

Conference Report

# Ten Years of Cultural Cooperation under the Northern Lights

The Third Conference of  
the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region 9 – 10 September 2002 Oulu Finland

Publications of the Ministry of Education, Finland 2003:3



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# Foreword

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region convened some 50 participants in Oulu on 9 and 10 September 2002. In addition to the ministers and senior officials responsible for culture in the Barents Member States, observer countries and other organisations, such as the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic Cultural Foundation and the Council of Europe, had sent their representatives. The Saami Council represented indigenous peoples.

The Finnish Ministry of Education prepared the Conference together with the representatives of the Barents member states and in consultation with the Barents Regional Cultural Committee. One preparatory meeting was held in Helsinki, Finland, in May 2002.

The Oulu Conference was a milestone in Barents cultural cooperation. The first decade of cultural cooperation is nearly over, for the ministers responsible for culture met for the first time in Kirkenes, Norway, in 1993, and after that in Archangel, Russia in 1998. Since 1993 the Barents Regional Cultural Committee, on which every Barents region is represented, has been developing cultural activities and networking with great success both within the Region and outside it.

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture provided a good opportunity to look back, to assess the results of cooperation and to discuss future development. A report on cultural cooperation and its future challenges was presented at the conference as well as the first action programme for Barents cultural cooperation under the heading "*Voices in the Barents Region*" in which future development and practical project proposals are outlined for the period 2003-2006.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region is a unique area in terms of both its history and its culture. The characteristics typical for the Barents Region are a sparse population and long distances. It is a region where the mainstream culture and indigenous cultures live side by side. The speakers at the Oulu Conference stressed that the development of cultural life serves social and economic development in the Region as well. It is important to enlarge opportunities for cultural interaction. The achievements gained in Barents cultural cooperation are not only felt in the Region but also spreading all over Europe, increasing interest in the Region.

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture adopted a Communiqué which stresses the need to strengthen the Barents cultural identity, with due respect to its historical tradition. One of the goals continues to be to encourage closer cooperation between local and regional stakeholders: cultural organisations, the indigenous peoples, individual artists, cultural experts and authorities.

A future challenge is also to integrate Barents cultural activities into other cultural cooperation in Europe. According to the Communiqué, cultural questions must be taken into account in the preparation of the new Northern Dimension Action Plan in the European Union. The Northern Dimension takes a concrete form in the numerous cultural projects undertaken in the Barents Region.

Contemporary communications technology offers an excellent tool for cultural development in a geographically large and sparsely populated area. The Conference endorsed a proposal for creating a portal to present Barents culture and facilitate communications between stakeholders. The portal will also help to make the cultures in the region known outside the Region. The practical implementation of the project was assigned to the Barents Regional Cultural Committee.

This report contains the material of the Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. All presentations submitted to the organisers of the Conference are included in the report. I hope that it will serve both as a source of information and as a tool not only in further developing existing cultural activities and networking but also in creating new multinational networks and projects. Barents cultural cooperation has to a large extent grown out of networking.

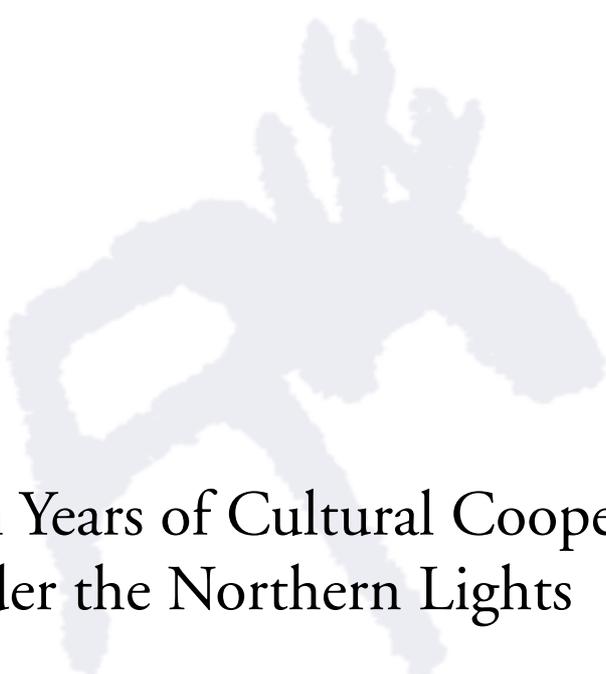
The results obtained at the Conference have been preliminarily reported in autumn 2002 to the EU Presidency, Denmark. The aim of this report is also to make the Barents Region and its cultural cooperation known in other international structures. The representatives of the other organisations took actively part in the Oulu Conference, and I think it is important to continue along these lines and further develop cooperation with them.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the participants for their active work and constructive cooperation during the Conference. The common will expressed in the Conference was very encouraging. I believe that the Communiqué of the Conference will lay a solid foundation for cultural cooperation in the Barents Region and for its further development.

Sweden will host the next Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, at a time and place to be decided later.

Helsinki, October 2002

**Kaarina Dromberg, Minister of Culture**  
**Conference Chair**



# Ten Years of Cultural Cooperation under the Northern Lights

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) is Europe's largest area of interregional cooperation, including 13 of the northernmost regions in Finland, Sweden, northwest Russia and Norway, most of them intersected by the Arctic Circle. This is a region with a rich history, its own traditions and links between people that go beyond national borders. Freedom, trade and shipping and other forms of interaction within the region date back many thousands of years.

The border between Russia and the European Union (EU) goes through the Barents Region. The population of the Barents Region is 6.2 million and the surface area is 1.7 million square kilometres, which is larger than France, Spain and Portugal put together. Several indigenous peoples and minority groups live in the region – the largest among them being the Komi, the Saami, the Nenets and the

Vepsians. The Saami are the only people in the EU area with the official status of an indigenous people. Cultural life among indigenous peoples in the Region shows a vitality that is impressive and strong.

Today, when decentralisation and regionalisation are progressing in most European countries, initiatives are taken to strengthen or create new regional structures. The Barents cooperation is an example of these. This process is expected to bring political and administrative structures closer to the citizens and to improve the democratic functions of society.

## Barents Cooperation Structures

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1993, the intergovernmental cooperation in the Barents Region was formalised, when the Foreign Ministers of the Nordic countries



The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (<http://ud.se/fragor/utrikespolitik/barentsradet> <http://www.barents.no>)

(Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden) and Russia, and a representative of the European Commission, signed the *Kirkenes Declaration*, creating the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC). The Council was established as a forum for intergovernmental cooperation to promote interregional contacts in the northernmost parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and northwest Russia.

On the same occasion, the representatives of the regions together with a representative of the Saami, signed a protocol of cooperation, that established the Barents Euro-Arctic Regional Council, with the objective to work together and to promote the development of the Barents Region. The work and the activities of the Regional Council are managed at the moment by six working groups/networks appointed to handle culture, youth, education and research, environment, communications and

information technologies. Each working group consists of representatives of the region or within the sector concerned. Some working groups have also set up sub-groups such as the Council of Christian Churches, Barents Sport Cooperation, Barents Press International, Barents TV Festival & Academy, Radio Barents, Barents Dance Network etc. In 1995 a central working group for indigenous peoples were initiated - the Barents Indigenous Working Group (BIWG).

### The Vision

The vision of the Barents cooperation is to encourage sustainable economic and social development in the Region and thus contribute to stability, progress and a peaceful development in the northernmost parts of Europe. The Region is

characterised by strong cultural identity, stability, prosperity and progress. The cross-border cooperation is regarded as an integral part of creating a stable, democratic and prosperous Europe. This vision is being realised by developing people-to-people contacts and by strengthening the regional cultural identity.

## Since 1993 Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Region

### Ministerial Conferences

The Ministers responsible for Culture convened for the first time in September 1993 in Kirkenes, Norway. Another important milestone in cultural cooperation was the Second Ministerial Conference held in September 1998 in Archangel, Russia. The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region held in Oulu, Finland in September 2002 can be considered to mark ten years of the Barents cultural cooperation in the region.

The ministerial conferences have stressed the importance of strengthening the common identity in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and emphasised, in particular, the need to support the development of a regional identity and the cultures and cultural heritage of indigenous peoples in the region. The core message has also been how to integrate cultural and economic development and to increase joint activities for supporting social and economic development in the Barents Region.

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture highlighted in addition two aspects. Firstly, it is important to integrate Barents cultural activities into other cultural cooperation in Europe. The development of the EU's Action Plan for the Northern Dimension creates potential for putting the Barents Region on the map in terms of the EU's policies.

Secondly, it is important to raise the awareness of Barents culture both within the Region and in a wider context. The creation of a Barents cultural portal will help to make the cultures in the region known and will also facilitate communications between stakeholders.

### Barents Regional Cultural Committee

The Barents cultural cooperation is organised in a way that assigns the responsibility for the activities to the Barents Regional Cultural Committee. The Committee has representatives from all the Barents regions and has successfully developed cultural and artistic networks and activities. At the request of the Archangel Ministerial Conference in 1998 *the Report on Barents Cultural Cooperation* (September 2001) has been compiled by the Barents Regional Cultural Committee. The Committee has also drafted *the first Action Programme for Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Region 2003-2006*. The presentations both of the Report and of the Action Programme will be found later in this report.

### Cultural Projects in the Barents Region

The Barents cultural cooperation has been operational in full extent since 1993, when the regions in northwest Russia joined the northern areas in Finland, Sweden and Norway. It soon transpired that all regions have similar problems in their cultural provision. These mostly relate to communications, distances, and lack of international contacts and isolation from the capital cities. People working within arts and culture seldom communicate across boundaries, which meant that there was little cross-sectoral cooperation.

One practical problem right from the beginning was inadequate or virtually non-existent networking. In the early phases, many cultural projects were mainly designed to activate cooperation across borders within the Barents region. In practice, however, many projects led to wider activities extending outside the Barents region. The pooling of resources enabled the partners to enhance the artistic quality, undertake more projects and promote cultural participation in the northern areas, which had formerly often been overshadowed by the more populous areas in the south.

The Barents Region is characterised by a rich cultural diversity at the local and regional levels. This cultural and linguistic wealth is forged together by the northern mentality or "Northern Spirit" arising from tradition and the arctic conditions.

