

# Activity Report 2016



*Photo: Jacob Saurén, Tidningen Åland*



The Åland Islands Peace Institute





# A Year to be Happy About

The work of the Åland Peace Institute in 2016 has been characterised by a high level of activity. There is continuity with the activities achieved, and the interaction with the public has increased and deepened. The Kastelholm talks on the theme "A Sustainable Peace around the Baltic Sea - New Times, New Issues" was of a very high quality. The participants showed great respect for the event and the conversation was both interesting and moving.

During the year a series of lunch seminars were held at the Hotel Arkipelag's restaurant. The form and content of these seminars had a good impact, raising the profile of the Institute and its activities amongst the local population. In addition to these events, representatives of the Institute have participated in various types of meetings and discussions that all contributed to strengthening the image of the Åland Islands Peace Institute as a valuable player in research and dissemination of knowledge in topics of great importance to Åland as well as to the international community.

The Institute's current organisation and economy has been consolidated and further developed during the past year. The core staff situation has been relatively stable and the employees have many skills as well as the willingness and flexibility to work for the Institute's best interests.

The economy is still the Institute's greatest concern.

Despite great efforts by everyone, the prerequisites for financing the activities remain limited. The Åland Government and the Institute signed a financing agreement for 2016, which was a big step forward. Unfortunately, the level of the grant is still very modest given the ambitions and professional quality of the Institute. Further development of the Institute depends to a very large extent on local donors. Research and dissemination of knowledge about Åland's autonomy and Åland's status as a demilitarised and neutralised area lies in the interest of Åland. The preservation and development of the Institute as well as of the self-government is a matter of mutual dependence.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those who contributed in various ways to the Institute's activities and achievements in 2016. The employees have performed impressive work. The Research Council members and the researchers of the Institute should be commended, and to the retiring Board, I would like to thank you for active participation, support and trust.

*Barbro Sundback*  
*Chair of the Board of Directors*

# The Mission of the Institute

*The central mission of the Åland Islands Peace Institute is to conduct research, to disseminate information and to educate on topics related to the Åland Islands and its special status under international law.*

Hence, the concepts of peace, security, autonomy, and minorities are central to the activities of the Åland Islands Peace Institute. Being an independent foundation, both religiously and politically, the Åland Islands Peace Institute is dedicated to participate in and support endeavours relating to these issues, both in a Nordic and in a global context.

2017 will mark the 25th anniversary of the Åland Islands Peace Institute. During its existence, the Institute has created a large international network, especially in relation to co-operation amongst scholars. The central dimensions in the work of the Institute is to position the Åland Islands in its international, historical and contemporary

contexts. In today's world, the international dimension is constantly present in Northern Europe, and the Åland Islands Peace Institute interprets its mission to be a part of the constant continuous analysis of how that affects the Åland Islands.

The local aspect of the Åland Islands Peace Institute's mission, stands clear: the Åland Islands as an autonomy, has to carry out and develop the special position of the province. Within this work, the Åland Islands Peace Institute, wants to contribute to an independent analysis and assessment of specific issues.

Finally, meetings with the Institute, are highly prioritised by many foreign visitors. Requests for meetings with

the Åland Islands Peace Institute, by foreign visitors, are surprisingly numerous – some ten groups visit every year. The example of the Åland Islands is regarded as remarkable by many, since it provides concrete examples of issues that are crucial also in other contexts with ongoing intra- and intrastate conflicts.

To educate both individuals and groups, on research as well as practical experiences on the possibilities of regulating the political antagonisms through self-government arrangements, is thereby both a worthy and an important task for a Peace Institute.

*Kjell-Åke Nordquist  
Acting Director*



# The Work of the Board

*The Board of Directors for the Åland Islands Peace Institute take decisions regarding the overall activity of the Peace Institute. The Board consists of seven to ten members, elected for a mandate period of two years.*

The Board held five meetings in 2016. As in previous years, questions about funding have been given a lot of time on the agenda. The Board has considered the issue of a financing agreement with the Åland Government, which was established for the first time for 2016. The Board has also discussed financing strategies and opportunities for 2017 together with the Peace Institute staff.

The subsidiary Real Estate Company Fredsfast has kept the board

informed about current property issues and development ideas.

Åland's demilitarisation was highlighted in the media both on and outside of Åland during the autumn. The Board has discussed how the Peace Institute can work to increase knowledge about demilitarisation and neutralisation.

Since the Board's term of office expires in April 2017, the Board has appointed a Nomination Committee for the 2017 Board of Directors,

consisting of Lars Ingmar Johansson as Chairman of the Nomination Committee, and as members, current Chair of the Board Barbro Sundback and Information Officer Susann Simolin.

*Tina Sjövall,  
Deputy Organisation Secretary  
and Secretary of the Board*



*The Board. From left, top row; Roger Jansson, Acting Director Kjell-Åke Nordquist, Göran Lindholm, Kenneth Gustavsson. Middle row: Katarina Fellman, Leena Lindqvist, Susanne Eriksson. Bottom row: Lia Markelin, Ulla Backlund and the Chairperson of the Board, Barbro Sundback*

## Members of the Board

**Barbro Sundback**, Chair of the Board of Directors, one of the founders of the Åland Islands Peace Institute. Politically active since the 1970s, former Speaker and Member of the Åland Parliament.

**Leena Lindqvist**, Deputy Chair of the Board.

Entrepreneur, one of the driving forces behind the peace movement on Åland and the foundation of the Åland Islands Peace Institute.

**Lotta Angergård**, Acting Director of the Åland Save the Children association with experience from both public and the third sector.

