

**CONTINUITY & CHANGE IN NORTH EUROPEAN
NORDPOLITIKK IN THE WAKE OF THE COLD WAR:
THE BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC REGION (B.E.A.R.)**

Paul Mitcham

June 1996

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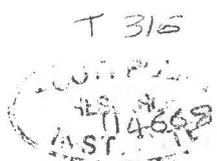
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN
NORTH EUROPEAN *NORDPOLITIKK*
IN THE WAKE OF THE COLD WAR:
THE BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC REGION (B.E.A.R.)

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



DECLARATION

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Paul J. Mitcham
13 June 1996
Cambridge

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Abstract

This thesis aims to look at how the the northern policies (*Nordpolitikk*) of governments in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia have been affected by processes of continuity and change, with regard to the development of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) as a new entity. In studying, also, the forces shaping this region's emergence and political direction, the *Nordpolitikk*, especially of Norway, is assessed.

The paper begins by examining the region geographically, and by explaining the changes which Russo-Nordic relations underwent in the final years of the Cold War. The effects that changes in the international political climate since have had upon the national policies of Northern Europe are also considered, and the reasoning behind the Barents co-operation scheme is explained both implicitly and explicitly within this context. The implications of the nascent 'region' are then discussed, both in terms of economic practicalities and political potentialities. From this theoretical basis, aspects of continuity and change inherent in the BEAR are subsequently investigated. Key areas (such as economics and the environment, their significance for regional confidence and stability, and the interaction between the BEAR and wider European and pan-Arctic processes) are analysed. The commentary of various contemporary players and interpreters is reassessed, in the light of three years of the scheme's operation, changing national and foreign policies, and new internal and external threats to the region's future. The rôle of the Barents Region as a bridge-builder between Russia and Western Europe is then reviewed, as is the BEAR's (co-)operative potential.

The concluding section aims to reflect upon whether or not the Barents co-operation structure genuinely responds to changing needs. The division between military/security and civilian goals is considered, as the question is posed whether the BEAR can ultimately become anything more than a mere puppet for the continuation of national policies, and what chance it has for wider recognition. Finally, the remaining implications of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region are debated, as its rôle is assessed between North, South, East and West.

“The only opportunity for a region to bring itself to bear on the European space is through interdependencies which extend beyond the national perspective”

Former President of Baden-Württemberg, Lothar Spät, 1992 (quoted in Wiberg, 1994: p.30).

1.0 General Introduction

'Paths are walked, which have earlier been set foot on'

(Scandinavian proverb)

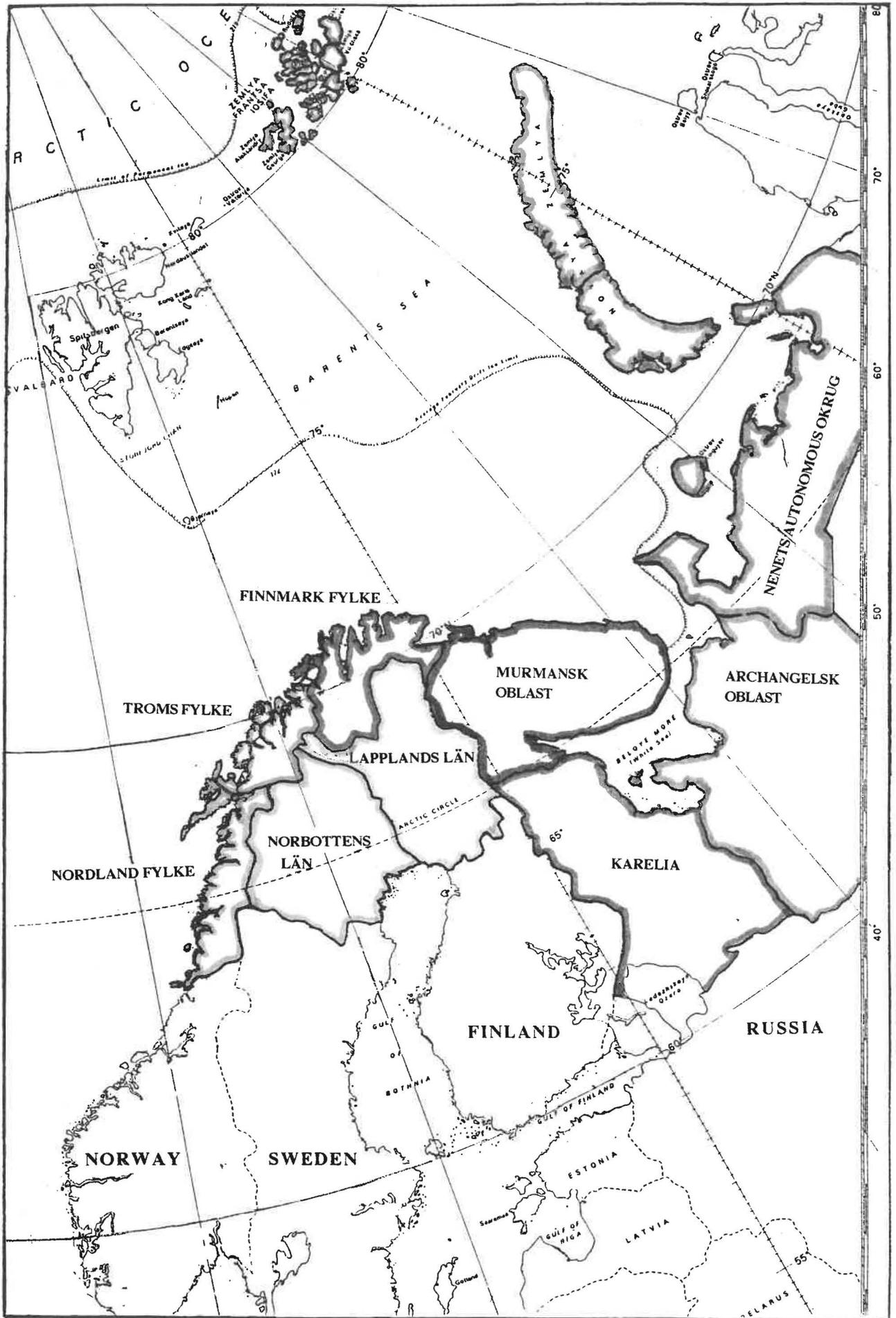
The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) is a newly-established economic, political and security-based co-operation zone spanning much of the Arctic sector of the European continent, and in circumpolar terms involves four of the eight so-called 'Ice States'. It is considered by some as a model form of regional development and East-West foreign policy relations, as three of the wealthiest Western nations have committed themselves to the transformation of a small but important part of the former state-controlled Soviet Union.

Three years into the scheme, the BEAR has met with relatively little criticism. On the other hand, it is no longer viewed in the optimistic light of its launch. Changes in local, regional, national and international circumstances have inevitably affected the development of the BEAR. Simultaneously, *Nordpolitik*¹ has been used in both domestic and foreign policy in order to reflect such change. What the resultant Barents structure implies in terms of Nordic relations, core and periphery relations, North-South relations, and state-indigenous political behaviour, are, therefore, very topical and important issues. A critical examination of the nature, direction and future prospects of the BEAR, has (as far as the author is aware) seldom been attempted, and nor has any realistic assessment between the elements of inherent change and continuity. This paper searches for insights into these and related issues - as to how the military utilisation of the North has influenced the preconditions for Arctic co-operation in non-military issues in the post-Cold War period, what the dominant features of such relations are, and how they have altered - through understanding the establishment, popularising and operation of the BEAR in an appropriate context.

As is commonly the case in any border area, efforts to deal with regional problems in Northern Europe are embedded in political processes outside the region itself. It is for this reason, that although it is the BEAR which provides the focus for this paper, the governance even of relatively remote areas of Europe cannot be divorced from the wider perspective.

¹ 'Nordpolitik' is a Norwegian word, although it is a policy adhered to, at least in spirit, in each of the Nordic countries. It is apt for the purposes of this thesis, not only because Norway was instrumental in the formation of the BEAR, but also because the Norwegians use their northern territory and northern problems as an essential part of a wider policy-making process, as the following chapters endeavour to explain. By definition, Nordpolitik should include Svalbard, but this is not a part of the Barents Region, and for long has been an anomaly in governance, hence will not be considered as part of this work.

International relations have changed in the Arctic as they have changed worldwide in the wake of the Cold War. The degree to which things have changed at ground level, both very suddenly, and historically, however, is something which remains to be assessed. The paradoxes of long-term continuity and short-term change will therefore be borne out in this paper, in the course of studying the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

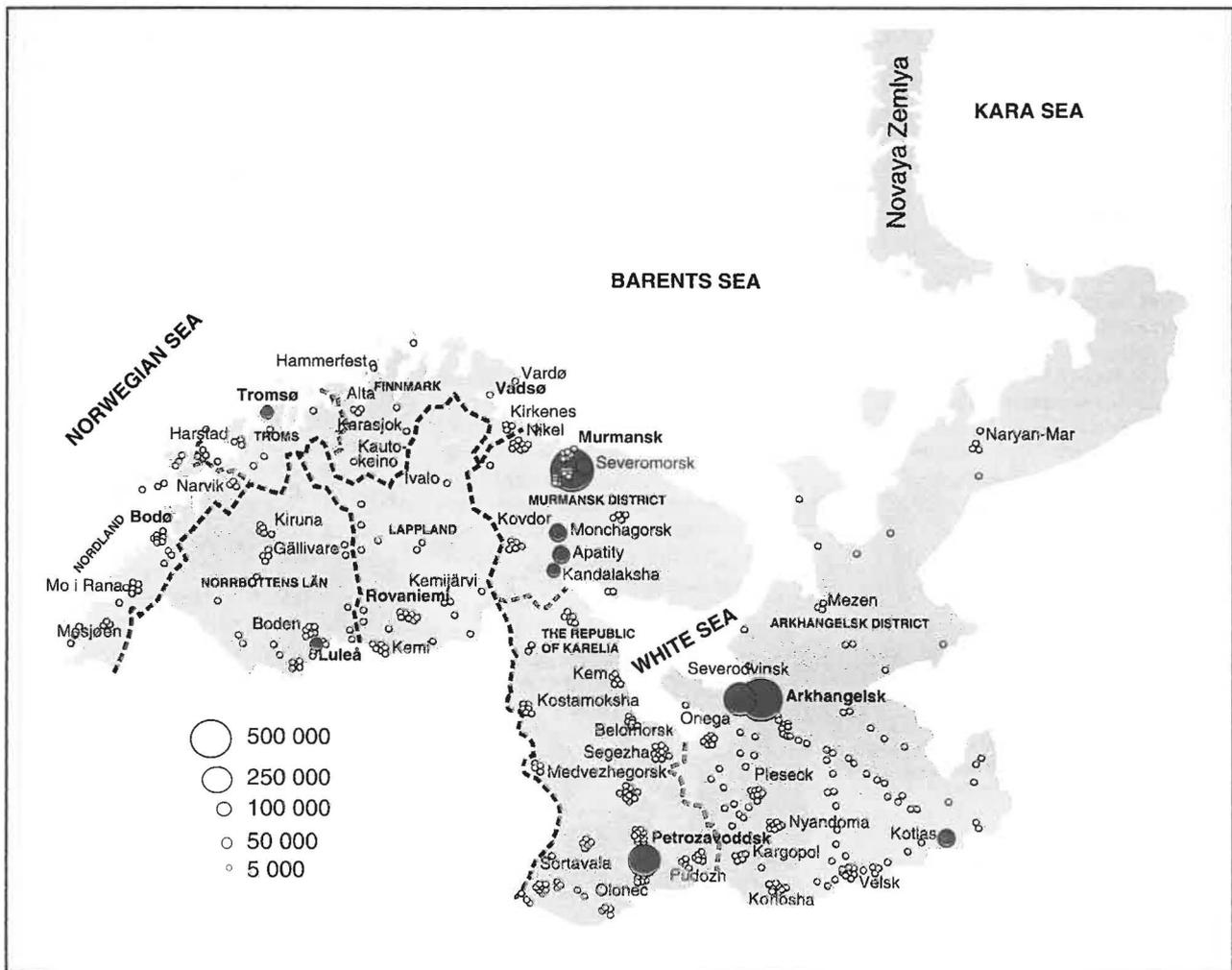


Map 1: Northern Europe. Fenno-Scandinavia, Russia, and the member counties of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) (adapted from British Admiralty Charts, 1995)

2.0 The Barents Euro-Arctic Region

2.1 Geography

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) covers an enormous area, and an understanding of its geography is essential in any study of the region (see Map 1). It stretches from the remote Arctic islands of Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya, south to the tundra of the Nenets Autonomous District of North-Western Russia, westwards across the taiga of Archangelsk, Karelia, Finnish Lapland and northernmost Sweden, and across to the Atlantic coast of Northern Norway. The area covers more than 1.2 million square kilometres (ie. five times the area of the UK), over half of which is in Archangelsk Oblast. Practically all of this territory lies North of the Arctic Circle, even if not all of it qualifies as ecologically or geographically polar. Nonetheless, in European terms, it is a unique area, distinctive as much in its natural assets as in its weather and environment. Yet barely 4.5 million people live in the region, and, of these, some 3.6 million inhabit the industrial towns of the Russian North, in, for example Murmansk and Archangelsk (Godal, 1995b) (see Table 1 and Map 2).



Map 2: Population distribution and urban concentration in the Barents Region (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.5)

Straddling the former divide between Russia and Scandinavia², between a poor, disillusioned East and an affluent West, and connecting a state still in transition to market economy democracies, the BEAR has seen a high degree of political energy and commitment invested in its operation. This may be all the more surprising, given that this was probably the world's most sensitive military confrontation zone only a decade ago. It still contains the world's largest stocks of strategic nuclear forces, and therefore remains an area of some political sensitivity. The all-round operational success of any cross-border co-operation in such a region can therefore develop only through great political trust. This can by no means be guaranteed in an area of such great cultural and economic heterogeneity, even when its vast natural resources give the Barents region significant future potential.

The region is believed to be rich in unexploited minerals, forests, fish stocks, gas and oil, and prospects for economic growth and prosperity in the region as a whole are therefore good. The population, military and industrial activity are largely concentrated towards the coast. At the same time, the Barents region covers some of the last wilderness areas in Europe. But it is also a climatic zone highly vulnerable to pollutants, as weak wintertime ocean circulation in the Barents Sea, coupled with cold temperatures to hinder evaporation, in turn reduces bacteriological breakdown. Combined with acid deposition, oil spills, and Russia's poor nuclear safety record, environmental problems are a prime characteristic of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

Table 1: Population by member county of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.3)

Area	Population	Area (km ²)
Lapland County	202 000	99 000
Finmark County	76 000	46 000
Nordland County	240 000	36 000
Troms County	149 000	25 000
Arkhangelsk County	1 561 000	587 000
Murmansk County	1 135 000	145 000
Republic of Karelia	798 000	172 000
Northbotten County	266 000	99 000
Total	4 427 000	1 209 000

² By definition, 'Scandinavia' comprises only of Norway and Sweden. Politically and culturally, however, it includes the other three Nordic countries, Finland, Denmark, Iceland (and the Faeroes). Thus Fenno-Scand(inav)ia will be used in this paper where absolute clarity is required, although, generally, Scandinavia will be taken to mean the three Nordic countries with which we are dealing, ie. Norway, Sweden and Finland, which can also collectively be referred in this context as *Norden*, (even if this word, which literally means 'the North', can sometimes also be extended to include Iceland). See also Map 3 (ahead).

Among the inhabitants, language, standards of living, religion, political culture and historical experience differ markedly. The region is home to several ethnic groups, for, in addition to the Swedes, Finns, Russians and Norwegians, there are indigenous peoples, such as the Saami (who live in the North of all four countries), and the Nenets and Komi of NW Russia. In the Karelian Republic live several Finno-Ugric minorities. At least nine different languages are spoken in the region, added to which complexity, national minorities live in all four countries. This fact can be reflected in local place names, trades and customs. Indeed, *Murman* is Russian for Norwegian (Schram Stokke, 1994c: p.27).

A permanent national frontier in the region was established to divide the former joint Swedish/Norwegian and Russian territories as recently as 1826, although, by the middle of the 19th century, the mere delineation of a national border had transformed the area into two divergent economic zones. Mekhalin, the Russian Consul-General to Christiania³ in 1848, could only ascribe the disparity to the difference in the efforts governments made to encourage exploitation. For Norwegian Finnmark was bustling with activity and prosperity from fishing, roadbuilding, steamship and telegraph services construction, while the Russian Murmansk coast remained virtually unpopulated (Nielsen, 1992: p.2). Since then, despite a history of strong trading links (at least until the 1917 Russian Revolution), there had been minimal East-West integration in the Barents Region until the dissolution of the USSR. Different political systems in the Communist East and capitalist West were reinforced by differences in currencies, laws and trading practices.

Today, three and a half years into the Barents Region project, there still remain noticeable disparities. However, given that some of the most peripheral regions of four different countries are involved, this can hardly be surprising. The aim of the BEAR was not to transform the region instantly, but to work towards creating a sustainable and co-operative zonal entity. When the governments of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia met to put the scheme into operation, they knew that planning for a new future together would not be straightforward. In the wake of the Cold War, and suffering from the cutbacks in associated military spending, the European Arctic still faces a barrage of problems. But the BEAR was instigated as the tool by which it was hoped that these problems could be solved. Hence it is to the foundation of the BEAR, the changes in northern policy, and the ways in which the four governments have attempted to deal with the specific problems of the post-Cold War world, that we now turn.

³ From 1380-1814, Norway was part of the joint kingdom of Denmark and Norway. From 1814-1904, Norway was part of Sweden. Christiania was the former name for Oslo, 1624-1924, in honour of King Christian IV.

2.2 The Kirkenes Declaration

In the Spring of 1992, when the Baltic Sea Region was being established, the Foreign Ministers of Russia, Norway and Finland agreed to meet early in the following year, in order to discuss a framework for regional co-operation in the European Arctic. They sought to replace the era of Cold War hostility with an active form of partnership to promote peace and stability, as democratisation in the former Soviet Union, combined with American economic retrenchment and military 'right-sizing', put pressure on Scandinavia to assume greater responsibility for her own defence (Kvistad, 1994: p.73). Similarly, it followed attempts dating back to the 1950s, between France and Germany, first to build confidence, and later, mutual interdependence, in what has now become the European Union (Stoltenberg, 1994: p.xi). Linking the northernmost parts of Russia and Fenno-Scandia would, it was believed, similarly aid development on both sides of the former Iron Curtain, as positive contacts and governmental backing could start to replace Cold War suspicions and mutual distrust, to promote mutual economic growth, to satisfy the demands and expectations of each country's Arctic inhabitants, and thereby to reduce the risk of economic strife and future conflict (ibid.).

The BEAR came into being the following year, when, on 11th January 1993, at Kirkenes, in North-Eastern Norway, the Declaration on Co-operation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region was formally signed by Russia, the five Nordic countries and the European Union (Commission)⁴ (see Fig. 1). The Kirkenes Declaration established a forum for considering bilateral and multilateral co-operation in the fields of economy, trade, science and technology, tourism, the environment, infrastructure, educational and cultural exchange, as well as projects particularly aimed at improving the situation of the indigenous peoples in the North.

The BEAR was unique. It was "a political instrument designed to normalise relations across the former East-West divide in the North" (Godal, 1995b) through combining both an intergovernmental (Barents Council) and an interregional (Regional Council) sector (see Fig. 2), therein reflecting the intent of state governments to retain a decisive say in its operation, and to ensure better political control of developments in the region, particularly with regard to the balance between safeguarding the environment and exploiting natural resources (Schram Stokke & Tunander, 1994: p.3).

⁴ The participation of the European Union (EU) (previously known as the European Community (EC)) in an international agreement requires a decision by the Council of Ministers, on a proposal emanating from the Commission. In the case of the Kirkenes Declaration, which is not a formal agreement, the Commission signed in its own name, although for the purposes of this paper, as well as at a regional level, it is taken to represent the European Union *per se*.

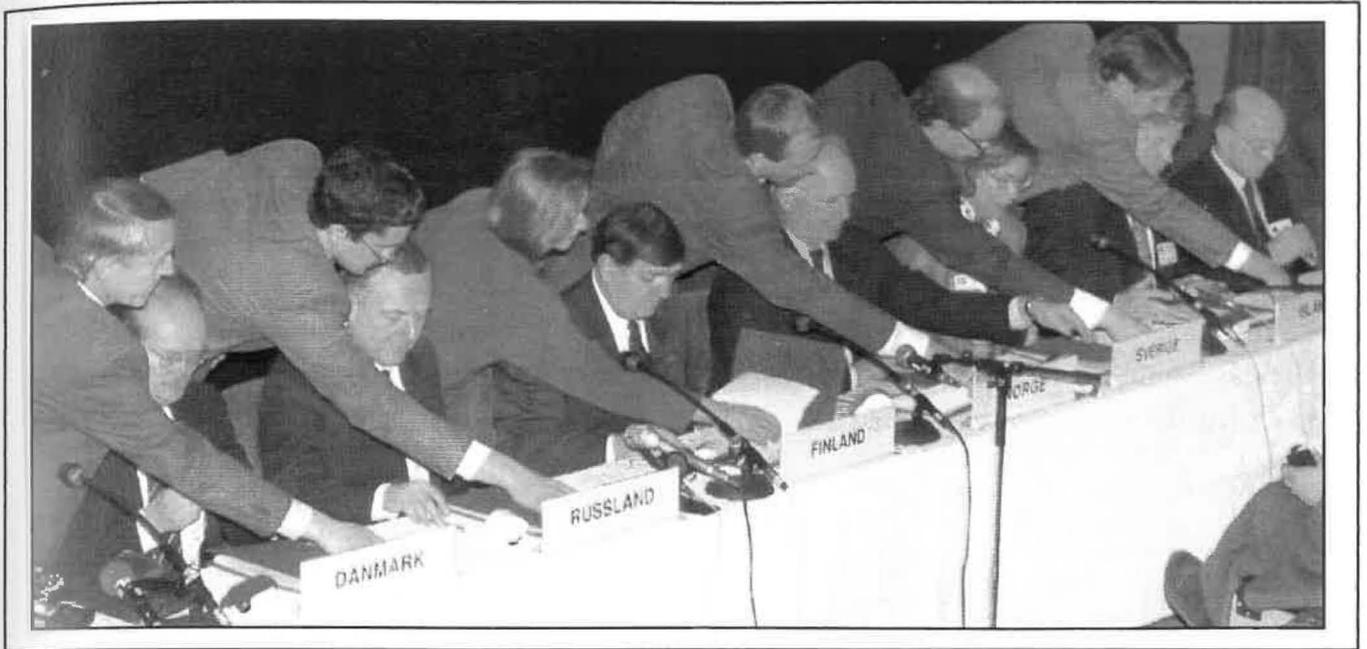


Figure 1: Signing the Kirkenes Declaration, 11th January 1993: the Foreign Ministers of the Barents Council (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.4)

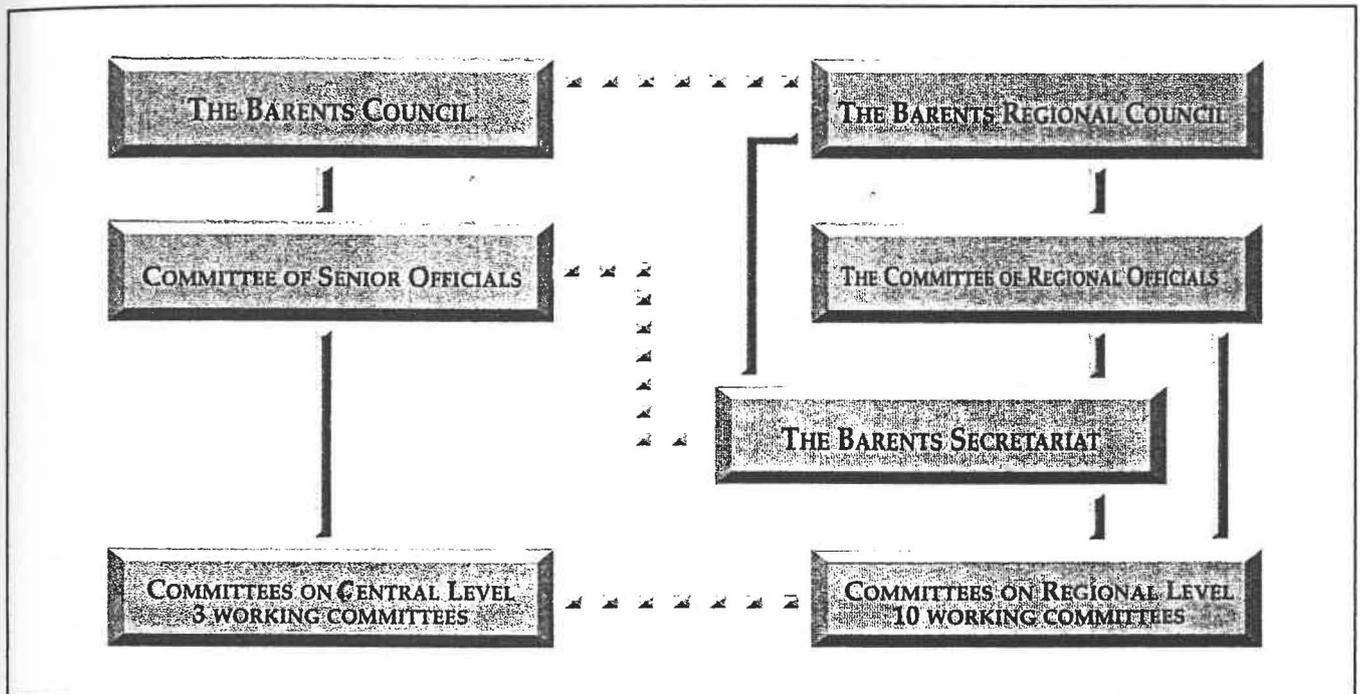
The Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Barents Council of Ministers) is comprised of government representatives from the seven signatory powers, but observer status was granted to Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States, since it was felt that the efforts needed, particularly in the environmental field, warranted international participation. Norway, whose government had designed the BEAR, therefore stood to gain political respectability, and was the first of the four core countries to take the chair.

