

Strengthen Normat by widening its base!

Nordisk matematisk tidskrift, *Normat*, NMT, is owned by the mathematical societies of the five Nordic countries DK, FI, IS, NO, SE. It is published in cooperation with the National Center for Mathematics Education (NCM) in Göteborg and Institut Mittag-Leffler in Djursholm. It has an impressingly rich history. But it is in difficulty, which is noticeable from the outside by the simple fact that the latest volume mentioned at the journal's web site is volume 59 (2011). Now, in the year 2014, volume 60 (2012) is being prepared. It is obvious that such delays hurt the confidence in the journal and leads to a decreasing interest in a downward spiral.

I propose that the journal be strengthened scientifically and economically, by a widening of its base to the mathematical societies in eight countries, viz., beyond the five already mentioned, also the three Baltic countries, EE, LT, LV.

There is an old sharing of values between the Nordic and Baltic countries, and during the freedom period of the latter, 1918–1940, it was natural and easy for people from SE to go there.

The Baltic countries have many similarities with the Nordic ones, culturally and historically, and also structurally and in a general sense by the simple fact that they are countries with few inhabitants who speak languages that nobody from the outside understands. But together they nevertheless constitute an important part of Northern Europe. Six of them are members of the European Union.

With eight countries behind the journal it could certainly rise. In addition, it would get another group of publishers than that of *Mathematica Scandinavica*.

The old thought to publish in Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish is beautiful, but I have seen an investigation which showed the readers in DK, NO, SE tend not to read other languages of Scandinavia than their own, in spite of the fact that the three languages da, no, sv are mutually intelligible—not to mention the difficulties for speakers of Icelandic and Finnish. So the problem is probably not just that younger Swedish mathematicians do not want to write for Normat, but that even the readers abandon the Nordic language model, which is beginning to be a fiction—or already is. An article popularizing mathematics probably has a greater academic value if it is published in English than in Swedish.

As far as the name is concerned, one can imagine *Nordic Mathematical Journal*, in analogy with the fact that *Mathematica Scandinavica* is published not by the three Scandinavian countries but by the five Nordic ones. That would be the extended Norden! But perhaps it will be easier to accept the name *Baltic-Nordic Mathematical Journal* (BNMJ).

I earnestly ask the eight mathematical societies to improve collaboration between the Nordic and Baltic countries and at the same time strengthen an important scientific journal.

Christer Kiselman