**Ulla Backlund**, active in the Norwegian Refugee Council, former Country Director for the Refugee Council in Georgia, Burundi and Lebanon.

**Susanne Eriksson**, Secretary General of the Åland Parliament with long experience of working with and informing on the Åland Example.

**Katarina Fellman**, Director of Statistics and Research Åland, ÅSUB.

**Roger Jansson**, politically active since the 1970s, former Speaker and Member of the Åland Parliament and Member of the Parliament of Finland, former Head of the Åland Government.

**Kenneth Gustavsson**, antiquarian at the Åland Museum, Associate Professor of History, conducts research on the significance of Åland from a security and strategic perspective during the 20th century.

**Göran Lindholm**, former President of the insurance company Ålands Ömsesidiga Försäkringsbolag with extensive experience in management and board positions within the business world.

**Lia Markelin**, Research Coordinator at the think-tank Magma in Helsinki.

# The Research of the Institute

During 2016 the research activities of the Institute have continued in accordance with the guidelines set out in the 2015-2017 research plan, hence focusing research on autonomy, minorities, violence, demilitarisation and issues relating to the Baltic Sea Region and European development.

The final report for the completed project “European Language Diversity for All” (ELDIA) was published during the year. A publication about self-government in a peace perspective in the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland, published in 2015 as a result of a research project, was supplemented with electronic policy briefs in Swedish, Danish and English in 2015. In 2016, a policy brief was also added in Finnish.

A research project on demilitarisation, led by Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, was the dominant task for the research in 2016. Several research meetings have been held, as well as an evaluation meeting, and one of the participants in the project, Doctoral Student Saila Heinikoski, has been based at the Institute during the year.

Kjell-Åke Nordquist received a research grant from the Academy of Finland to conduct the research project “Fragile cities in the global South: Societal security, environmental vulnerability and representative justice” (2016-2020), together with a group of five researchers. Parts of the work will be conducted from the Peace Institute.



By 2016, the Research Council, and in particular Research Coordinator Elias Vartio, studied the possibility of issuing an e-journal. This would give the Institute an additional platform for disseminating the research. Written in English, it might also give the Institute a geographically wider circle of readers.

*Gunilla Herolf, Chair of the Research Council*

The Research Council decides on the Institute’s scientific orientation and has a quality assurance function. During the mandate period of 2015-2017 the Council consists of Chairperson Gunilla Herolf, PhD, expert in European Integration issues and Security, Mikael Wigell, PhD, researcher at the Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki and Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Associate Professor of International Law and Head of Research of the Peace Institute. The Acting Director of the Institute, Kjell-Åke Nordquist, Professor in International Relations, serves as the secretary of the Council. The Council is assisted by the Institute’s Research Coordinator Elias Vartio.



*Meeting with the Research Council. From left Saila Heinikoski, Gunilla Herolf, Kjell-Åke Nordquist, Elias Vartio, Mikael Wigell and Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark.*

# Lecturing Around the World

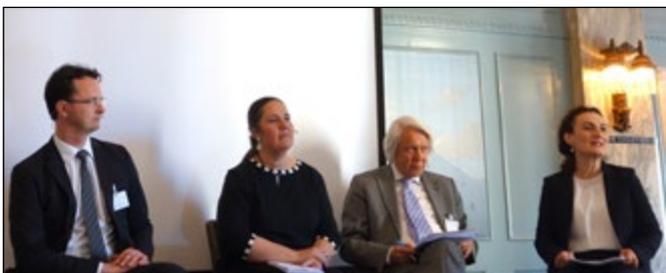


## *State-building, East Timor/ Timor-Leste*

In April, Kjell-Åke Nordquist, visited East Timor/Timor-Leste to lecture at the Dili Institute of Technology, on how institutional mechanisms can contribute to stability during the shift from post-conflict to stable societal relations. In this context, experiences from the Åland Islands were discussed, as well as possibilities for future contacts between the Åland Islands and Timor-Leste.

## *Minorities, etc., Burma/ Myanmar*

In March, Kjell-Åke Nordquist took part in a strategic planning workshop in Myanmar/Burma, arranged by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee, a working group responsible for political dialogue. Minority rights, cultural heritage, and returning refugees were among the core topics of the workshop.



## *Education rights of national minorities , the Hague*

In April, the Head of Research Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, took part in the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of “The Hague Recommendations Regarding the Education Rights of National Minorities”. It was organised by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Astrid Thors, in the Hague. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark participated in a high-level panel discussion on the role of education when building sustainable, diverse societies.

## *Demilitarisation, Uppsala*

In April, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, was a Research Fellow at the Uppsala Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies and at the Faculty of Law in Uppsala, Sweden. During her stay, she held guest lectures and took part as a panellist in a seminar on the changing security landscape of Europe. It was arranged by the Uppsala Forum on Democracy, Peace and Justice at Uppsala University.

## *Minorities and self-government, Liverpool*

In September, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark participated in the international conference “Minority Rights, Self-Government and the Law”, organised by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (Sweden) and the Faculty of Law at Liverpool University (UK). The themes of the conference were theoretical as well as practical aspects of minority protection and self-government. Case studies from Europe, the Nordic region, Turkey and the Middle East were discussed. Spiliopoulou Åkermark lectured on “Territorial Autonomy Now and Then”, reviewing debates and legal tools on territorial autonomy at the international level, particularly in the early 20th century.

## *Shared societies, Berlin*

In September Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark attended the international conference “Shared Societies”, organised in Berlin by the Robert Bosch Academy at the initiative of its Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow, Mohammad Darawshe, in cooperation with the organisation Givat Haviva (Israel). Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark talked about the experiences of coping with difference in Europe, as understood under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.



