

# THE BARENTS PROGRAMME

## The Umeå University Multidisciplinary Research Programme on the Barents Region

### Background

The initiative to establish a cross-border collaboration project in the Euro-Arctic Barents Region was taken in April 1992 by the former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Thorvald Stoltenberg. At a meeting in Kirkenes, Norway, on the 11 January 1993, between the foreign ministers of the countries involved a declaration of co-operation was signed between the Nordic countries, Russia and the EG Commission. Through this declaration the Barents Council was established. In addition to yearly meetings at the foreign ministerial level meetings should also be arranged between the ministers of the environment, communications, culture, financial affairs and business relations under the auspices of the Barents Council. Furthermore, the importance to establish a strong regionally based collaboration was emphasized. Thus, to a great extent the collaboration is supposed to be conducted by actors on the local and regional level in initiating and coordinating roles. Special attention should, for example, be drawn to the situation of the indigenous peoples.

In the Barents co-operation declaration a broad repertoire of co-operative forms and measures are envisaged. Much of this presumes, at least in the short term, that financial resources can be mobilized in the Nordic countries or in other parts of Western Europe. The environmental problems are of a central interest, in particular civilian and military use of nuclear power as well as the deposition of nuclear waste. Scientific and technical co-operation is evidently important ingredients both in the work that has to be devoted to the solution of pollution problems, and in the work that is aiming at achieving a more efficient use of the region's natural resources.

Emphasis is also put on the development of an economic co-operation. Agreements will have to be reached about forms for trade exchange and other business relations across the Russian border. The importance of developing collaboration concerning energy conservation, restructuring of military industries and establishments for civilian use as well as achieving an increased level of efficiency and quality in agricultural production in the Russian part of the region are specifically mentioned in the agreement.

Another important area of co-operation is the improvement of transport and telecommunication facilities. The volume and timing of infrastructural investments form significant prerequisites for the manner in which contacts and collaboration will develop.

In order to foster the interest in co-operation in such a politically, economically, ethnically and linguistically diverse region great attention must be devoted to activities of a social and cultural character. This fact is also emphasized in the declaration of co-

operation. To develop the region's cultural identity and common profile towards the surrounding world is a crucial task for the regional Barents Council. A transregional identity project cannot be elaborated by actors at the national level.

## Research about the Barents Region at Umeå University

The existing situation in the Barents Region provides a strong motive to create an active and multifaceted R&D co-operation. Such a co-operation might contribute to the satisfaction of the needs of information, to finding solutions to problems, to making obstacles and opportunities for co-operation more clear and, in general, to implanting "seeds of togetherness". Furthermore, the R&D communities in the Russian parts of the region badly need to improve competence through a widening of their external relations. The degree to which the restructuring towards a sustainable resource use, a competitive market economy and an increasingly democratic political life succeeds might depend upon how well import of new knowledge and its implementation can be achieved.

During the last few years a number of research activities concerning the Barents Region have been initiated at Umeå University. This focus of interest has recently been significantly substantiated. Today, several projects are investigating a number of economic, political, and ecological aspects of the changed situation in the region. For obvious reasons this research is to a large extent conducted in collaboration with other universities and research institutions. A determined effort to establish collaboration with researchers in different parts of the Barents Region has brought Umeå University into an extensive research network devoted to the study of issues related to the development of the region.

It is natural to pay special attention to the Russian situation in order to understand the problems and opportunities that present themselves with the establishment of the Barents Region. In Russia we find many of the serious environmental problems that complicate and even threaten an intensified co-operation in the new region. At the same time here we also find the largest population concentration, unexploited natural resources and a huge constrained consumption demand, a fact that in itself represents a potential development opportunity.

To study Russian life requires good relations to Russian researchers and the establishment of such relations requires long and persistent efforts. Thus, a necessary step in the establishment of research about the Barents Region is to strengthen and widen the contacts that have already been established with Russian researchers and scientific institutions. In Umeå there are researchers with the linguistic competence that is required to achieve a fruitful collaboration with Russian researchers. As a part of the long term effort to develop contacts and strengthen the linguistic competence on the Russian side younger Russian researchers are continuously invited to spend some time on scholarships at Umeå University.