The second layer, the Regional Council⁵, is the real 'engine' of the scheme. The Council is responsible for initiating projects and releasing the potential for development that the new structure implies. Also integral to the treaty was the expressed aim that development should adhere to EU policy. The Council consists of representatives of the three North Norwegian *fylker* (counties), Nordland, Troms and Finnmark, the northernmost Swedish and Finnish *län*, Norbotten and Lappland, the Russian *oblasti* (provinces) of Murmansk and Archangelsk, and the Russian constituent republic of Karelia. There is also a delegate to represent the Saami.

⁵ Decisions made by the central bodies are based on priorities and assessments made at the regional level. At the same time, the regional bodies implement the priorities made at the central level, ie. in the Barents Council, from the Committee of Senior Officials when the Barents Council is not convened, and also from national governments. For a complete explanation of the BEAR's operative system, the reader is referred to the publications produced by the Barents Secretariat (Barentssekretariatet, 1994).

Under the Communist system, the Scandinavian Saami were permitted few links with their Russian counterparts, thus only with the collapse of the former Soviet Union have transnational links been developed, to enable these people to speak with one voice. It is not hard to see that the BEAR itself similarly owes its existence to such change, since regional integration across the Iron Curtain would have been unthinkable. On the other hand, politically limited co-operation between East and West certainly was not unprecedented.

Figure 2: The structure and official bodies of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region
(Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.8)



3.0 Changing political relations and the emergence of international co-operation in the Barents region

3.1 *Glasnost*

By the mid-1980s, it had become apparent to both East and West that new measures were needed to break the Cold War deadlock and to counter the expense of growing militarisation in the Arctic. Since real security requires mutual trust, respect and interdependence, disarmament alone was no panacea. This is why the Soviets came to favour a comprehensive approach to security (Granovsky, 1989: p.216). There appeared to be two alternatives: either an integrated conception of Arctic security, in the form of combining the military threat with the environmental, social and economic ones; or the building of non-military co-operation, on the basis that conflict in one issue area need not preclude co-operation in another, and that non-military co-operation can help reduce military-strategic relations (Østreng, 1992; p.26).

Thus it was, that traces of collaboration across the Barents area were discernible early on in the Gorbachev era, since regional and pan-Arctic co-operation formed part of the basis for the watershed in Soviet foreign policy outlined by the Communist Party General Secretary in his speech in Murmansk, in October 1987.

This 'Murmansk Initiative' foreshadowed a whole series of reforms in Soviet foreign policy, as the Kremlin came to recognise its ailing grip on state and society. Previously, the security of the Soviet nation was the insecurity of others. Then Gorbachev introduced a clearer distinction between military and civilian security, and singled out science, resource exploitation and shipping as areas suitable for Arctic co-operation. Both types of security were considered vital, but, for the first time in the post-war period, the civilian component was given an independent position.

Despite this, the Soviets still found it hard to divorce the idea of Scandinavia from the West as a whole, when NATO's military presence in Norway was still growing one year after the Reykjavík Treaty (Gorbachev, 1987: p.28). Yet the third of Gorbachev's six tentative reforms for the region included "peaceful co-operation in developing the resources of the North", albeit largely through private initiatives. Although it startled many Western diplomats, the speech paved the way for policy-makers to begin to think about joint co-operation projects: Gorbachev had outlined the USSR's willingness "for relevant talks with other states ... [and] for co-operation in utilising the resources of the Kola Peninsula... The main thing is to

conduct affairs so that the climate is determined by the warm Gulf Stream of the European process and not by the polar chill of accumulated suspicions and prejudices" (Gorbachev, 1987: p.30).

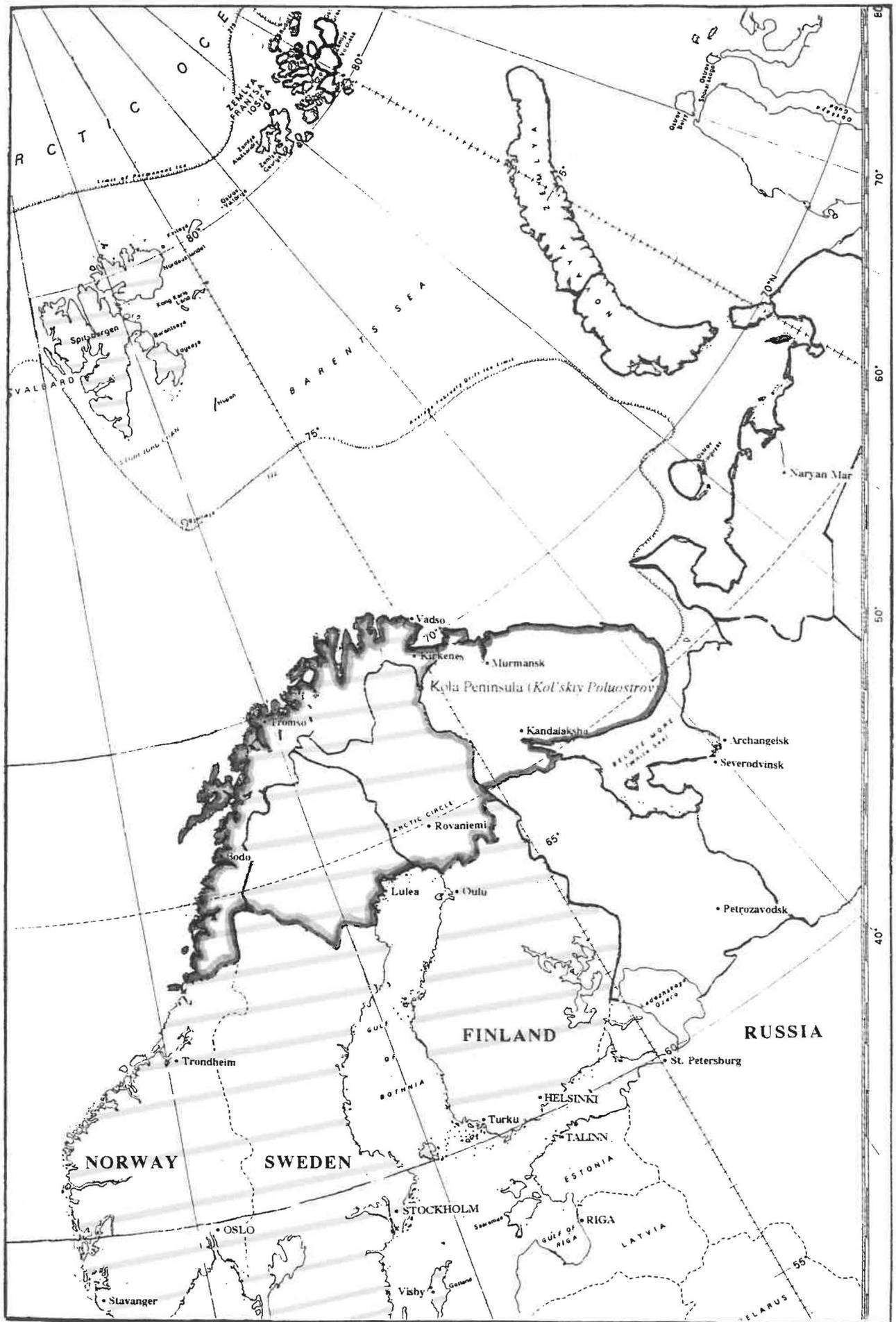
This is not to argue that Gorbachev in any way proposed the Barents scheme, but his words did usher in a new era in regional relations, which thereafter may be seen as part of an evolving trend. At the same time, it may be argued that the Barents Region itself was little more than the logical geographical and functional extension into Russia of the Fenno-Scandic *North Calotte*⁶ co-operation, already fostering the idea that the Northern hinterlands were being united by their very difference to the South. There remained also the fact that the *Pomor*⁷ (ie. coastal) trading era was not long past, and survived strongly as a memory in Archangelsk Oblast, whereas most inhabitants of Murmansk had migrated northwards only since 1917, (hence many in Archangelsk still used the Pomor era as an important frame of reference when judging the behaviour of foreigners) (Castberg et al., 1994: p.72). On each side of the former divide, therefore, there were meaningful precedents for a new regional structure.

In 1988, it was agreed that Soviet autarky was to be supplemented by international co-operation and co-ordination. First came joint oceanographic research, at least partly because of the military advantage in learning what an opponent knows and thinks in areas of mutual strategic relevance (Østreg, 1989: p.121). But the Soviet government may also have been wanting to expand the range of themes for collaboration, in order to improve credibility for its policies of rapprochement. It was, therefore, less an instance of 'if you can't beat them, join them', than a wish to co-operate because the political gains would outweigh the military disadvantages.

The other motive for change was economic. Reductions in defence expenditure were required alongside better external relations, if the Soviet economy was to be held together. Oil being the USSR's most important export item, the prospective development of the offshore oilfields, in the Barents Sea, greatly concerned Moscow. Witnessing Norway's exploratory drillings, and facing difficulties in their own technology and management, the Soviets realised that the successful development of the offshore oil industry in the Barents Sea would only be

⁶ The North Calotte is comprised solely of the Nordic sector of the BEAR, which it predates (see Chapter 3.2).

⁷ The *Pomor* trade between Russian and Norwegian coastal merchants was permitted by the rulers of Russia and Norway because of its ability to generate wealth in some of the most inaccessible parts of each kingdom. It was this same process, however, which built up levels of mutual distrust between Russia and Norway, as each believed the other was increasing its power base in the region ready for territorial annexation. Pomor trading therefore declined immediately after the Russian Revolution. For a full discussion of the Barents Region's Pomor history, the reader is directed to the work of J.P. Nielsen, 1992, 1994 (see Bibliography).



Map 3: Northern Europe. The North Calotte (*Nordkalotten*), Great Calotte (*Storkalotten*), and the concept of *Norden* (adapted from British Admiralty Charts, 1995)

possible with Western co-operation.

Hoping, therefore, to hasten a solution to the security and co-operation problem in the North, Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, visited Stockholm and Oslo in January 1988 to propose reductions in military activity, and to announce for the first time that the Barents Sea could be included in the zone of confidence-building measures (Deryabin, 1988: p.38). Bearing in mind the disputed continental shelf between Russia and Norway, this suggested that Soviet attitudes towards co-operation were changing.

Although the Murmansk Speech had picked out Norway as one of the likeliest sources for external co-operation, the Norwegian government declined Ryzhkov's proposals for an offshore 'special zone of partnership' (Scrivener, 1989: pp.40-41). Such a zone would have reduced the incentive to solve the ongoing maritime dispute, and would have put Moscow in a much better position to assert Russia's might in the area (thereby altering the Western presence, and possibly forcing Norway to downgrade NATO surveillance) (ibid.). Norway made it clear that any civilian responses to Murmansk would be much enhanced by settling the boundary issue. The USSR, however, could not afford the political backlash at a time when the West was already perceived as having too much influence. There was, consequently, no solution.

Almost without precedent, however, the first agreements were signed on functional co-operation. With *glasnost* and *perestroika* the spirit of the age, the policies of the North European states had had to adapt to a changing geopolitics. Obtaining, then, the correct balance between continuity and change, was what would prove fundamental to successful co-operation.

3.2 Nordic, Baltic and Pan-Arctic Co-operation

There had, perhaps inevitably, been some degree of co-operation in Arctic Europe before, but by the late 1980s, there were only three multilateral régimes in existence which involved the signatories of the Barents Council⁸. There had been several Soviet-Norwegian bilateral agreements on search and rescue operations (1956), on sealing regulations (1957), and in scientific-technological co-operation (1988). But co-operation had never stretched any further (Slipchenko, 1989: pp.101-2).

Norway had always trodden carefully in her ties with Moscow and Washington, lest on the one hand she be isolated diplomatically, or on the other she be perceived by NATO as doing what she should not. Norway was, therefore, keen to multilateralise links when it came to the BEAR, both to bring in foreign aid and expertise and to avoid Russian domination, even though the Nordic nations had traditionally acted, and had been regarded, as a bloc of their own (*Norden* - see Map 3). For Norden, the BEAR would provide the first real opportunity to face militarised Russia in a non-military way, and without Russian dominance or Scandinavian dependence, because of the broader policies and involvement that the newly-internationalised Arctic region provided (Scrivener, 1996, pers. comm.).

Already, at the outset of the BEAR, Norway's efforts to influence Russian policy had passed through three identifiable stages: first, the preparatory, at county-level, when meetings began in the *glasnost* era; secondly, scientific co-ordination, following the Murmansk Speech and the 1988 Leningrad Conference (which forged strong ties between bureaucrats as well as scientists); and thirdly, politicisation, with a concomitant growth in public interest in such co-operation. This stage was heralded in 1990, with Norway's pledge of NoK300 million for the modernisation of the Nikel works in Russia (Schram Stokke, 1994b: pp.19-20).

It was also immediately after the Murmansk Speech that a number of bilateral agreements were signed with the USSR, to give rise to what has since been dubbed the 'Arctic Boom'. The West naturally seized this opportunity to develop closer co-operative ties with the USSR, partly out of self-interest, and partly to foster stability (which may also be viewed as self-interest) (Lock, 1996, pers. comm.). National responsibilities were multilateralised, and no longer limited to simple mutual benefits and convenience (*ibid.*). It was in this way that a

⁸ These were: the 1911 Fur Seals Treaty (subsequently updated), the 1925 Svalbard Treaty, and the International Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears. In addition, there were a number of scientific organisations, eg. the International Permafrost Association, and the International Union of Circumpolar Health (Slipchenko, 1989: p.98)

Norwegian-Soviet Joint Environmental Commission was established in 1988 (since when it has served as the primary means of co-ordination between the respective environmental ministries). Russia and Finland also signed a co-operation agreement in September 1990, this time at both inter-state and inter-regional level. Military-strategic preoccupations may have remained dominant at this point, in an atmosphere of some continued distrust. But it was as a natural continuation of the co-operative (environmental) trend from which arose, at least in part, the mechanics of the BEAR.

Initially, it had been Finland, with her well-founded relations both East and West, that had paved the way towards a new era of co-operation. In 1989, the Finnish government launched its environmental 'Rovaniemi Initiative', following which, in August 1990, an International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) was established to facilitate scientific co-operation, with an accompanying multilateral Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), and followed by the adoption of an Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS). This was an attempt to deal with the same environmental *problematique* as the BEAR, but in a geographically wider (and functionally narrower) approach. Then, in May 1992, negotiations commenced, to establish an international Arctic Council. This was to be a body in which to discuss common issues and to promote circumpolar co-operation.

At a territorial level, however, co-operation amongst governments had already begun in November 1991, with the launch of the Northern Forum for consultations on cultural, environmental, social and economic issues, thereby aiming to promote a 'Northern dialogue', and to identify areas of trans-regional and pan-Arctic interest in order to aid future co-operation (Gizewski, 1993: p.6). Collaboration, therefore, must have reflected a widely acknowledged polar perspective on civil co-operation in the Arctic, as a distinct sense of regional political community began to emerge on the basis of location, common needs and concerns.

This sense of regional community already existed in Northern Scandinavia, however, in the area known as the *Nordkalotten* (North Calotte). Such Nordic co-operation also pre-dates Arctic multilateralism, in being founded on a common cultural heritage and decades of collaboration. In the late 1940s, for example, there were plans made for a Scandinavian defence alliance (which never materialised). A Nordic Council was established in 1953, to deal with questions of law, economics, society and culture, and discussions were even begun in 1968-70 for a 'Nordec' economic alliance. Then the Nordic Council established a North Calotte Committee in 1972, to concentrate on Nordic issues pertaining to the Arctic, and, much more recently, there has been a Nordic Passport Union.

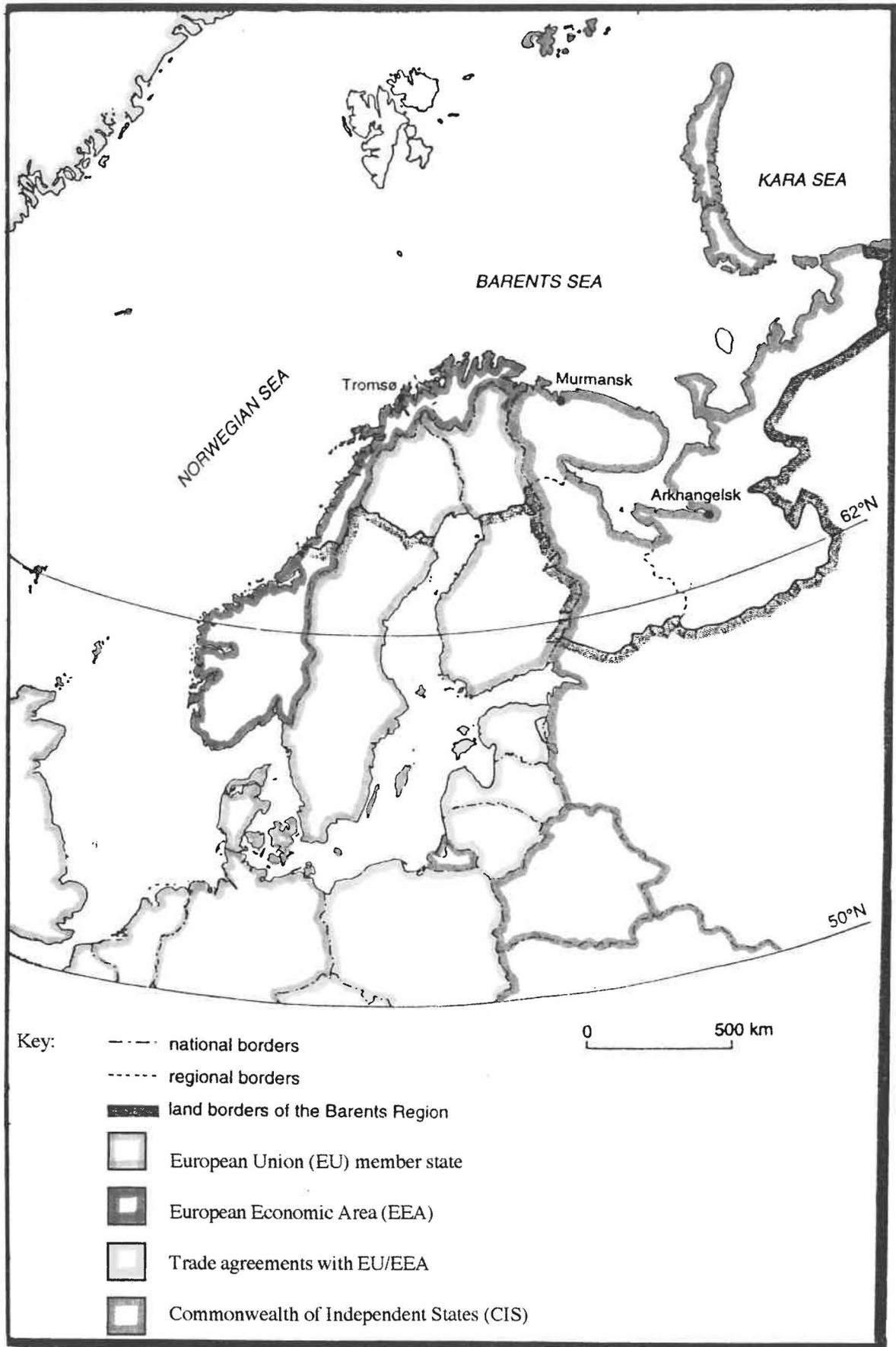
Yet Norden was far from being united. Economically and militarily, Norway had been strongly orientated towards Great Britain and the United States since WWII (see Maps 4 and 5); Sweden was politically non-aligned and economically tuned towards Germany; and Finland had had to balance her dependence on the Russians with equal ties to the West. But the disintegration of the Soviet Union, in Autumn 1991, forced Scandinavian governments to reformulate their foreign (and, by implication, northern) policies, so that, despite their different approaches, the Nordic countries had far more in common than separated them. There was, therefore, never any theoretical objection to extending Nordic co-operation principles to the Barents Region. Indeed, in the author's opinion, and since the Nordic Saami Council had already widened its membership into the Kola Peninsula in 1990, it was perhaps therefore inevitable that wider political co-operation would follow, in what politicians now termed the *Storkalotten* (Great Calotte) region.