## *Equality despite difference, Strasbourg*

In October, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark had the opportunity to address the international conference “The Framework Convention: a Key Tool to Managing Diversity through Human Rights” in the final panel entitled “Equality Despite Difference – how to Guarantee Equal Access to Rights and Resources”. The 4th Thematic Commentary on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, on the scope of application of the convention, was launched during the conference.

## *Peace and reconciliation, Colombia*

On 28.9-1.10, Kjell-Åke Nordquist attended a conference on mediation and culture of peace in Bogotá, Colombia. The conference addressed mediation and reconciliation both at an individual and an international level. Nordquist was one of the keynote speakers, and he lectured on restorative justice and reconciliation after an internal conflict.

# Research on Demilitarisation

*The researchers in the project "Demilitarisation in an Increasingly Militarised World" completed their first scientific articles during the year and participated in various events and research meetings.*

The project runs for three years (2015 - 2018) and funding is granted by the KONE Foundation and the Åland Cultural Foundation. The research project is a co-operation between the Åland Islands Peace Institute and the Arctic Center at Lapland University in Rovaniemi. Four main researchers are involved in the project: Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark (Associate Professor of International Law and Head of the Project), Pirjo Kleemola-Juntunen (Lawyer, Post-doc), Timo Koivurova (Professor, Director of the Arctic Center, Rovaniemi) and PhD student Salla Heinikoski. This year, the project also includes work by Research Assistant Filip Holiencin.

Based on International Law and European Integration, the researchers are studying how Åland's demilitarisation and neutralisation have been influenced by the development of modern technology, the fusion of military and civil actors and rules, as well as the impact of new forms of military co-operation. The project also makes comparisons between Åland and other demilitarised areas, primarily Svalbard.

The research project held a seminar in Mariehamn in March 2016 where the project's international scientific advisors participated. The project's researchers have contributed to several events and scientific meetings during the year, in Finland, Sweden, Britain and Italy and have also published several scholarly articles and op-eds.

Researcher Yannick Poullie's work on demilitarisation debates in Finland and Åland 1989-1995 was published in the summer of 2016 in the journal *International Journal of Minority and Group Rights*. By the end of the year, several articles and book chapters had been submitted for review and publication.

*Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Head of Research*



*Research meeting in Rovaniemi. From left: Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Pirjo Kleemola-Juntunen, Timo Koivurova and Salla Heinikoski.*



*The researchers and the scientific advisors of the project met in Mariehamn in March.*

*Top row from left: Sonja Østreng (guest), Professor Said Mahmoudi, Research Assistant Filip Holiencin, associate Professor Gregory Simons Professor Willy Østreng, Associate Professor Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark Director Päivi Kaukoranta.*

*Bottom row from left: Professor Timo Koivurova PhD Pirjo Kleemola-Juntunen, Professor emeritus Lauri Hannikainen, PhD Matthieu Chillaud and Doctoral Candidate Salla Heinikoski.*

## Two New Reports

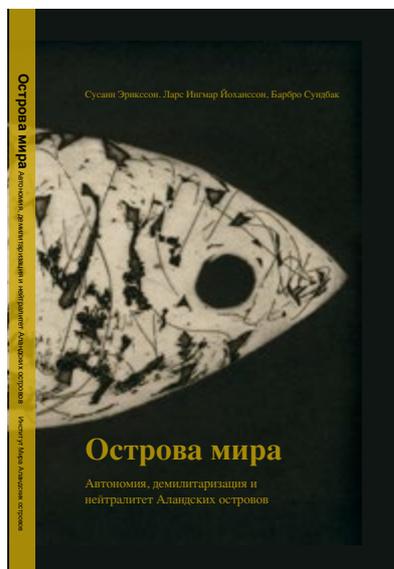
In the series “Report from the Åland Islands Peace Institute”, two reports were issued in 2016. They can be downloaded for free from [www.peace.ax](http://www.peace.ax).

### **The impact of the EU-law on the autonomy of the Åland Islands/ Anna-Sjölund**

Report no.1/2016 “The EU-law and the Distribution of Competencies between Finland and the Åland Islands” is written in Swedish by the International Lawyer Anna-Lena Sjölund. In the report, she analyses the impact of the EU-membership on the Åland Islands legislative powers. Sjölund especially takes an interest in the possible transference of the legislative powers from the Åland Islands to Finland, and if the Åland Islands has lost some of its powers in the process.

### **Self-government in Iraqi Kurdistan and Zanzibar/ Jaakko Virkkunen and Lotta Valtonen**

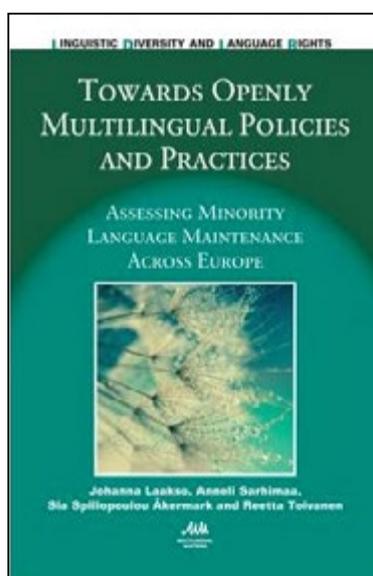
In the report no.2/2016, “Managing Diversity through Territorial Autonomy: Experiences from Iraqi Kurdistan and Zanzibar with the Åland Example as a Point of Reference”, Jaakko Virkkunen and Lotta Valtonen analyses Iraqi Kurdistan and Zanzibar respectively, by using the autonomy of the Åland Islands, as a measure. Both Virkkunen and Valtonen participated in the e-course on territorial autonomy and the Åland Example, which was held by the Peace Institute in the spring of 2016.