## The Barents Programme

The research about the Barents Region that is currently being conducted at Umeå University is primarily connected to the Centre for Regional Science (CERUM) and the departments of Political Science, Economics, Health and Environmental Protection and Environmental Chemistry. In order to improve the information between the departments engaged in research about the Barents Region and to improve coordination in the endeavours to find financial support for these research activities CERUM has established a special *programme committee*. People who are, in one way or another, engaged in issues relating to the Barents Region have been invited to become members of this committee. The programme committee has elected a smaller steering group which consists of the following people:

Ass. Prof. Ulf Wiberg, CERUM (chairman)  
Research Assoc. Mats-Olov Olsson, CERUM (secretary)  
Prof. Jan Åke Dellenbrant, Dept. of Political Science  
Dr. Torgny Mossing, Dept. of Health and Environmental Protection.

At its inaugural meeting on January 18, 1994, the programme committee decided that the activity developed by the committee should be labelled *The Barents Programme — The Umeå University Multidisciplinary Research Programme on the Barents Region* and that the goals of this activity should be:

- to initiate and procure the support for social scientific, natural science and humanistic research on problems related to the Barents Region,
- to work for a further development of research co-operation in the region, and
- to distribute information about on-going and planned research concerning the Barents Region.

The committee should also organize seminars and conferences on the initiative from the researchers participating in the network of the committee. In connection with these seminars and conferences everyone interested should be offered an opportunity to discuss issues related to the activity in the programme.

The programme committee should be regarded as a resource for researchers who wish to initiate studies about problems related to the Barents Region. Researchers should be able to turn to the committee to discuss their ideas, evaluate the possibilities to find financial support and to ask for contributions to cover costs that might arise in connection with, for instance, journeys in the region.

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For further information about the Barents Programme you are welcome to contact:

Ulf Wiberg  
Director of CERUM  
Telephone: +46 (0)90 166082

or

Mats-Olov Olsson  
Telephone: +46 (0)90 166034  
Email: Mats-Olov.Olsson@cerum.umu.se

*Address:*

CERUM, Umeå University, S-901 87 Umeå, Sweden, Telefax: 090-165121

List of people currently connected to the programme committee for

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### The Umeå University Multidisciplinary Research Programme on the Barents Region

Margareta Attius-Sohlman, Department of Religious Studies  
Jörgen Björklund, Department of Economic History  
Peter Bröms, Department of Political Science  
Jan Åke Dellenbrant, Department of Political Science  
Johan Eriksson, Department of Political Science  
Janerik Gidlund, Department of Political Science  
Einar Holm, Department of Geography  
Lars Hultkrantz, Department of Economics  
Urban Janlert, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health  
Per Erik Johansson, National Defence Research Establishment, Umeå  
Kerstin Lundberg, ColdTech, Luleå  
Torgny Mossing, Department of Environmental Health  
Erik Nyholm, Department of Environmental Health  
Mats-Olov Olsson, Centre for Regional Science (CERUM)  
Christoffer Rappe, Department of Environmental Chemistry  
Bo Svensson, Department of Political Science  
Sverker Sörlin, Department of History of Science and Ideas  
Lars Westin, Department of Economics and CERUM  
Ulf Wiberg, Centre for Regional Science (CERUM)  
Lars Östlund, Department of Forest Ecology, Swedish University of Agricultural  
Sciences

*Additional member:*

Mats Ahlberg, Centre for Environmental Research (CMF), Umeå

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### LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