The principle underpinning all Barents cooperation is to promote local and regional artistic and cultural life. Since cultural projects generally reach large population groups and get a lot of media exposure, they effectively make life in the northern areas known to the great public.

The regional cultural administrations have played an important role from the outset. They have the resources needed to implement projects, which often require complicated financial arrangements. Gradually, with networking, individuals have become more active so that with time the role of the administrations will be to coordinate and finance rather than implement. Cooperation exists between professionals and between amateurs.

#### A few examples of the more extensive Barents cultural projects.

##### Euro-arctic Diploma in Cultural Management

A programme for training cultural partners in project work, the financing of projects and international cooperation. During four years it has trained nearly one hundred cultural workers, at the same time effectively promoting cultural networking.

##### Barents Cultural Festivals

Cultural events that are annually arranged in the Region are now called "*Barents events*" with a view to making them more widely known. The events invite visiting artists from the different Barents Region countries.

##### Fine Arts

Since 1993 there have been several workshop type projects geared to promote cooperation among Barents Region artists. The projects have staged joint exhibitions in the Barents Region and elsewhere in Europe. They have generated new independent exhibition groups and joint projects between artists. This cooperation, which started as Barents cooperation, has been steadily progressing towards wider international cooperation.

##### Music

"*The Barents Chamber Orchestra*" - young musicians practice together and perform chamber music each year. They have also visited cities and areas outside the Barents Region.

##### Literature

The first Barents anthology was published in the late 1990s. It contains texts from seven different language areas. It has been published in Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Russian.

"*A Time of Changes*" – *people and life in the Barents Region*" is an illustrated book of nearly 300 pages. It is a collection of essays and articles (1998) which looks at the Barents Region through the eyes of photographers and writers representing four nationalities.

##### Dance

There is a professional dance group of dancers representing the four Barents countries. Co-productions include the dance dramas "*Pessi and Illusia*" and "*The Ugly Duckling*", featuring both professional and young amateur dancers from all over the Barents region. The productions have toured different countries.

Folk dance cooperation has been increasingly active in recent years, and new projects are constantly being developed.

##### Theatre

Theatre people are networking, and are especially active in puppet theatre, in which the eastern and western traditions meet in an interesting way.

##### "Breaking the Ice"

In 1998, when Stockholm was the Cultural Capital of Europe, there was a large presentation of Barents region culture, including a joint art exhibition and a dance production "*Out of the Water*", which later also toured in the Region. "*Out of the Water*" was a veritable showcase for Barents culture, being totally created by different art professionals in cooperation from composition to performance.

# Opening of the Oulu Conference

*Ms Kaarina Dromberg  
Chairperson of the Conference  
Minister of Culture, Finland*

It is a great privilege for me to welcome you to the Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. We started our conference at full force with the local men's choir Huutajat. They gave us a living example that Barents cooperation is more than words and paper. It is singing, dancing, humour, joik and flirt.

We in Finland are very proud and happy to be able to host this conference, especially now that we are just about to celebrate the first ten years of Barents cooperation.

In September 1993, the ministers responsible for culture in the Barents Region met for the first time in Kirkenes. Another important milestone in cultural cooperation was the second ministerial conference held in Archangel, Russia, in September 1998.

What is unique about Barents cooperation is the strong role of the regions themselves in decision-making. The Barents Regional Cultural Committee, on which every Barents sub-region is represented, started its work in 1993 and has ever since successfully developed cultural cooperation and networks. At this conference we have a marvellous opportunity to look both back on these achievements and ahead to future priorities.

As we all remember, the Archangel conference requested the Regional Cultural Committee to

review cultural activities in the region. This has now been done. The former committee chair, Jan Henriksson, will present the findings to us today. His successor, Aaslaug Vaa, in turn, has promised to tell us about the actions planned for the next few years and let us see with our own eyes what has been achieved and is being done in Barents cooperation.

It seems to me that we are at a turning point in Barents cultural cooperation. Neither the region itself nor the world at large are what they were ten years ago. Sweden and Finland are now members of the European Union. New partner areas in Russia have joined in our cooperation. We are also witnessing a gradual return to the cross-border – and “no-borders” – interaction of old. However, as far as I can see, there is still the need to promote the mobility of people and cultural products. Mobility is a prominent theme both in Nordic cooperation and in the EU under the Danish Presidency.

Today we can look forward to new opportunities, as well as to new challenges. This is a good time to reflect how we could further develop and strengthen our cooperation.

From the outset, Barents cooperation has largely been organised by cultural authorities. In their cooperation, they have invested in building networks in order to create a basis for inclusive interaction. However – and I would say fortunately – there are already signs of growing involvement by non-governmental organisations and private individuals.

As I see it, this heralds the growing contribution of citizens and their organisations to Barents cooperation. Indeed, the goal should be a state of affairs where the cultural administration facilitates action and cooperation between the creators, providers and users of culture.

Another thing which I consider very important is not to overlook young people in cultural cooperation. Young people are the true resource of the region. I was very happy to see that one of the priorities outlined in the action programme is to promote cultural cooperation between young people and to strengthen their regional identity.

Today we talk a lot about Europe of the Regions, but is it a reality yet? As regards culture, many official decisions still cater for urban centres. To take

an example: even though the system of European City of Culture to some extent also presents regional culture, the emphasis is still on fine arts and urban culture. Is it not time for Europe of the Regions to start designating European regions of culture? Being inter-regional in the purest sense of the word, Barents cooperation could serve as an example to Europe as a whole in this respect.

The core message of the Archangel meeting was to create closer links between cultural and economic life. The idea of the economic impact of culture has lost none of its topicality and I’m sure we all agree that this is an important relationship.

Finland, together with the representatives of the Barents member states and in consultation with the Regional Cultural Committee, has drafted a communiqué, which we shall discuss and adopt tomorrow. The main message of this document is that we should do our utmost to strengthen the cultures of the Barents region and step up our action.

The need to make the cultural potential of the region known both in the region and more widely in Europe has led to an initiative for a Barents cultural portal.

It is also proposed in the draft communiqué that culture should be included in the EU’s Northern Dimension action programme as an entity of its own.

I think that the way in which the Northern Dimension is seen only from the economic perspective is too one-sided. I’m sure you all agree with me that Barents cultural cooperation is a concrete manifestation of the Northern Dimension to the highest degree.

The draft communiqué has been distributed to you in advance. Should you still want to propose revisions in the wording, please let the conference presidency know about them as soon as possible.

With these words, I open the Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Once again, welcome to Finland. I am convinced that our discussions will be both inspiring and productive.

## Welcoming words

*Mr Eino Siuruainen*

*Governor, State Provincial Office of Oulu, Finland*

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Province of Oulu and its administrative centre, the City of Oulu. You have arrived here in the heart of the Barents area, which has good communications with the neighbouring areas in all directions. Provinces have a long history of cooperation in the Nordic countries, especially between the northern parts of these countries. The change of our eastern neighbour from the Soviet Union to the Russian Federation and the ensuing change in our relations have given our counterparts in the east, the north-western areas in Russia, totally new opportunities for cooperation. Over the past ten years we have signed cooperation protocols with areas as far as the Komi Republic.

Cooperation with Russia has seen interesting phases. At first we explored potential fields of cooperation. These were most easily found in research, education, culture and administration. Soon there emerged piloting business ventures across the border, but owing to various problems, this pioneering began to wane. The most solid basis was found for collaboration between different specific sectors; progress is being made in health care, social affairs, crime prevention, road communications, rescue services and general administrative development. We can well say that, with very small resources, our province has succeeded in carrying out multi-sectoral cooperation between authorities, and its good results are recognised on both sides of the border.

In recent years, we have been launching a Finland-Russia cultural forum, which has proved a good vehicle from the outset. On both sides of the border,

surveys have been undertaken to gauge the interest of the parties concerned in cultural cooperation; the results have been encouraging. Our province has partner projects with several areas in Russia. A meeting held in Novgorod and the preparations for a similar meeting in Lappeenranta are generating new enthusiasm among the stakeholders. It would be worthwhile to put in place similar organised activities in the financial and business fields as well. It is with great satisfaction that we follow the growing cooperation carried out by our two folk churches in the northern areas.

For nearly a decade, the Province of Oulu, together with its counterparts, has been planning a northern logistical area with a view to facilitating developments in all the different sectors. The Oulu-Karelia-Archangel-Komi communications channel is a widely accepted aim, and within this undertaking rail and road communications have been developed especially on Russian territory. New road communications have been opened from the Republic of Karelia to Archangel and Vologda. At present we are setting up a joint Northlink consultative body to promote all communications in the region. The aim is to create connections which facilitate emerging economic activity, tourism and cultural cooperation.

The Province of Oulu has four hundred kilometres of border in common with Russia. This provides a gateway for regional and international activities between Russia and the European Union. To promote our aim, we have created good cooperation contacts with Central Europe, especially with Germany. Knowledge of northern logistics is

rare already within the Baltic Sea Region, let alone further south, which necessitates both cooperation and information.

As one of the partners in the Barents Region, we want to contribute to the concrete implementation of the EU Northern Dimension. Our objective is to advance general well being and welfare not only among the population of the Province of Oulu but all of Finland and to contribute with our expertise to cooperation within the Barents Region as a whole. In this work, nature and culture have an increasingly important place.

Welcome to the Province of Oulu. I wish you every success in your conference. Your decisions will promote cooperation in the Barents Region. We are progressing towards significant cooperation, which the people of these northern parts expect to advance peace, stability and welfare.





## Strengthening cultural and artistic cooperation in interaction with other international structures

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region stressed that it is important to develop multilateral cultural and artistic cooperation in the Region in interaction with the other international structures, in particular the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Council of Europe. In addition, it is important to work in close cooperation with indigenous peoples of the Region.

Representatives of these organisations took part in the Oulu Conference. The following are their messages to the Conference and the addresses of the Swedish chair of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Danish presidency of the European Union and the chair of the Nordic Cultural Foundation.

### **Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)**

*Ambassador Helena Ödmark  
Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)  
of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden*

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region was formed in 1993. At a Conference of Foreign Ministers in Kirkenes, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) was established as a forum for cooperation between Governments and government agencies at national/federal level.

At the same time, the Barents Euro-Arctic Regional Council was also formed. The Regional Council brings together the Governors of the counties in the

Barents Region and a representative of the indigenous peoples. It cooperates at county level. Both the Barents Council and the Regional Council have a number of subsidiary bodies. They work very closely together.

