

## Welcome to the launch of the OECD report on the NSPA regions in the European Arctic

The network for Northern Sparsely Populated Areas, NSPA, cordially invites to the official launch of the study on the NSPA, conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, with support from the EU Commission Technical Support Instrument. The unique study, "building resilience to global transition in the northern sparsely populated areas", captures 14 regions in three countries, two within the EU and one in the EEA. Although there are great differences between the NSPA regions in the European Arctic, there are also many issues and challenges in common and a need to gather critical mass for innovation. The report delivers analysis and recommendations for the NSPA regions, but also towards national and EU level. This is to generate true adapted support for regional development and the green and digital transition in the NSPA European Arctic. The event will be followed by a reception.

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 at 15:00 to 17:30**  
**Norway House, Rue Archimède 17, Brussels, Belgium**

14:30 *Registration*

15:00 Welcome

**Kristin Traavik**, Minister Counsellor, Mission of Norway to the EU

**Jonas Andersson**, Chair NSPA network, Chair of Region Jämtland Härjedalen, Sweden

15:10 Keynotes

**Charlina Vitcheva**, Director-General of DG Mare, coordinating EU Arctic Policy, European Commission, Brussels

**Dorothee Allain-Dupre**, Head of Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division, OECD, Paris

**Thomas Wobben**, Secretariat-General, European Committee of the Regions, Brussels

15:25 Presentation of the OECD report on the NSPA

**Stefano Barbieri**, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD, Paris

15:50 Comments by NSPA representatives

**Benjamin Nordgård Furuly**, Deputy County Mayor of Troms, Norway

**Jouni Ponnikas**, Regional Development Director, Kainuu Region, Finland

**Rickard Carstedt**, Chair Regional Development Board, Region Västerbotten, Sweden

16:05 *Coffee break*

16:25 Introductory statements

**Elisabeth Bacteman**, Director General, Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth

**Emil Raaen**, State Secretary, Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development

**Janne Uusivirta**, Counsellor, Regional and Structural Policy, Finnish Permanent Representation

**Sofie Eriksson**, Member of European Parliament, REGI and ITRE Committees, Sweden

16:45 Panel discussion moderated by Stefano Barbieri, OECD

Panel with; the introductory statements speakers, the chair NSPA network; **Jonas Andersson**, and from OECD; **José Enrique Garcilazo**, Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit.

17:20 Closing Remarks

**José Enrique Garcilazo**, Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, OECD, Paris

**Satu Vehreävesa**, Member NSPA Steering Committee, Former Chair NSPA network, Regional Development Director, Pohjois-Savo Region, Finland

17:30 *Reception*