## Islands of Peace, Reprinted in Russian

The publication “Islands of Peace. Åland’s autonomy, demilitarisation and neutralisation” has been issued in four languages; Swedish (2006), English (2007), Finnish (2007) and in Russian (2012). In 2016 a slightly revised version was issued in co-operation with the Contact Group for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Åland.

## Publication on Multi-lingual Justice



There is a common perception that there is multi-lingual justice in Europe. The reality, however, is viewed differently by the speakers of minority languages. Johanna Laakso, Anneli Sarhimaa, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark and Reetta Toivanen, write about this in the blog piece “The Widely-Cherished Myths of Language Diversity in Europe”. It is based on a research project, which focuses on language politics and the practice of minority languages. The results of the research project are presented in the book “Towards Openly Multilingual Policies and Practices”, which was released by “Multilingual Matters”.

# Second Edition of E-course on Autonomy

*The E-course “Territorial Autonomy as a Tool for Diversity Management: Lessons from the Åland Example” was given for the second time in 2016.*

The Åland Islands Peace Institute has further developed the internet-based university course on territorial autonomy with Åland as an example and case study, which was given for the first time in 2015. The course was successfully held for the second time the spring semester 2016, in co-operation with the Åland Open University. The interest in the English-speaking course has increased from year to year. This year’s course included 12 students from Åland, Finland,

Sweden, Sri Lanka and Kenya. The course is scheduled to be given again in the autumn of 2017.

The course is interdisciplinary and discusses self-government in a broad perspective, in relation to self-determination, internationalisation and minority rights. As study material, the course contains not only texts but also audio files, pictures and video interviews. The course concerns Åland’s autonomy, demilitarisation and neutralisation as well as the

cultural and linguistic guarantees for language and culture. The importance of territorial autonomy as a possible tool for conflict resolution and as a mechanism for flexible governance is also discussed. The purpose of the course is to globally promote knowledge, exchange and discussion on these issues using a digital platform.

*Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark,  
Head of Research*

# Kastelholm Talks on Sustainable Peace Around the Baltic Sea

*What are currently the biggest threats towards our security in the Baltic Sea region and how can we explore options to work toward a more peaceful future? These were the main questions during the Kastelholm talks in 2016, which were held under the patronage of President Tarja Halonen on 30th March at the Castle of Kastelholm on the Åland Islands. The title was "A Sustainable Peace around the Baltic Sea – New Times, New Issues".*



The talks were held on the day of the Åland Islands' demilitarisation and neutralisation. The special status of the Åland Islands was established as an alternative to military solutions, which was one of the starting points for the Kastelholm talks.

President Tarja Halonen is the patron of the Kastelholm talks and participated actively in the discussion as a member of the panel, as she did in 2014. The other members of the panel were Pekka Haavisto, Member of the Parliament of Finland and the Foreign Minister's Special Representative for Peace Mediation; Lena Ek, chairperson of the Forestry Group Södra and former Minister for the environment in Sweden; Said Mahmoudi, Professor of International Law at Stockholm University and Hanna Ojanen, Jean Monnet Professor at the University

of Tampere. Associate professor and Head of Research at the Åland Islands Peace Institute, Sia Spilipoulou Åkermark, acted as the moderator of the event.

President Halonen initiated the discussion by reflecting on the themes, sustainable peace and sustainable development. She stated that peace doesn't have to be defined in a narrow sense, as in absence of war, but that peace also entails providing equal opportunities for people to participate actively in society and for them to prosper. There was a consensus on this among the other panel members. International peace was viewed as strongly related to peaceful societies, where the population feel secure and can trust the state. The theme was discussed in a broad sense. Peace was discussed in relation to the environment, energy matters, democra-

cy, identity and demography, among other issues.

Afterwards, a follow-up round table discussion was held in the nearby Restaurant Smakbyn. Four commentators held speeches, which were subsequently discussed by the audience. The round table discussion was moderated by the Peace Institute's Acting Director, Kjell-Åke Nordquist. The commentators consisted of the Peace Institute's two Senior Advisers, former MP Gunnar Jansson and Peace Researcher Pertti Joenniemi, as well as Professor Timo Koivurova and Petra Granholm, Deputy President of the NGO Åland Nature and Environment, and also, a member of the Sustainability Council.

*Susann Simolin  
Project Manager*

# European Security Policy, Mediation and Demilitarisation for Lunch

*In 2016, six open lunch seminars were held in the hotel Arkipelag's restaurant. Scholars and experts discussed demilitarisation, EU security policies and peace processes in Burma/Myanmar with audiences consisting of 30 to 60 persons each time.*



*The lunch seminars of 2016:*

## *Demilitarisation and Neutralisation*

Two researchers from the three-year long research project “Demilitarisation in an Increasingly Militarised World. International Perspectives in a Multilevel Framework – the Case of Åland Islands” presented their research. Researcher Saila Heinikoski spoke of how the European Union’s security and foreign policies affect the demilitarisation of the Ålands Islands. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark lectured on the proliferation of various forms of civil-military cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, in particular in relations to air space.

