



The Norwegian Barents Secretariat

Harald Sørensen - Bodø, June 18 2010



Thank you for the invitation to let me speak about The Norwegian Barents Secretariat and how we work today

Presentation of myself: Harald Sørensen I've been working 2 years at the Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes and my main area is business projects. Also Project coordinator for the EU-project Northern Maritime Corridor, so I'm most of all dealing with transport corridors, ports and infrastructure

The slide shows you the map from the way we like to see it. We like to watch the world from this angle, The Barents Region and Kirkenes in the centre. Why: most of the nature resources is situated here and therefore will be the economic drivers in the future. This is also a region where different culture meets and challenges due to that

Our Office in Kirkenes, 12 employees Kirkenes in the heart of the Barents Region



This is the tallest wooden building in the world. The Norwegian Barents Secretariat may have been most in focus due to this.

Many people have understood this as a joke, and some may still think it's a joke, but anyway what has happened, is that the idea and the progress has developed. Working with cross border cooperation in Barents Region is a challenge, this monumental building could be a symbol for that.

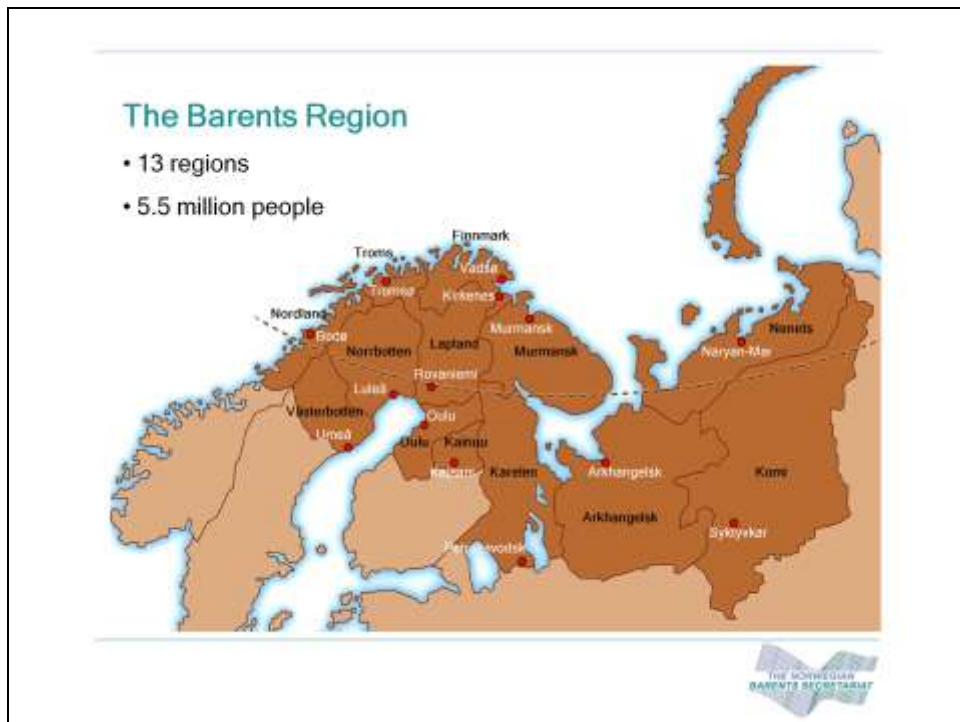


The 17th floor building should be a landmark in the city and for the Barents cooperation and should house institutions dealing culture, environment, innovation, science and economy

Status today: A property company has been established with Artur Buchardt, Kjell Inge Røkke and Sør-Varanger Invest

But I'm not gonna talk about the Barents House. First some briefs about the Barents Region

Kirkenes by night



- The Barents Region consists of 13 administrative units within Norway, Russia, Sweden and Finland.
- The territory covers almost the size of Central Europe (France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany and Italy put together)
- The region has a population of around 5,5 million inhabitants. 73% of them live in the Russian part of the area.
- The region is one of Europe's richest areas on natural resources such as forestry, fish, minerals, oil and gas.
- The Barents region connects the North-western part of Europe and Russia and is Europe's largest region for interregional cooperation.



The Barents Cooperation can be characterized with soft security, regional foreign policy and people to people cooperation

The purpose of the Barents Cooperation is to strengthen East-West infrastructure, establish people-to-people contacts and thereby contribute to the economic, cultural and social development of the Region.

