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Multilingualism in the Nordic countries

The Nordic, or Scandinavian, countries have – in the past – been seen as relatively monolingual countries that fit nicely into the Herderian model: one nation, one people, one language. This was not a good description of the language situation in the past and even less of contemporary Scandinavia. Since the 1970s, the demographics of the Scandinavian countries have changed dramatically with increased multilingualism as an important consequence. This has created both new affordances and possibilities, but also challenges and dilemmas at different levels of society and importantly for democratic participation. In my lecture, I will focus on the current situation in the Scandinavian countries with particular attention to Norway.

Unn Røyneland is Professor of Multilingualism and Scandinavian Linguistics at the University of Oslo. She was Deputy Director and later Director of MultiLing – Center for Multilingualism in Society across the Lifespan, CoE (2013–2024). She is a member of The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. Røyneland is Co-Editor in Chief of the multimodal digital series *Linguistic Minorities in Europe* (LME), De Gruyter. She has published on a wide range of topics – most recently on language activism, language policy, language ideologies and attitudes, multilectal and multilingual practices online.

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