## *The Security Politics of the EU*

The Lisbon treaty should enable the EU to be better prepared to handle the problems in Europe and in its neighbouring regions. Instead, the EU is an organisation suffering from crisis, simultaneously as the problems accumulate. The lecturer was PhD Gunilla Herolf, Chair of the Research Council of the Institute. Herolf has been a researcher at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs and at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Her main field of interests are European Integration and Security Co-operation.

## *The Peace Process in Burma/Myanmar*

Kjell-Åke Nordquist held a lunch seminar on the topic “The National Peace Process in Burma/Myanmar – Democracy, Self-Government, and Minorities”. Nordquist talked about the history of Burma/Myanmar and the path towards a national peace agreement. He also described the experiences of the Åland Islands, in relations to protection of minorities and self-government, which could be useful for the peace process.

## *Mediation and Restorative Justice*

This lunch seminar was held by Mediation Officers Malin Söderberg and Justina Donielaite, in co-operation with the voluntary mediators at the Åland Mediation Office, Soile Wartianien and Ulf-Peter Westmark. They talked about the ten-year experience of mediation within Åland society and how mediation works in practice. The theories that mediation is built upon were also discussed.

## *Colombia's Path towards Peace*

Kjell-Åke Nordquist, talked about his experiences of the peace processes in Colombia. He attended a conference on mediation and culture of peace in Colombia on 26th September, the very day when the historic peace agreement between the government and the Marxist guerrilla movement, Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC), was signed. President Juan Manuel Santos was later that year awarded the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring the country’s more than 50-year long civil war, to an end.

## *The Crises of Turkey and War in Syria/Iraq*

Ambassador Michael Sahlin, PhD in Political Science, held the last lunch seminar of the year. He has been working for several years at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including as an ambassador in Turkey/Azerbaijan, Sahlin talked about how a Turkey in severe crises, in the light of the coup d'état in the summer, and the following purge wave, struggles with upholding and promoting its regional security interests in relation to the war in Syria and Iraq.



# Demilitarisation and Peace Prize on the Media Agenda

Åland's demilitarisation was widely debated in the Finnish media during the year, and the researchers of the Åland Islands Peace Institute have both commented and published their own entries on the subject.

► Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark has written op-eds published by the Swedish-speaking morning paper Hufvudstadsbladet and the Finnish speaking paper Helsingin Sanomat on Åland's demilitarisation and neutralisation in a broader context, linked to the UN Charter and global collective security system.

► Simplified statements and categorical answers do not move forward the debate on demilitarisation and Åland's position, wrote Kjell-Åke Nordquist in an op-ed published in newspapers Nya Åland and Tidningen Åland on 28 October.

► Demilitarisation should not only be analysed from a defense policy point of view, since Åland's status is a part of Finland's foreign and security policy as a whole, writes researcher Salla Heinikoski in an article in Finnish, published in the Finnish Political Science website Polititiikasta.fi.

► States have a duty to settle disputes through peaceful means and peaceful pressure mechanisms, such as diplomatic negotiations or independent investigations, e.g. weapons inspections, Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark wrote in her op-ed published in the Swedish-speaking newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet 12.8.2016. Her main argument was that the UN's prohibition of violence should be maintained. The article has also been published in the Kone foundation's blog.

► Another theme that interested the media was the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, for his persistent efforts to end the civil war that has been ongoing for over 50 years. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark was interviewed in Åland's radio on the day that the peace prize was announced, and at a later stage an interview was broadcast with Kjell-Åke Nordquist, who has for many years followed and contributed in various ways to conflict resolution processes in Colombia.



◀ This year's first edition of the Norden Association Sweden's magazine "Nordens tidning" had the theme of peace, and a large part of the content has been written by the partner organisations in the project "Norden for peace?". The project was led by the Åland Islands Peace Institute and the Norden Association Sweden is one of the partner organisations in the project, which is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers' program Nordplus Adult. The magazine "Nordens tidning" has a circulation of 13,000 and reaches members of the association in Sweden as well as some hundred subscribers in the Nordic region. The magazine is available for downloading on the Norden Association Sweden's website.



▲ Åland is described as "a paradise for peacemakers" in an article published by the US based news organisation The Christian Science Monitor. The piece was written by Journalist and Historian Gordon F Sander, who visited Åland and the Åland Islands Peace Institute during the summer.

# Live Knowledge Shared During Autonomy Day



The Ålands Islands Peace Institute served food for thought during the Autonomy Day celebrations on the 9th of June at the market square in Mariehamn. Visitors were encouraged to borrow a "human book" from the Peace Institute's version of a living library. The human book shared his or her insights on self-government, minority issues and security – on Åland and in the world. Among the titles were: "Minority Report", "Conflict Resolution - the Åland Way" and "The Åland Example: an Introduction". The Chair of the board Barbro Sundback, Board Member Roger Jansson, and Senior Adviser Gunnar Jansson as well as Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark acted as human books.

# Visitors from Around the World

*The Peace Institute annually receives several visits from various parts of the world. The visitors come for presentations and discussion about the Åland Example and its components. In 2016, the Institute had many guests, including visits from Moldova, Bonaire and Quebec.*

In 2016, the Peace Institute hosted several visits from Moldova. In September, Moldova's Deputy Prime Minister Gheorghe Bălan and two officials came to the Institute for information on the Peace Institute's activities and a discussion on current issues. Two other visits were organised at the initiative of the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) in Helsinki. One group consisted of high-level former and current experts, in a so called High Level Expert Dialogue Group, that for several years, with CMI as facilitator, has discussed opportunities for resolving the situation of Moldova/Transnistria. On the second occasion, the visitors consisted of a group of parliamentarians from Moldova and representatives of the People's Assembly in the Gagauzia Autonomous Region. In addition, Åland and the Peace Institute were visited by a delegation consisting of persons active in small businesses, business organisations and NGOs in Moldova and Transnistria. This visit was organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Moldova.

