

Norden and WWII (1939-1945)

Very different experiences, all had sought to remain neutral:

- Faeroe and Iceland occupied by Allies
- Denmark and Norway occupied by Nazi Germany (April 1940)
- Finland engaged in 3 wars against the USSR
- Sweden retained Neutral

Background to 1939:

- WWI left impression that neutrality could be maintained. Meetings of Nordic Ministers in 1930s and declaration of neutrality in event of War (however, disagreement on who was “the enemy”)
- None of Nordic countries acted toward the building of military defense for neutrality in 1930 (only Finns).
- Hitler offered “non-aggression pacts” in April 1939. Finland, Norway and Sweden politely declined, Denmark accepted and signed.
- Hitler believed none of Nordic countries would defend their neutrality, launched “Operation West” [Weserübung] in April 1940.