The most obvious precedent for the BEAR, however, came from the Baltic Sea Region. Established in Copenhagen in March 1992, this new international forum was designed in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, to deal with the economic, infrastructural and environmental problems of the Baltic countries, as a kind of Germano-Scandinavian 'clean-up operation' (Tunander, 1994: p.35). With Russian politicians seeking to replace the discredited Soviet ideology, a reborn Hanseatic League⁹ could refocus doubts and boost the new government's prestige, whilst providing a wide roof under which the problems between the ex-Soviet states could be diluted. Sweden and Finland were keen members - in fact, Finland had already considered extending the scheme to the Barents region (Kvistad, 1994: p.96). Norway was also a signatory, for although she is without Baltic coastline, she had no desire to become marginalised. But Norwegian political attention was turning to the High North, since, for her, the Baltic was only of minimal economic or political relevance. Norway had thus by then realised that she needed a unique approach to European affairs if she was to improve her regional (and, therein, international) status.

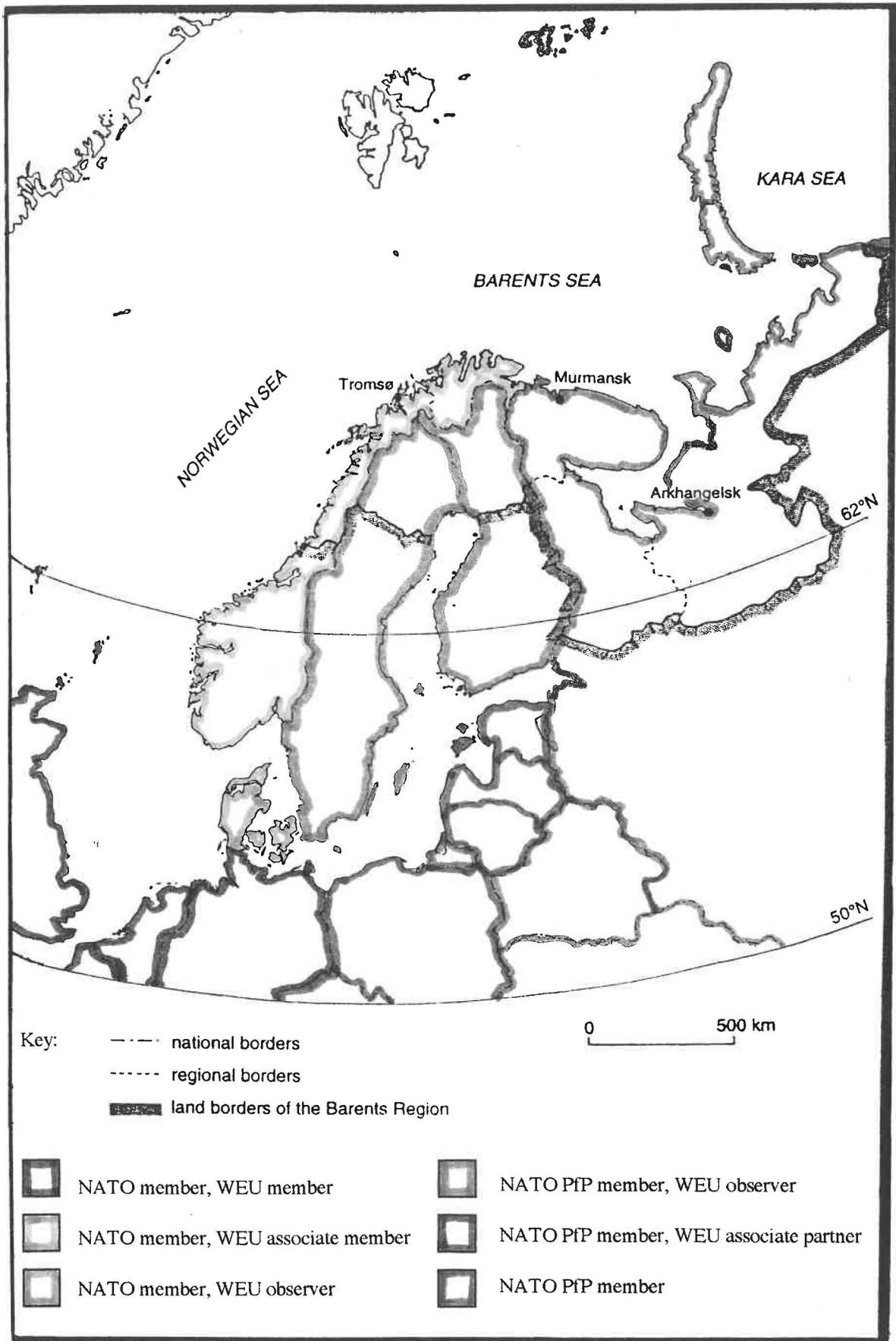
By the early 1990s, the Nordic Council was already recommending that Nordic governments take initiatives to establish an Arctic régime, to promote comprehensive intergovernmental co-operation in resource, environmental and security issues (Scrivener, 1996: p.5). But the Arctic rim states were not in favour of any regulatory international environmental régimes, nor the surrender of any sovereignty. The dissolution of the USSR

⁹ The Hanseatic League ('Hansa') was a confederation of trading cities with a monopoly in Baltic commerce, and existed in the days before nation states, from the twelfth century to 1669.

had thrown Nordic relations into a flux and an atmosphere of increasing distrust, thus the need to stabilise relations became increasingly apparent. There was, for example, suspicion in Oslo that Finland's Initiative sought to gain influence over Norwegian resources policy in the Barents Sea (ibid.:p.7). It was, therefore, through further developing the perceived need for co-operation, and in harnessing the growth of links between scientists, indigenous people's and other organisations within states with those of territorial governments - ie. transnationalisation - that the idea for the Barents Region was soon to be born (Scrivener, 1996: p.3).



Map 4: Northern Europe. National affiliations to European economic and political co-operation structures (after Bærenholdt, 1996: p.236; Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1995: pp.78-79)



Map 5: Northern Europe. National affiliations to European military structures (after Bærenholdt, 1996: p.236; Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1995: pp.78-79)

3.3 The reasoning behind the BEAR

Understanding the reasoning behind the BEAR is essential in assessing the nature of northern policy. The Nordic states had a number of important reasons for favouring increased co-operation in the Barents Region in the wake of the Cold War, as did post-Soviet Russia. When Russia declared independence in the Summer of 1990, President Yeltsin tried to formulate a foreign policy independent from that of the USSR. However, this policy met with heavy internal criticism almost immediately. Although nothing had been resolved by the time of the Kirkenes Declaration, either towards the Euro-Arctic region, or the Nordic countries themselves (Jonson, 1994: p.167), Foreign Minister Kozyrev lent his support to his Norwegian counterpart's plans for the BEAR in March 1992, and the Russian government has repeatedly stated its support for the scheme ever since. Indeed, the newspaper *Izvestia* heralded the 1993 Declaration as "a prototype of a future system of inter-related co-operation zones stretching from the Barents Sea through... Europe" (12 January 1993, quoted in Jonson, *ibid.*).

For the Scandinavian governments as a whole, the underlying motivation in the BEAR was to remove the environmental and security threat. The Barents policy was one of pursuing national interests pragmatically, which, for Norway, as initiator of the scheme, meant that her *Nordpolitik* must fit such *Realpolitik* goals. Together, the Nordic states sought to aid Kola in its ecological problems, since transboundary pollution issues - nuclear dangers, acid deposition, marine hazards - could not be addressed without the active participation of Russia. Norden also sought to develop confidence-building measures, to encourage greater long-term regional stability. Hence the BEAR could simultaneously become the superstructure for economic development at the national, regional and international level (Hoel, 1993: p.43). Furthermore, Stoltenberg always emphasised that such regional co-operation was an integral part of Norway's European policy.

In a country extending from the Kola Peninsula to the European Union (see Map 4), Norwegian foreign and internal policies had to fit hand in hand. Norway was doubling as a window to NW Russia for the EU, as well as a window to Western Europe for the Russians. With Sweden and Finland also poised for EU membership at the time, it was no longer satisfactory to allow market forces dictate the rate of economic transition in the European Arctic. Neither Communism nor the West's military spending levels appeared likely to resume, and, therefore, alternative investment had to be found. Amongst the Nordic foreign

policy élite, moreover, there was concern over Nordic marginalization unless there was positive action in Northern Europe (since the EU distracts the political and economic attention of key players like Germany or Great Britain, while the USA was streamlining its political and military presence in the European Arctic).

Linking East and West in Arctic Europe thus seemed a useful instrument. It would, the Foreign Minister said, provide a new forum for dialogue between Brussels and Moscow (Stoltenberg, 1994: p.viii). It would also provide a basis for a North European dimension to any future common foreign or security policy in the EU, and would serve as a useful common ground for Nordic ministers in the run-up to EU integration. Finally, involvement in the BEAR would be a useful learning experience for Brussels, not just as an East-West co-operation pilot scheme, but also a North-South one, for it prepared to re-extend the Union's reach into the Arctic for the first time since 1985, when Greenland had withdrawn her membership.

The BEAR was thus, at once, a basis for EC *Nordpolitikk*, and Norway's dowry for the EU. The Commission's enthusiasm for it was largely due to the EU representative in Oslo, who several times tried to obtain policy direction from Brussels, but who ultimately received no guidelines (Archer, 1996, pers. comm.). The European Union's involvement would strengthen Norway's application for EU membership (in providing new possibilities for finance and political clout), further to Norwegian oil and fish production (which were not such enticing prospects). Archer believes there was also a tacit understanding that terrestrial success would allow future incorporation of the Barents Sea (and hence its resources) within the Barents Region, provided there was agreement regarding jurisdiction (*ibid.*).

Moreover, the North has always played an important rôle also in Norwegian domestic regional policy, and regional co-operation justified an opportunity to allocate more resources to the three northernmost counties, not least in research and education. Regional policy has become almost as important as international policy for Oslo, and not least because the BEAR had the potential to tie domestic questions into the EU structure (eg. through regional aid to old military bases). Certain issues in the North-South debate could therefore be solved, as, at one stroke, the government also appeared to be doing something constructive for the indigenous minority (especially in the light of notorious Saami protests in Norway in the early 1980s) whilst countering the widespread belief amongst the Norwegian population that the EU would be harmful for northern livelihoods (which many Norwegians regard as their living heritage, and, therefore, particularly opposed the EU's policies towards fishing, whaling and sealing

(Hoel, 1996, pers. comm.)). It was not simply coincidental, therefore, that the EU membership referendum results should show significant disparities within all three Scandinavian countries in voting trends between North and South, just as they were split urban to rural (see Appendix).

In Finland and Sweden, the BEAR was supposed to provide the means to uphold regional development schemes in the North, whilst meeting the criteria necessary in withdrawing public intervention from less prosperous districts, as domestic competition was being eliminated in the run up to EU admission. This also dovetailed with the retrenchment philosophy of the new coalition Swedish government, which sought to make peripheries 'bridges for integration', whilst labour and service markets were encouraged to 'go it alone' (Wiberg, 1993: pp.30-1).

Finally, there were further domestic issues in Scandinavian politics that had to be addressed in the wake of the Cold War, when it became clear that national security policy (in the form of government investment in military infrastructure) could no longer be maintained as a means of regional policy. Those in the North, dependent upon a defence economy, were often, therefore, hostile to conversion. There was also internal government opposition against entering co-operation arrangements with Russia, particularly within the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Stoltenberg only quelled this with a succession of Ambassadorial postings overseas. There was, thus, very little which would prevent northern policy from being reformulated, lest the all-too-peripheral status of the North Calotte be reinforced. A distinct new Nordpolitikk, it was felt, should have certain principles. Its aim should be to reflect and respect the interests and aspirations of northern inhabitants; to involve these people fully; to develop in a sustainable manner; and to ensure peaceful civil relations through mutual, co-operative security measures. It was aimed to achieve this, at least in part, through the BEAR.

4.0 The academic and practical concept of the Political Region

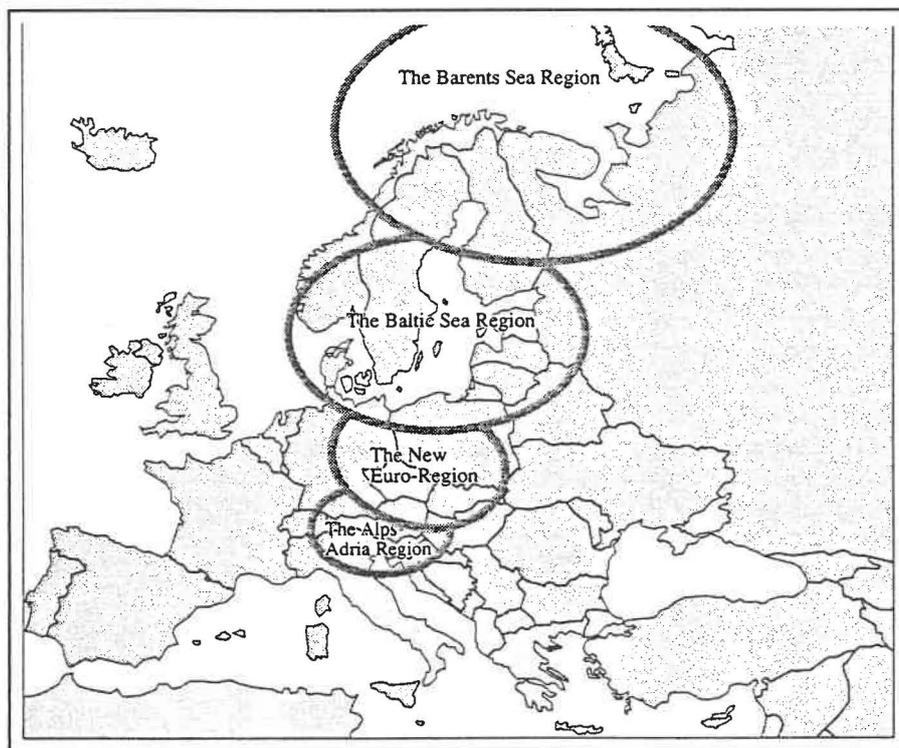
The Barents Euro-Arctic Region evidently combines multifaceted national goals, through both internal (northern) policies, and the wider trends of regionalism (the activities of region-forming forces in society) and regionalization (deliberate region-forming imposed by states). Just as the state needs the region as an instrument of national development, and for foreign policy goals, so the region needs the state for economic and political support, in order to pave the way for regional development (Nilsen, 1994: p.21).

To date, three distinct types or stages of region have been identified: the minimal; the co-ordinate (which co-ordinates state behaviour through multilateral actions, and has region-wide plans to structure development, and regulate its impact socially and physically) and the integration region (where a regional community and recognised identity are forming, and loyalties and effective jurisdiction are transferred to regional institutions designed to co-ordinate policy, thereby restraining individual states' independent action) (Griffiths, 1989: pp.3-4). The BEAR, therefore, may currently be viewed as a co-ordinate region, although different interpretations exist with respect to its success, and it is topical for academics to debate the viability of effective Barents regional integration (cf. Nilsen, 1994: p.26; Käkönen, 1996: pp.72-86).

Regionalization, which is perhaps the natural result of regionalism, is a long-term process, and one driven by such subjective factors as the sense of a common identity, history or culture, as well as such objective ones as economics or geopolitics (Möttölä, 1996: p.10). As a policy and a phenomenon, regionalism is an integral part of today's international relations, since spatial patterns and political processes are no longer contained within national boundaries. From such a basis, scholars cite seven prime factors necessary within interregional co-operation: a prerequisite is geographical contiguity, with its implicit common cultural values; secondly, an economic network and a basis of information exchange; thirdly, the aim to use common resources to stimulate regional co-operation (to avoid diseconomies, on the one hand, or free riding, on the other). Fourthly, there are specific thresholds or economies of scale in terms of universities, airports, &c. Fifthly, interregional co-operation may be necessary in order to avoid wasteful competition between regions; ^{strictly} co-operation schemes may also influence transaction costs within the new region (eg. in terms of information flow, dismantling trade barriers, and establishing joint trade fairs). Lastly, interregional co-operation may be used to influence the political and economic bargaining

power of constituents in their relations with an external enemy or counterpart, and in the face of other regions (eg. nationally or continentally) (Cappellin 1992: pp.13-14). The Barents Region appears to show signs of all these, which implies that co-operation is genuinely working.

In the 1990s, in the wake of the Cold War, Europe is experiencing new trends in cross-boundary links between adjacent territories (Schram Stokke & Tunander, 1994: p.3). Regional players are, for example, attempting to engage in forms of transnational co-operation not necessarily orchestrated by state authorities. Regions emerge within and between countries with previously distinct borders - and not just in the Barents or Baltic areas (see Map 6). As Veggeland points out (1994: p.203), this new desire for decentralisation in (inter)national politics is based on a need to establish a wider decision base for the electorate, with more efficient problem-solving and project-initiating apparatus. Transferring both responsibility and capital to *regional* players is therefore supposed to have a dynamic effect, since it ought automatically to engender the mobilisation of local forces as soon as it is implemented.



Map 6: The new regions of Central and Northern Europe (Veggeland, 1994: p.205)

This process appears to represent the transformation of the European political scene into an increasingly centre-less entity with rather weak external borders, structured between the EU, nations themselves, and regional formations in “a complementary, rather than supplementary nature... [thus] constituted around a simultaneous occurrence of competition and dependence,

unity and diversity" (Joenniemi, 1994: pp.222-3). The wish to create a Barents region is, to a large extent, therefore, a question of demand for regional visibility in the face of competition, alongside the fact that the northern tip of Europe has frequently been 'missing' in talk of the European continent (Kazantseva & Westin, 1994: p.106).

Foreign Minister Holst saw that, "in shaping the new Europe, we shall need to develop a wider community than that of the nation state [but] to supplement a framework for individual states, not to replace them" (1993: p.50). The Barents scheme was thus to be a European venture with political leverage, with the EU, the USA and Japan involved for added credibility.

The new era which beckoned was one in which power would increasingly be exerted by economics - information networks, capital concentration, power in decision-making bodies, financial markets and the EU. Hence the wealth of resources of the peripheral areas is their only economic key to counteracting marginalisation. Tunander (1994: p.42) says that a similar attitude regarding their hinterlands exists in the Nordic capitals, as existed in Prague towards Slovakia, or the *Lega Nord* towards Southern Italy. Hence Norway's symbolic extension to the Kola Peninsula could be used as part of internal Nordpolitik as well as a way of *confronting* the disintegration of Russia. Russia's neighbours have, therefore, been forced to devise new policies in order to cope with the economic chaos, crime, possible migration and environmental destruction spreading from the corresponding regions across the border. Meanwhile, international stability is being enhanced by allowing greater regular political and societal interaction both within the region, and outside it (*ibid.*).

Already firmly rooted in local-level decision-making, the older Nordic North Calotte border region co-operation was used as the point of departure in the BEAR. Distinct challenges would, therefore, have to be met in the scheme's early stages, for not only were long-closed borders to be re-opened, but decision-making powers would also be at least partially transferred from metropolitan governments to the far North of their countries, as well as (potentially) to Brussels. New northern policies would, thus, have to be forged within the respective capitals, while regional officials began operating on a new level, transnationally.

Viewed in this light, the activities of the Regional Council appear almost as a decentralised foreign policy, where local level politics influence national foreign policy issues. In Norway's opinion, such delegation has ensured the need for close co-operation between central and local authorities in all four countries, and seems to have vindicated not having subordinated the Regional Council to the Barents Council. Levels of openness and trust have to be developed 'horizontally', in terms of the number of specialised agencies in various issue

areas involved in the collaboration, as well as 'vertically', in terms of the political levels activated (Schram Stokke, 1994c: p.12). But, in the author's opinion, open channels of communication should enhance, rather than threaten, national policies.

On the other hand, Russia's relations between centre and periphery highlight the potential conflicts of interest. Stoltenberg's successor as Norwegian Foreign Minister, Johan Holst quickly recognised the duality inherent in the BEAR structure, as well as the fact that lines of communication were being established beyond Moscow's control. He remarked soon after the declaration how incredible it was that "three small Northern countries propose to achieve a balanced and negotiated relationship through equal consultation with an impoverished giant" (Bathurst, 1994: p. 45).

What was not foreseen at the time, however, was just how much relations *within* Norden would run independently, as Fenno-Scandia looked towards Brussels and the Baltic as soon as the Kirkenes Declaration had been signed, and no sooner had they nominally tamed the Russian bear.

5.1 Aspects of change: inter-Nordic relations

Norway's main desire to establish the Barents Region has already been examined, as the internal influence of the southern metropolises upon the northern hinterlands continued as it always had in each of the Scandic countries. Only in Norway, however, could the North in turn exert much influence on policy-making in the capital. This difference in the reassessment of security priorities signalled, also, a wider change in the assessed need for inter-Nordic co-operation. For while Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki were enthusiastically agreeing on an economic/environmental strategy for their northern periphery, inter-Nordic relations on a wider scale were cooling now that the common Soviet threat had receded.

Sweden appeared to be refocussing her attention away from Russia, as she looked to the international scene (eg. the UN) in order to raise her profile. Furthermore, in July 1991, she submitted her application to join the European Community¹⁰, where, previously, the Socialists' neutrality policy had prevented Sweden from joining (Swedish Institute, 1995: p.1). This volte-face, coupled with Sweden's proposals for maritime regulation, began to arouse Norwegian suspicions - especially since Sweden had no coastline in the North, and appeared to be pushing strongly for something from which she could neither obviously lose nor benefit (Scrivener, 1996, pers. comm.).

Finland, meanwhile, had played the part of intermediary after the 1987 Murmansk Speech - but, by 1991, no such rôle was needed. Conscious of the need to adapt, the Finns had launched the Rovaniemi environmental initiative, renegotiated the 'Friendship & Mutual Assistance Treaty' with Moscow, and, in January 1992, also announced their desire to seek EC membership. Again, the possibility that Finland might be seeking access to the Barents Sea, for fish, increased Norway's distrust of Finish motives (ibid.).

In the author's opinion, Norway's competition with Finland to assume the leadership in Arctic affairs invigorated plans for the Barents co-operation. Anxious also to exert further influence after the BEAR was agreed, Norway subsequently pushed for the Stavanger Declaration in the Baltic Sea Region (modelled on that of the Barents Regional Council). Above all, Norway wanted to avoid peripheralisation should the EU membership plebiscite prove negative. The BEAR would thus give her international East-West prestige, while the country decided how relations were developing in the wider North-South context.

¹⁰ Negotiations were undertaken by the non-socialist coalition government between 1991 and 1994, before a referendum in November 1994 saw 52.3% of the population vote in favour of membership. As with Finland, Sweden then acceded to the EU in January 1995.