On 11 January, 2003, we are planning to arrange a Meeting of Prime Ministers in Kirkenes to celebrate the 10-Year Jubilee of cooperation in the Barents Region. Both the Barents Council and the Regional Council will celebrate their 10 Year Anniversary that day. Throughout the year 2003, there will also be many other activities to highlight and manifest the benefits of 10 years of successful regional cooperation among neighbours in the Barents Region.

The Barents cooperation today covers a very wide range of sectors: environment, energy, transportation, trade and economic cooperation, health, youth, higher education and research, forestry, customs authorities, emergency and rescue services etc. And of course culture.

You all know that there is lively cultural cooperation in the Barents Region and active cultural exchange. As a representative of the Barents Council CSO, I am happy to state that we are very pleased with the way cultural cooperation and cultural exchange is developing. The cultural sector is a sector where everybody can contribute and everybody can benefit.

In other sectors, different languages, traditions, experiences etc. often create obstacles to cooperation and we sometimes have to work hard to overcome such obstacles. In the cultural sector, however, such differences are valuable assets to explore – not liabilities to overcome. Through cultural cooperation and cultural exchange, the full value of the cultural diversity in the Barents Region is brought out and can be appreciated.

In the Barents Council, we see cultural cooperation and cultural exchange as an integral part of the overall Barents cooperation. It increases understanding and respect and that in turn facilitates regional cooperation in the other sectors.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, traditional east-west contacts in the Barents Region were cut off. A lot happened in all the Barents counties during that

period but those historical developments are not well known outside the Region. Sometimes they are not even known to people inside the Region. Much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century history in the Barents Region has not yet been properly documented. Memories are being lost as old people die.

In the CSO, we are now considering to launch an initiative in connection with the 10-Year Jubilee in 2003 to try to shed more light on the recent history in the Barents Region. I hope we will manage to do this. I also hope that you will help us since our history is a part of our culture.

## The Presidency of the European Union

*Mr Peter Van Zaane*

*Ministry for Foreign in Affairs, Denmark*

I convey greetings from my minister who unfortunately is unable to attend this meeting, although aware of the important themes that are to be discussed in the next two days.

Denmark is in a special position in connection with the Barents cultural cooperation. The Barents Region is far away from Denmark and the cultural cooperation is very direct between the different communities and the local governments in the region. This, in our opinion, is generally the model for optimal, efficient and positive cultural cooperation in any region. Direct Danish participation in this cultural cooperation is therefore difficult in a practical way.

Another national aspect is that Denmark like many other countries has a significant general interest in the arctic region and the ongoing cooperation in different fields in this region. In 1999 Greenland proposed to open an Arctic Window in the Northern Dimension. This idea has now gained significant support. It is recognised that often the opportunities and problems are the same in the North of Europe, in Greenland and in the North of Canada. Benefits can be obtained by coordination and exchange of experience.

As to the European aspects, especially in this context the Northern Dimension, there is much to

say in many fields. During the Danish EU Presidency, guidelines will be established for a new action plan for the EU's Northern Dimension for 2004 to 2006. In the light of enlargement, the new plan should highlight the importance of cooperation over the EU's new external border, the safeguarding of the effective functioning of the border and more generally the integration of north-western Russia into the positive developments in the Baltic region, which enlargement will promote yet further. The plan should also support economic development in the region, by contributing to good conditions for private business and the abolition of obstacles to trade.

A ministerial conference on these topics has been held in Greenland on the 27 - 28 August. Amongst other things the Arctic aspects of the Northern Dimension were taken up. Arctic environment and development in thinly populated areas were some of the important points taken up for discussion in this context.

There will be a follow-up conference on the initiative of the EU Presidency this October with the purpose of seeking agreement on more precise guidelines for a new Action Plan to be adopted in good time before the expiration of the present plan.

Cultural cooperation is not mentioned specifically in the context of the action plan for EU's Northern Dimension. But the cultural cooperation and the different cultural projects being undertaken in the Barents region and in the Arctic region are of great importance seen in the general concept of international cooperation, that is - developing stronger direct ties across borders and between people living in the region.

Maybe that is why cultural cooperation is not mentioned directly in EU's plan for The Northern Dimension – it is a basic element in every society and in every cooperation forum which is hard, if not impossible, to define in an action plan. Cultural cooperation should therefore also be seen as one of the foundations and an instrument in developing and implementing policies and action plans in other fields.

Perhaps that is one of the most important facts about the cultural dimensions in regional or

worldwide cooperation. Without secure foundations, fellow human understanding and respect for cultural values and differences any form of cooperation might crumble.

## Arctic Council

*Ambassador Peter Stenlund*

*Chairman of the Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs)  
of the Arctic Council*

*Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland*

During the past two years, Finland has served as Chair of the Arctic Council ([www.arctic-council.org](http://www.arctic-council.org)). The Council's area of operations comprises areas north of the Arctic circle, and also some areas below the Arctic circle in the western hemisphere. The areas in question have considerable populations of indigenous peoples. The highest proportion of indigenous people is found among the population of Greenland. Canada and Alaska also have high proportions. The proportion of indigenous people in Norway, Sweden and Finland is much lower than elsewhere in the operating sphere of the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental forum for the governments and indigenous peoples of the areas concerned. Six organisations representing indigenous peoples are Permanent Participants in the Council. These organisations represent Aleuts, Native American groups, Inuit, indigenous peoples in Russia and the Saami. RAIPON, the organisation of indigenous peoples in Russia, does not, however, include the Komi people and the Yakuts in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

The Arctic Council's working method is largely based on working groups, focusing mainly on environmental issues such as the impact of pollution and the preservation of biodiversity. The Sustainable Development Working Group embraces all dimensions of sustainable development. There is no separate organ for culture in the Arctic Council. Cultural issues are naturally very important as an integral aspect on sustainable development, and since indigenous peoples feature prominently in the work

of the Arctic Council. The identity and cultural diversity of indigenous peoples and preserving and strengthening them are ultimately crucial for sustainable development. The Arctic Council promotes the preservation of cultural diversity and traditional lifestyles among indigenous peoples.

The cultural aspect is not, however, easy to integrate into the Arctic Council's operations; for instance, issues touching on country/land are very complex from the perspective of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples and majority populations also have differed views on the hunting of marine mammals, specifically whales. Conflicts may also emerge concerning reindeer grazing and hunting of species such as caribou. Oil and gas fields and the utilisation of areas needed for traditional indigenous livelihoods are a further source of conflict. Traditional lifestyles and modern economics are often at loggerheads. Tourism in the circumpolar region is also far from problem-free. It should be developed in ways which ensure that indigenous cultures are respected. The skills and special expertise - traditional knowledge - of indigenous peoples are also an important dimension of culture. This is recognised nowadays and used to some extent in monitoring environmental changes, for instance.

## Nordic Council of Ministers

*Ms Valgerd Svarstad Haugland  
Chair of the Nordic Council of Ministers  
Minister of Culture, Norway*

I am here today in two capacities; as Norwegian minister of culture and church affairs, but also as president of the Nordic Council of Ministers ([www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org)). My two hats give me a double opportunity, and also a double platform, for stressing the importance of cultural cooperation in this northern region of Europe. Cultural cooperation is the only way for establish lasting relations between countries and people. Let me put on my hat as president of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Nordic cooperation is based on mutual exchange and cooperation, networking and mobility.

This goes also for the cooperation in the field of culture, where most of the programmes and institutions are focused on how to enlarge the mobility – not only for artists and performers – but also for the products of culture and art in the Nordic region. There are schemes for translation of literature, for the coverage of expenses related to touring for professional theatres, performers, music ensembles, for distribution of domestic films to the neighbouring countries etc. Some of these schemes are already opened up the Barents Region.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' activities in the Adjacent Areas have several framework programmes in operation in the Barents Region. Most of these grant schemes are aimed at building and setting up networks in the non-governmental sector: academic networks, cultural networks. Special priorities are given to applications associated with Nordic languages and culture.

The Nordic Information Office in St. Petersburg is in charge of Nordic cooperation with Northwest Russia. This office, together with partners from the northern part of Russia, have organised a large amount of cultural projects during the last years, not only in St. Petersburg, but also in Northwest Russia.

Events in the Barents Region include everything from promoting the Nordic languages to organising exhibitions, workshops and concerts, and arranging cultural exchange visits between the Barents Region and the Nordic countries.

The Nordic grant scheme SLEIPNIR is a programme for young professional artists under the age of 36. The grant aims at mobility in the Nordic Countries and allows participants to visit a host institution, usually an art institution, in another Nordic country. This grant scheme has since 1999 also been open for young professionals from Northwest Russia enabling them to visit the Nordic Countries - and vice versa.

During the year 2001 twenty young professionals from the Barents Region received this grant. During the first seven months of this year, already 19 professionals from Northwest Russia have visited the Nordic Countries and built networks with art institutions and professionals.

In 2003 the Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art, which has a grant scheme for artists and a residency programme, will enlarge this programme and also include residences in Archangel and Petrozavodsk.

In 2003 St. Petersburg will celebrate its 300-year anniversary. At the same time also Petrozavodsk will celebrate its 300-year anniversary. The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art and The Nordic Information Office in St. Petersburg will, together with partners from Karelia, produce cultural projects to honour this event.

Culture is not manifestations. Culture is communication. Culture is to pose questions and to seek new solutions. This is what we are striving at within the Nordic cooperation, and we want to extend this to the whole Barents Region.

Cultural contacts across frontiers enjoy long traditions in the Arctic Nordic region. These are traditions that should be continued, strengthened and seen in the context of cultural cooperation taking place under the auspices of the Barents cooperation. Cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region is important to all of us.

## **Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)**

*Ambassador Tauno Pesola  
Chairman of the CBSS  
Committee of Senior Officials  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland*

Finland took over the chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States - CBSS ([www.baltinfo.org](http://www.baltinfo.org)) in June this year, after the 4<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit in St. Petersburg.

With the European Union's policies of the Northern Dimension as an umbrella the Heads of Government of the Baltic Sea States have given guidelines for our regional cooperation. Also the work of the Ministers of Culture has been noted by our Summits.