#### *Available from CERUM (in original or as reprints):*

- Andreev, Oleg A.; Mats-Olov Olsson (1994): "New Environmentalism in the Russian Northwest" in Heininen, L., ed., *The Changing Circumpolar North: Opportunities for Academic Development*, Arctic Centre Publications 6, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, pp. 135-147.
- Bröms, Peter (forthcoming 1995): "Living on the Edge: Aspects of Security in the Euro-Arctic Area" (preliminary title); *Världspolitikens Dagsfrågor*, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.
- Bröms, Peter (forthcoming 1995): *Theory of Environmental Security* (preliminary title), Research Report, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.
- Bröms, Peter; Johan Eriksson; Bo Svensson (1993): "Nationella strategier och regionala lösningar", *Nordisk Kontakt (NK Tema Arktis)*, No. 2, pp. 76-81.
- Bröms, Peter; Johan Eriksson; Bo Svensson (1994): *Reconstructing Survival. Evolving Perspectives on Euro-Arctic Politics*, ERU, Fritzes, Stockholm (144 pp.) NB This book is only available from the publisher, Fritzes, S-106 47 Stockholm, telefax +46 (0)8 205021.
- Bröms, Peter; Johan Eriksson; Bo Svensson (1994): "Perspektiv på samarbetet i Barentsregionen", *Internationella Studier*, No. 4. The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.
- Dellenbrant, Jan Åke; Oleg Andreev (1994): "Russian Politics in Transition: Political Parties and Organizations in Russia and the Murmansk Region" in *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 109-142.
- Dellenbrant, Jan Åke; Cynthia Kite (1994): "Networks in the North: Historic Patterns and Future Scenarios" in Tennberg, M.; H. Hakovirta; L. Heininen, eds., *Regional and Transnational Cooperation in the North*, Papers from the Third Circumpolar Universities Cooperation Conference, Rovaniemi, 30 November – 3 December 1992, Arctic Centre, Rovaniemi, pp. 12-46.
- Dellenbrant, Jan Åke; Mats-Olov Olsson, eds. (1994): *The Barents Region; Security and Economic Development in the European North*, CERUM Perspektiv (246 pp.).
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Wiberg, Ulf (1993): "Samarbete i Barentsregionen", *Internationella Studier*, No. 1, pp. 53-62, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.

Wiberg, Ulf (1994): "From Visions to Functional Relationships in the Barents Region" in H. Cwiklinski & J.W. Owsinski, eds. *Nordic-Baltic Europe Is Restructuring: Looking for the Integration Fits*, The Interfaces Institute, Warsaw.

Wiberg, Ulf (forthcoming 1995): "The North Calotte as an Economic Region" in J. Käkönen, ed., *The North Calotte as an Emerging Region*, Tampere Peace Research Institute.

**Working Papers (available from CERUM):**

Andreev, Oleg A.; Mats-Olov Olsson (1992): *Environmentalism in Russia's North-west*, CERUM CWP-1992:15 (Second revised edition).

Andreev, Oleg A.; Mats-Olov Olsson (1994): *Regional Self-Government in Russia – The Situation in the County of Murmansk*, Barents Programme WP-1994:1.

Eriksson, Johan (1994): *Security in the Barents Region: Interpretations and Implications of the Norwegian Barents Initiative*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Swedish Political Science Association, Umeå, 3-4 October. Barents Programme WP-1994:2

Bröms, Peter (1994): *The Foundations of an Environmental Security Theory*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Swedish Political Science Association, Umeå, 3-4 October.

Bröms, Peter (1994): *Changing Stands? The Negotiations of an International Environmental Security Regime in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region*, Paper presented at the First NISA Symposium 1994: Agence and Structure in the Changing International and European Systems, at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, August 29 – September 1.

Eriksson, Johan (1994): *The Euro-Arctic Challenge: Norwegian Foreign Policy Change*, Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions, workshop "EC Enlargement and Foreign Policy Change in Europe: Implications for the EC, the Twelve, and the EFTA states", Madrid, 17-22 April.

Svensson, Bo (1994): *Opportunity or Illusion? Prospects for Foreign Direct Investment in North-Western Russia*, Paper presented at the conference "Trans-border Regional Cooperation in the Barents Region", Kirkenes 24-26 February, 1994.

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