The Peace Institute received several visits from the diplomatic missions in Helsinki, including the Ambassador for France H.E. Serge Mostura as well as Carlos S. Risso-Dominguez from the Embassy of Argentina. The Peace Institute's activities were also presented to visitors from mainland Finland, not least the Speaker of the Parliament, Ms Maria Lohela, with delegation.

There was also a visit from Bonaire, an island in the Caribbean with about 19,000 inhabitants located about 25 kilometers north of Venezuela. Bonaire has the status of a "special municipality" in the Netherlands. Commissioner Clark Abraham came with a delegation to study Åland autonomy and the Åland Example.

The Peace Institute also received visits from exchange students and EMA students in the course "Autonomy and Participation" at the Åbo Akademi University as well as a group of students from Turku University, studying border regions, e.g. minorities in the Baltic sea



*The Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova, Gheorghe Bălan (second from right) visited the Peace Institute in September. In the picture is also Director Kjell-Åke Nordquist (to the right) Head of the Åland Government Katrin Sjögren as well as the Adviser of the Deputy Prime Minister.*



*Visit from Bonaire. From the left, Peace Institute Intern Karita Kostianen, Researcher Saila Heinikoski, Commissioner Clark Abraham, Information Officer Susann Simolin and Head of Communication of the Åland Government, Björn Häggblom.*

region (the interdisciplinary study program is called Baltic Sea Region Studies). A presentation was also held for a group of students from Université du Québec in Montreal (UQAM) and for a group of young people who participated in an international youth camp in Kontioranta, "Re-thinking Identities", organised by the United World College Association in Finland.

*Susann Simolin,  
Information Officer*



## 38 Cases at the Mediation Office

*Mediation is a complimentary and statutory service. Through mediation, the parties in a criminal case or dispute are given the opportunity to own their conflict and find a solution through constructive discussions facilitated by educated and impartial voluntary mediators. In 2016, 38 cases were brought to the Mediation Office.*

Since autumn 2006, the Åland Mediation Office has offered mediation between parties in case of a crime and in certain disputes, based on national legislation on mediation. From 1.1.2016, the responsibility for arranging mediation services has been transferred from the regional administrations to the Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) with which the Åland Islands Peace Institute has signed an agreement to function as a mediation service provider.

The purpose of the mediation activities is to offer the parties in cases of crime or in certain disputes an opportunity to gain an understanding of the background and consequences of the situation, as well as to create the con-



ditions for taking responsibility and reaching reconciliation. The Mediation Office has a network of twenty trained voluntary mediators who act as impartial discussion leaders at mediation meetings. The aim is that the mediation should provide long-term results by preventing repeated

crime and breaking a developing crime spiral, especially among young people. The Office is led by a Mediation Officer who works part-time.

The plans for arranging Swedish-speaking mediation days in Åland during the year have not been

realised because of staff changes. When Malin Söderberg left the position in the fall, Justina Donielaite was appointed Mediation Officer. Justina Donielaite, who was educated as a

mediator in 2006, also works as an Organisation Secretary for the Åland Islands Peace Institute. However, from November 2016, she is on a parental leave from both assignments. Heidi Öst, former mediation officer (2009-2012), is her replacement during this time.

In 2016, Åland's Mediation Office dealt with 38 cases. Most of the mediation initiatives were taken by the Åland Police Office. Among the types of crimes are twelve cases of physical abuse and mild physical abuse, six of slander, six of shop-lifting and theft, five of unlawful threats, three of violation of domicile and three of vandalism. During the year, seven civil cases were dealt with.

*Heidi Öst,  
Mediation Officer*

# International Project for Gender Equality in Kindergartens Completed



*The KID-project, aiming to increase gender equality at participating preschools in Åland, Lithuania and the Kaliningrad region in Russia, was completed in 2016.*

The project "KID (Kindergartens in Development) - Equal Opportunities for Boys and Girls in Kindergarten" has been ongoing during 2015 and 2016. The purpose of the project has been to promote equal treatment of children in childcare through training of staff and knowledge-enhancing efforts for the children's parents. The project has been conducted in co-operation between the Åland Islands Peace Institute and three partner organisations - "Waldorf Åland", the Center for Women and Children "Nendre" in Vilnius, Lithuania, and "The Star of Hope" in the Kaliningrad region, Russia, all engaged in day-care activities. The project has been funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers and Emmaus Åland.

Within the project, all the organisations have had access to a local supervisor who has supported the staff in the field of gender equality. The supervisors have observed the staff at work to help them analyse

their treatment of the children. Based on new insights, staff have developed gender equality plans and introduced a number of new methods. The children's parents have been involved in the project, among other things through meetings where gender issues have been discussed.

In November 2016, the project held a final conference in Vilnius, Lithuania. Representatives from the three day-care centers presented results from the project and exchanged experiences and lessons they have learned.

Although the partner organisations work in very different conditions, with different social conditions and societal attitudes towards gender equality, there have been great similarities in the processes. Everyone has found that the biggest challenge is to work with yourself, to gain insight and to question one's own preconceptions. Communication between staff and parents has improved as discussions have been held, which was

positive in all centers. The results and experiences have been shared at open seminars at all locations and the staff at the day-care centers feel motivated to continue the work even after the project is complete.

