in Århus University and Uppsala University in Sweden to join the publishing forces.

## Some numbers

In 2022, the journal had an impact factor of 1.7 with a total of 250,149 downloads and an acceptance rate of 43%. In addition to editors and a *PopNAD* editor, we have a scientific board with nine members, and we have four associate editors who help out with the growing number of submissions.

*NAD* has an annual submission volume of approximately 100 manuscripts. Our estimation is that, annually, approximately 200–250 scholars contribute to the journal and 120 reviewers are involved in the reviewing processes. Approximately 45 manuscripts get accepted. A rough estimation is that 2250 reviewers' hours go into the journal every year. This is, naturally, the base that we stand on and rely on in order to function in the future.

There would not be a journal without the work of the many researchers and reviewers that have supported this publication for 40 years. The journal's board and staff want to thank all of them for the incredible amount and quality of work that the journal requires.

## In this issue

In a position paper from the International Society for Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE), Babor et al. (2023) suggest ways to get a more balanced gender representation in the management and workforce of addiction journals. Johnstad (2023) asks why the police are against drug policy decriminalisation and liberalisation. In an interview study, Pettersen et al. (2023) explore the meaning of recovery and a sober life after a long duration of a substance use disorder. Bendixen et al. (2023) look into the rights and the constraints in municipality help for people with both serious substance use and mental health problems. Wahlström et al. (2023) study whether associations in problematic familial alcohol use and adolescent outcomes differ by parental education. Finally, Unlu and Hupli (2023) study the discussion on the cannabis legalisation proposal on Finnish-speaking Twitter.


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