5.2 Aspects of change: inter-Russian relations

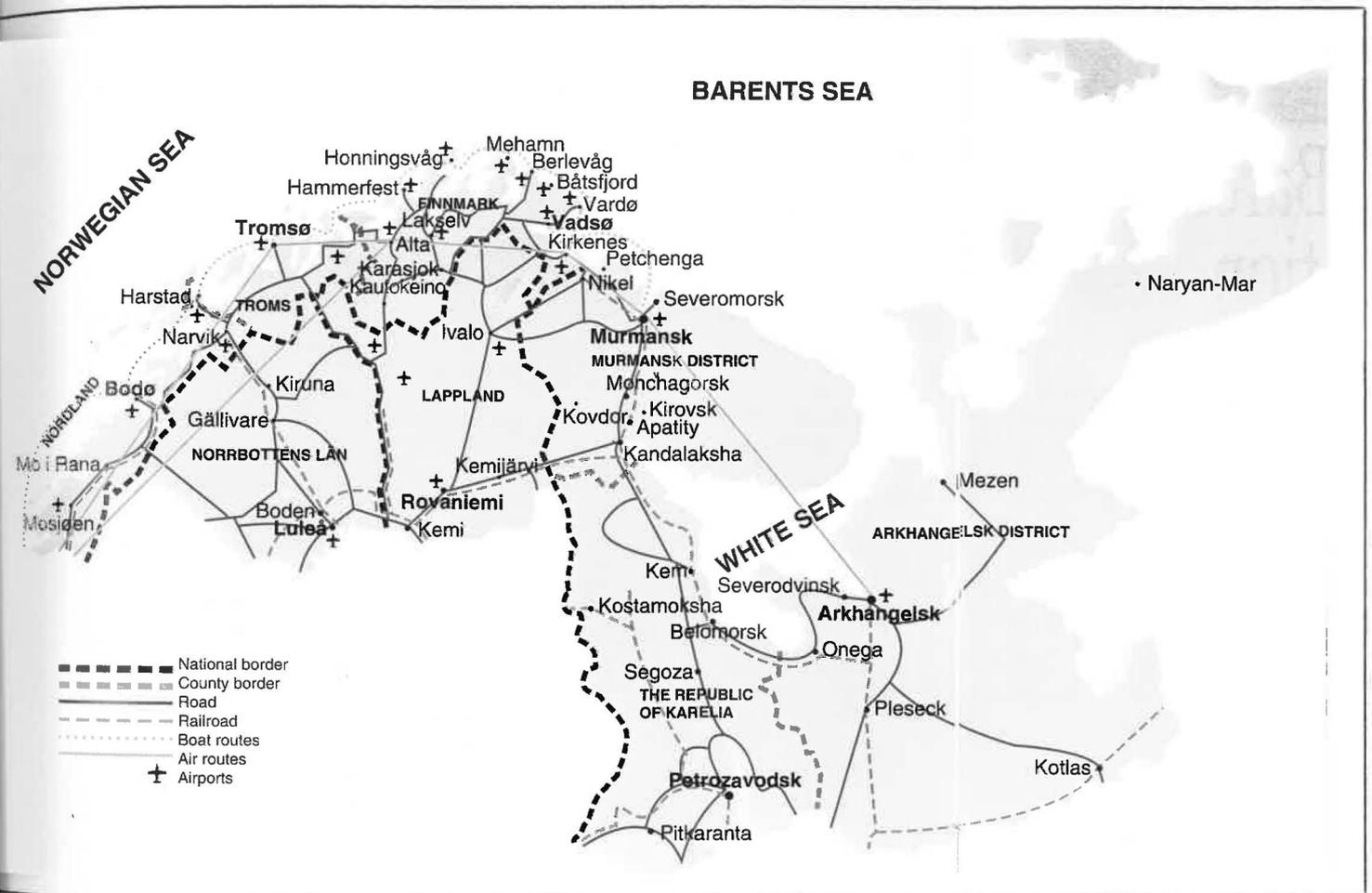
The Kola Peninsula is not just militarily important to Russia. The ports of Murmansk and Kandalaksha are gates to the West made all the more important by the loss of Baltic ports further South, while cross-border relations with neighbouring states have not yet been properly established. Moreover, Kola is rich in nickel, phosphate, rare metals, mica, oil and gas, as well as timber, fish and hydro-electricity. It is also an area free of the central planning dictates of the Soviet era (Luzin, 1994: p.74). Moscow, notwithstanding the NW's natural resources potential, scientific and industrial bases, its expertise in metallurgy, mining, nuclear power, ship-building, timber industries and fish processing, has allowed the oblasti limited autonomous rights, and accepted proposals for joint resources exploitation, provided there are clear national foreign policy, security, ecological and the social benefits, as well as local advantages (ibid.: p.76). Both local and national leaders, therefore, agreed to treat the Barents scheme in an organised, westernised way, and the Karelian authorities were belatedly granted accession to the BEAR, in order to similarly increase their trading, their standing, and revenues.

Karelia had been seized from Finland by Stalin in 1939. Naturally enough, the collapse of the USSR brought growing demands, from exiles, for the restitution of their seized lands (The Guardian, 18 November 1993)¹¹. Many people (even in government circles) in Finland, therefore, were keen to see Karelia accede to the Kirkenes ^{Declaration} Treaty, in the hope that co-operation would, in a sense, help to bind lost territories back to the motherland (Käkönen, 1996, pers. comm.). Moscow's initial post-Communist policy had been to reverse Stalinist centralisation, thereby allowing republics like Karelia greater autonomy whilst simultaneously binding them to safe supervisors, at a time when the transition to capitalist democracy still seemed assured. Aware of her economic and political importance to Moscow, Karelia was, therefore, able to negotiate a 90% retention of tax revenues; she also assumed the right to grant trade licences, and the right to register foreign enterprises, which are both of crucial importance when establishing greater cross-border trading links (Rikkonen & Männistö, 1993: p.170).

The wider priorities in infrastructural development in the BEAR included new airline and postal services from Murmansk to Tromsø and Kirkenes, where former East-West links

¹¹ In Helsinki, over 1992-3, both the Karelia Association and the Finnish Defence Review recommended the return of this land to Finns. Although it has since been stressed as unrealistic, and is played down, the issue has become sensitive in official circles on both sides of the border (Nyberg, 1996, pers. comm.). Russia has, in turn, been known to bar foreign tourists from the most sensitive areas, to avoid undue embarrassment, since Karelia's current day political standing is amongst the top tier of Russian constituent republics.

were minimal. Transport and communications will play an important part in the region's development, in laterally expanding North-South corridors as well as planning for use of the Northern Sea Route¹² (Holst, 1993: p.16) (see Map 7). The NSR has, therefore, as a result of its importance, been adopted as one of the issue areas to be dealt with within the co-operative structure of the Barents Region, even though the scheme is not supposed to extend to maritime issues.



Map 7: Today's primary road, rail, shipping and air routes in the Barents Region (cf. Map 9) (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: pp.2-3)

¹² The Northern Sea Route (NSR), or North East Passage, is predicted to be one of the world's busiest future waterways, since ice-breaking technology and global temperature increases have made the Arctic Ocean rim more navigable, and journey times, eg. between Western Europe and Japan, can be halved in comparison to conventional routes. As the largest port in the Arctic, and as the current base for the Russian Arctic fleet, Murmansk should benefit greatly from any such development. The world's largest shipyard is also located in the Barents Region, being that at Severodvinsk, in Arkhangelsk. Previously, during the Cold War, few Western-owned ships would have called in to either port, because NATO opposed their stopping in or near the Kola Peninsula if they wished to also dock in Northern Norway (Kosmo, 1996a)

Greater interest and investment in the Barents scheme, however, are still much needed, as the BEAR continues to operate at its best on paper. The economic and political motives for inter-regional co-operation were always going to be easier to understand than gaining broader public support would be (Tunander, 1994: p.36), added to which, Yeltsin's support for regional autonomy within Russia ties in curiously with periods of elections. Forging a new identity for the neonate politico-economic entity therefore plays an important part in expounding the benefits of the development of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

5.3 Forging the BEAR

Region-building is a purposeful activity, and one which builds upon historical and ^{conceptualised} mental regionalization. Despite the degree of inevitability in cross-border links across the former Iron Curtain, the Barents scheme was, without doubt, one imposed 'top down' by national governments upon the region. The government in Norway was therefore keen to make co-operation in the Barents Region appear a natural, age-old process merely interrupted only by Communism, if it was to gain acceptance for the BEAR amongst the local population. Many people in the Nordic part of the Barents Region may not feel that they have much in common with their Russian counterparts, or vice versa. In order that this could change, "like nation-building, region-building selects and dramatises historical myths instrumental to the project in question" (Tunander, 1994.: p.37). Thus reference was made to the Viking Age, as well as the Pomor trade, to reinstate the importance of the old ties and commercial networks.

Although the indigenous Saami span the old divide, and constitute an important element of cultural homogeneity, they have not deliberately been involved in region-building. For everyone, decades of secularisation may have removed many otherwise inherent East-West differences (eg. religion, despite a religious revival in Russia), but the Russian political system has been shifting constantly westwards in style since Gorbachev came to power, and the BEAR consequently fulfils more than the minimal social and cultural prerequisites for recognition as a defined regional entity.

To reassure the inhabitants of the area that the BEAR was the natural path to follow, the Norwegian government has defined the BEAR as the 'normalisation' of relations, as though it was restoring them to what they would have been between Scandinavia and Russia, were it not for the Revolution of 1917. Ministers and politicians on both sides of the former divide thus drew attention to the most obvious link of old, the *Pomor* trade, since, as Schram Stokke and Tunander have commented (1994: p.230), such a "radically new policy has to be presented both as something very new - to focus attention and resources away from traditional policy - but also as something very traditional, reinterpreting the new policy as a return to normality. Region building in that sense is a parallel to 19th century nation-building, with its selective use of historical affinity". Indeed, historians like Jens Petter Nielsen eagerly played their part in reviving interest in the region's common heritage, and often with government backing. With the source of 'real' Norwegian identity to be found in the mountains, fjords and peasant settlements of the North, where fishing is the traditional livelihood, the Viking

'Bjarmeland'/Barents Region context also gave the BEAR a symbolism which elevated it almost beyond criticism. On the other hand, there is clearly also something to be said for a natural evolution of co-operation.

However, popular support in the North for renewed trading contacts to the East was not quite what Oslo had in mind, when, ironically, it coincided with opposition to the EU. The BEAR had been planned to link Russo-Norwegian co-operation into Norwegian integration in the EU (which is to say that the more far-reaching co-operation in Arctic Europe presupposed a Norway already firmly connected to Western institutions) (Tunander, 1994: p.40). The importance of Europe would be reflected in the importance of the BEAR. The Region would also demonstrate practically the principles of subsidiarity¹³, to show EU practices in a better light in Northern Norway (as, for example, European financial aid would be provided in the quest to solve environmental and nuclear waste problems in the Russian Arctic).

As the Russian Foreign Minister was fully aware (Kozyrev, 1993: p.25), the 'Europe of Regions' philosophy is becoming an important method of handling the continent's affairs and enhancing stability, permitting some local or regional decision-making whilst maintaining adequate state structures and furthering cross-border relations. In its renunciation of Soviet ideology after 1991, Russia eagerly embraced such thinking, and agreed to co-operate with Norway in order that this might be done, rushing from insularity and reactionism to provide a unique opportunity for co-operation.

Hence the BEAR came into being in 1993, widely accepted by the Northern population. Although the Alaskan Governor commented in Tromsø, "the greatest challenge of those who live in the Arctic is to cope with decisions made in the South that don't work... [and which are] born of... ignorance" (Hickel, 1993: p.12), and the following year he still maintained that neither Moscow nor Oslo understood the Arctic (Hickel, 1994: p.2), it has now become clear that the BEAR has had an important effect on Arctic Europe. There certainly has been considerable change in policy-making for the North, as the following chapters will demonstrate. But at the same time, there are important aspects of continuity. Both of these will now be considered.

¹³ Subsidiarity was conveniently translated into 'proximity' in the Nordic languages, in order to emphasize decision-making at the lowest possible level (ie. precisely what many sceptics feared would not happen) (Airoldi, 1995: p.37).

6.0 The operation of the BEAR

6.1 Political Security

The successful operation of the Barents Region project at the regional level may depend above all upon economic profitability, but in international terms, it is the political gain for which states are playing. Moscow's interest in giving impetus to NW Russia through opening up to the West corresponds to the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish interest in giving their own northern counties an economic stimulus by downplaying state barriers. On the other hand, given the current uncertainty in Russia and the Nordic countries (if not the West as a whole) over the fate of democratic government after the Russian presidential elections in June 1996 (see Fig. 2), political security remains a key component in the Norwegian strategy inherent in the formation of the Barents Region.

The concept of the BEAR being a Western one, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, who backed it, was clearly orientated towards Western progressivism. Zhirinovskiy, however, with his oppositional ideologies, would almost certainly reject the Barents Initiative, or at least quite fundamentally alter it. Kozyrev alerted the West to such probabilities in his Stockholm speech in December 1992, warning that a reactionary, imperialistic and thereby anti-Western, resentful Russia, could only be averted through greater Western support for Russia's reforms. "The message was clear: if the West wishes to negotiate with a progressive Russia, then it must vigorously support such institutions as the Barents Initiative" (Bathurst, 1994 : p. 45).

In NW Russia, as, indeed, across the former Soviet Union, the danger that unfulfilled economic and social expectations have created a climate of disappointment and disillusionment has given added responsibility not only to Russian politicians to yield results, but also to their Western partners (Godal, 1995b). Yet there has been a simultaneous loss of momentum and enthusiasm in Barents region-building, political enthusiasm and investment, especially from Finland and Sweden, the junior partners, which flies in the face of political logic for an area so long their Achilles heel. These countries' partial neglect of their responsibilities in promoting the region has meant that the drive for the continued operation of the Barents initiative has been left almost entirely in Norwegian hands. In this sense, Norway's rôle in the BEAR is as much 'peace-building' as it is intern(ation)al Nordpolitik.

To date, the leaders of the NW regions of Russia have proved some of the staunchest supporters of Yeltsin and his politics, partly because of the opportunities granted to develop

their areas' own international contacts, to help compensate for the reduction of economic resources from Moscow¹⁴. Although reform-orientated candidates represent these areas, a large protest vote in 1993 and 1995 reflected NW Russia's growing dissatisfaction with the decline in living standards and the spread of unemployment. The BEAR must, therefore, deliver results quickly, if extremist politics are to be averted.

Figure 2:
Boris Yeltsin
campaigning for Russia's
June 1996
presidential
elections,
and surrounded
by folk singers
in Archangelsk
(The Times,
27 May 1996)



¹⁴ In the December 1993 elections, only ~53% of electors, on average, voted in Karelia, Murmansk and Archangelsk, and support for Zhirinovskiy's Liberal-Democratic Party reached almost 20% (or 57% in the military base of Severomorsk). Baev (1994: pp.180-181) provides a more complete discussion.

The anti-Communists in Russia in the late 1980s had come forward as Westernisers, not as nationalists, as in the rest of Eastern Europe. They therefore failed to link the struggle for democratic rights and freedoms with the restoration of the Russia the Bolsheviks destroyed (The Guardian, 20 April 1996). It is for this reason, therefore, that today's democratic, market economy Russia is in jeopardy from political extremism - and with it, the successful economic functioning of the BEAR. For although the Communist Party leader, Zyuganov, promises to maintain the institutions of post-Communism, he also plans wealth redistribution, and would use protectionist methods to reduce imports and foreign business involvement. In foreign affairs, he would pursue a Russia-first policy, no longer worrying whether Russia's actions satisfy the West.

Thus threatened with defeat, Yeltsin has already begun stealing the Communists' clothes, with a new emphasis on an independent foreign policy, internal spending priorities and confederation within old USSR boundaries. In this sense, even if Zyuganov loses this Summer's poll, the communists will have already won their argument, and "the Westernising policies of the last ten years, moderate under Gorbachev, but taken to politically destructive extremes by Yeltsin, have run their course and, from now on, the outside world will have to deal with a prouder and more awkward Russia" (ibid.).

Two years ago, the BEAR was described as "a rare window of opportunity... now opened for Norden... *But success depends upon moving quickly...*" (Bathurst, 1994: p.55). This was especially so in terms of developing and defending new institutions, and promoting sound investments, fiscal guarantees and legal codes of practice. Local government, international and domestic businesses were already making gains by then, and were being forced to take more independent and creative rôles. They were backed up by Western support to assume greater initiative than perhaps Moscow would concede. Looking back in 1996, however, it seems that Moscow, and even the military, became peripheral to Murmansk's interests only during an interlude in Russian politics.

As the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Holst, clearly understood, the NW of Russia could not operate independently of Moscow indefinitely. He might not have been able to foresee a return to many aspects of Communism, but, as Bathurst makes plain, "while in the present there must be a rapid development of the regional idea, in the long run, its viability will also depend on paying appropriate tribute to Moscow. A major politico-cultural problem will be to determine how and when that is to be done. In the meantime, as a new Pomor trade develops, and before Moscow [or its military] resumes its traditional control, Norden has

indeed the opportunity of creating the first model of a possible new world order." At present, Russia's chairmanship of the Barents Council is the only forum of European countries with a Russian presidency. It is therefore seen as important not only that Russia be accorded some prestige through this body, but that other states take careful note of what is happening in Russian political and military thought.

For Russia, currently seeking to reassert her position as a major power, the BEAR is not a priority, although it is an important geopolitical asset, and Russian foreign policy likes to be able to take every advantage of it. It is also an interesting example of how regional co-operation can help quell disputes between centre and periphery which threaten the very existence of the Russian Federation (Baev, 1994: p.175). For Norway, having another forum in which to observe the trends in Russian thinking and politics is central to that country's security planning. Norway would "be very unhappy" to see any independence movement in Russia jeopardising this situation, but then "the chances of this developing into a viable movement do not seem high enough to keep the decision-makers awake" (Gleditsch, 1996, pers. comm.).

Although Scandinavians may sympathise with the need of Russian politicians to formulate and promote their national interests in such a context, nationalistic trends in Russian politics have created a more apprehensive air in the West, because no-one can foretell what will happen next. Yet, as a great power on the European continent, Russia must have a central rôle in the security architecture now being designed. Recognising this, Godal admits that, "although Russia does not constitute a threat to Norway, we cannot just ignore the fact that sizeable military forces are still stationed near our borders" (1995a). Security is not simply a regional matter, and, as a result, the BEAR makes no provisions to try to solve security problems alone. On the other hand, should there be a problem, it does provide a valuable forum in which to vent concerns - eg. over the Finnish border question, although, thus far, this issue has not been raised, and, officially, Finland has no desire to see the restitution of its old borders (considering Finnish Karelia as Germany does Kaliningrad) (Nyberg, 1996, pers. comm.). Although this subject is often discussed in the press, the strip of the Barents Sea which Finland also once possessed no longer fits into the equation (ibid.).

For one thing, Finland cannot afford a dispute with Russia or Karelia. Not only does she rely increasingly on Karelia for timber, but, as Stoltenberg warned, closer co-operation means that the region will be more easily affected by developments in Russia, even if political events there should take an unexpected turn. The best way to deal with such a situation was

thus to ensure that the Nordic countries are firmly linked with broader-based European arrangements, by means of collective security (see Maps 4 and 5). Regional stability required EÜ backing to match the Russian political heavyweight. Hence the deeper the regional co-operation in the BEAR, the more necessary Fenno-Scandic membership of the EU was considered to be.

However, Norway has never been blind to the possibility that the reconstruction and disorder inherent in Russian society may at any time disrupt support for the Barents scheme. The post-Soviet administration has already broken down, distributional networks have altered, and governance structures are far from settled. Anti-western sentiment is also far stronger now than it was at the time of the Kirkenes Declaration, and arguments for the stability of central planning oppose the currently chaotic and harsh market economy. Decentralisation in Scandinavia has had very different consequences to decentralization in the former USSR. For Norway, the BEAR encourages financial private-sector investment and cultural contact. For Moscow, with many of Russia's armed forces based in the NW, there are clearly different reasons for wanting regional co-operation: foremost amongst them was economic necessity. Norwegian foreign/Nordpolitikk therefore aimed to stabilise Russia, to mutual advantage, precisely through economic channels (Darst, 1996: p.100).

6.2 Economics

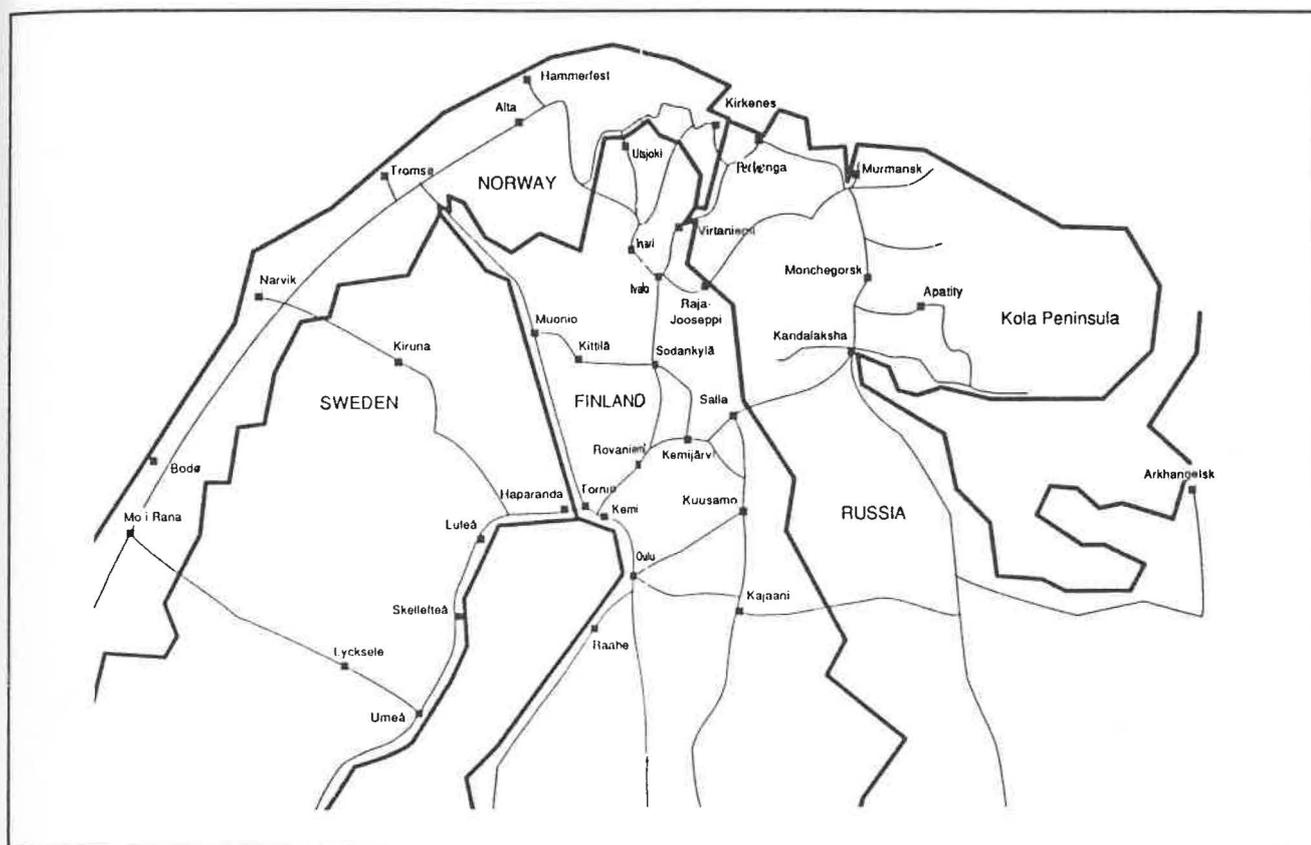
Postwar European co-operation, as in any co-operative scheme, works best through mutual economic gain. Co-operation in the Barents Region is no exception, and promoting stability in the region is important across the West, since a quarter of the developed world's foreign debt is owed to Russia (The European, 2 May 96). Economically, the two sides of the former Iron Curtain are markedly different, in terms of unequal distribution of capital, and the extreme differences in cost structures, purchasing power, accessibility of goods, and in services and know-how. But it was also recognised early in the day that each of the member countries' economies are complementary, very open, and characterised by undiversified production structures, with a high dependence on externally produced goods and services. The economic connections between North and South are also far more significant than those across national boundaries (see Map 8). These factors, coupled with the disintegration of the Soviet empire and the current economic crisis in Russia (which has broken up many traditional economic relations with other parts of the Soviet Union), make regional economic planning a necessity. For Russia, therefore, East-West economic reorientation was not just cosmetic - it was vital (Castberg, 1994: p.102).