*Ida Eriksson, Supervisor*



*The Åland Feminist Academy appointed the Head of the Nendre Center in Vilnius - participant in the KID project and the Institute's partner since many years - Danutė Mituzienė, to the year's feminist 2016. Faximil from newspaper Nya Åland.*

# Financial Situation of 2016

*The Åland Islands Peace Institute bases its economy in 2016 on two pillars: the Local government's yearly support and project related support for both one-time events as well as longer undertakings.*

During 2016 the income from specific projects was 125.766 euro. The income from administration services was 25.376 euro. While the costs for the specific projects ended up at 167.370 euro, the costs for administration were 153.749 euro – this resulted in a negative balance of 171.887 euro. This balance was adjusted through the support from public sources amounting to 186.690 euro which resulted in a positive balance of 14.802 for the year of 2016.

There was during 2016 a good balance between income and expenses and generally a sensible control of economic activity.

During 2016 the Peace Institute received its first general funding from the Åland government based on a treaty, something that gives a strong basis not only for on-going activities but, more importantly, for developing ideas and applying for further funding, developing networks and expanding the activities in various ways. It should be noted that the Åland government, besides the general funding, also specifically supports major activities such as the Kastelholm Talks.

*Kjell-Åke Nordquist  
Acting Director*



## Fredsfast

The Åland Islands Peace Institute's wholly-owned subsidiary real estate company, Fredsfast, has during the financial year carried out planned maintenance work under budgeted funds. Among other things, a disability access ramp has been built adjacent to the entrance to the eastern end of the house, in order to increase accessibility to the property.

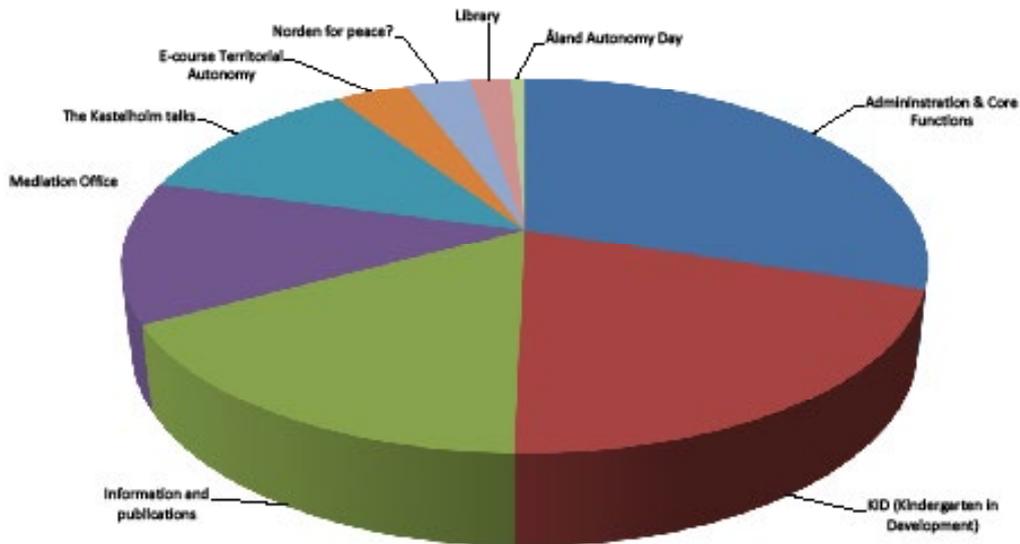
All premises have been leased during the fiscal year.

The Board of Fredsfast AB has been composed of Chairman and also CEO Roger Jansson, Leena Lindqvist and Bror Myllykoski. Erika Sjölund, has been the company's auditor.

The Annual Meeting was held at the Åland Islands Peace Institute on 5.4.2016.

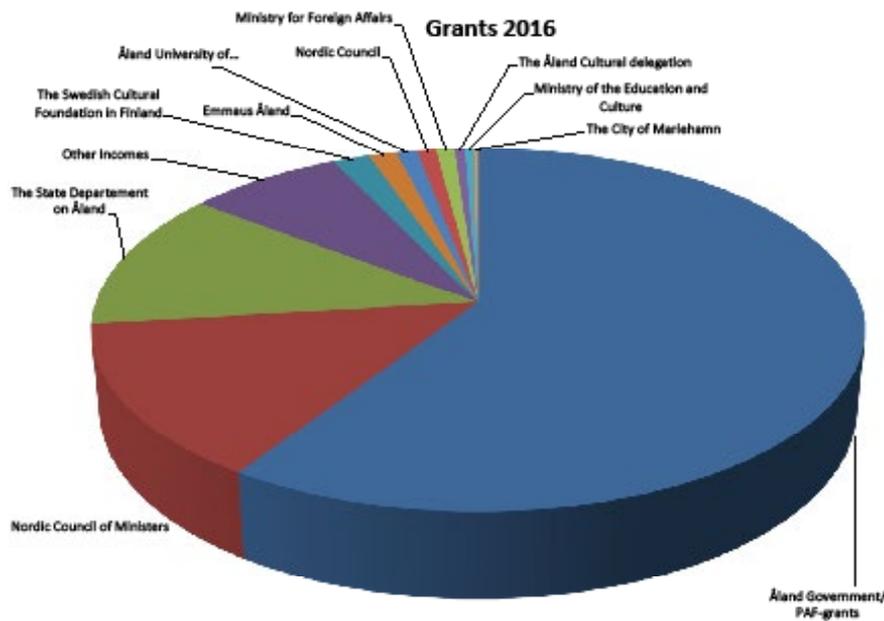


## Expenses 2016



|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 Administration & Core Functions   | 30%         |
| 2 KID (Kindergarten in Development) | 20%         |
| 3 Information and Publications      | 17%         |
| 4 Mediation Office                  | 12%         |
| 5 The Kastelholm Talks              | 12%         |
| 6 E-course Territorial Autonomy     | 4%          |
| 7 Norden for Peace?                 | 3%          |
| 8 Library                           | 2%          |
| 9 Åland Autonomy Day                | 1%          |
| <b>Summa</b>                        | <b>100%</b> |