A year ago in September 2001, the Ministers of Culture of the Baltic Sea States met in Copenhagen for their fifth Conference. During the presentations

and discussions, the Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the ongoing cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

The common cultural heritage can be noted as a factor that binds the different countries in the region together. At the same time the diversity and differences of the cultural heritage and ongoing projects in the various fields of culture give the different countries close and unique possibilities of multicultural cooperation.

The cooperation in the field of culture in our region has been growing during last years. It has developed from ad hoc projects, tentative direct contacts between artists and cultural workers, to well oiled cultural networks, cooperation between state institutions and a natural and growing exchange of artists, exhibitions, concerts and plays. Ars Baltica network can be presented as one of such kind of cultural cooperation. Its intention is to enhance cultural identity in the region and also realise projects of the European significance. Network aims to develop in the direction of a communication centre and a structured and organised market place of new ideas. Though the governments perhaps should a bit reserved while boasting with the Ars Baltica as it has been an endeavour very much lying on the responsibility of the NGOs.

If and when we are trying to build a regional identity for our regions, the cultural cooperation has a decisive role.

Among the countries both in the Baltic and in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region we can find a lot of common aims, achievements, problems and at the same time common priorities of cultural cooperation in both regions. This concerns the development of cross-border contacts, cultural heritage, international cultural relations, and last but not least tourism. This gives us the basis for the fruitful discussions and exchange of views about further steps to strengthen the sub-regional cooperation in the field of culture.

We feel confident that our regional cooperation arrangements up in the North, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Arctic Council and CBSS as well as the Nordic cooperation could achieve quite a lot with joint efforts. This is a wish which obviously will be met in the conclusions of this meeting.

## Council of Europe

*Ms Pirkko Rainesalo  
Chair of the Standing Committee  
for Culture, Council of Europe  
Counsellor for Cultural Affairs  
Ministry of Education, Finland*

Let me first bring you the personal greetings of Director General Bendik Rugaas, who indeed originally comes from Kirkenes in the Barents Region and who at the moment is in charge of the Directorate responsible for education, culture and heritage, youth and sport in the Council of Europe ([www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)). He sends his best greetings and wishes to this conference and to Barents cultural cooperation, which has been designated one of the best practices in the present “Culture and Conflict Prevention” project of the CoE Culture Committee. The other best practice is Nordic cultural cooperation. We are looking forward to having Barents cultural cooperation as a godfather example for regional cooperation in Southeast Europe as well as in the Caucasus Region.

You also mentioned, Madame Chair, the CoE working group “Culture and the Regions” from the late 1980s. One of their achievements was to start the European further education programme for regional cultural authorities. This European Diploma in Cultural Management again led to the Euro-Arctic Cultural Diploma in the Barents Region – to our great satisfaction!

I would also like to take this opportunity to tell you about the flagship programme undertaken by the CoE Culture Committee in the 1990s: the national cultural policy review programme, within which Swedish national cultural policy was reviewed already during the pilot phase in the late 1980s, together with French policy. Finnish and Russian cultural policies were reviewed around the mid 1990s. To date, we have reviewed the cultural policy of 18 European countries, and work is underway in six and starting in three countries. The results are easy to find in a very concise form on the Internet at: [www.culturalpolicies.net](http://www.culturalpolicies.net). This compendium of basic facts about, and trends in, European cultural policies

is very well known amongst researchers and students of cultural policy all around the world – we score on average more than 2000 hits a day at our web site – unfortunately it is much less used and less known amongst cultural politicians so far.

Another concrete result of the national cultural policy review programme is the European contribution to the report “Our Creative Diversity” of the World Commission on Culture and Development. The CoE Culture Committee established a European Task Force to produce the European contribution to the process. This report, published under the title “In from the Margins”, was based on the in-depth experience and knowledge gained through these national reviews in different European countries. The book very clearly points out the new responsibilities and challenges for the ministers of culture. As the authors put it, the report’s central themes are “two interlocking priorities: to bring the millions of dispossessed and disadvantaged Europeans in from the margins of society, and cultural policies in from the margins of governance”. They are intended to penetrate other public policies.

The book also very intelligently analyses the four key principles of the European cultural policy: strengthening identity and diversity as well as promoting creativity and participation. The work done within cultural cooperation in the Barents Region is a good substantiation of successful work based on these key principles.

I wish all success to the further work of the Barents Euro-Arctic cultural cooperation and look forward to further cooperation between Barents Regional Cultural Committee and the CoE Culture Committee.

## Nordic Cultural Foundation

*Mr Lars Hjertén  
Chairman of the Nordic  
Cultural Foundation*

The Nordic Culture Fund was established in 1966, some ten years after the foundation of the Nordic Council, and five years prior to the establishment of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Fund has thus been up and running for over 35 years.

The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers appoint the Board of Directors of the Fund in a fifty-fifty division. This composition, a Board with members some of whom are appointed by the Nordic parliaments and some by the Nordic governments, is unique. And it works very well. The parliamentarians and the civil servants interact constructively, and their resources are complementary.

The mission of the Fund is to provide financial support to cooperation amongst the Nordic countries in relation to culture and the arts in the broadest sense. This includes, for instance, funding for conferences, concerts, exhibitions, festivals and publications.

We receive some 800 applications per year, for a total of over 150 million Danish kronor, while the Fund's budget is only about 26 million. Approximately 200 of the 800 applications per year receive funding. In other words, there is a great deal of interest, and competition is tough. The main criterion for fund applications is that the project must involve at least three of the Nordic countries, as participants, arrangers or as part of the theme. In this respect, the Fund considers the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and Åland to be Nordic countries.

That was the main criterion. Beyond the three countries, other non-Nordic countries, such as Russia, may be involved. In other words, the Fund can grant resources to projects relating to our cooperation with the Barents Region.

At the two most recent meetings of the Fund's board, for example, we have approved applications for the following projects relating to cooperation in the Barents Region:

- A feasibility study for a "*Barents International Centre for Choral Music*", the aim of which would be to set up a Nordic-Russian centre for education and research on choral music.
- The creation of a professional dance network in the Barents Region, the aim of which is to simplify contacts among actors and theatre groups in the countries in the region.
- The establishment of *Barents Youth Centre*, to set up a meeting-place for young people working in the arts in the Barents Sea region.
- And finally a project entitled "*Trans-Barents Highway Symposium of Art*", the aim of which is to tour 19 different municipalities between Bodø and Murmansk, holding symposia on art.

These grants were made in order to stimulate increased contact between countries and individuals in the Barents Region, with a view to increasing reciprocal knowledge and understanding and thus contributing to strengthening peaceful coexistence in northern Europe.

## Saami Council (SC)

*Mr Stefan Mickaelsson  
Vice-President of the Saami Council, Sweden*

*"We, Saami are one people, united in our own culture, language and history, living in areas which, since time immemorial and up to historical times, we alone inhabited and utilised".* This is one of the Saami Council statements from 1986. The Saami Council was established in 1956 and in general its purpose are:

- to promote the interests of the Saami as a nation,
- to consolidate the feeling of affinity among the Saami people,
- to attain recognition for the Saami as a nation and to maintain the economic, social and cultural rights of the Saami in the legislation of the four states (no-swe-fin-rus).

The Saami Council is involved in international works. We are an permanent participant of the Arctic Council, and we have also attained NGO-status at the Ecosoc and ILO. It was SC who did take the decision on establishing the Saami flag. It was also SC in

cooperation with Inuit Circumpolar Conference, who suggested professor Ole-Henrik Magga as a member in Permanent Forum and later as a chair.

Also relatively new integration such as the European Union and the cooperation in Barents Euro-Arctic Region constitute new challenges to SC. Small resources however limit the possibilities to draw advantage of these offers.

The funding for SC cultural activities, has not been increased in the way that makes it possible for us to hold our work and quality of that, to a relatively high level. It is necessary therefore, that both of the Nordic Ministerial Council and of various national states realise what has to be done. A slow and long process in the decision-making of funding is often harmful to both the activity, the applicant and to the national states.

One of the aims of the Barents cooperation in the cultural sector is: *“to strengthen the cultural relations and ties between the peoples of the region”*. SC has send an application with date 18th of June 2002 to the Foreign ministry of Finland and Sweden. The application concerns a national Saami culture centre in Lovozero/Lujavre in Murmansk oblast, Russian federation. The project plan has been developed thoroughly, and the aim with this project is to get meeting and activity venues for the indigenous peoples (IP). And not only that. Another project has looked upon the possibilities to establish “Kola Peninsula Saami radio”. The Saami radio project will make it possible with: -permanent Saami radio programs in Russia, -program exchange between the Nordic Saami radio stations and kola peninsula Saami radio, -daily radio program in Saami language in Russia, -weekly news from Russia in Nordic Saami radio and TV.

Already has the education of Saami journalists started. Journalists that will work on the Saami radio on Lujavre after education. But the Kola Peninsula Saami radio need the culture centre project, because the needed facilities is in the culture centre.

The budget of this two SC-projects is approximately 1,2 millions Euro. What is remaining is the funding from Finland and Sweden to the culture centre project on 133 500 Euro for each country. Norway has already submitted their share to

Karasjok commune, who takes on active part in organising the repairs before the long and hard winter arrives.

It is needed that other responsible countries also shows their seriousness in this issue, and I will remind you about some lines in the Kirkenes-declaration: *“The forum will act as a forum for cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, science and technology, travel, environment, infrastructure, exchange inside education and culture, and projects that especially aims to improve the situation for IPs in the north”*.