A regional economic policy implies either the regional aspect of the State's national policy, or the social and economic policy of the local authorities in relation to regions within their jurisdiction (Luzin, 1993: p.125). The Kirkenes Declaration called for both of these, in a series of concrete economic measures for the post-Soviet European Arctic, including joint oil and gas exploration; the protection and restoration of the environment; the conversion of defence industries to peaceful uses, eg. telecommunications and shipbuilding; the creation of favourable conditions for further joint ventures; and solutions to the economic and cultural problems of the indigenous peoples. The BEAR would not simply be merging separate national economies, but integrating regions within nations into one new, wider region.

There is great potential for the BEAR, in terms of resource exploitation and processing (see Map 9), international transport links, tourism, low labour costs (which may also attract investment in Kola), and Russia's reasonably large local markets and need for improved infrastructure (Kazantseva & Westin, 1994: pp.109-110)¹⁵. Russian media often used to

¹⁵ Karelia's most valuable asset is timber, and Finnish loggers moved in almost as soon as the Iron Curtain collapsed (today performing ~15% of operations). In return for the right to fell trees, therefore - even in reserves - the Finns build roads, erect power lines and improve the infrastructure, making dubious arrangements with insolvent authorities (Moscow News, 28 March 1996).

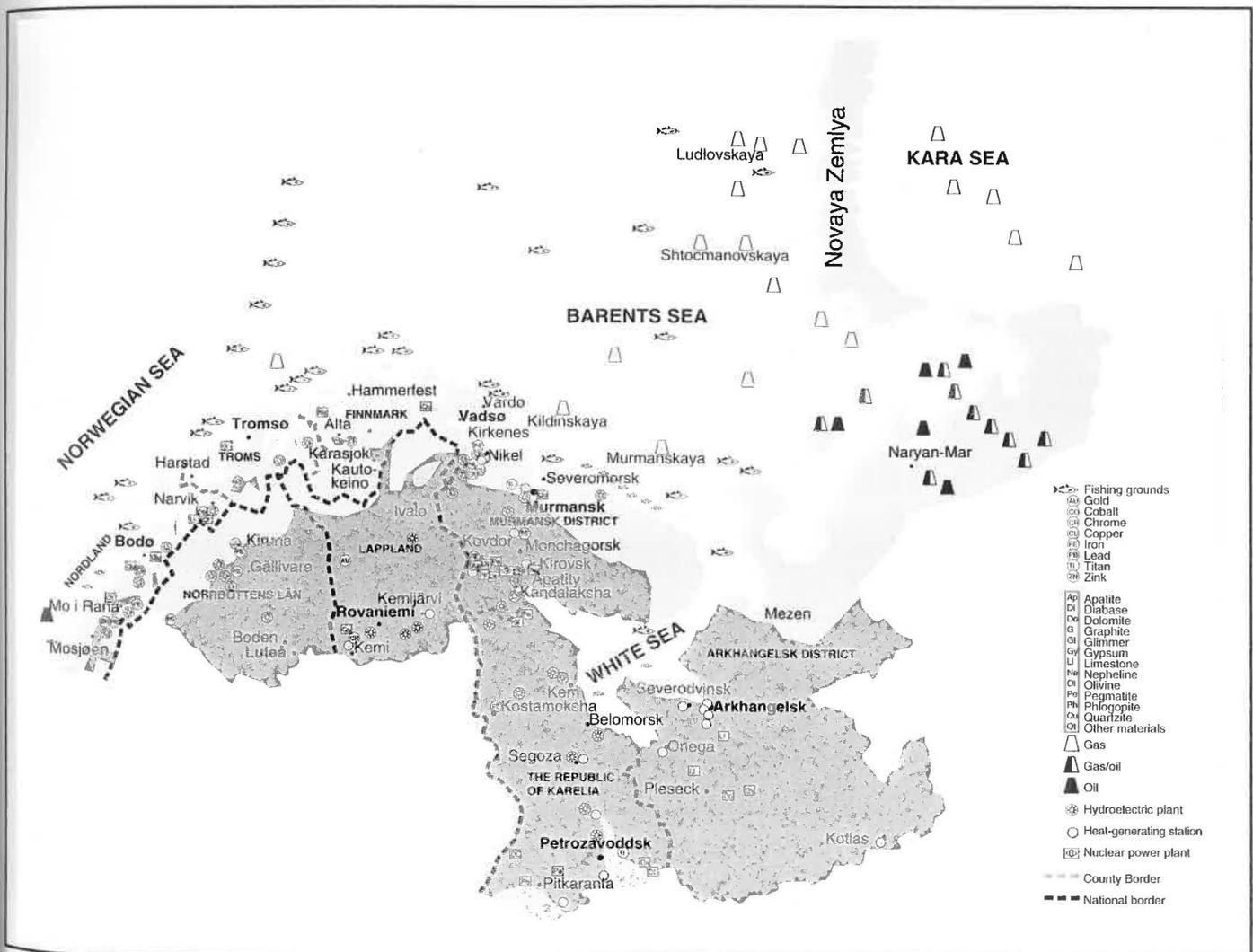
argue that co-operation projects merely aim to substitute Western for Russian technology, and thus undermine Russia's status and economic potential, transforming her into an economically retarded supplier of raw materials (Schram Stokke, 1994c: p.29). But the successful exploitation of oil and natural gas, hard minerals and fish stocks, have simultaneously placed a higher value on Arctic areas in recent years, thereby increasing the very chances for co-operation (Archer, 1988: p.139).



Map 8: Road connections between the North Calotte and the Kola Peninsula (Kazantseva and Westin, 1994: pp. 120-1)

Whereas NW Russia's population is heavily urbanised and industrialised, like Northern Scandinavia, it remains import dependent. In contrast, the Great Calotte is sparsely populated, with predominantly primary industries. Between them, there has already been some significant cross-regional business and investment from West to East, making use of the low-paid but well-trained Russian workforce. Detailed planning is now underway to exploit future Russian market opportunities.

The fishing sector is a little different, having already operated under Soviet jurisdiction, and with institutions of its own already in operation. Although fishing was not, therefore, among the seven issue-areas listed in the Kirkenes Declaration, there has been further integration in this sphere, since fishing remains the economic mainstay of the Barents Region (Hoel, 1994: p.121). Nevertheless, there is a risk of a dawning conflict of interest, as the modernization of processing plants in Russia puts them in direct competition with plants in the West (Chaturvedi, 1996a: p.186). The Barents Sea dispute may also continue between the two littoral states, despite the BEAR co-operation (although the strategic value of the area, and the loss of prestige, in ceding to Norway anything claimed by Russia, probably account for this).



Map 9: The natural resources of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.6)

When the BEAR was established, Norwegian government ministers at least considered it an opportunity to address the maritime boundary problem once again, as potential petroleum exploitation would also require recognised delimitation. But, in order for this to occur, Russia needs to perceive that the changes inherent in the end of the Cold War are compelling enough to alter earlier policy (ibid.: p.193). The need for a permanent settlement has therefore hitherto been avoided, whilst fishing regulations remain acceptable to both sides, and large catches continue to be made. As with the BEAR as a whole, Russia and Norway tried to devise a system which would suit their needs very comfortably: both countries can therefore regulate who fishes in the Barents Sea (whereas EU membership would have meant openly sharing Norwegian waters beyond twelve nautical miles from the coast, and having quotas open to exploitation). Currently, some two thirds of Norwegian fish exports go to the EU (Hoel, 1994: p.123), since Norway's accession to the EEA (with the other EFTA countries) in January 1994 opened access to EU markets without having to abide by the *aquis communautaire* of fishery policy regulations.

In terms of the economy as a whole, it has often been said, that the BEAR represents the "normalisation of relations between the neighbouring nations on the top of Europe", as the effective barriers to trade and integration have been cast aside, and the outpost towns of Kirkenes and Nikel have been reorientated to be at the heart of a new region (Castberg, 1994: p.101). Norway may be operating the stick and carrot principle with Russia, but if Russia does help the West to help itself, she will eventually see concrete gains, as with the current infrastructural improvements in terms of sewerage and water supply in Murmansk.

In one sense, however, there seems to be a strange logic in regional devolution, since it is a strong central government, and, through it, attempts to reinforce the economy, which bring business investment, and hence benefit the ordinary citizen. Yet so far, in the BEAR, the opposite has been the case, and the regional economy has had to develop through Norwegian and EU aid schemes. Measuring the economic success of the Barents Region in this light is not easy, and the initial optimism on all sides has been somewhat set back. Even the official Norwegian line on the subject has been to take account of the realities of the situation.

There is, however, broader public involvement now than there was, and industrialists' groups are discussing their respective problems together (Godal, 1995b). But there is no quantifiable statistical evidence for economic progress because of the BEAR, to reinforce the argument for its success. The Foreign Minister could offer only the following explanations: "it is no easy task to normalise our relations and establish practical co-operation with Russia.

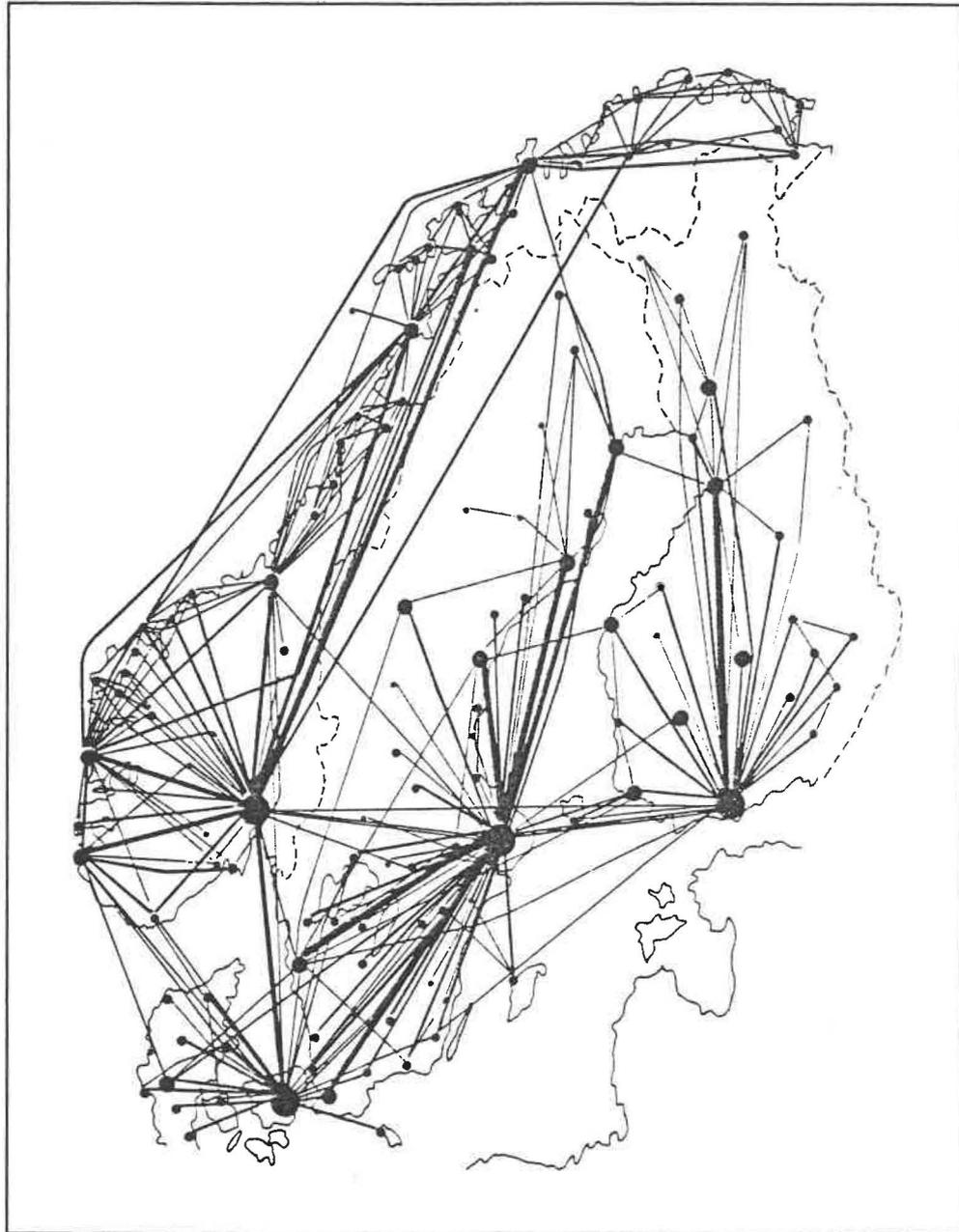
Much remains to be done [there] before conditions for private foreign investment reach a satisfactory level. There are major deficiencies in the legal system... law enforcement and business legislation." The result has not only been Norwegian exasperation, and an apparent wonder that Norway became so closely tied up with such a system in the first place, but the continued backwardness of the Russian economy and lack of improvement in living standards, both reflected in the relative instability of the political situation - which, in turn, further influences the level of foreign investment (ibid.). Similarly, it is "unrealistic at this stage to believe that substantially better conditions can be established for economic co-operation in the Barents Region than for co-operation with Russia in general" (ie. not much). As it stands, the BEAR therefore appears as little more than a "workshop" for East-West development (ibid.).

And yet the Barents scheme structure does work. Indeed, the Barents Council's very functioning is of considerable political importance, overcoming prejudices, promoting neighbourliness and strengthening stability. A solid front thereby attracts external interest - eg. Japanese interest in the Northern Sea Route, or Portugal's interest in fish stocks (Kozyrev, 1994: p.28) - for co-operation and integration have obvious benefits. Nonetheless, so too do free-riding and protectionism (Heininen et al., 1995: p.51). In the context of wider long-term security, however, economic changes which are met by demands for increased protection were to be offset by maximising the benefits of interdependence, at minimal cost. The fisheries authorities in Norway remain rather sceptical of regionalization, for fear that the resource base may come to be seen as a shared regional, rather than national, asset, as regional boards try to gain influence in stock management (Hoel, 1994: p.128). For the majority of regional businesses, however, the economics of the BEAR make real sense in the wake of the Cold War.

In Soviet days, the defence industry had consumed ~60% of industrial production in Murmansk. In contrast, Russia allocated only 16% of its budget to defence in 1992 (since reduced), and keeping both the military and workers content has thus been a priority in both regions as government spending and subventions have fallen (Jonson, 1994: p.170). Even so, in practice, business can only take place with the military's consent. As long as international security issues are assigned top priority in the Russian Northwest, economic collaboration will be permitted only where it does not conflict with the demands of the armed forces. Economics do not, as yet, exert an influence on military priorities.

Previously, in the Barents Region, the military was a major employer on both sides of the Iron Curtain. All communications were with the economic and political capitals further

South (see Map 10), and primary industries served manufacturing plants' needs elsewhere, rather than being developed locally for potential markets in the far North. There was, as a result, a high economic price being paid for the Cold War, as well as a social one. But there was another price to pay for its demise.



Map 10: The Nordic airline flight system in 1990
(Kazantseva & Westin, 1994: p.117)

Transportation and telecommunications, above all, require investment, for Russian localities that can be tied to the Nordic countries by new, direct communications routes are likely to have substantially better prospects than those without (Wiberg, 1994: p.36).

Consequently, Norway early on extended its telephone cable system, to include Murmansk under the same area code. One of the key points in the transition, however, is to encourage local business venture investment. To date, such success is hard to gauge. Even in capitalist Norway, most extraction/processing companies are owned by Southern/foreign interests, with external management, even in trawler operations (Aanesen, 1993: p.67).

The Norwegian public sector's main concern heretofore in NW Russia has been the extraction, and, to a lesser degree, processing, industries (which were often the most lucrative, but also the most polluting). Due to the considerable costs of effluent reduction, even the fate of the flagship Nickel project remains undecided. Nevertheless, regional co-operation has generated a variety of projects without a major drain on financial resources, some (such as assistance in improving the standards of drinking water) with very useful and tangible benefits. The Barents Council's work remains in its early stages, although the respective Foreign Ministers, meeting in October 1995, agreed to recommend a programme of fifteen further infrastructure projects (including the modernisation of Kandalaksha aluminium works and Pechenga nickel works, and improved road and rail communications, harbours and airports), provided that international funding can be found (The Financial Times, 20 November 1995).

Economic disparity in itself provides further good reason for investment in the BEAR, in order to dissuade Russians from crime, from smuggling (especially drugs and alcohol) and from prostitution. Should the established order fall apart in Russia, then there could be very direct consequences for the Nordic countries, because of their geographical proximity, and, therefore, stabilisation forms the most effective means of Scandinavian defence (Wiberg, 1994: p.27).

Karelia, in particular, offers the West large potential, providing low-cost materials, manufacture and labour, at least in the short-term. The Russian sector of the region also offers the penetration of wider markets, and the ports of Murmansk and St. Petersburg are already working to overcapacity (Rikkonen & Männistö, 1993: p.175). Eventually, new markets and new resources are hoped to stimulate markets on both sides of the former East-West divides. Yet, on a wider scale, perhaps the most important area in which regional economic gain will be apparent, is through the extraction of oil and gas. Norway, above all, will thereby benefit.

Norway's economy is currently the world's eighth largest, a position attained as Europe's biggest producer of natural gas, and the world's second largest producer of oil¹⁶.

¹⁶ Norway's economic importance, if defined by G-7 (Group of Seven) criteria, would place the country in the position of G-8 (immediately after Britain and Canada).

High quality gold may also soon be boosting the wealth generated within the country (The European, 2 May 1996). Furthermore, Norway's oil reserves have enabled her to maintain influence in Europe, whilst paying nothing to Brussels to pursue a policy of effective shadow membership of the European Union. Bjørn Tore Godal, Norway's Foreign Minister, believes any foreign policy disadvantages of not belonging to the EU are mitigated by Norway's membership of NATO. The automatic right to prosperity and economic credibility may disappear from the beginning of next century, as oil production declines, but with Norway's newly-established Petroleum Fund there to invest oil profits for the future, Oslo's policy seems to be to stabilise Norway's influence in the northern region, and to let the rest of Europe take care of itself.

Recently, Russian and international oil companies have discovered vast reserves of oil and gas, both on and off the Barents coastline. A large part of it is hidden under the Nenets Autonomous Okrug¹⁷, where the 6,500 Nenets are politically dwarfed by 40,000 Russians and Komi. The latter's wish for the eventual economic exploitation of the area appears unstoppable now that latest estimates predict 1.2 billion tonnes of oil in the Sokmanovskoye field, 489 billion cubic metres of gas, and 20 billion tonnes of oil condensate in the district (Ludviksen, 1995; pp.63-64).

Russia has already joined the international oil market, which has made fuel prices rocket in price (*ibid.*). Freight costs have consequently risen, and the populations of the Far North are affected further by the absence of roads: all transport of people is by air. Reindeer farmers, however high their yields, are left to find a way of transporting their meat to market, and then to sell it at whatever prices are negotiated by the combines. With slaughtering always occurring in November, the annual pay packet is almost worthless by February, due to rampant inflation. Hence little economic optimism remains for herding. Oil and gas are more lucrative, and fit the megaproject criteria envisaged by the BEAR's founding fathers. They may even provide many local jobs in the construction stages - but in an area of empty state coffers, any benefits are not guaranteed to be permanent, nor to be spread where they are most needed, even when negotiations take place in the Nenets capital (Naryan Mar), rather than in distant Archangelsk (*ibid.*). There thus remains scant regard even for okrug-wide Nordpolitik in such circumstances, as the authorities of the Russian North continue to seize the initiative for themselves wherever they can. More importantly, it would appear, as a rule, that economic

¹⁷ The Nenets Autonomous Okrug forms part of Archangelsk Oblast, although it is self-governed and has its own capital at Naryan Mar (see Map 3). Nenet people actually form a minority, but their reindeer herding activities currently generate the region's most important source of income.

development may now be what drives Barents Region co-operation, rather than the other way round.

Clearly, investment and development remain incomplete in the BEAR at this stage, as national and local governments await private initiatives to match their own enthusiasm for the region's economic potential. Businesses remain reluctant to become too heavily involved in the Russian sector, generally, however, unless they can be sure of quick returns. But the Russian transition to a market economy is slow to progress, and purchasing power remains limited. Only in the Russian defence industry, it would seem, can spending levels be assured. Hence it is this very military priority which is again concerning the West.

6.3 Military Security

“The security of the Arctic is as much affected by circumstances, traditions and other factors specific to the circumpolar North, as it is to the fundamental changes occurring in international relations” (Möttölä, 1996, p.2). In the West, therefore, the fact that Russia is in a maelstrom of internal political wrangling and power-seeking means that military security policy has not lost its importance. For although the Nordic states face a post-Cold War Russia, they remain aware that the end of open conflict has not reduced their need for security. One of the reasons for this, is that the Kola Peninsula seems destined to remain heavily militarised - not simply for the sake of tradition, or because of Russian military-political trends, but because pressure from Kazakhstan has driven Russia’s nuclear testing programme back to Novaya Zemlya, while developments in the Pacific region could easily result in Russia’s entire strategic nuclear fleet being redeployed in the Arctic (Gizewski, 1993: p.10). The region already contains Russia’s chief naval port. Policy dictates, not surprisingly, come as often from the military as from civilian government.

Integration in the military sense in the BEAR is really not a subject which has been broached, for ignoring military concerns gave the Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, much greater scope in the Kirkenes Declaration. Even though the BEAR challenges military leaders’ overall authority in the Kola area, many leaders have, through necessity, been supportive, since budgetary cutbacks have made the military more dependent on local civilian authorities. Consequently, it is imperative not only that central governments remain in overall control of northern policies, but also that the wider Cold War era defence alliances be suitably adjusted and maintained while a new ‘security architecture’ is devised for the whole Arctic region (Ásgrímson, 1995b). Canada has urged Northern Europe to take the initiative, advising that the “current climate of amity be used to put confidence- and security-building measures in place in the Arctic, as a hedge against any future decline in political relations, or the growth of instability in Russia” (Lamb, 1994: p.10).

But the possession of nuclear weapons still guarantees Russia great power status, and Russia’s smaller neighbours continue to pursue independent strategic planning policies as a result. Sweden may therefore be downgrading her military presence in the North, but Finland’s military capacity there is being increased. Finland, it would appear, does not believe in trusting other nations when dealing with Russia, and so plays a very close hand, and considerably detached from Sweden. Sweden has been very cynical of real progress, and so

prefers the rôle of interpreter and peacemaker to one of any action. Norway, meanwhile, has continued her tripartite foreign policy, simultaneously reaching out to the US and NATO, to Russia, and across Scandinavia. Finland interprets this as the result of internal confusion (Iivonen, 1996, pers. comm.), but, having actually devised the BEAR, Norway expects due Nordic influence. Her partners in the region (especially Russia) consequently play that for what they can get. Norway may, therefore, be very rational, within her own culture, in her approach towards the BEAR, but simultaneously, the Norwegians' romanticism for the North may blind their vision as to the ultimate prospects of integration, when so little has changed since the end of the Cold War in terms of national military security goals (Bathurst, 1996, pers. comm.; Käkönen, 1996, pers. comm.). The real prospects for multidimensional collaboration are, consequently, rather slim. The Barents co-operation, in this light, is little more than a porous plaster to cover the wound.

