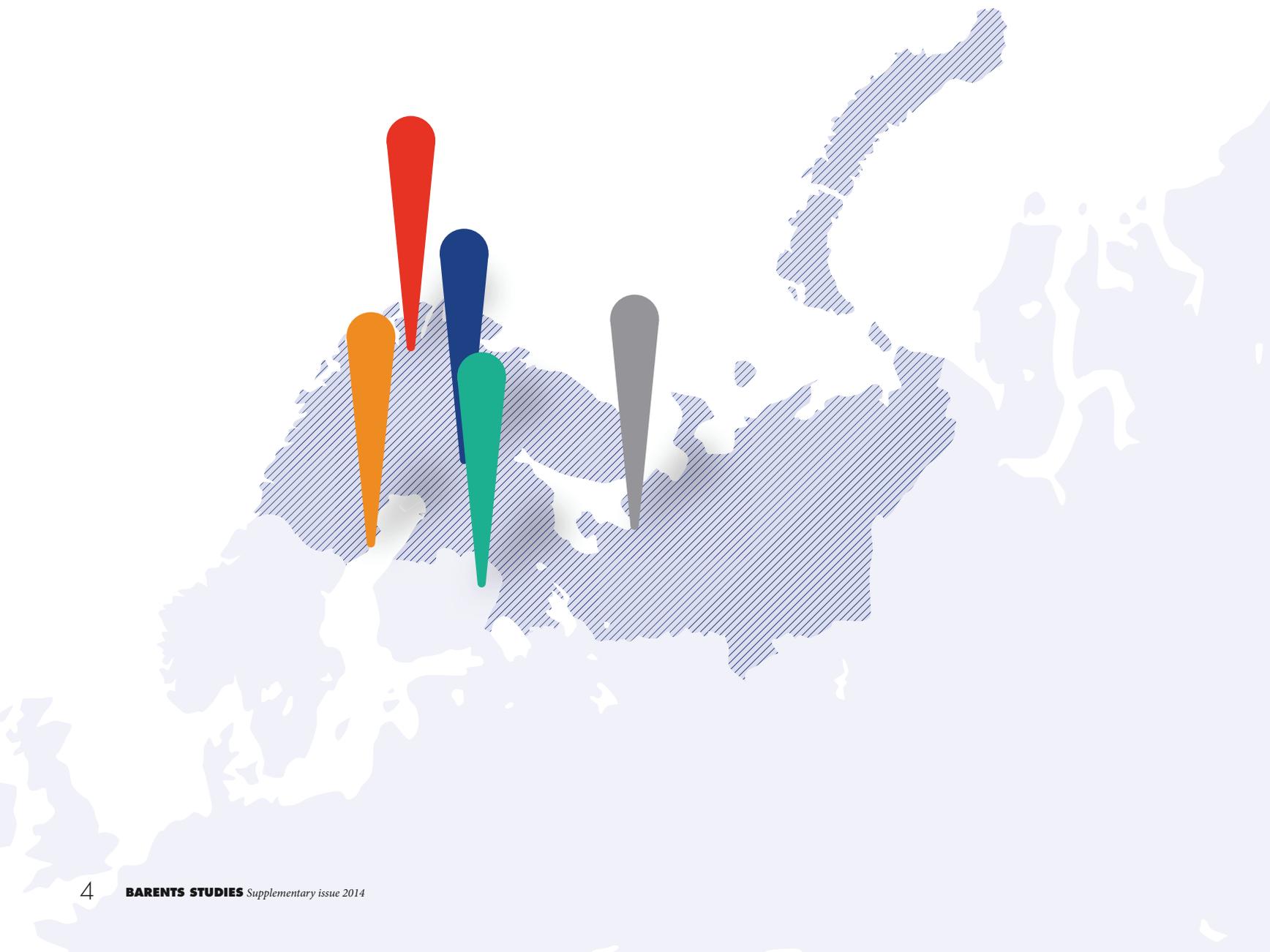


GALLUP

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word 'Barents'?



TRINE KVIDAL

Associate Professor, Alta, Norway

"It is an important aspect of regional identity processes in parts of Eastern Finnmark. Kirkenes is home to institutions like the Barents Secretariat and the Barents Institute, and there has been active use of the term in naming and symbolism. The Barents discourse has been important in expanding the cultural identity in the area, which arguably used to be more specifically linked to the mining industry."

ULF WIBERG

Professor, Umeå, Sweden

"A region with rich natural resources representing significant potential for economic growth and prosperity. Complicated barriers for interaction and collaboration across the East-West divide limit possibilities for joint efforts to release that potential. The institutionalised Barents Region cooperation has an important long-term task in dealing with these opportunities and challenges."

REGIS ROUGE-OIKARINEN

Project manager, Kemijärvi, Finland

"There are two things: four countries and cross-border cooperation. The Barents Region has a long history of cooperation among its local communities and, especially during the last 25 years, among its four nation-states. Nowadays the Barents is a territory where, more than ever before, contemporary challenges like climate change and sustainable development require close liaisons among its residents on both the formal and informal levels."

NATALIA KUKARENKO

Assistant Professor, Arkhangelsk, Russia

"I learnt about the Barents Region through the cooperation projects between universities while studying at Pomor State University in Arkhangelsk in the 1990s. I had the opportunity to see different academic cultures and ways of living in Norway, Sweden and Finland. I got many good friends and colleagues, as well as the experience of travelling abroad and a strong wish to see the world. My first trip was to Tromsø in Norway and I fell in love with the city, which is so clever at bringing people together through lots of events, and, of course, Norwegian nature – mountains and fjords – something really special and very beautiful."

MARIA LÄHTEENMÄKI

Professor, Joensuu, Finland

"As a historian, the first thing that comes to my mind is Willem Barentz, who was a Dutch explorer in the 16th century. He died in the Kara Sea, which is also known as the freezer of Europe. The word 'Barents' reminds me of the interests of individual navigators and nations in mapping the last unknown northern regions and sea routes to enhance their scientific reputation, national power or economy. Barentz was the beginning of a big wave to conquer the North."