And to the end,

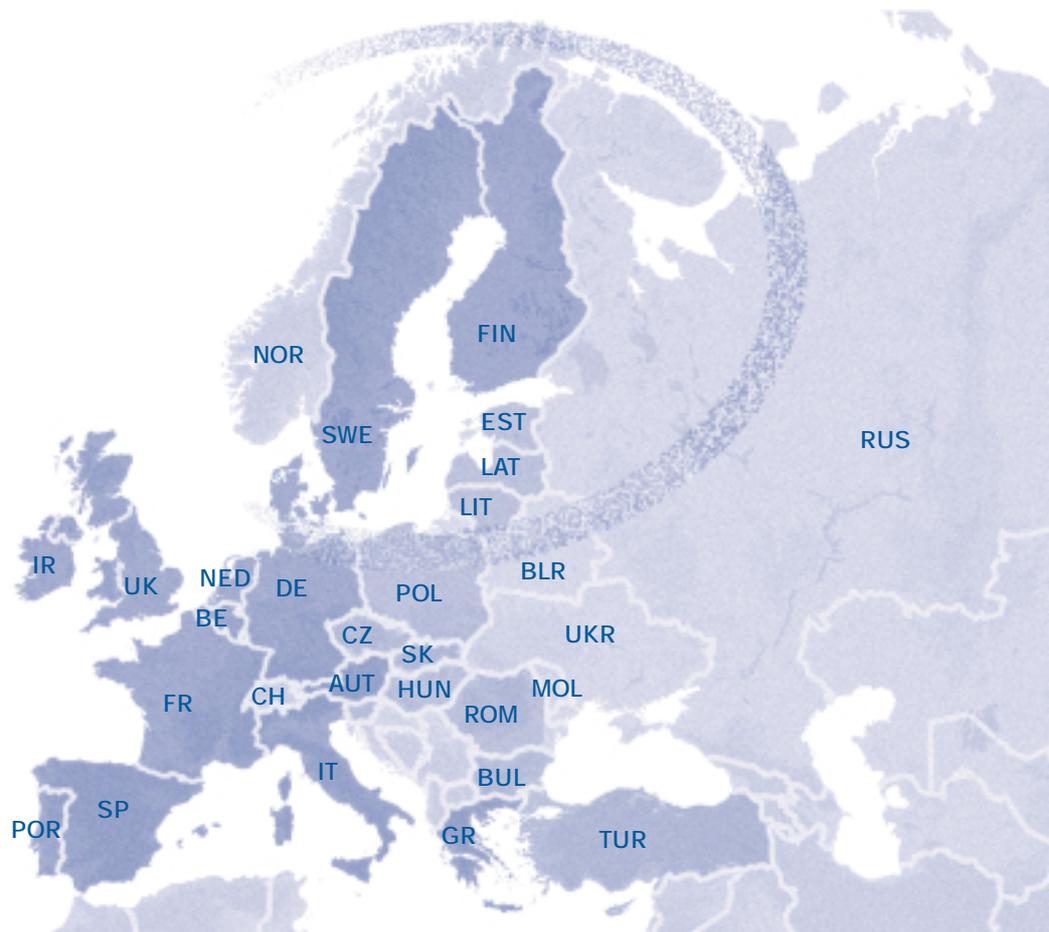
*“If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character, if there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home, if there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation, when there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world”*.



## The Northern Dimension and Cultural Policy

The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region agreed to further develop cultural cooperation in the Region as part of the implementation of Northern Dimension policies. The future challenge is to integrate Barents cultural activities into other cultural cooperation in the Europe.

The European Union (EU) is in a position to develop its Northern Dimension ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/north\\_dim](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim)) with Denmark holding the EU's Presidency in autumn 2002. In October 2002 there will be a Ministerial Conference in which Member States, the applicant countries and other Northern Dimension partner countries will draw up guidelines for the Northern Dimension policy. Approval of a new Action Plan will thus be deferred to the Greek or Italian Presidency in 2003. Presidency cooperation between Finland and Portugal showed that preparations for the implementation of the Northern Dimension made during the Finnish Presidency and decisions on implementation made during the Portuguese Presidency functioned very smoothly as a system for interaction on the North-South axis. The Helsinki European Council in December 1999 invited the European Commission to prepare the Action Plan for the Northern Dimension. The Feira European Council in June 2000 adopted the Action Plan for years 2000-2003.



The Geographical Area of the Northern Dimension

The Northern Dimension aims at addressing the special regional development challenges in northern Europe. It aims to intensify cross border cooperation between the EU and neighbouring countries and regions in northern Europe. In the coming years, with the enlargement of the Union to Poland and the Baltic States importance of the Northern Dimension will increase. The changes that the enlargement will bring to the functioning of the Northern Dimension will feature prominently in the development of the new Action Plan. One effect of the enlargement will be that the border between Russia and the Baltic States, the new Russia-EU border, will come under scrutiny. It also seems that there is support for adopting a concept of a 'Wider Europe'. This concept focuses on the areas beyond the EU's new eastern border: Ukraine, Moldova and – depending on political developments – Belarus.

The development of the new Action Plan for the Northern Dimension creates considerable potential for putting the Barents Region on the map in terms of the EU policies. Cultural cooperation is not mentioned specifically in the context of the current Action Plan for EU's Northern Dimension. The Oulu Conference highlighted that it is important to take cultural aspects into account in the next EU's Action Programme for the Northern Dimension for years 2004-2006. The Northern Dimension takes a concrete form in the numerous cultural projects undertaken in the Barents Region. The Barents Euro-Arctic Council must draw more attention to its operations and to the area it serves. Denmark has expressed interest in specifically developing the idea of an Arctic Window. If this concept can gain support, it will give added weight to the circumpolar dimension.

## Presentations

### The Report on the Barents Cultural Cooperation

*Mr Jan Henriksson, Barents Coordinator  
County Administrative Board of Norrbotten, Sweden*

“This Land  
where the sun never sets  
once it has risen  
where darkness is endless  
when twilight falls”

Declaration of Love to the Landscape in the North, Rauni Magga Lukkari (Tana-Tromsö)

The Ministerial Conference on Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, held in Archangel on September 10, 1998 stated as follows:

- The creation of a new cultural policy, a *“Northern Renaissance”*, is the principal goal of common activities on the threshold to the 21st century
- From culture towards economic development
- From economic development towards culture
- Give priority to cross-border contacts
- Support cultural activities aiming at joint long-term programmes and projects
- Introduce the Barents culture in a variety of contexts and strengthen international cultural relations
- Develop the Barents Region into a dynamic and open cultural area

The Communiqué adopted by the Archangel Conference requested the Barents Regional Cultural Committee to chart the results and experiences from the cultural cooperation in the region, existing financial resources as well as obstacles in order to facilitate cultural contacts and exchanges and render the performances more effective.

Based on the decision of the Archangel Ministerial Conference on Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region the Barents Regional Cultural Committee has adopted the Report on Barents Cultural Cooperation in September 2001.

### Process of the report work

The report covers activities from 1993 to 1999. During the work with the report, a total of nine cultural hearings were arranged in nine different regions. In autumn 2000 an international seminar was arranged discussing the results and conclusions of the report. Decisions concerning the report was dealt with three times by the Regional Cultural Committee.

The main focus of work on the report was on mapping out the profile of cultural activity in the regions and, above all, the extent of employment in the cultural sector. The report showed that the number of projects appeared to be growing every year.

### Results

The main results of cultural cooperation in the Barents Region were as follows:

1. The Barents Cultural Committee has been in operation for ten years now, creating contacts and networks.
2. Entirely new networks had emerged in some areas in cultural management, literature, dance, the visual arts, film and TV, libraries, music schools, chamber music, sports and churches.
3. Thirdly, multi-regional productions, training programmes, dance performances, multi-art performances, books and magazines, art

exhibitions, CD-ROM productions, international events and annual Barents Festivals.

4. Cultural agreements: Multilateral and bilateral, unilateral, twin city, and “people to people” contacts such as small organisations, NGO’s and villages.

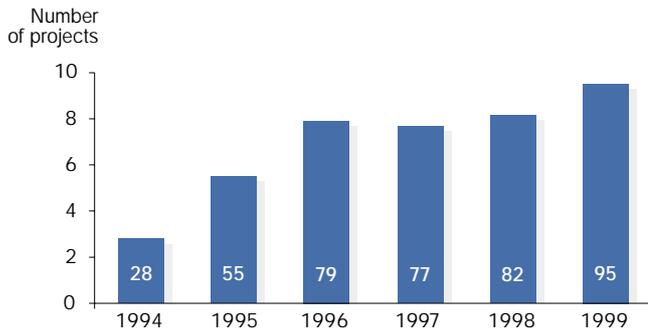
During the work on the report from 1994 and 1999 there were in total 600 different projects. The following analyses were based on 416 projects:

- 416 decisions for project support at regional level were identified and listed
- 90 % bilateral projects
- 10 %, was multilateral
- from 1994 to 1999 the number of projects annually increased by 240 %.
- most of the projects were libraries and literature, small local projects and art /handicrafts, surprisingly few activities concerned museums and theatre

### Recommendations of the report:

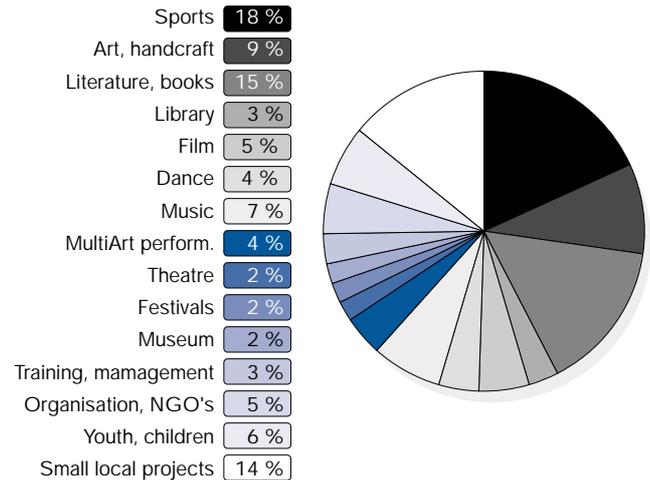
- Support the process of cultural democratisation
- Strengthen the multilateral working
- Support educational/cultural structures for regional-local cooperation
- Introduce local authorities gradually into inter-regional activities
- Develop twin-city partnerships and people-to-people contacts
- Support training in management and networking
- Develop artistic specialisation at the highest professional level
- Stimulate media and the general public’s participation
- Support research
- Strengthen the common identity in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

Barents project 1994-1999 Number of project support



Source: Barents Secreteriat Kirkenes, Swedish Institute, ArtsCouncil of Lapland, Norrbotten County Council

Barents Cultural Projects in various fields of Culture, the Arts and Leisure 1994-1999 416 projects, support in %



### General measures to promote cooperation:

1. Reach a general agreement for cultural policies in the Barents Region, a “Northern Renaissance”, for approval at national, regional and local level.
2. Define national, regional and local responsibility for decisions, initiatives and finances.
3. Commission the Barents Cultural Committee to participate in the decision-making
4. The establishment of a Barents Portal of Cultural Networks.
5. Increase financial resources at all levels
6. Strengthen the financial support for multilateral activities.
7. Harmonise and create common regulations: simplify the processing of multi-visa applications.
8. Reach a multilateral agreement about medical services in the Barents Region.
9. Integrate cultural production in upper secondary arts education.
10. Integrate the Barents cultural cooperation into a European and Baltic dimension.
11. Strengthen the exchange of students, teachers and experts in the field of arts and culture.
12. Appoint a committee to support the development of Barents TV.