## Grants 2016



|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1 Åland Government/PAF-grants                              | 39,2%       |
| 2 Nordic Council of Ministers                              | 13,9%       |
| 3 The State Department on Åland                            | 12,3%       |
| 4 Other incomes, not service donations, special money etc. | 7,3%        |
| 5 The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland               | 1,8%        |
| 6 Emmaus Åland   | 1,4%        |
| 7 Åland University of Applied Sciences                     | 1,0%        |
| 8 Nordic Council   | 0,9%        |
| 9 Ministry for Foreign Affairs                             | 0,9%        |
| 10 The Åland Cultural delegation                           | 0,5%        |
| 11 Ministry of the Education and Culture                   | 0,4%        |
| 12 The City of Mariehamn                                   | 0,2%        |
| <b>Summa</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

# Staff and Interns 2016

The turn-over of staff in 2016 was comparatively high. Parental leave and employment changes led to three vacant positions at the Peace Institute during a period of the year. All processes landed well, and created a good foundation for 2017. The interns should also be considered in this movement, working at the Peace Institute for three-month periods during spring and autumn. Even though the continuity in certain fields have been interrupted, the visible activities of the Institute have not been disturbed.



*Almost all of the staff gathered. From left: Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Jonny Andersen, Tina Sjövall, Heidi Öst, Susann Simolin, Elias Vartio, Saila Heinikoski and Kjell-Åke Nordquist.*



▲ **Andrea Södergård** was an intern at the ÅPI from the middle of September until the middle of December. During the internship Andrea worked mainly with dissemination of information Andrea studies International Public Law and Communication at Åbo Akademi University in Turku. After the internship, she wrote her master thesis about sexual minorities as refugees.

► **Karita Kostianen** was an intern at the Institute from February to April 2016. During her internship she worked mainly with preparations for the high-level conference, the Kastelholm talks. She was simultaneously writing her Master's thesis in International Security and Law for the University of Southern Denmark. Previously she has acquired a Bachelor in International Relations from the Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia. In her field she is especially interested in reconciliation and the participation of women in peace processes.

## Staff 2016

Kjell-Åke Nordquist, Acting Director

Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, on leave from her position as Director to work as Head of Research for an externally funded project on demilitarisation.

Susann Simolin, Information Officer, Project Manager for the Kastelholm talks.

Justina Donielaite, Project Manager for KID, Organisation Secretary (January-October) Substitute Mediation Officer (January-May). Parental leave (November-December)

Henrietta Hellström, Economist (January-September)

Jonny Andersen, IT-coordinator (February-December), Economist (October-December)

Malin Söderberg, Mediation Officer (June-October)

Heidi Öst, substitute Mediation Officer (November-December)

Elias Vartio, Research Coordinator (February-December)

Tina Sjövall, substitute Organisation Secretary (November-December)

Ida Eriksson, substitute Project Manager KID (May, September, November-December)

Bror Myllykoski, Real Estate Officer

John Knight, Librarian

Johanna Eker, Cleaner





## The Peace Fund

The Åland Islands Peace Fund was established by the Åland Islands Peace Institute with the purpose of supporting work for peace. As the peace fund grows the interest accrued can be awarded for purposes decided by the Board. The peace fund can also be used for special purposes, for example, condolences.

Payments can be made to:  
Ålandsbanken 660100-12 09 154  
IBAN: FI22 6601 0001 2091 54  
BIC: AABAFI22  
Nordea 203218 -22 564  
IBAN: FI70 2032 1800 0225 64  
BIC: NDEAFIHH

Donations can also be made through [www.peace.ax](http://www.peace.ax).  
Donation cards are available in banks and at undertakers on Åland.

## Newsletters

The Åland Islands Peace Institute sends electronic newsletters to subscribers 4-5 times a year. To subscribe, please register at [www.peace.ax](http://www.peace.ax).

## Publications

The "Report from the Åland Islands Peace Institute" series, working papers and selected additional publications, can be downloaded in pdf, free of charge at [www.peace.ax](http://www.peace.ax). Publications can also be ordered from [books@peace.ax](mailto:books@peace.ax).

## Visits

Every year, the Peace Institute meets with groups or individual politicians, officials, NGOs, journalists etc. with an interest in the international relevance of the Åland Example. The core concept for the introductions includes a presentation of the Åland Example, its history, components and lessons learned as well as the role and the agenda of the Peace Institute. These complimentary presentations last for approximately one hour including discussion, and are offered in Swedish or English. Longer or more specialised presentations can also be arranged for an agreed fee.

## Library

The Åland Islands Peace Institute's library, that has previously only operated as a reference resource, has now opened for the public to borrow books and other literature. In the library and archive we hold material on peace and conflict issues, minorities, autonomy, security, gender, human rights, and the Åland Islands and their unique status. The library of the Peace Institute is included within the Åland library database found at [www.bibliotek.ax](http://www.bibliotek.ax), which allows you to search the catalogues. Items can be borrowed at the Peace Institute with a valid Åland library card and returned to any library on Åland.

During 2016, an updated version of the Peace Institute's leaflet was printed in Swedish and Russian.





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