Overall, however, security today is seen in much broader terms than hitherto. Strategic nuclear stability and arms control remain important issues, but the dismantlement of nuclear weapons mostly threatens ecological security. Cold War naval competition is mitigated by the political atmosphere, whereas naval arms control has never been on the Barents agenda, and the BEAR has no competence for dispute settlement or conflict management (Möttölä, 1996: p.8). Stoltenberg was well aware that the regional/local approach to military and sovereignty problems would be more likely to break the stalemate situations of the past, but Olsson & Sakharov (1994: pp.144-6) believe that, "notwithstanding the fundamental changes in the global political climate that have occurred... no really profound shifts in international security policy can yet be observed." The potential of a common European defence system, and the recent declaration that the WEU¹⁸ become a 'component' of the EU, has alarmed politicians in Norway and Russia, just as Western actions prompted Russian responses during the Cold War (The Daily Telegraph, 8 May 1996): Russia fears isolation, while Norway fears further European marginalisation (Ásgrímson, 1995c: p.2).

Traditionally, of course, Norway has always looked westwards, towards NATO, for her defence, and Finland to the Soviet Union, while Sweden's neutrality balanced the Nordic course as a buffer zone between this Scylla and Charybdis (Tunander, 1989: p.11). Extending

¹⁸ The Western European Union (WEU) was established in 1955 as a consultative forum for European military issues. It has always had close links with the US-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and today is co-ordinated through NATO as well as western European governments. Should the EU ever adopt a common security and foreign policy, it is likely that the WEU will act as its military flank, even though membership of the two bodies is by no means exclusive.

one side's activity would lead automatically to a counterpoising response. Consultation in security matters between the Nordic countries thus always occurred, but it was never extensive, and the end of the Cold War presaged many changes. Since it is important that Russia is not made to feel threatened by any enlargement of the NATO Alliance in the wake of the Cold War, the Organisation places great emphasis on security co-operation with Moscow. Nevertheless, Norway has to be careful in taking the lead in this field, for fear of strengthening local control in NW Russia relative to Moscow, or civilian control relative to the military.

Security policy and competitive maritime strategies understandably underlay Norway's initiative for the Barents Region. Whereas under conditions of Cold War rivalry, global security requirements took precedence over the local aspirations, the attenuation of global rivalry opened the way to a reappraisal of regional security arrangements (Gizewski, 1993: p.4). The current political context thus enables regional powers to make a more vigorous contribution to their own security, as well as to take a greater rôle in the definition of what those security arrangements are.

A new security paradigm is thus now being created through the BEAR, to overcome "both the residual Cold War confrontation and the current economic and ethno-nationalist division of Europe" (Baev, 1994: p.183). Stability in the Baltic is a prerequisite for security in the Barents region (Kosmo, 1996b), while another main goal of regional and multilateral co-operation in Arctic Europe has been to decrease tension in the Northern Seas. Svalbard has always been demilitarised (in accordance with the Spitsbergen Treaty), although the geostrategic value of the Barents Sea remains high. It is because of this that the Barents Sea boundary question remains suspended, as traditional notions of security continue to impose serious restraints on co-operation and conflict resolution. Grasping their opportunity, therefore, further South, Sweden and Finland have, since 1991, become observers of the WEU, and associate members of NATO through the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (see Map 5).

NATO's answer to the new world order was to begin a process of enlargement through gradual co-operation, starting with the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative. The cornerstones of their security structures clearly weakened, and the very meaning of neutrality questioned by the end of the Cold War, Finland and Sweden belong to this, even though the proposals were not designed with an Arctic perspective (Heininen, Jalonen & Käkönen, 1995: p.79). Joint Nordic military exercises will link in, beginning in Ofoten (Norway) in 1997 (Kosmo, 1996a), and although Russia strongly opposes its immediate neighbours working within NATO,

Finland and Sweden are treated differently because they have each agreed to limit their activities to clearly defined areas. Moreover, today's Finnish doctrine stresses that she remains independent and non-aligned (Iivonen, 1996, pers. comm.). On the other hand, relations between Russia and Finland, and Russia and NATO may yet change, and negatively affect intra-regional development (Käkönen, 1996, pers. comm.).

Partnership for Peace also proposed a series of joint military manoeuvres which have given the Russian forces in the Barents region a chance to work alongside the traditional enemy. The Nordic states are unwilling to organise bilateral military activities with Russia, particularly in an area for civil co-operation, although they are willing to organise multi-polar PFP manoeuvres (Iivonen, 1996, pers. comm.). The BEAR thus has an implicit military dimension, with perspectives for development, and "more committed Western participation in solving the painful social problems of the Russian Navy could become a real catalyst for co-operation in other fields" (Baev, 1994: p.178). Rather ironically, considering the apparent lack of enthusiasm of late for the BEAR, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs still proclaims that "security policy must be viewed as a form of influence. Seeking security means seeking ways of exerting influence" (Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1995: p.66).

It is, therefore, clear that Gorbachev, in 1987, may have split military issues from civilian. But the result in the BEAR has been to create a region in a state of persistent dualism (Nilsen, 1994: p.29). Since many of today's most vivid threats are not military, however, and pay no respect to national frontiers, economic and environmental challenges increase the interdependence between states and thereby require their ability to manage problems jointly. Nordpolitikk has to play out such aims. Thus, in 1992, Norden (and the other members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)) committed itself to a line of action within which it would jointly strive to influence the social and economic causes at the root of international and internal conflicts through solidarity, stability and sustainable security (ibid.: p.19).

6.4 The Environment

Sustainable security from environmental catastrophe has been one of the prime reasons for co-operation in the Arctic. The 1986 Chernobyl disaster had provided, for those who really needed it, firm assurance that environmental problems transcended national boundaries, and that the legacy of the Soviet régime was immense. Since Norway considered this as much a European problem as her own, relations with the EU were important as a result. Working on the principle that a problem shared is a problem halved, both Finland and Norway were keen to entice Russia into proper environmental assessment and clean-up co-operation agreements as soon as they could, to act against such threats as nuclear contamination and acid rain. The 1992 Russo-Norwegian^{dic} Ministerial Declaration on the environment further proclaimed that, "ministers recognise that solving the existing major transboundary environmental problems will be central in realising the potential for broader co-operation in the Barents Region..." (Schram Stokke, 1994a: p.151).

One of the primary aims in launching the BEAR was to involve a broader range of governmental institutions than previously in this process, both 'horizontally' and 'vertically'. A new, high-level, politically visible agenda from which discussions could take place was thereby created, and, through promoting transnational ties between sub-national organisations, it was anticipated that organisations' standing on their domestic base, both in environmental and industrial matters, would be improved. Already, comparative Soviet openness in environmental information had awakened a degree of local consciousness, and the first 'green' Russian organisations gained political momentum after the Murmansk Speech, as it identified the northern environment as a key political issue.

The BEAR may, therefore, be far from being an environmental organisation, but it still bolsters political commitments, and nurtures the build-up of consensual knowledge (Schram Stokke, 1994a: p.156). Thus Sweden, Finland and the EU were similarly keen (if not obliged - Europe's most important fishing grounds and protein resources are to be found in this area (Godal, 1995b)) to become involved, and a Barents Region Environmental Action Programme (BREAP) and Task Force were agreed upon in June 1994 at the first meeting of the Council's Environment Ministers.

A range of environmental problems has been experienced to date in the BEAR, not least because Russian priorities are not always in line with Nordic ones. The Russian lack of regard for the environment can be seen, for example, at the nickel smelting plants of Nikel and

Monchegorsk, where over 700 sq. km. of land have been totally destroyed. Sulphur dioxide emissions there are over five times that of the whole of Norway (Nilsen, 1994: p.46). The Kola Peninsula also contains the world's highest concentration of nuclear installations (not to mention testing grounds), and the Russians' operational safety levels, storage and disposal of waste are highly questionable (Bjerke, 1994: p.5). But the switch to more environmentally-friendly alternatives demands international know-how, technology and capital, as well as substantial investment (Wiberg, 1994: p.29). This high price is one which many Russians believe their economy can ill afford. Moreover, nuclear waste may receive considerable attention, but the worst affected areas are not necessarily those in the Barents Region. Norwegian efforts to clean up the NW thus require considerable financial 'support' if Russia is to recategorise its priorities.

With Russia's attitude towards developing new nuclear waste management technology so ambivalent, it is hardly surprising that little, overall, has been achieved, although the danger areas are almost all now monitored. There has been some minor safety investment in the Polyarnye Zori plant, and acidic emissions in Kola have declined in recent years, but otherwise, no real environmental clean-up has taken place (Schram Stokke, 1994b: p.21).

Russia's uncertain political climate has made environmental co-operation and even assistance increasingly difficult, however. The FSB (ex-KGB) has repeatedly tried to deter the spread of information on nuclear data, and, in Autumn 1995, seized files belonging to the Norwegian environmental pressure group *Bellona*. Observers at the time already feared how such an atmosphere bode ill for the future of international co-operation (The Sunday Telegraph, 29 October 1995).

The extent of the current nuclear threat, therefore, remains unknown, with spent nuclear fuel containers still dumped underground and at sea, and outdated and decommissioned military and industrial equipment abandoned (Perowne, 1996). The promising era of environmental co-operation of 1993 thus appears to have turned quite sour in Russia's Northwest. President Yeltsin's 1994 decree to give the Russian nuclear watchdog, *Gosatomnadzor*, powers to inspect naval facilities, had to be rescinded because of strong protest from Russian officers (The Guardian, 3 November 1995). The Russian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources is unashamedly overshadowed by the Economy Ministry, Atomic Energy, and the Navy, hence environmental bureaucracy in Russia limits what can be achieved with Norway or anyone else.

Nevertheless, the Norwegian government's efforts in strengthening co-operation with

Russia in order to improve nuclear safety and prevent radioactive pollution have more recently resulted in an internal 'Plan of Action'. Projects have been prioritised in four main areas: safety standards at nuclear installations; the management and storage of spent fuel and radioactive waste; the dumping of waste into rivers and the sea; and arms-related environmental hazards (Bjerke, 1995: p.21).

Offshore, however, despite the different sources of pollution, from nuclear weapons testing fallout, and leaking and dumped nuclear fuel, measurements show that radioactive pollution in the northern ocean areas is still at low levels for the Northern hemisphere (Ofstad, 1993: p.3). Fish from the Barents Sea have been found to contain just 1Bq/kg. of human-generated radioactivity, whereas the EU safety limit is 600Bq/kg. When environmental protection has always been listed at the top of the Norwegian agenda in the Barents Region (Hoel, 1994: p.125), such statistics have raised doubts over the real priorities of the Norwegian initiative in the BEAR, for although land-based nuclear pollution may be having more far-reaching consequences, to sceptical pundits overseas, the stress put on the issue as a whole may be seen to have been overplayed.

Moreover, the fact that most of Northern Scandinavia's airborne pollution was thought to blow northeastwards, from Great Britain and Germany, seemed to reinforce this view (Heap, 1996, pers. comm.) (although it is also recognised that any pollution inevitably will affect photosynthesis in Arctic areas, where there is low biodiversity, low productivity, and a low capacity for regeneration (Aanesen, 1993: p.69)). Indeed, the Russians are widely considered to have overstated the amounts dumped in the Barents and Kara Seas (Ofstad, 1993.: p.5), perhaps in an effort to attract more foreign aid. What is less easy to explain, however, is the Norwegian reaction. In the course of the Kara/Pechora Sea Conference, in February 1996, they appeared to some observers to be overly anxious to echo the Russians. Whether this was the result of a Nordic zeal to appear to maintain an influence on standards in the region, or the Norwegians felt anxious over their leadership of the BEAR, and were backing down because they realised they could no longer simply dictate Russia's pace of change, remains to be seen. Consequently, only in the Scandinavian sector can high environmental awareness and safety levels be assured. In other words, little has effectively changed over the past three years.

6.5 Social, cultural and indigenous developments

A further issue linked into the philosophy of the BEAR is the goal of encouraging links between people from all cultures and historical backgrounds who live within the same region: “stability, good relations and common trust and understanding among neighbours are elements of a vision that can only be fulfilled through... exhausting, practical, day-to-day co-operation in such fora as the Barents Co-operation” (Godal, 1995a). However, the Norwegian government early on declared its belief in the importance of according a separate rôle and status to the indigenous peoples within the Barents Co-operation. For the Saami (the largest indigenous group) in particular, the BEAR has granted new opportunities to establish and re-establish links with their brethren across the former Iron Curtain.



Fig. 3: Young Saami women on the Kola Peninsula
(Bjørklund, Møller & Reymert, 1996: front cover)

However, although the general pace of change in Russia may have been rapid since Communism's collapse, the BEAR itself has had little effect on indigenous people's economic or political development. A Kola Saami Association was established independently (in 1989), to work for social and economic development and further the Saami traditions and lifestyle, just

as the Nordic organisations aim to do. The Kola Saami have also been voicing the right to their own parliament, and are demanding stronger political action in the defence of traditional rights in Murmansk Oblast. Yet they are only 1,700 in number, in an area of 1.1m (Andreev & Olsson, 1994: p.206). Furthermore, in the BEAR as a whole, their political position has been weakened, when compared to the population total of the North Calotte (Käkönen, 1996: p.82).

Chaturvedi (1996a: p.190) poses the question of whether the BEAR will ever gain the upper hand in decision-making at the regional (rather than state) level. He also asks, in typically subaltern school style, whether it will usher in a new era for the Saami, in ensuring their 'full and effective participation' in a new political unit. But Saami awareness and enthusiasm are not great, and opinion is divided as to how the Saami will benefit (ibid.), especially when it is so difficult to see any specific Russian northern policies regarding the minorities, even when, as in Murmansk, there are two officials on the administration for indigenous matters (Rantala, 1996, pers. comm.).

One of the major concerns of all indigenous people in the BEAR is the utilisation of natural resources. The President of the Norwegian Saami Assembly has acknowledged that the BEAR gives indigenes a real opportunity to become involved in safeguarding their own interests through economic development (Godal, 1995b). In practice, however, only the Norwegian Saami are particularly keen to become involved, and it is a Norwegian who represents all Saami at the Barents level. The Saami Council decided that national Saami parliaments were the appropriate bodies with which the BEAR should work, but the Swedish Saami parliament has showed only a passing interest, and the Finnish none at all (Rantala, 1996, pers. comm.). The General Secretary of the Saami Council, Leena Aikio, has also commented that the Saami are very lazy in taking part in the different working group meetings of the Barents Council (ibid.). Only the Saami women's group, *Sáráhkká*, has a region-wide programme, although there are suggestions that this is because the BEAR is viewed as simply another stage in colonisation (Helander, 1996: p.299). Consequently, the latest suggestion has been for an indigenous people's authority, equal to the Barents and Regional Councils, to make the BEAR a more representative, tripartite structure (ibid.: p.303).

On the other hand, indigenous rights have not been neglected in Finland, for it was the Finnish government which signed a European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1994, and a Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 1995. A supplementary protocol is now being devised to deal with cultural rights (Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1995: p.21).

In Sweden, a small minority like the Saami is believed to be much more effective through staying outside the political assemblies, in trying to influence politicians and the media from without, rather than participating formally in the decision-making process (Johansson & Myrland, 1992: p.218). Hence there is no priority given to Saami political questions in current political programmes - but then they do only form 0.25% of the Swedish population (ibid.: p.215). Any Saami campaigning at a national level has therefore concentrated^d on arenas in which they can gain most for their traditional livelihood, ie. reindeer herding.

Politicisation along ethnic lines is perhaps more noticeable in Kola than Scandinavia, simply because the few Saami who do remain, are almost all still involved in herding. In Lovozero *rayon*, in Murmansk Oblast, where unemployment is currently ~60%, and the promise of Western tourism has not developed, the traditional Saami lifestyle offers an economic alternative, through private reindeer herding and craftsmanship. Saami Council aid schemes have already been distributed, but, in an area where profitability attracts bitterness (and poaching) it is not surprising that the Kola Saami Association is campaigning for the establishment of a distinct Saami district within the region (Rasmussen, 1995: p.55). There are, however, already claims that the Saami are becoming more distinct from the Komi, and any tensions only add to the political and economic instability inherent in the Russian sector of the BEAR.

The only certain point in Saami affairs appears to be that indigenous issues remain national, rather than wider regional issues. (Opinion polls also indicated that the Saami were even less enthusiastic about joining the EU than were other voters (Airoldi, 1995: p.47).) The BEAR, to date, has clearly had minimal use for the Saami. However, there has been considerable success in cultural issues at the wider level.

The importance of academic co-operation, for example, was enshrined in the Kirkenes Declaration, which emphasised the need to exchange information and share technology, as well as to systematise and co-ordinate research. Much of this had already been suggested by Gorbachev in this 1987 Murmansk Initiative, to deal with the region's problems, but now the reasoning was not so explicit, as educational co-operation, academic and scientific research and exchange programmes in universities across the Barents Region were encouraged for their own sake. These schemes have now been operating for some years, in the guise of the 'Barentsplus Co-operation'. Over 1,000 Russians have been educated in Northern Norway as a direct result of the Barents region initiative (Tunander, 1996, pers. comm.). On the other hand, once again, much is due more to enlarging the Calotte ('Nordplus') co-operation, than being new

because of the BEAR. Nevertheless, speaking recently at the Tromsø University Barents Conference, the Norwegian Secretary of State said she believed it “foolish to underestimate the positive contribution research and education make to regional co-operation” (Bjerke, 1996). Quite what this rôle will be worth, the rest of the world waits to see.

7.0 The Euro-Arctic in the European and the Circumpolar Context

7.1 Looking North, looking South

Once the government in Oslo had pledged itself to attempting to join the EU for the fifth time, Norway was keen to try to balance the EU's interest in Southern Europe (as witnessed by Brussels' Mediterranean Economic Development Aid package (MEDA), and free trade agreements) with that in the North. EU involvement in the Arctic could establish a privileged channel of diplomatic and economic relations with Russia, enhance European standing, and contribute towards defusing the environmental, especially nuclear, threat to the continent (Airoldi, 1995: p.46). An Arctic 'region' also fitted in with the 'Europe of the Regions' philosophy then emerging to counter the widespread perception that overzealous centralisation and universalisation policies were pervading Western European politics. 'Subsidiarity' was thus promoted from Brussels, in order to permit certain issues to be regulated at a level more appropriate than supranationally. Almost paradoxically, the term 'Euro-Arctic' stemmed at least in part from the desire to attach peripheral northernmost Europe more firmly to mainstream European thinking. It therefore stressed the novelty and uniqueness of an area which was largely soon to have become part of the European Union (cf. above, pp.14-15).

At one stage, it was suggested that "if North Norwegians persist in their massive scepticism to EU membership, a Faeroes/Greenland solution¹⁹ ... may be an alternative. This is by no means attractive to Oslo, but it will have to be considered... [This] would probably guarantee a Norwegian majority in favour of EU membership, and it would give the people in the North the right to the fisheries resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone, as well as underlining the relative autonomy already exercised in the Barents Region" (Tunander, 1994: p.41). Pragmatism and hindsight suggest, however, that a North-South division in any of the BEAR member countries remains as unlikely today as it ever was, and especially not in a nation as prosperous (and, therefore, influential) as Norway.

On the other hand, in the light of Norway's having rejected EU membership, it has been questioned how much her policies have anything more than 'interesting symbolic effects' in international political terms (Sydnes, 1995: p.11). Opponents of the EU had always argued

¹⁹ Neither the Faeroe Islands nor Greenland (both constituent parts of Norway's neighbour, Denmark) belong to the European Union. Each state has its own parliament and Home Rule governments, which chose to withdraw from the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1972 and 1985 respectively. However, each state also has a strong sense of national identity differing from that of the motherland through history, culture, livelihoods and language. To date, the possibility of a unitary state being split in its membership of an organisation such as the EU is unprecedented.

that the country's influence would increase as a 'neutral' non-member, as Norway became an international 'bridge-builder'. Yet Norway's ability to build alliances is increasingly dependent on the degree of co-ordination within the EU, and EU policy co-ordination in turn varies from one issue to the next (*ibid.*). Thus the EU issue has reactivated the centre-periphery/North-South conflict across the Nordic countries, even if the BEAR has a new rôle which differs markedly from the official Nordic Euro-orientation.

Officially, Denmark, Sweden and Finland appear more than satisfied with their impact on EU policies, and with EU impact in the UN. Consequently, they have less time for separate (and, some might say, superfluous) meetings with Norway to determine today's Nordic position. Sydnes therefore takes on the stance of the political Jeremiah, to argue that the idea of any increase in Norwegian influence as a neutral is "a misconception, [for] Norwegian strategy must now rely... on the ability to come up with the best ideas and arguments. Unfortunately, good ideas are not always what it takes to have an impact" (*ibid.*).

Norway's best policy, in this sense, was undoubtedly the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Initially, Norway's Nordic neighbours were almost as enthusiastic for the scheme's success, as was the European Union. Thus, in addition to the Regional Council's Barents Programme, the EU border regions programme, INTERREG²⁰, becomes operative this year, with Norway to participate on an equal footing with Sweden and Finland (which nations benefit from EU subsidies) (Bjerke, 1996). This means that EU efforts to develop the BEAR will be made for the first time (Commission of the European Communities, 1994: p.35). The INTERREG North Calotte Programme will therefore complement the EU's TACIS programme for NW Russia, as TACIS funds attempts to restructure state industries from military to civilian production.

Since the BEAR's inception, in 1993, however, and because of European Union activity, Norwegian diplomats have been known to be considerably frustrated by their more immediate neighbours' lack of enthusiasm in Arctic (especially Barents) affairs, and in particular by their lack of political and economic commitment. Part of the reason for this, is that the Barents Region is still not producing many tangible results. Norway's and Russia's political futures may, therefore, lie as much in relations with other Arctic states, as in their relations with the rest of Europe.

²⁰ The INTERREG scheme aims to overcome the relative isolation of border areas in national economies, through the appropriate channelling of development funds, in an effort to respond to new opportunities for co-operation with third countries, thereby increasing trade to mutual advantage, and decreasing visible barriers between EU and non-EU countries.

7.0 The Euro-Arctic in the European and the Circumpolar Context

7.2 Looking East, looking West

The Cold War divided the world into two opposing parties and held both parties unified and united. This bipolar world happened to be split East-West across the Arctic. But the Arctic is now emerging as a region in its own right, with its own unique problems and needs (see Map 11). It is therefore not unreasonable to argue that a growing awareness of a northern identity exists in the circumpolar region. While the process of regionalization proceeds latitudinally (ie. on the circumpolar plane), however, political and trading relations across the Arctic proceed faster meridionally, (ie. North-South), in both EU and NAFTA²¹ arrangements. The political map of the North is changing rapidly. What is more, the process of political devolution has accelerated, and even indigenous politicians are involved in international activities. These changes present metropolitan governments both with opportunities and problems which are best addressed in a focussed, regional context.

