

Photo: Elena Haapaniemi



County Administrative
Board of Norrbotten



International cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region





Facts & figures about Barents

- ✓ 4 countries – Finland, Norway, Russian Federation and Sweden.
- ✓ Initially 7, now 13 regions.
- ✓ 1.75 mln square km².
- ✓ 5,4 mln inhabitants.
- ✓ Rich in natural resources (oil, gas, minerals, timber, fish).
- ✓ Harsh climate, sparse population, vast territory.

1993 Kirkenes, Norway

- ✓ **An international conference** on the cooperation in the Barents-Euro-Arctic region initiated by the then foreign minister of Norway Thorwald Stoltenberg.
- ✓ **Kirkenes declaration** signed by the foreign ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and the European Commission establishing the **Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)**.
- ✓ **Cooperation protocol** signed by the region's county governors together with the representatives of indigenous peoples establishing the **Barents Regional Council (BRC)**.

Objectives of the Barents cooperation

- ✓ To contribute substantially to stability and progress in the region and in Europe, replacing the confrontation and division of the past, and to contribute to international peace and security.
- ✓ To contribute to a better cooperation and integration in Europe.
- ✓ To improve the conditions for regional cooperation between local authorities, institutions, industry and commerce.

Cooperation structure

- ✓ Unique nature of cross-boarder cooperation on two levels – national and regional.
- ✓ BEAC - a forum for intergovernmental cooperation.
- ✓ BRC - a forum for cooperation between the 13 regions of the Member States.
- ✓ Working Group of Indigenous Peoples has an advisory role to both Councils and cooperates closely with them.

BEAC & Committee of Senior Officials

- ✓ BEAC meets at the Foreign Ministers level in the chairing country every two years.
- ✓ The chairmanship rotates every second year between Finland, Norway, Russian Federation and Sweden.
- ✓ The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) is the highest executive body of Barents cooperation between BEAC meetings.
- ✓ The CSO meets on a regular basis appr. 3 times per year and most often in the country holding the Chair of the BEAC.

The role of the Barents Regional Council (BRC)

- ✓ To improve and to strengthen local cooperation between regional authorities, institutions and industries through regular dialogue as to identify common challenges and ways to jointly address them.
- ✓ To set priorities and guidelines for interregional cooperation.
- ✓ BRC meets twice a year.

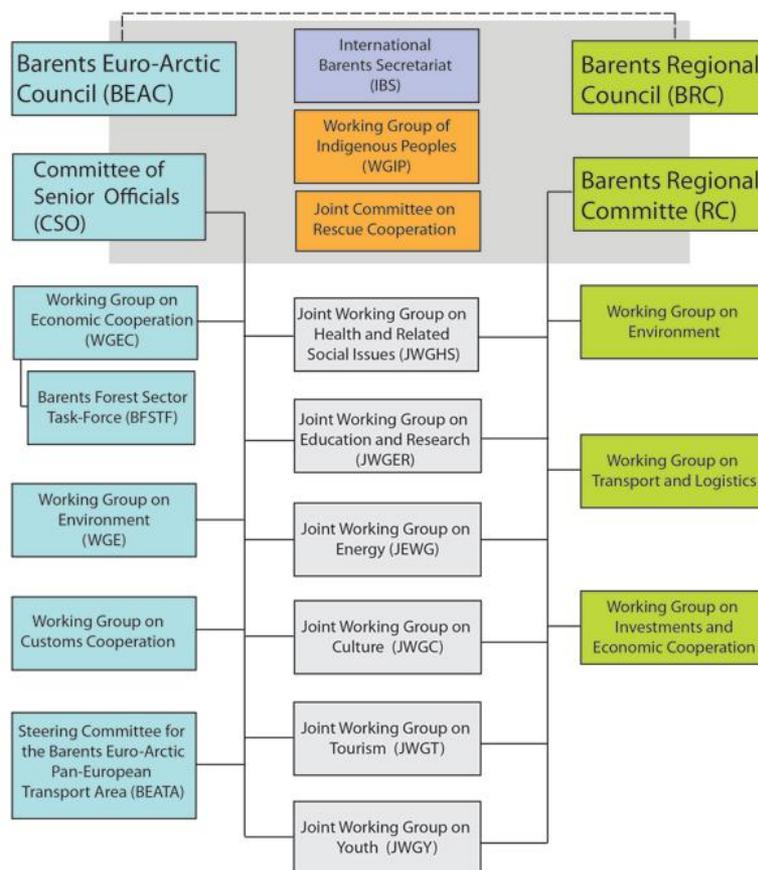
The role of the Barents Regional Committee

- ✓ The Committee consists of civil servants of the participating regions and is an executive body in charge of the implementation of the guidelines and priorities set by the Council.
- ✓ The Committee prepares BRC meetings and meets four times per year.
- ✓ The Committee drafted and the Council in November 2008 approved the Barents Program 2009-2013, which lists the priorities of the regional cooperation, namely :
 - Economic and commercial cooperation;
 - Sustainable living environment;
 - Human resources;
 - Indigenous peoples;
 - Transport and infrastructure;
 - Information and promotion of the Barents Cooperation.

The WG of Indigenous Peoples

- ✓ An advisory role to BEAC and BRC.
- ✓ Barents Indigenous Peoples Office in Lovozero, Murmansk region.
- ✓ Projects focusing on traditional reindeer herding, Sámi languages, traditional Sámi crafts and family entrepreneurship training.
- ✓ "Indigee" - cross-border indigenous entrepreneurship project in the Barents Region.

Organisational chart



International Barents Secretariat

- ✓ Established in January 2008 in Kirkenes following an intergovernmental agreement between Finland, Norway, Russian Federation and Sweden.
- ✓ IBS provides administrative and organisational support to both national and regional levels of Barents cooperation.
- ✓ 3 permanent staff members & seconded personnel.
- ✓ Serves as "the institutional memory" of the Barents cooperation.

JWGT – Joint Working Group on Tourism

- ✓ national – regional level
- ✓ meetings at least twice per year
- ✓ strategic focus

Mandate – our main tasks

- ✓ to influence preconditions for tourism development in the BEAR when improving traffic connection
- ✓ to identify and define authentic common values in order to build common identity in tourism development
- ✓ to co-operate in the fields of tourism education and research in order to achieve common criteria in quality, safety and sustainability

Mandate – our main tasks

- ✓ to promote proactive development and realization of high quality joint products and thematic product families
- ✓ to promote synergies between parallel industries to ensure competitiveness of tourism industry

JWGT - 2013

Action Plan

- ✓ Barents Program
- ✓ Kirkenes Declaration
- ✓ ENI
- ✓ Interreg V A North

Read more about Barents

www.beac.st

www.barentsinfo.org

www.barentsobserver.com



Our Barents - Our Future



Thank You for Your attention!

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