

A map of Northern Scandinavia showing the Northern Sparsely Populated Areas (NSPA) in red. The areas cover large parts of northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland. The map is overlaid on a light blue background with a grid of latitude and longitude lines.

# Northern Sparsely Populated Areas

NSPA Forum, Kuopio Finland 22.9.2011

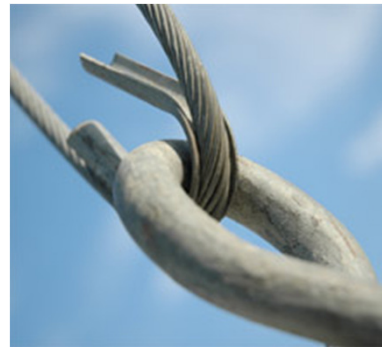
Kari Aalto

**NSPA**   
Northern Sparsely Populated Areas

# Our region



- the four northernmost counties of Sweden (Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Jämtland & Västernorrland)
- the seven northernmost and eastern regions of Finland (Lapland, Oulu Region, Central Ostrobothnia, Kainuu, North Karelia, Etelä-Savo & Pohjois-Savo)
- the two northernmost counties of Norway (Troms & Nordland)



# Special characteristics

## Long distances

- 500 000 km<sup>2</sup>
- Equals Spain

## Harsh climate

- Ranging from -40C to +35C
- At least four different seasons

## Sparse population

- 2,2 million
- <5 people/km<sup>2</sup>
- European average is 112 people/km<sup>2</sup>

Regions with special geographical characteristics have a legal base in Protocol 6 of the Accession Treaty for Sweden, Finland and Austria and in article 174 of the Lisbon Treaty.

# NSPA Regional Offices in BRU

- North Finland EU Office  
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- East Finland EU Office  
Riikka Railimo [riikka.railimo@eastfinland.eu](mailto:riikka.railimo@eastfinland.eu)
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# NSPA Political Group

## Politicians

- Pia Svensgaard
- Tytti Tuppurainen
- Satu Vehreävesa
- Erik Bergkvist
- Åsa Möller

## Officials

- Anne Berg
- Esko Lotvonen
- Riitta Koskinen
- Thomas Westerberg
- Helena Gidlöf

# Our joint vision for 2020

- NSPA comprises dynamic and modern regions with diversified economic profiles and functional labour markets
- Our enterprises are highly competitive and at the forefront of developing green technology making a globally important contribution to sustainable development
- The regions offer attractive living conditions for women and men of all origins, as well as world class higher education opportunities
- We are truly internationally oriented and provide Europe with significant added value

*Adopted by regional politicians in January 2010*

# Added value for Europe

- contributing to the climate change strategy of the European Union
- potential to further contribute to development of renewable energy resources and the securing of European energy supply
- innovative solutions and sharing good practices for the development and the service provision of sparsely populated, rural and peripheral regions across Europe
- vast natural resources such as oil, gas, wood, fish and minerals
- excellent access to the resource rich Barents Region
- long tradition of partnership in the cross-border cooperation with North-West Russia
- excellent universities and education
- unique natural environment and cultural heritage for recreation and tourism in cooperation with the Sami people, the last indigenous people in Europe

# Raising the awareness in BRU

- raise awareness of the region in the EU institutions
- influence EU policy
- provide a platform for best practice



# Who are doing the lobbying for NSPA?

- Actors from the regions
- NSPA Political Group
- NSPA Offices in Brussels

# Publications / Position Papers

- 2005 study – assessing the socio-economic impacts of low population density, peripherality and cold climate in NSPA
- 2009 study – towards a vision for the NSPA - Strong, specific and promising
- 2010 Political Position - statement on the framework on the future EU cohesion policy

## Other paperwork:

- Contribution to the consultation on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, 2009
- Contribution to the consultation on the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion policy, 2009
- NSPA's co-signing the critical analysis of the EU Working Paper on Territories with Specific Geographical Features, 2010
- Statement on the future Cohesion Policy, 2010
- a "non-paper" on the EU Arctic policy, 2010

## Meetings:

- arranged meetings with general director Ahner, DG Regio and his staff
  - \* January 2009, September 2009 (small group) ,  
January 2010, February 2011
- meetings with organizations establishing the secretariat to the European Parliament Intergroup 174
- meetings with the European Parliament Intergroup 174
- 3 meetings at the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy and a workshop in Rovaniemi

## **Open Days seminars/workshops and cocktail events: 2008**

- “Northern Periphery Looking Forward”
- “Northern Periphery – Added value for the whole of Europe”
- NSPA local event in Tornio and Joensuu

## **2009**

- “Barents-Russia Cooperation”
- “Growth and competitiveness through renewable energy resources”
- NSPA local event in Murmansk

## **2010**

- “Northern Sparsely Populated Areas - Strong Specific and Promising”-seminar
- NSPA local events in Lappeenranta and in Sundsvall

## Joint discussions with:

- Commissioner Hahn's Cabinet
- Commissioner Rehn's Cabinet
- the permanent representations
- several members of the European Parliament
- representatives of Committee of Regions
- different officials in the DG REGIO and DG MARE
- groups of guests in the Brussels offices
- individuals

## **Presentations to different audiences:**

- CPMR, Islands Commission  
Stornoway, 2009
- all the 27 Regional Counselors to the EU  
Tromsø, 2009
- Norwegian-Russia Chamber of Commerce  
Murmansk, 2010
- Northern Dimension Steering Group  
Brussels, 2010
- European Parliament Intergroup 174  
Brussels, 2010
- Barents Regional Council  
Kajaani, 2010

## **NSPA FORUMS**

Haparanda, August 2009

Kiruna, December 2009

Tromsø, January 2011

Kuopio, September 2011

## **VIP visits to the regions:**

- Mr Ahner, DG Regio in Norrbotten, July 2010
- Commissioner Hahn in Finnish Lapland, Feb. 2011



## Recent and coming actions:

- NSPA representatives participated in the Cohesion Forum 31 January -1 February in Brussels
- NSPA delegation met with general director Ahner, DG Regio and his staff on 2 February
  - document on State Aid
  - document on Special funding for NSPA
- EU Budget, proposal on future financial perspectives, in May
- EU legislative proposals, in June
  
- NSPA Get-Together during the Open Days, 11 October
- NSPA FORUM in Kuopio Finland 22-23 September 2011
- NSPA Transport and Raw Materials seminar, Brussels 8.12.2011
- NSPA meeting with Dirk Ahner, DG Regio, Brussels 8.12.2011