The primary goals of the cooperation are to improve living conditions and promote sustainable economic and social development in the Barents Region and thus contribute to peaceful development in the northernmost part of Europe.

The Barents cooperation was originally a peace project intended to create stability, because the region had many potential conflicts, such as

- gap in living conditions
- the borders were closed with hardly any contact, which resulted in large possibility for misunderstandings
- In addition, the joint recourses like fish, oil and gas raised practical problems which needed to be solved in a proper way.



Our work

- Project grants
- Cross-border competence
- Studies and Reports
- BarentsObserver.com



Project grants: Our most important task is to grant Norwegian-Russian projects in the Barents Region.

Project grants 2009: almost 30 mill Norwegian kroner, (3,8 mill Euros Three point eight)

200 projects yearly (average=gjennomsnitt)

The main objectives of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat are for example to provide information and coordinate projects within the Barents Program, including counselling of project applicants and distribute information and stimulate contact in the entire region to promote and spread the knowledge of the opportunities present in the Barents Cooperation.

Cross border competence: The Barents Secretariat has knowledge and and is a competence centre of cross border issues on Norwegian-Russian relations. Nowadays representatives from border areas in the eastern part of Europe come to Kistrakenes to learn about our job.

We also make studies and reports

Studies and reports: Example Barents Review plan yearly publication about people, borders and regional cooperation Articles on "Border crossing exercises, security cooperation, oil and gas development, indigenous peoples and industry

BarentsObserver.com
Cross-border news

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Norway Sweden Finland Russia

Photo Video Map

Norway: Continued high population growth
2010-06-18
The population of Norway is projected to rise considerably in the peri...
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Successful Norwegian-Russian naval exercises
2010-06-13
The POMCR-2010 exercises are regarded as a success, both from the Russian and the Norwegian side. Today the Norwegian frigates "Otto Sverdrup" left the Northern Fleet's main base Severomorsk.

Museum has key to Barents Sea geology
2010-06-18
Geological samples collected at Novaya Zemlya by the early 20th century...
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Russia wants extra drilling checks
2010-06-13
In the wake of BP's large oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, Russia's Na...
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First shipment of highly radioactive waste from border area
2010-06-13

Total want stake in Yamal LNG

The new Norwegian Honorary Consul Arkhangelsk
The head of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat's

Briefs Articles Opinions Reports

- Norway: Continued high population growth
- Museum has key to Barents Sea geology
- Russia wants extra drilling checks
- Total want stake in Yamal LNG
- French PM: High North increasing in strategic importance
- Russia to explore continental shelf this summer

Spotlights

BarentsObserver best website on news in the Barents Region with 100 000 unique clicks monthly. 20% of the visitors are russian, off course this webside is translated into russian. Hired one guy sitting in Nikel, our twin city translating the website every day. Both national and internationally newspapers and websites refer dayly to news from the BarentsObserver



Structure

- Owned by Nordland, Troms and Finnmark
- Offices in Kirkenes, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Naryan-Mar
- Project grants from Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Partner programmes with other ministries.



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Partner programs with other ministries

We are funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and administer the ministries funds for the Norwegian-Russian cooperation in the north. In addition cooperation with other ministries responsible for culture, regional development, health and youth as (the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion and Ministry of Health and Care)