As internal pressures have increased in importance vis-à-vis international ones, political thinking has changed in favour of regionalization. This has occurred both within unified states, where various functions are appropriated, and between them, as new co-operative ventures are established. Such a process might lead an area towards greater autonomy, or even towards independence as a region state (Käkönen, 1996: p.71). The Euro-Arctic is not thought to be in a position to gain all that much from the EU or its regional policy when it is so sparsely inhabited (compared to the poorer southern peripheries), even though Sweden and Finland do have special status for their territories above 60°N (Heininen et al., 1995: p.142). Therefore, regional and sub-regional circumpolar co-operation seems equally (if not more) logical to many inhabitants of the Arctic, than does looking southwards. American political geographers writing in 'The Los Angeles Times', in August 1992, were not jesting when they predicted that many of the northerly peripheries of the Arctic states would thus eventually secede, even in Arctic Europe. Lacking political power, such states would then have to confederate in an entity such as the BEAR (ibid.).

The underlying aim in regional co-operation in the BEAR, however, is to advance a decentralised international system, to support sustainable development, and to preserve the culture and society of a distant periphery into the future, both in a European and a pan-Arctic way: "in this sense, the Arctic could be an experimental laboratory for a new post-Cold War

²¹ The North American Free Trade Association is comprised of Canada, the USA and Mexico.

international system” (Heininen et al., 1995: p.135). There also remains something of a vague hope that the BEAR will one day belong to a new Arctic ‘Mediterranean’ community, or as part of a Co-operating Region of the Arctic (CORA), although this is unlikely for several decades (ibid.).

Map 11: The BEAR in a circumpolar perspective (Holst, 1993: p.66)



Looking East and West in the meantime, there are problems enough even in attempting to establish the Arctic Council. Russian politics have also to stabilise somewhat before the BEAR or any other co-operative régimes can become truly successful, for Russian disarray is at the crux of most problems currently extant in the Arctic. Efforts have already been made to involve Russia in NATO, although the preferred Nordic solution would probably be to demilitarise an area such as the North Calotte/BEAR, along similar lines to the demilitarisation of Svalbard.

Finally, several of the regional members of the BEAR belong, too, to the territorial Arctic organisation, the Northern Forum (although participation by no means overlaps)²². The BEAR may thus be only one way in which regional governments are facing the future in the Arctic. But it is also the scheme of most relevance to the rest of Europe. It is, therefore, to a critical assessment of the BEAR's functioning overall that we in the West must now turn.

²² Currently, the Regional Authority of Northern Norway is a member of the Northern Forum, as is Lapland and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Murmansk and Archangelsk Oblasti, Karelia and Norbotten are not members, since they believe their economic future lies at a regional, rather than circumpolar level. The more southerly Swedish county of Västerbotten does belong to the Forum, however, largely because it believes it is one of the few ways in which it can gain national, and therefore international, attention (Tornberg, 1996, pers. comm.). At the time of the establishment of the BEAR, the governments of both Västerbotten, and its Finnish neighbour, Oulu district, wished to belong to the new region, but their applications were rejected by their more northerly neighbouring authorities, on the grounds that the North already received too little political or economic investment, and a territorial expansion of the Barents Region would only dilute that further (ibid.). There was also a question of balance to consider, with regard to Russia. Any regional border alterations today would have to be voluntarily accepted by all regional players.

8.0 Assessing the BEAR: Has the dream gone sour?

The relative success of the BEAR is hard to gauge. It is impossible to determine how the region would have performed in the past three years were it not for the government funding it has received, although it is unlikely to have fared any better economically. However, region-building also requires a degree of political commitment which is, in the author's opinion, visibly lacking in vital areas of national government. The fact that Norway has had to raise the issues she wanted discussed for the Barents Region at the Baltic Region's Visby Summit²³, perhaps says more on this subject than anything else.

Being a regional arrangement, the BEAR must primarily serve the interests of all its inhabitants if it is to be favourably judged. Officially, the Norwegian government is pleased with the speed of change. But the BEAR cannot afford to please simply the politicians of the respective capital cities, however much it may be that politicians today shape the futures of most regional, national and supranational organisations.

Norway continues to set considerable store by her co-operation with Russia in the Barents Region, despite the growing frustration with her more immediate political partners. The Russians are anxious to reciprocate, partly, perhaps, because Kozyrev is elected to the Duma Murmansk voters. At the private level, however, the experience of Scandinavian businessmen trying to invest across the border has not been uniformly successful. Although Kozyrev is also chairman of the Russian-Norwegian Trade Commission, project co-operation is not developing particularly quickly, not least because of the military. The mutual benefits of co-operation may yet be great, but the region clearly still suffers from the legacy of the Soviets.

Another part of the problem with the BEAR is that there has been a change of emphasis in looking across the East-West border since the end of the Cold War. Eyeing what lies over the frontier has now become of more interest to those in the West than in the East, as the Scandinavian authorities devise strategies to prevent a refugee exodus, smuggling or criminality (whilst simultaneously keeping relations open), in order to encourage long-term political, economic, ecological and demographic stability across the region.

Norway has, therefore, always admitted that the BEAR is not limited to the development of the region itself, but that it constitutes a significant element in Norwegian domestic and foreign policy, in turn part of a wider European process which involves the

²³ The Visby Summit was the first full-scale intergovernmental meeting for the Baltic Sea Region, and was held on 3rd May 1996, in the former chief city of the Hanseatic League.

creation of new structures of co-operation across the old Iron Curtain. In all cases, says Bjerke (1996), "the aim is to create a climate of mutual trust and a sense of purpose, by setting common goals for economic development by establishing political structures where representatives from both sides of the old East-West divide can meet."

What worries some observers, however, is that Russians will not be able to adapt to Western thinking, having always lived in a society of strong centre-periphery polarisation, formal production plans, central governance, monopolisation, isolationism, and the passive employee mentality. Designing effective East-West co-operation models in light of this is clearly not straightforward (Wiberg, 1994: p.30).

Yet, from a Nordic perspective, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain the idea that Norden is a semi-isolated region of the world where post-war welfarism and state structures can be maintained indefinitely, independent of events elsewhere, and despite ever-rising costs. Finland and Sweden have tied in their economic futures with the thirteen other countries of the EU. On the other hand, Norway has chosen a future on the periphery of the European Union, which she can maintain only through her disproportionately strong economy. And although Jacques Delors cited the BEAR as a prime example of regional co-operation, no Commissioner has ever partaken in its ministerial meetings (Airoldi, 1995: p.40). The future strength of the BEAR therefore relies upon Norwegian enthusiasm for a Norwegian project.

Originally, the Norwegian government devised a northern policy innovative in three respects: as a reflection of a new Norwegian European policy; as a new aspect of post-Soviet policy (in inviting Russia to co-operate in a limited regional context without scaring Moscow into believing this was a sign of support for separatism); and in the signs of erosion in Norwegian-Atlantic ties (Käkönen, 1994: p.185). Yet it is the Baltic Sea Region which has set a precedent for commercial and government relations, taking the concept of regionalism as a point of departure in a way the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and the restructuring of the Russian Arctic have been slower to adopt.

Thus, enthusiasm for the BEAR seems to have waned at the moment, because what was anticipated has not been fully achieved. Norway aimed to normalise and stabilise East-West relations: to counteract and reduce military tension, to lower environmental threats, to boost the whole region's economy, and, through regionalization, to create a multilateral framework for co-operation as part of a wider trend in Europe (Holst, 1994: p.12). In each of these areas, there have been shortcomings. For the Norwegian government, the Barents Region co-operation was the first major post-Cold War step towards a proper strategy

specifically designed for Europe's northern periphery. The civilian sector in NW Russia may be unlikely to look such a gift horse in the mouth, but extremists and the military prefer to think of it as a Trojan one. Which probably leaves the real worth of the BEAR to be valued by domestic Norwegian opinion, and the policy-makers of Sweden and Finland.

In assessing the worth of the BEAR today, therefore, to begin with, the common security interest remains apparent, but the process is by no means straightforward, and it has had no immediate results. The Norwegian Foreign Minister always knew it would need at least a decade to take effect (cf. Stoltenberg, 1994), but, in the meantime, attention easily turns elsewhere to more important issues.

Secondly, Europe has reached a time of apprehension now, and the general security context is far from being sorted, even if it is becoming more necessary as Russia is more preoccupied by domestic affairs. The state of Norwegian-Russian relations are at times questionable, although Norway no longer feels so insecure as to whether the Americans' deeds will match their words, in light of US involvement in Europe in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Archer, 1996, pers. comm.). But although the BEAR has provided a convenient starting point for deepening relations, it has also paradoxically weakened the reasons for wanting it in the first place (ie. as a multilateral partnership), since Norway is now confident enough to enter relations with Russia alone, because even if she cannot always get what she wants, she knows she will now be protected. Norway can act bilaterally *because* of the multilateral context the BEAR provides (ibid.). In Sweden, similarly, the lack of a perceived threat has resulted in large-scale military cutbacks in the North, even as Finland augments her forces.

Thirdly, Norway has not joined the EU, and the EU has not gained any Arctic territory. Since the BEAR was originally Norway's initiative, Sweden and Finland have been quite content to let aspects of it drop quietly by the wayside, as their political and financial commitments turn towards the South of the continent. The Swedish Ministry argues that this is because there are simply different ways of dealing with the same problems, and that different rules, centralised (rather than local) funding and private enterprise regulations will ultimately result in the same outcome (Tornberg, 1996, pers. comm.). On the other hand, since Norway had always made it clear who would command the Barents initiative, any perceived lack of success outside Norden only widens a vicious circle. Sweden would thus willingly consider some form of amalgamation of the Baltic Region with the BEAR (ibid.). Bearing in mind that the forthcoming Barents Council meeting is to be attended by the EU chargé from Moscow, and not Oslo (Archer, 1996, pers. comm.), Brussels is, in the author's opinion, apparently

similarly treating the BEAR in a way other than that for which it was contrived, as less and less a peculiarly Northern issue.

Fourthly, internally, the Norwegians are still using the BEAR as a sweetener to northern inhabitants, putting their political and economic interests in a wider context than the region would otherwise deserve. But the predicted economic gains are slow to arrive, except through smuggling (eg. Russian cod into the EEA). Furthermore, although certain business deals are working well, there are others which have met unexpected problems, and, as they do so (eg. in fishery disputes such as that between Norwegians and Icelanders in 1993 and 1994), they might decrease the interest of local people, hence governments, in further co-operation (Heininen, 1996: p.153).

Fifthly, state control of the utilisation of resources (through the control of spending priorities, infrastructure requirements, and the regulation of conditions for resource exploitation) is believed to result in an area of minimal goods or wealth retention, thereby limiting the BEAR's potential as anything more than a 'gateway' (Chaturvedi, 1996a: p.191). Russian centre-based colonial practices also ensure that the functioning of the market economy is still hampered at the periphery, so local authorities have to direct much of their energy into protecting regional interests against the internal process of change.

This situation may be highlighted, for example, by the introduction of export duties on iron concentrate from Kola, which effectively prevented any transfrontier trade (Castberg et al., 1994: p.79). The *oblast* administration then had to devote its energies to proving to Moscow what ill effects this was having, before it could get the export fee reduced, rather than concentrating upon more immediate issues, or upon the tackling of other major legal and excise deficiencies in the BEAR's Russian sector. Thus, although there are isolated Russian outposts successfully integrating with the Nordic economies, they are appearing more than anything else as (neo-)colonial outposts in an area devoid of any certain future at the present (Archer, 1996, pers. comm.).

Sixthly, although the BEAR is working well enough at the Regional level of meetings, and much has been made of the increase in border crossings and administrative and cultural contacts since its inception (cf. Godal, 1995b), it is hardly proper integration, as envisaged in the Norwegians' goals for the Barents Region co-operation. This could, at least in part, be due to the conflict in understanding inherent from the beginning, when observers such as Veggeland believed that the region "lacks the unifying inspiration necessary to mobilise and act... It lacks a common identity. Its future is therefore very dependent on its being able to

establish itself as an effective functional region" (1993: p.45). This lack of belief in a regional identity therefore contrasted with the Norwegian government's position, and its hopes for the success of cultural contacts. More recently, the fundamental aim has been reiterated, to "ensure that these contacts are being utilised to establish co-operation projects that [really] will contribute to sustainable economic growth, the creation of jobs and improvement in the living conditions of the people of the region" (Bjerke, 1996).

Finally, and perhaps of particular note, the BEAR has, to some extent, turned the tables, to become more of an internal North-South divide rather than an East and West one. For Norway, and, to a lesser extent Russia, are trying to sustain the dynamism of the scheme, in the face of Finland and Sweden. On the other hand, the EU's trade barriers have reinforced the distinction between East and West, as Sweden and Finland have been harmonised (and Norway adjoins through the EEA). This leaves a gaping difference in Russia, which itself is far from being a unitary region, even within the confines of the BEAR. Kozyrev may have put much of his personal reputation on the line at its outset, because he believed in the region, but there has been no integration in the sense of the EU, or even in legal or trade systemisation.

Thus, three years into the Barents scheme, the assessment of the merits of co-operation has been somewhat overcast by an air of despondency and scepticism. Questions are being asked in the Nordic countries as to the scheme's realistic chances of medium-term success, and to the costs of becoming so deeply involved with NW Russia. For although it may have taken several attempts to jump-start other international bodies (like the EU), in the face of Europe's other regional arrangements, the BEAR is underperforming. Moreover, there is some alarm at present in the West that Russia is not transforming as fast, nor along quite the right lines, as policy-makers had hoped. Hence sceptics argue over the degree to which Russian collaboration and co-operation (eg. in environmental matters) is just great power arrogance dressed up in new garb. This, and the degree to which the increased attraction of Europe has left room in Nordic calculations for any security co-operation on a circumpolar basis, may probably be better judged in the light of the June 1996 Russian elections.

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9.0 Conclusion

As has been emphasized throughout this thesis, finding the right balance between continuity and change has had a fundamental rôle in the creation and functioning of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, and today, three and a half years after its launch, the BEAR remains far from becoming an integrated entity. National foreign and domestic policy goals have been played out through the Barents co-operation, certainly in Norway, and to the region's tangible advantage in Russia, although governments in Stockholm and Helsinki have been far more cautious and selective in their approach towards a specific Barents Region Nordpolitik.

Economic, hence political, stability in the Barents Region is fundamental to the security of Northern Europe. This was a major force behind the wider international interest shown at the time of the Kirkenes Declaration. Inverting this concept, it has also been apparent that regional economic or social success is greatly affected by wider commitments. Security today is thus interpreted in the broadest sense, as national political goals have universally changed in favour or against new superstructures or subsidiarity. Left without the East-West threat, there is less to bind nations together. Cross-border regionalism has therefore developed, ⁷And governments have been compelled to choose either to follow or to pre-empt these trends.

The four Barents Council member states have clearly chosen the latter direction. The lack of momentum within the BEAR, therefore, stems largely from differing interpretations as to how best to drive the scheme forward, and where national priorities must lie, rather than in a rejection of co-operation. It is thus, that governmental consideration for the North is as much affected, for example, by NATO, as it is, to, say, unemployment levels within the region.

The BEAR has without doubt proved itself as a window between East and West. But the amount of political and economic investment cannot as yet be seen to have paid off to mutual advantage, when wider concerns continue to dominate regional issues. The best solution for the region may therefore rest in balancing some form of condominium against North European fears of marginalisation.

National boundaries will inevitably still exist in the future, but although they are expected to become less important, that is no reason to expect a loss of sovereignty: the Barents Region is not an autonomous region, and probably never will be. The BEAR is essentially a simple hybrid of regionality at the internal and international level. How much it will be possible to integrate East and West within its structure, as a result, is debatable. That there will continue to be integration in one sense or another seems universally accepted, if not always

encouraged. The issue today therefore concerns the methods and ultimate goals of the process, and how and where this process is going. Doubtless, there will be changes in the character of most nations, regions and municipalities, their institutions, economic and political life (Dellenbrant & Olsson, 1994: p.9), but theorists prefer to foresee less the dismemberment of states, than a loose regional economic collaboration (ibid: p.11).

Certainly there is no question of redrawing national borders in the Euro-Arctic (not just because of the security risks, political weakness, or lack of ethnic justification, but also because of the burden that territory has become: even Svalbard and the Kola Peninsula lost much of their vital strategic significance as soon as the Cold War finished). On the other hand, Käkönen (1996: p.83) suggests that the BEAR's current East-West inequality can be best overcome by the integration of Oulu and Västerbotten, since, according to the Japanese, Ohmae (1993, p.80), such regions (of over five million people) have the best chances to integrate directly in the world economy, and will have a good base size for economic growth. As it stands, financially, the region remains dependent upon the South (eg. in welfare, healthcare and schooling) which makes it complicated to aim for self-reliant development. Moreover, in Kola, modernisation has depended wholly upon state subsidies, and now Moscow requires financial justification for all spending. Central-level involvement must thus be expected.

But governments recognise that, after three years of dismantling old divides, organising, and establishing contacts, the time is ripe to start up projects that will produce clear local results, in industry, infrastructure and the environment.

Yet the international changes making this possible have also been accompanied by key elements of continuity. For although the Cold War has passed, tacit threats remain, and almost regardless of the BEAR, the lack of border security, the potential for violent Russian civil strife, the appearance of ground-level politics, and the continued deployment of nuclear strategic submarines all look set to continue (Heininen, 1996: p.147). When set in the original context of the BEAR, the question that has to be asked, is whether there is really much to separate the forecast healthy 'competition in co-operation' from Cold War 'co-ordinated competition' (ibid.: p.151).

Hence the BEAR can be seen simply as a logical response to the demand for apparent innovation that the post-Cold War situation in Europe demanded. This has largely been to the credit of forward-thinking officials in the government departments in Norway. Her government's plan of action for nuclear issues and close contacts with Russia have also proved to be of interest to others, to grant useful co-operation, in turn, with the USA, France and

Brussels in particular (Godal, 1996). Since the policies of individual states are seldom adequate for solving economic, technological, social and environmental problems, so cross-border challenges can only be met through these, and other, international steering mechanisms.

Nordpolitikk has therefore become synonymous with all levels of contextual politics, hence there are no singularly northern policies (eg. for Arctic trade, or regional unity), when the BEAR serves as a convenient functional hotchpotch primed for such developments. Its success to date may have been ambiguous, but on paper, at least, the value of the BEAR cannot be questioned. For Barents regionalization has begun to integrate the Arctic peripheries into global systems, both with and without the regulations imposed by national centres. This calls into question the rôle of northern inhabitants, in the face of the capitals, although the scheme cannot, in its present structure, exist without governmental input. There thus seems to remain, in fact, little more than the need for a popularly elected Barents Parliament, if the original wish of the élites for a truly viable and dynamic region is going to be logically fulfilled. Perhaps this will be the way to carry Nordpolitikk to its natural conclusion in northernmost Europe in the wake of the Cold War.



Fig. 4: Moving slowly ever forward: reindeer migrating through Lapland (Barentssekretariatet, 1994: p.5)

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Results of the referendum on EU membership in Lapland (by district):

	% YES	% NO
URBAN		
Kemi	48.7	51.3
Kemijarvi	48.8	51.2
Rovaniemi	63.2	36.8
Tornio-Torneá	49.1	50.9
SUB-TOTAL	54.1	45.9
RURAL		
Enontekiö	33.3	66.7
Inari	47.1	52.9
Keminmaa	44.7	55.3
Kittilä	35.8	64.2
Kolari	35.7	64.3
Muonio	39.8	60.2
Pelkosenniemi	35.5	64.5
Pello	46.3	53.7
Posio	35.1	64.9
Ranua	34.6	65.4
Rovaniemen Maalaiskunta	50.7	49.3
Salla	38.7	61.3
Savukoski	34.6	65.4
Simo	37	63
Sodankylä	44.1	55.9
Tervola	31.2	68.8
Utsjoki	32.8	67.2
Ylitornio	38.4	61.6
SUB-TOTAL	41.4	58.6
TOTAL	47.3	52.7

Total %age in favour:	Finland: 57%	against: 43%	(74% turnout)
	Sweden: 52.3%	against: 47.7%	(data unavailable)
	Norway: 47.7%	against: 52.3%*	(88.8% turnout)

* ie. a 0.6% swing in favour since the previous referendum, 22 years earlier

(Lapin Lääninhallitus (Provincial Government of Lapland), 1996)