### Barents Portal of Cultural Networks

The main project proposal to emerge from the report is the proposal for the establishment of an Internet portal, which would bring Barents region culture to public attention and provide a practical forum for cooperation. This would not be merely a web portal, but it would also provide a network of electronic offices, improve access to information, education and training, and all in all, it would provide the broadest possible scope for operations and communications, with the aim of reinforcing regional identity.

“*The Report on the Barents Cultural Cooperation*” in English can be found from the following Internet homepage: <http://www.arra.se/news.htm>

## The Action Programme for the Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Region 2003-2006

### *“Voices in the Barents Region”*

The Action Programme for Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Region *“Voices in the Barents Region”* for the period 2003-2006 defines the objectives of cultural cooperation for the coming four-year period. Based on the Archangel Communiqué in 1998 and the Oulu Communiqué in 2002, the objectives for cultural collaboration in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region are as follows:

- To make the Barents Region and its cultural dimension more visible in an international perspective and thus contribute to economic development
- To create meeting-places in which people interact, particularly young people of both genders
- To enhance awareness of the region's identity and to translate the northern cultural dimension into practice

These objectives will be realised through multilateral and bilateral projects which are described in the following extract of Ms Aaslaug Vaa, Chair of the Regional Cultural Committee, Norland fylkeskommune, Cultural department, Norway.

The Action Programme in English, Norwegian and Russian can be found from the following web address: <http://www.nfk.no/kultur/mvisdok.asp>

### Voices in the Barents Region

*“The Barents Chamber Orchestra’s”* ambition is to give concerts which will open the hearts of the audience. But we also know perfectly well that through the orchestra we have chosen an art form which truly belongs to the European educational culture. *“The Barents Chamber Orchestra”* is to flag the Barents Region internationally. In this way we show that we can also handle expressions that are brought us from other places. But it is just as important to present the things that make us so different from the others.

*“Voices of Barents”*, the Action Plan for the Cultural Cooperation, will through multilateral



projects present the perhaps 10 000 year old cultural heritage that rock art represents. With the project *“Rock art on the edge of Europe”*, focus is put on traces from the first society of gatherers and hunters, the cultural heritage that we still know the least about.

The project *“World War 2 – 1000 letters on war and peace”* involves the research and documentation of the fate of the people in this region during the war, in order to present it to a broad audience. Passing on this material involves creating a dialogue between generations and societies regardless of which side the writer represented.

An international centre for choir music will be the arena for creative vocal music, choir education and research in this field, *“Barents International Centre for Choral Music”*. All experience so far shows that musical activities create a vivid meeting place with equal participation. *“The Barents Summer Music Academy”* in Kostomuksha is another arena for particularly talented young musicians.

The library cooperation in the region had been developed long before the Kirkenes Declaration, the positive standing point will be taken further by arranging the *“Barents literature camp for young people”*, a meeting place where youth are stimulated

to write and where they are taught about the writing culture in the region. "*Children's Polar Library*" is a website on the Internet where literary work from our countries is presented. It is adapted for children, and they can also send their contributions to the website's school of poetry, which offers guidance and advice. The project "*Young Writers in the Barents region*" will hold seminars and workshops, at first for writers and culture pedagogues with methodological training, then for youth who with this work form are able to supplement the art of writing with other art forms.

Within visual arts, we want to revitalise existing studios for artists and establish new ones in cooperation with The Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. The aim is to make the region attractive for artists, and make the region's nature and culture influence artistic practice.

With the photo project "*City of Barents*", focus will be put on the urban distinctive features of the region seen through young photographers eyes. The project "*New Forms in Barents*" will create a meeting place for designers, present existing products and pass on knowledge to new people. These days, the exhibition "*New Potatoes*" opens in London, based on a journey in the region. This is contemporary art based on our life worlds, a Barents exhibition where 49 young artists participate.

"*Cultural Portal for the Barents region*" on the Internet will be established to create a consciousness of cultural heritage and cultural activities, and to increase our cooperation. "*Gateway to Barents*" is a project that will result in a regional expert network among the cultural workers in the region, for project development, financing and implementation of international cultural projects.

All the projects mentioned are multilateral, which means that ideally, all the member regions participate, each of the four participating countries should be represented. The ten years of experience that we put behind us show that most of the projects are bilateral, which means that one of the Scandinavian countries cooperate with Russia. This is not in line with the idea of one Barents Region.

But despite all this, the culture committee wants the bilateral work to be taken further in the form of festivals and seminars, and let us not forget the

friendship work between individual municipalities in the region and friendship work from people to people.

What is the Barents Region? The Barents region reaches from Vega in the south-west and to Vorkuta in the north-east, from the Onega Sea in the south to North Cape in the north. Thirteen regions that stretch over more than 1.7 million square kilometres, and where 6.2 million people live. These figures are not always so easy to understand, let us try the comparative method. The areas of the Barents Region correspond to the entire areas of Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Poland and Israel.

The Barents Region is as an arctic area characterised by a cold climate, scattered settlement and long distances. This is one of Europe's gold mines; wood, ore, minerals, fish, oil and gas. Another common feature is the area's remote location compared to our time's centres and big markets. Moreover, business and industry are characteristically unbalanced and raw material dependent. It is a paradox which effects all of us who live here, on the one hand we hold some of the yet untouched nature of Europe – on the other hand, there are undetonated bombs here, nuclear material. The differences are not fewer than the similarities.

The biggest difference is between the living standard of the Scandinavian citizens and of those in Russia. As late as the spring of 2000, Russian statistics reported that the share of poor people comprised 40 percent of the population. The numbers were based on Russia's own official poverty line.

There is a huge gap between the material living conditions for people on either side of the old Iron Curtain. This, in spite of the fact that the 1997 cod quota in this region corresponded to 178 kilos per inhabitant. This means that all the citizens would have dinner on their table every day all year round.

Even though all the four nations have multicultural settlement of historic origin in the north, the diversities are the greatest in Russia. I do not know the exact number of languages that can be heard in the Barents Region – but a fair estimation would be; the Saami language in four different

dialects, Meänkieli, Karelic, Veps, Komi, Nenets, Russian, Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian.

The cultural cooperation must function in a world which not only is characterised by historical and ethnic differences that create cultural gaps. But also by physical distance, geographical distance. In this world, the culture cooperation's ambition is to create new cultural meeting places where people interact and cooperate, particularly young people. Naturally, one of the demands is that the perspective of gender is a guiding dimension in the practical work. These meeting places for cultural interaction may be established through bilateral cooperation, establishment and further development of our sister counties, festival participation, seminars and last but not least, interaction over time through the multilateral projects.

What does it take to succeed? Who would want to take on the responsibility to carry out international work within a culture area that in reality consists of; historical conflicts, great geographical distances, small specialist environments, a scarce population and which also is described by the rest of the world as the outskirts of the outskirts, without there being a minimum of financial fundament.

That means that in addition to patience, we will need:

- High motivation and a priority of the tasks among the member regions. The projects must be implemented in the different environments.
- All the countries must participate in the multilateral projects, ideally all the participating member regions.
- Government and region budgets must provide financial resources. These resources must be earmarked for the implementation of the action plan. These regional and national financial resources form the basis to apply for international funding for relevant projects.

If we succeed, there will be no better example of international regionalization in Europe. In this world, anything is possible. Let us inspire the small stories, and use our precious time well.



# Interventions on the Communiqué of the Oulu Conference

Finland, together with the representatives of the Barents member states and in consultation with the Barents Regional Cultural Committee, drafted a Communiqué for the Conference. The Communiqué was adopted unanimously. In the following are the interventions of the Norwegian, Russian, Swedish delegations regarding the Communiqué.

## Norway

*Ms Valgerd Svarstad Haugland  
Minister of Culture*

Looking back on the last ten years I think we all agree that cultural cooperation in the Barents region has flourished to an extent that goes beyond all expectations. A high number of activities which can be related to the Barents cooperation, have taken place in all our countries, people have crossed the borders and contacts have been established. This is a development we all support and wish to further develop. Contact between people is the only reliable way of establishing a real and effective cultural network. The Report on the Barents Cultural Cooperation, which was presented to us yesterday afternoon, is a documentation of this cooperation and of its achievements.

Network and network building has become a kind of slogan in our days. Sometimes you get the feeling we are using words without real content. Not so in the case of Barents cooperation. In the Barents region networks of all kinds have been one of the conditions for making this cooperation

working. In this region active networking has resulted in numerous productions like dance performances, concerts, art exhibitions, books, magazines, CD-ROM productions and festivals. It's a pleasure just to look at the long list of successes. Of course there has been obstacles and difficulties. That's the way life is. However, important goals have been reached and we are grateful for the work carried out. I don't hesitate to say that thanks to this work we feel today that talking about the Barents region is more than just words. The Barents region has become a concept in our minds, and that was exactly one of the ideas when the initiative for this cooperation was taken nearly ten years ago.

In order to stimulate cross-border contacts and inspire to further exchange it's most important that we, from the political side, do our best to facilitate cooperation. This also means that we do what we possibly can to remove obstacles that might exist. What the obstacles are may vary from time to time, therefore, close contact between the Regional Cultural Committee and our national central authorities is most important. I know that this contact today is formalised in the way that representatives from both administrative levels meet once a year. This has proved to be efficient and I support its continuation.

Cultural cooperation in the Barents region is organised in a way that leaves the responsibility for the activities that take place with the Culture Committee and the regional authorities. This is the way the structure is, and that is the way we want it. In my opinion it functions well and there is no reason for changing it.



However, seen from the central government, we often feel that we are at a distance, sometimes also quite remote. We receive reports, we see the programmes and read the lists of activities, but we have very little direct contact. Therefore, this yearly meeting is most important.