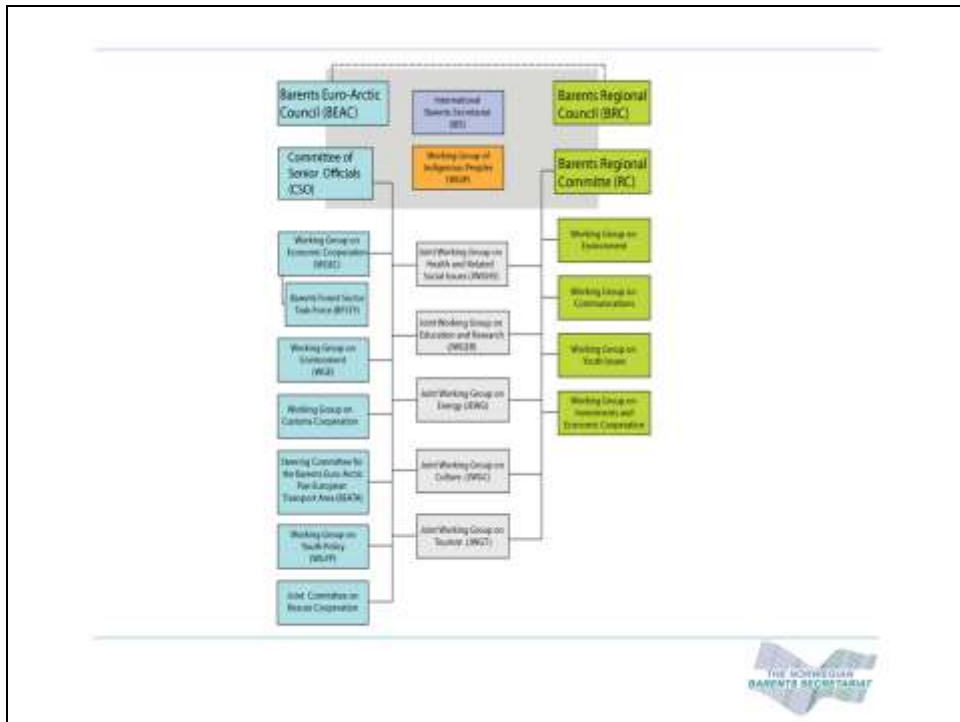
Kirkenes 12 employees, 3 information, 2 business, indigenous relations, health and culture

Murmansk 2

Archangels 2

Naryan-Mar 1 employee

Partners Programs: Youth program, Health program



When the Barents cooperation was established in 1993, the political cross border contacts were formalized on two levels, The intergovernmental between the Foreign Ministries in Moscow, Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm, named Barents Council, while the interregional contacts were organized within the frames of the Barents Regional Council, where the thirteen member regions are represented.

Barents Secretariat responsibility is on the right handside, det regional cooperation.

The top level on the left and right is represented by the politicians, and the groups below consists of administrative personal



The success of the Barents cooperation

- 17 years of cooperation
- 3400 projects financed
- 50 million EUR granted


2009

- 170 projects funded



Approximately 400 million Norwegian kroner (50 million Euro) 17 years

The work to the Barents Secretariat has been evaluated a couple of times within the 17 years. Last evaluation were done by NIBR (Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research) in 2007-2008, which concluded that the Barents Cooperation is a success for the Barents Cooperation and that we spend our money in accordance with the instructions.




Areas of priority

- Culture
- Competence
- Indigenous peoples
- Business
- Environment

- Health
- Youth

More information:
www.barents.no



The Barents Cooperation is regarded as a vital part of creating a stable and democratic Europe.

It finances projects within the areas of

- Youth own program
- Indigenous peoples (Saami, Nenets, Veps- Karelia). Defines as indigenous people, less than 400 000.
- Industrial and commercial development (for instance 50 norwegian companies in Murmansk)
- Environment/health care
- Welfare/culture
- Competence and education,
- in order to increase the transregional contact.

By knowledge about each other, we are increasing the common understanding and making the distance between the regions a bit shorter.



What about the future:

The Barents Secretariat had a poll 2008 which showed that 80% of the Russian on Kola peninsula wanted to be engaged in international cooperation, 65% of the respondents want Russia and Norway to engage in a joint exploration of the Barents Sea Shelf. 80% believe international business cooperation can help improve the economic situation in the Kola Peninsula.

Today Barents Cooperation faces new challenges as climate change, big energy projects and industrial opportunities attract the attention of new powerful interests. Therefore there are no reasons to assume that the new times will lower the importance of Barents Cooperation.

The picture shows ice hockey players from Norway and Russia after a match in Zapolyarny, a border town to Kirkenes. This year it was established a Barents Hockey League, supported by the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. When Kirkenes Puckers started some years ago they didn't have competitors. The solution was to find hockey teams on the other side of the border. As Finland and Russia which are great hockey nations. The League consists of teams from Ivalo, Nikel/Zapolyarny, Murmansk and Kirkenes.

Next slide show you the results of Barents Cooperation after still 20 year -

Scenario 1: THE MELTING POT
ГРУПА СМЕШЕНИЕ

Possible Development?





Thank you for your
attention!

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