LAPLAND'S MUNICIPALITIES

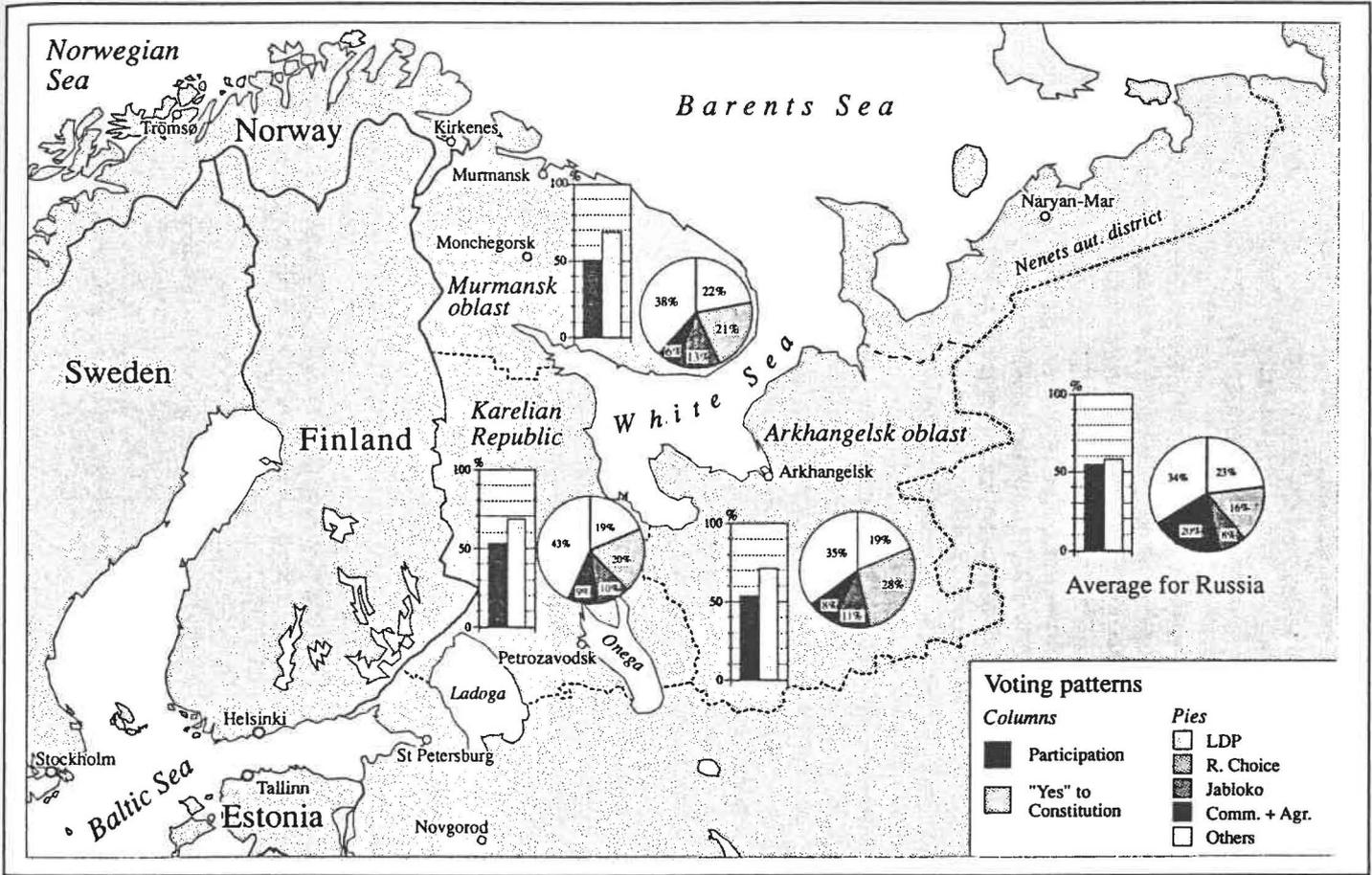


0 20 40 60 80 100 km

Provincial Government of Lapland, 1996

Appendix B

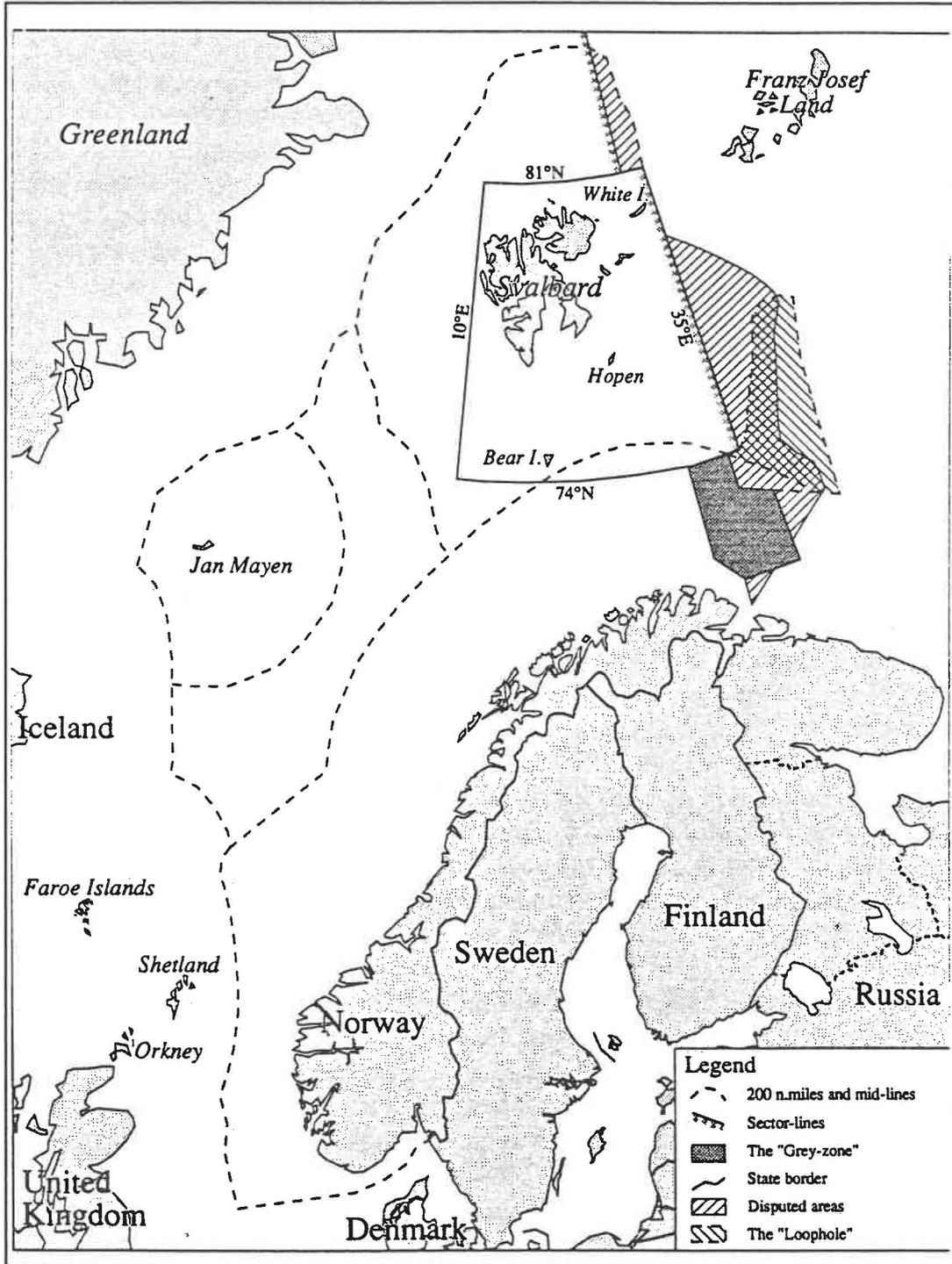
Election results for NW Russia in December 1993



(Baev, 1994: p.182)

Appendix C

Map to show the extent of territorial waters, the Svalbard box, and the disputed Russo-Norwegian maritime boundary in the Barents Sea



(Hoel, 1994: p.117)

Appendix D1

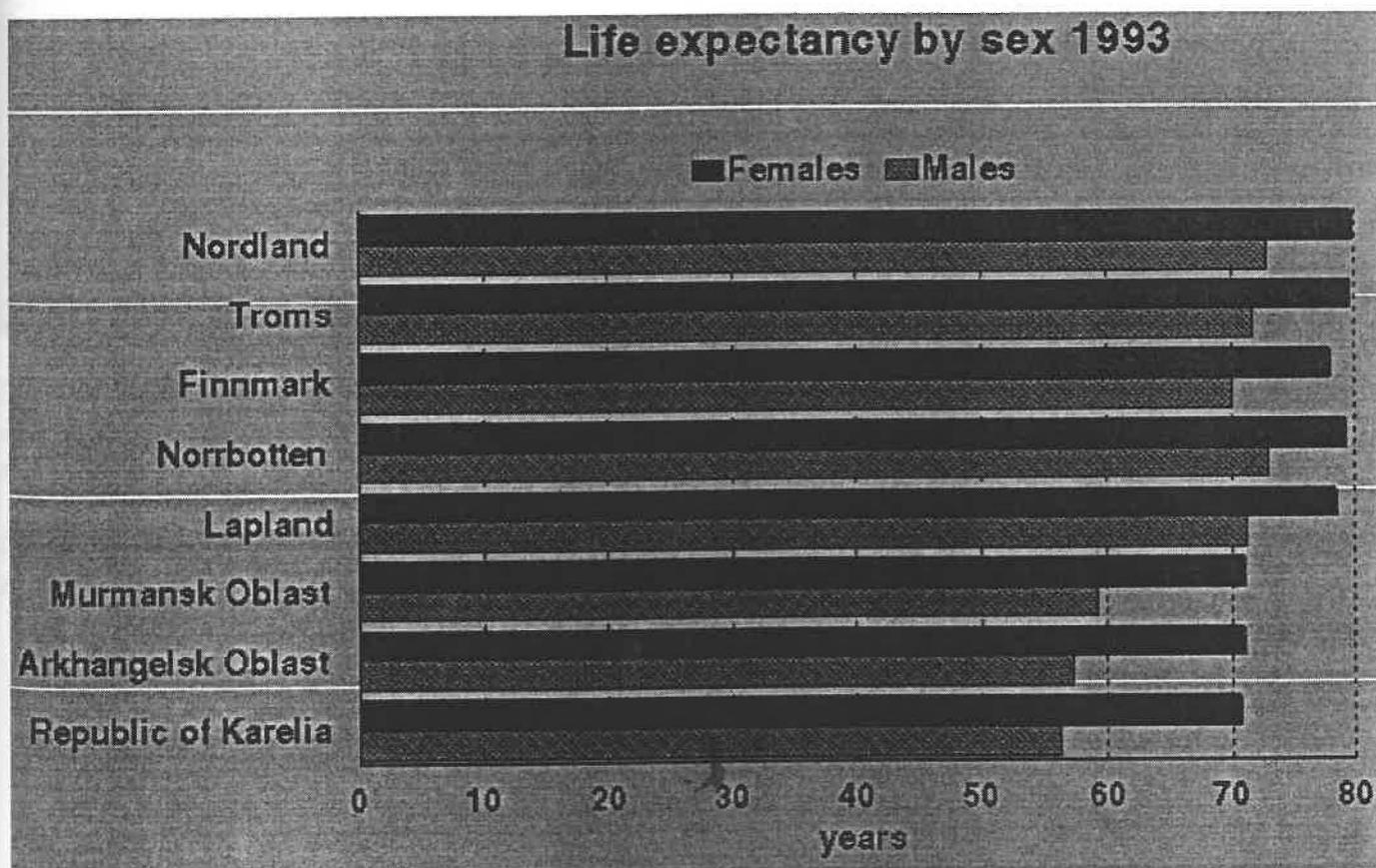
The Barents Region as an Emerging Market: Land area, population density and human life expectancy by sex in the Barents Region (1993)

The Barents Region

Region	Area, km ²	Land area, km ²	Population 1.1.1994	Inhabitants per km ² of land
Nordland	38 327	36 302	240 694	6,6
Troms	25 981	25 121	149 745	6
Finnmark	48 637	45 879	76 459	1,7
Norrbotten	105 500	98 911	1) 267 092	2,7
Lapland	98 937	93 057	1) 202 895	2,2
Murmansk Oblast	144 900	133 657	1 109 357	8,3
Arkhangelsk Oblast	587 400	..	1 547 391	2) 2,6
Republic of Karelia	180 520	156 881	793 012	5,1

1) 31.12.1993 - 2) Inhabitants per km².

The total area of Barents Region is 1 230 202 square kilometers and the total population 4 390 000 inhabitants. Thus the area of the North Calotte account for approximately one fourth of the total area and the population one fifth of the total population of the Barents Region.

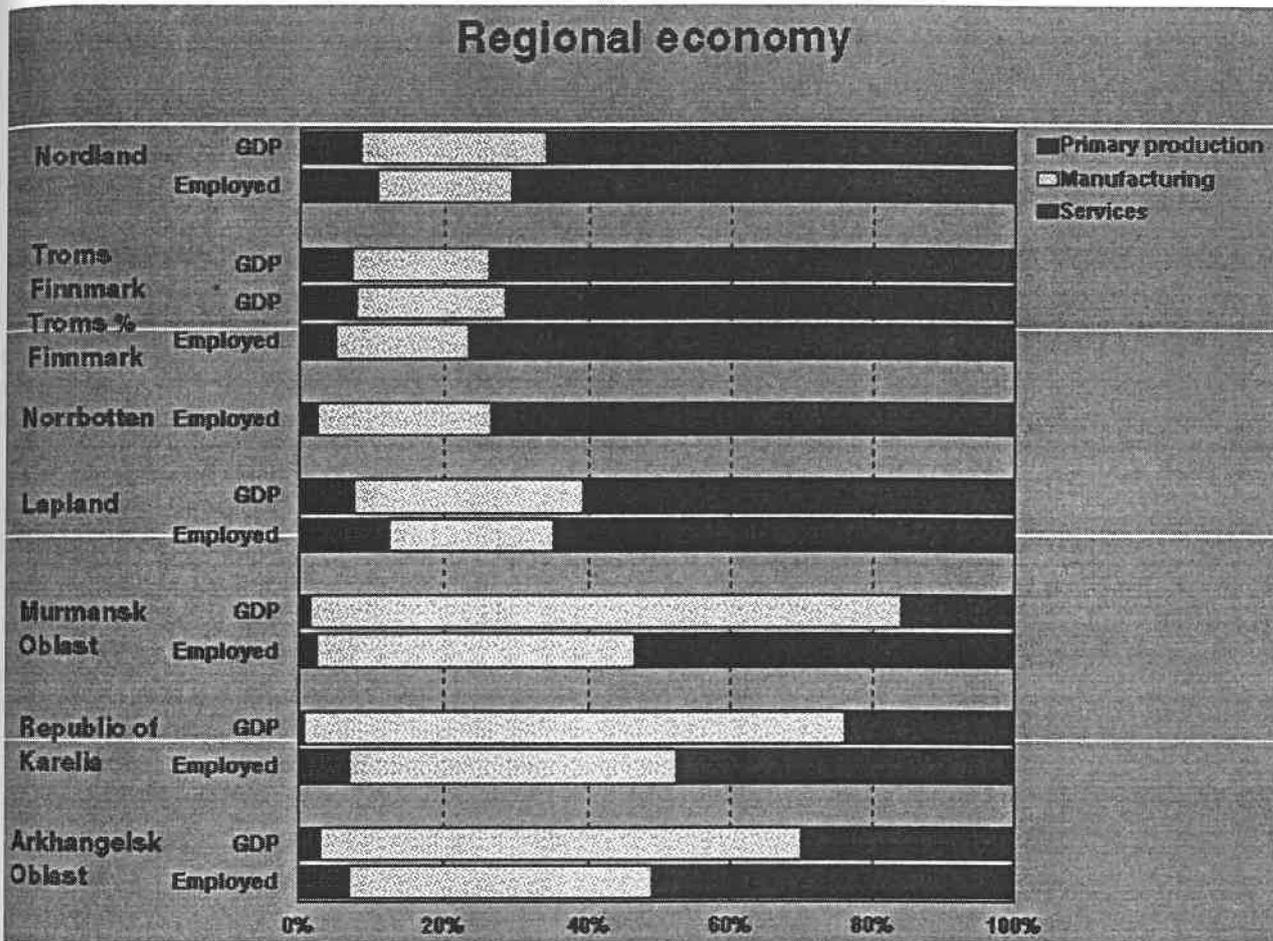


Mortality has risen considerably in the Whole North-West Russia during the last few years. A particularly alarming trend is that the male life expectancy has fallen below 60 years.

(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

Appendix D2

The Barents Region as an Emerging Market: The structure of industry, 1990, 1992, 1993



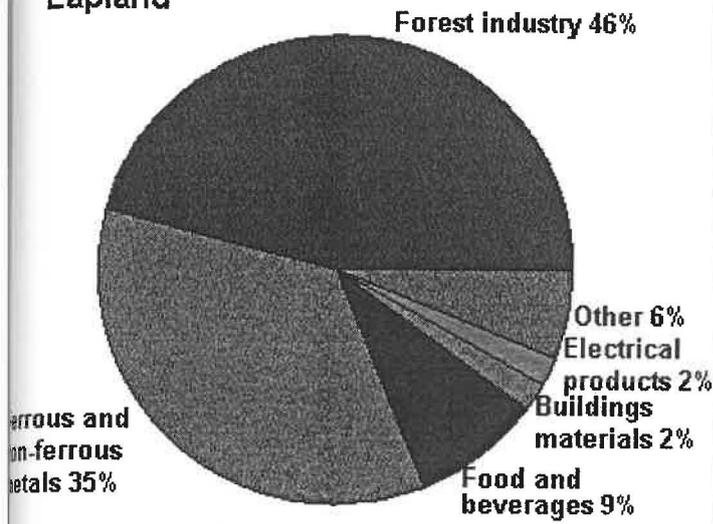
The economy of North-West Russia is highly dependent on industrial production. In the North Calotte, on the other hand, the service sector has evolved into the most important means of employment and a source of regional prosperity.

The GDP figures are from 1990 (Norway) and from 1992. In Sweden the first regional GDP figures will be available in spring 1996. Figures of employed persons are from 1993.

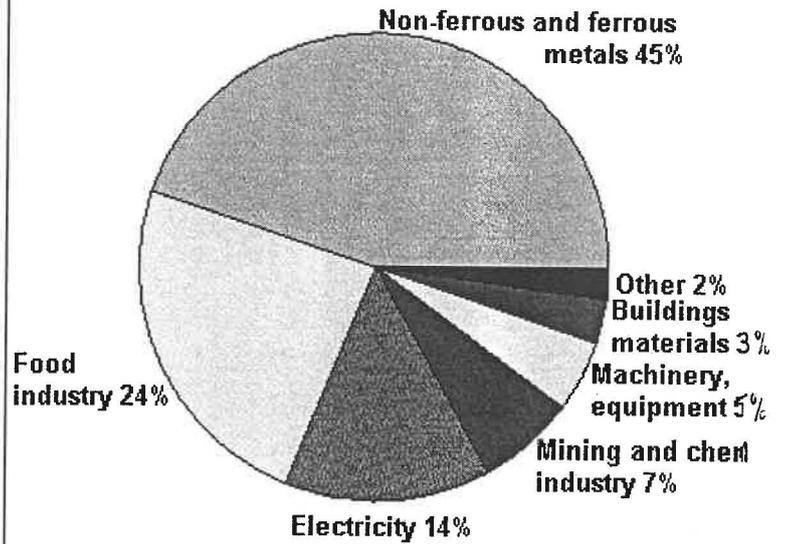
(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

The structure of industry, cont.

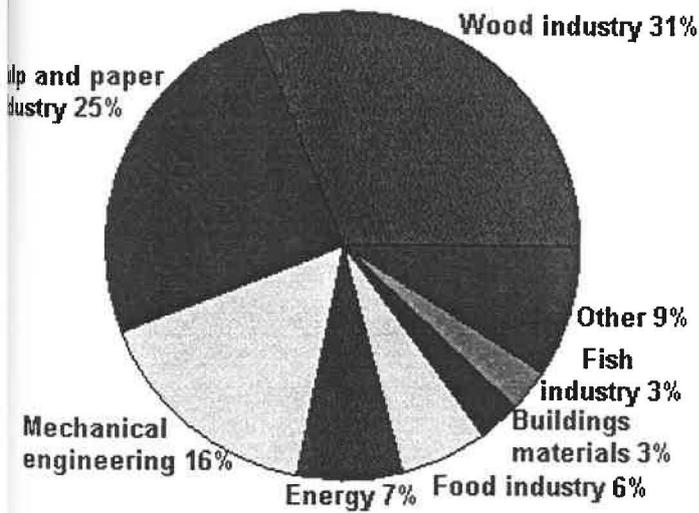
Lapland



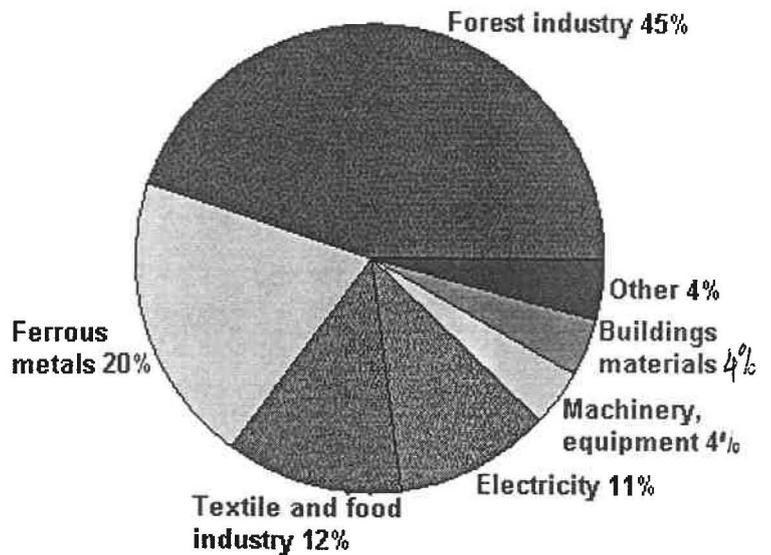
Murmansk Oblast



Nenets Autonomous Okrug



Republic of Karelia



Forestry and metal industry are the most important industries of North-West Russia and the province of Lapland.

(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

Appendix D3

The Barents Region as an Emerging Market: NW Russia's main export goods, 1993

Main export goods 1993

Republic of Karelia

	Unit	Volume	Change 1992/1993 (%)
Steel pellets	1000 t	1282	32
Paper	1000 t	332	98
Newsprint	1000 t	303	108
Chemical wood industry products	1000 t	22	175
Fresh-frozen fish and shrimps	1000 t	17	-22
Aluminium, plain	1000 t	5	-61
Roundwood	1 000 m3	435	9
Wood chips	1 000 m3	34	104
Wood products	1 000 m3	264	32
Glued plywood	1 000 m3	6	53
Cellulose	t	5 625	32
Charcoal	t	52	-83
Wild berries	t	1 020	-60
Fibreboard	t	260	

Murmansk Oblast

	Unit	Volume	Change 1992/1993 (%)
Electric power	mill. GWh	124	-15
Iron-ore	1000 t	1 069	7
Nickel	1000 t	28	
Calcium phosphate	1000 t	428	-2
Aluminium	1000 t	9	
Fish and fish products	1000 t	122	-0.3
Roundwood	1000 m3	45	-13

Arkhangelsk Oblast

	Unit	Volume	Change 1992/1993 (%)
Spruce	1000 m3	671	23
Pine	1000 m3	68	-54
Cellulose	1000 t	120	-23
Cod	1000 t	13	-53

The primary exports from the Republic of Karelia are wood-working products. The main export products of the Murmansk Oblast are for example mineral and metal raw materials, as well as energy. During the 1992-1993 period, the exports of wood-working products developed more favorably in the Republic of Karelia than in the Arkhangelsk Oblast. In the Kola Peninsula, the exports of electric power showed the greatest decrease and the exports of iron ore the highest increase. No regional foreign trade statistics are available for the Scandinavian countries.

(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

Appendix D4

The Barents Region as an Emerging Market: Employed persons by industry, 1993

Employed persons by industry 1993

	Nordland	Troms & Finnmark	Norrbotten	Lapland	Murmansk Oblast	Arkhangelsk Oblast	Republic of Karelia
Total	104 000	104 000	83 269	73 000	519 500	707 200	379 700
Agriculture	11 000	5 000	476	6 000	11 600	57 700	22 200
Forestry			1 430	3 000	600	4 400	2 900
Manufacturing 1)	12 000	12 000	13 116	12 000	168 400	227 100	124 000
Transport	9 000	10 000	3 730	3 000	52 000	85 800	31 900
Communications			3 141	2 000	7 400		7 000
Construction	7 000	7 000	1 344	5 000	56 500	67 800	36 100
Trade	16 000	15 000	12 425	8 000	38 900	45 000	26 600
Hotels, restaurants			2 667	3 000	11 800		20 900
Finance and insurance	6 000	6 000	1 344	5 000	4 600	5 500	3 200
Public administration and other	42 000	48 000	8 832	8 000	38 800	17 600	900
Personal and social services							
Health and social welfare services			23 822	10 000	35 800		26 600
Education and research			9 000	8 000	61 800	85 500	41 400
Recreational and cultural services			1 942	1 000	10 500		6 700

1) Includes mining and quarrying, energy and water supply and in Russian regions also fishing.

The table showing the distribution of employees by industry gives a clear picture of regional differences in the industrial structure of the Barents Region; the most important employers are the service sector in the North Calotte and the manufacturing industry in North-West Russia. Another structural difference in the labor force structure is that construction is as significant an employer in North-West Russia as is trade in the North Calotte.

(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

Appendix D5

The Barents Region as an Emerging Market: Unemployment rates by sex, 1993



The unemployment rate of men is considerably higher than that of women in all parts of the Euro-Arctic Region except in North-West Russia. In the North Calotte, more women than men are employed in the public sector, where the employment rate is not as dependent on trade cycles as is in the private sector.

(Finnish Statistical Office, WWW)

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