The formalised Barents cooperation was officially launched January 11, 1993 at a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Kirkenes, Norway. In fact this date also marks the birth of the concept "The Barents region". Today this concept is familiar to all of us, we know what we relate to it, and we use it in our daily language.

The first ministerial conference, after the opening conference, within the framework of the Barents cooperation was the meeting of Ministers of Cultural Affairs, which took place in August the same year, 1993, also in Kirkenes.

Related to the ten years anniversary of the Barents cooperation next year Norway has initiated an art project named "Migration", a Barents Touring Exhibition. The opening will take place in Kirkenes during the ministerial meeting in January 2003. The exhibition is a multilateral INTERREG project under Norwegian chairmanship, involving art institutions and art organisations in all the countries in the region. After Kirkenes the exhibition will continue to Murmansk, Archangel, Kemi, Luleå, Jokkmokk and Kiruna. Through the art this exhibition will tell the story of the people in the region, its history and contemporary life. The goal is also, during the tour, to establish new networks between artists and institutions, and then again strengthen cross border cooperation.

The exhibition is established within the framework of Barents cooperation, and will, as mentioned, be shown in various cities in the region. However, initiatives and activities like this should not be restricted to one region. What we see in Europe today, is a trend towards regionalisation. Our challenge in this situation is to build bridges between the different regions, to establish links between people and local communities. That's why we in our communiqué have reference to inter-regional cultural production. My suggestion, therefore, to the organisers, is to bring this

exhibition to our neighbour region, the Baltic Sea region. This could be done in cooperation with Ars Baltica, also mentioned in the draft communiqué.

Based on the Report on the Barents Cultural Cooperation the Regional Culture Committee has adopted a plan of action for the period 2003-2005. The plan emphasizes the importance of multinational cooperation in the region, and with a main goal to make the Barents region visible in an international context. The intention being that international awareness of the region and its resources will contribute to the development of the region and particularly its younger generation. Another goal is the strengthening of the regional identity among its inhabitants, a goal which is in line with our own intention as expressed in the communiqué.

From the Norwegian side we support this plan of action and the work of the Culture Committee with the confidence that it will be to the benefit of the Barents Region, its inhabitants and its culture.

In all the countries bordering the Barents Sea we have groups of indigenous people living in their own culture with their own traditions. These traditions have deep historical roots and involve contacts across the borders. Many of these cultures, if not all of them, exist under a constant pressure from the surrounding greater society with its majority culture.

Quite a lot is done nationally in order to preserve and develop these minority cultures. However, indigenous people in the Barents Region belong together and feel a kinship which goes beyond national borders. They have a cultural identity and a cultural heritage which connect them with this region. This means that we need to work together on a multilateral level, on a Barents level, in order to ease the situation for these cultures in their struggle to survive.

Cultural life among indigenous people in the region shows a vitality that is impressive and strong. The number of activities is remarkably high and across-border contacts take place in a great variety. However, all this activity needs our support. Let us, therefore, in our future work not forget that these people represent an asset to the regional culture, and

that their culture might easily be destroyed if not carefully taken care of.

Cultural cooperation within the framework of the formalised Barents cooperation has over the years been organised by the Barents Regional Culture Committee. The report presented to us today is a documentation of their achievements. For this they deserve our thanks. The report proves that bureaucracy is needed for establishing links and for channelling ideas between countries, institutions and people. The report, in my opinion, shows that this is the way our formalised Barents cultural cooperation should continue to operate also in the future.

In our Communiqué we agree to create a Barents cultural portal with the aim, among others, to raise the awareness of the region and its culture. I fully support this idea. However, to implement the idea will require financial support from all participating counties and bodies. I therefore, recommend that the Regional Cultural Committee is given the task to go into this question and take it up with the relevant institutions and authorities.

From the Norwegian side we see the Barents Region as a region with a rich history, with its own traditions, and with links between people that go beyond national borders. The Barents Region is a region with great resources, also in the field of culture, which point to the future. It has a skilful population with ideas and initiative. Therefore, let us all join in the common endeavour to further develop the culture of this northern-most part of Europe.

## The Russian Federation

*Ms Marina Klimenko  
Chief of Division  
Ministry of Culture*

It is a great honour for me to represent the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation at this Conference. Let me to convey the greetings from Mr. Molchanov, the First Deputy Minister, who unfortunately could not attend this meeting due to some unforeseen circumstances, and forward his best wishes to the participants of the Conference.

Taking into consideration that we are short of time because of the very tight agenda of the Conference, I am going to say just some words about the importance of Barents cultural cooperation for the Russian Federation.

During the last ten years after the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration in 1993 the main objectives such as to promote a cultural identity based on historical traditions in the Barents Region, to stimulate contacts in the entire region, to promote and spread the knowledge of the opportunities in the Barents cooperation, to coordinate projects within the Barents Programme etc. were being successfully implemented. The role of culture as a stimulating factor for the development of the Barents Region as large is constantly increasing.

Certain efforts were made to develop cross-border cooperation and organise contacts between the regional administrations and artists. Bilateral contacts at regional level between the northern regions of the Russian Federation and their partners in Lapland, Finnmark, Norrbotten and others effectively developed.

As you probably know most Barents projects in Russia are connected to various events, anniversaries, festivals, which are organised by regional administrations and institutions; annual events are usually based on bilateral agreements; projects are funded by internal institutional resources, with limited opportunity to cover external expenses. Of course the Barents cultural cooperation is of great importance for all the northern regions of Russia. But I'd like also to underline that this cooperation becomes more and more important not only for our northern regions but for the whole Russia, and that the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation supports new Barents projects and initiatives.

We are now in a new phase of the relations and we understand that new types and activities need new tools. First of all we need now to develop an electronic network for cultural contacts. I mean the mentioned above cultural portal for the Barents region. No doubt that the establishing of a web-based cultural portal, which would increase awareness of the current cultural activities, make cooperation more accessible and create interaction tools for people in

the region, is the primary task for all of us now. The Russian side fully supports this project.

In conclusion I'd like to repeat that Russia attaches great importance to the cultural cooperation in the Barents Region in the general concept of the international cooperation.

## Sweden

*Ms Kristina Rennerstedt*

*General Director*

*Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs*

It is a great pleasure and honour to represent the Swedish Minister of Culture at this Conference. I would like to forward my Minister's, Ms Marita Ulvskog's, warm and most sincere best wishes and apologies for not being able to attend this meeting. Her absence is due to the upcoming general elections in Sweden.

Culture in the Barents Region comprises all artistic fields and it has had an impact far beyond the established organisations. And this is important. We must strive to involve also those artists who do not belong to established organisations. Our objective must be to ensure culture as an independent force that can challenge and vitalise our societies. Therefore it is desirable that decision makers and cultural institutions in the Region to an even greater extent bear in mind the need for interregional cultural cooperation.

The Communiqué we will adopt later is in support and acknowledgement of 10 years of very lively cultural cooperation. Not only has this cultural cooperation been important to the artists involved, as been said, but the role of cultural cooperation has also proved important to economic development. Increasing demand within the cultural industry has contributed to more frequent cooperation on film and TV productions. As a result several documentaries and fiction movies have been produced in the Barents Region.

We should develop cultural cooperation as a part of the implementation of EU Northern Dimension policies. Sweden will do its utmost to ensure that the needs of cultural development are taken into account

in EU policies and in Community programmes. Cooperation within the media field is vital. We need to make our Region more attractive to the younger generation. Closer cooperation between institutions in the education sector and, in particular, with the media world would be important steps that could generate new impulses. In this context, we are very happy that the School of Music in Piteå, is establishing an "Academic Media Centre". The Centre, which has been authorised by the Swedish Government, is going to offer four new higher education programmes on important media issues.

Let me also mention that the national/federal public service companies recently linked their transmission lines to enable direct transmission throughout the Barents Region of TV news as well as programmes in minority languages.

The cultural heritage of indigenous peoples and other local inhabitants is a link to our past. They developed a richness in cultural expressions that we value highly today. We need to continue to preserve the cultural identity and the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Knowing how they lived in different parts of the world is important and gives an understanding of the basic conditions of life which is vital in a society that is becoming more and more dependent upon modern technology.

Sweden attaches great importance to cultural cooperation in the Barents Region. On behalf of Minister Marita Ulvskog, I very much look forward to welcoming you to Sweden for the next conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.



## Communiqué

The Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, convening in Oulu from 9 to 10 September 2002 to discuss cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region,

Having regard to

- the Kirkenes Declaration of 11 January 1993 on the basis of which the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council were established,
- the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in Kirkenes from 31 August to 1 September 1993,
- preparatory work for and the Communiqué of the Ministerial Conference on Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in Archangel from 9 to 10 September 1998, especially as concerns the aim to develop the Barents Euro-Arctic Region as a dynamic and open cultural area, and the decision to review cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, its economic resources and obstacles to cooperation,

**Expressing** their support and acknowledgement of 10 years' cultural cooperation, and appreciating its positive effects within all the artistic and cultural fields.

**Considering** the economic impact of culture in the development of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and, correspondingly, the role of the culture in economic development.

**Having** received the *Report on Barents Cultural Cooperation* (September 2001) compiled by the Barents Regional Cultural Committee at the request of the Ministerial Conference on Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in Archangel on 9 - 10 September 1998.

**Thanking** the Barents Regional Cultural Committee for drafting the first *Action Programme for Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Region 2003-2006*. **Being aware** of the need for support at national and regional levels for cultural initiatives in the Region, and at the same time **emphasizing** two important aspects: cooperation between equal partners and co-financing of activities.

**Recognizing** the work carried out by the Barents Regional Cultural Committee and the importance of structured organisation of cultural cooperation in the Region.

## Agree

1. **To promote** local and regional cultural identity and inter-regional cultural production based on historical tradition in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.
2. **To support** the strengthening of cultural identity and the preservation of cultural heritage of indigenous peoples in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.
3. **To continue to support** the work of individuals, local and regional institutions and nongovernmental organisations and the cooperation among them
4. **To further develop** cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region as part of the implementation of Northern Dimension policies, with the aim of
  - ensuring that the needs of cultural development in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region be taken into account in the European Union policies and Community programmes, especially in the next Action Programme for the Northern Dimension for years 2004–2006, as well as in the implementation of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the EU and the Russian Federation,
  - strengthening multilateral cultural and artistic cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in interaction with other international structures, in particular the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Council of Europe, as well as national and other actors and organisations representing ethnic and linguistic minorities in the Region.
5. To support **the creation of** a Barents cultural portal, with the aim of
  - raising the awareness of the culture of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and improving prerequisites for networking between cultural actors both within the Region and in a wider context,
  - strengthening the cultural dimension in information society development in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (i.a. Northern eDimension, eEurope and eRussia)
6. **To invite** the Barents Regional Cultural Committee, in cooperation with relevant national and regional bodies and as a part of the ongoing work on the Barents Regional Council Information portal, to start preparations for the creation and launching of a Barents cultural portal.

**Thank** the Government of Sweden for its kind offer to host the next Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, at a time and place to be decided upon.

The outcome of this conference will be reported to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.

## **Communiqué of the Ministerial Conference on Cultural Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region**

The Ministerial Conference in Arkhangelsk on September 10, 1998,

developing the basic ideas for cultural cooperation in the Barents Region stated in the Kirkenes Declaration of January 1993 and the Declaration of Ministers of Culture of September 1993,

taking into account other generally recognised statements in the field of cultural cooperation adopted by international organisations, in particular, the Council of Europe and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation,

taking note of the increasing importance of cultural cooperation as one of the means to promote a cultural identity in the Barents Region based on historical tradition,

considering the role of culture as a stimulating factor for the development of the Barents Region at large,

having discussed questions related to results and priorities of the Barents cooperation in the field of culture and specifically the common cultural heritage and identity as well as obstacles to the cultural cooperation,

**states,**

that the forming of a new cultural policy, “Northern Renaissance”, is the principal goal for common activities on the threshold to the XXI Century.

This new cultural policy requires a willingness from all parties to work actively for increased cooperation under the guidance of two main principles:

- from culture towards economic development
- from economic development towards culture.

The new cultural policy should:

- give priority to cross-border and regional contacts
- support cultural activity aiming at joint long term programmes and projects
- introduce the Barents culture in different contexts and strengthen international cultural relations
- develop the Barents Region as a dynamic and open cultural area.

The Ministerial Conference was aware of the need for different kinds of support at the national and regional level for cultural initiatives in the Barents Region.

The Ministerial Conference stressed that regular meetings between regional and national authorities are desirable in order to facilitate cultural cooperation in the region.

The Ministerial Conference emphasized in particular the need for support for development of the regional cultural identity and for the culture and cultural heritage of the Sami, Nenets and other indigenous people in the Barents Region.

The Ministerial Conference acknowledged the work of local and nongovernmental organizations and the cooperation between individuals, regional institutions and NGOs.

The Ministerial Conference decided to chart the results and experience from cultural cooperation in the region, existing financial resources as well as obstacles in order to facilitate cultural contacts and exchanges and render the performances more effective.

The Ministerial Conference underlined that priority should be given to future projects aiming at:

- the exchange of experts, art students and teachers on long-term basis,
- the building of computer networks and a common information environment.

The Ministerial Conference acknowledged the role of the Nordic Council of Ministers and considered the Nordic Plan of Action in the cultural field for the adjacent areas as a promising basis for their work in the Barents Region.

The Ministerial Conference stressed as well the importance and achievements of the Regional Barents Cultural Committee. The Conference thanked the Government of the Russian Federation and the Administration of the Arkhangelsk oblast for a particularly useful and well organised Conference.

The Ministerial Conference stressed the importance of strengthening the common identity in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. They recommended that the next conference of the Ministers of Culture should be held within the next few years.

## *Kirkenes Declaration 1 September 1993*

*Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Region,  
Kirkenes 31 August 1 September 1993*

### **Declaration**

We, the Ministers of Cultural Affairs, meeting in Kirkenes, 31 August to 1 September 1993,

1. Referring to the declaration from the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Kirkenes, 11 January 1993, which established a formal cooperation within the Barents Euro-Arctic region, where the general aims with regard to cooperation within different sectors are drawn up, including cultural cooperation,
2. Recognising the close historical and cultural relations between the peoples of the regions and states which participate in the cooperation within the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Regional Council of the Barents Region, with special attention to the bonds which always have existed among the Sami population in this region,
3. Expressing our hope and intention of extending and reinforcing the cultural cooperation within the region, bearing in mind the importance of close relations in this area of Europe for regional development and international stability.
4. Declare our mutual intention of:
  - a) Enhancing cultural cooperation in the Barents region within the framework of the mandate of the Barents Council and the Barents Regional Council.  
In this context culture is to be understood in the widest sense of the concept,
  - b) Emphasising the role of the educational and scientific institutions within the cultural cooperation,
  - c) Encouraging cultural exchange which aims towards increased knowledge of culture and society and a better understanding between the peoples of the region,
  - d) preserving our cultural heritage and important cultural monuments and objects, and through cooperation preventing the destruction of common and irreplaceable values,
  - e) promoting further cultural cooperation amongst the indigenous peoples of the Barents region.
5. Propose the following guidelines for cooperation:
  - a) The cooperation should take into account the characteristics of the different regions, be based on existing cultural objectives and rooted in the cultural activities of the region.
  - b) Projects should be initiated in the regions and be managed by or in close cooperation with regional cultural authorities.
  - c) Relevant national authorities should contribute in creating conditions enabling regional cultural cooperation to take place.
  - d) Cooperation should be organised through local and regional bodies and institutions, thus preventing the establishment of new institutions and unnecessary duplication of existing administrative bodies.



*The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture  
in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region*

September 9-10, 2002

“Uusi Seurahuone”

Address: Rantakatu 4, Oulu, Finland

## Programme

Sunday, 8 September 2002

Evening                   Arrival of delegations and registration at Radisson SAS Hotel  
Address: Hallituskatu 1, FIN-90100 OULU

20:00 -                   Get together buffet at Restaurant Toivo in Radisson SAS Hotel

Monday, 9 September 2002

Morning                   Arrival of delegations and registration continue

9:00                       Departure by bus for *Kierikki Stone Age Centre*, Yli-Ii

10:00 - 12:30           Guided tour in *Kierikki Stone Age Centre*  
including lunch at Stone Age Restaurant

12:30                     Departure for Oulu

13:30                     Coffee at the Conference Venue

14:00 - 14:20           **Opening of the conference**  
- Ms. Kaarina Dromberg, Minister of Culture, Finland

14:20 - 14:30           **Welcoming words**  
- Mr. Eino Siuruainen, Governor, State Provincial Office of Oulu  
- Mr. Jorma Yypänaho, Chair of the City Council of Oulu

14:30 - 15:00           **Addresses by the heads of the national delegations**

15:00 - 16:00           **Messages from**  
- The Presidency of the BEAC, CSO, Sweden  
- The EU Presidency, Denmark  
- The Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, Norway  
- The Presidency of the CBSS, Finland  
- The Council of Europe  
- The Chair of the Nordic Cultural Foundation  
- The Chair of the Saami Council

Coffee

- 16:30 - 16:45      **Presentations**  
 “The Report on the Barents Cultural Co-operation”  
 - Mr. Jan Henriksson, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten,  
 Sweden
- 16:45 - 17:30      **“The draft Action Programme for the Cultural Co-operation in the  
 Barents Region 2003-2006”** incl. the presentation of Barents projects  
 - Ms. Aaslaug Vaa, Chair of the Regional Culture Committee,  
 Nordland fylkeskommune, Cultural department, Norway
- 17:30 -              **Discussion on the Report and the draft Action Plan**
- 19:30                **Reception buffet hosted by the City of Oulu**  
 Address: City Hall, Kirkkokatu 2

Tuesday, 10 September 2002

- 09:00 - 09:15      **Message from the Presidency of the Arctic Council**  
 The Northern Dimension and cultural policy  
 - Mr. Peter Stenlund, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland
- 09:15 - 10:30      **Interventions of the head of the national delegations concerning  
 the Communiqué of the Conference**  
**Adoption of the Communiqué**  
 Closing of the Conference
- 10:45 - 11:15      **Press Conference**
- 11:30 - 13:30      **Lunch at the Conference Venue**  
 Departure of the delegations

*The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture  
in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region  
September 9-10, 2002  
Oulu, Finland*

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Parts Foreword, Ten Years of Cultural Cooperation under the Northern Lights, speeches and presentations of the Conference, Annexes		
Abstract  <p>The Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region was held on 9 and 10 September 2002 in Oulu, Finland. In the Conference took part some 50 participants. In addition to the ministers and senior officials responsible for culture in the Barents Member States, representatives from observer countries and other international organisations participated in the Conference. The Saami Council represented indigenous peoples.</p> <p>The Finnish Ministry of Education prepared the Conference together with the representatives of the Barents member states and in consultation with the Barents Regional Cultural Committee. One preparatory meeting was held in Helsinki, Finland, in May 2002.</p> <p>The Oulu Conference was a milestone in Barents cultural cooperation. The ministers responsible for culture met for the first time in Kirkenes, Norway, in 1993. The second ministerial meeting was held in Archangel, Russia in 1998.</p> <p>The Third Conference adopted a Communiqué which stresses the need to strengthen Barents cultural identity, with due respect to its historical tradition. One of the future goals is to encourage closer cooperation between local and regional stakeholders: cultural organisations, indigenous peoples, individual artists, cultural experts and authorities. The future challenge will be also to integrate Barents cultural activities into other cultural cooperation in Europe. It is important that cultural questions will be taken into account in the preparation of the new EU's Northern Dimension Action Plan.</p> <p>The Conference endorsed a proposal for creating a portal to present Barents culture and facilitate communications between stakeholders. The practical implementation of the project was assigned to the Barents Regional Cultural Committee.</p> <p>A Report of Cultural Cooperation (September 2001) compiled by the Barents Regional Cultural Committee was presented at the conference as well as the first Action Programme for Barents Cultural Cooperation under the heading "Voices in the Barents Region" in which future development and practical project proposals are outlined for the period 2003-2006.</p> <p>This report contains the material of the Third Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. All presentations submitted to the organisers of the Conference are included in the report.</p> <p>The outcome of this conference will be reported to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and this report will be delivered for distribution at the 10 Year Jubilee Meeting of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region on 10-11 January 2003 in Kirkenes, Norway.</p> <p>The next Conference of the Ministers of Culture in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region will be hosted by Sweden, at a time and place to be decided later.</p>		
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