



Finnish Presidency: Working Group on Tourism (WGT)

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2021-2023

THE FINNISH PRESIDENCY
OF THE BARENTS
EURO-ARCTIC COUNCIL

<https://um.fi/barentsfi>

REGION OF
OPPORTUNITIES

2021-2023



The goals of the Finnish presidency 2021–2023

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030, the European Green Deal and the Barents Programme 2019–2023 all form the starting points for Finland's Presidency activities in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.
- We focus on the areas of sustainable development and healthy environment, people-to-people contacts and transport and logistics.
- Regions and counties are key to people-to-people cooperation in the Barents region.
- Peace, stability, well-functioning co-operation and low level of tension with our Arctic neighbours have been and remain at the top of Finland's foreign policy agenda.



Working Group on Tourism (WGT)

The mandate of the working group has been drawn up for the period 2022–2025. The objectives defined in the mandate for the working group are as follows:

1. stimulating competitiveness of the Barents tourism/visitor sector
2. inspiring to innovate more in tourism products, travel concepts and services on offer
3. enhancing tourism quality, sustainability, skills and education, and use of digital solutions
4. influence to increase better cross border mobility
5. increasing sustainable tourism demand, from within the EU and beyond, by delivering experiences that meet the client's expectations and motivations for travelling.
6. working with future scenarios for tourism industry in the Barents Region

Objectives and activities of WGT (1/2)

- The themes of the Finnish Presidency and the mandate of the WGT will form the basis for the work of the WGT.
- A key action is to renew the Barents Tourism Action Plan and to start its implementation. Through the Barents Tourism Action Plan, concrete actions will be formulated for the cooperation.
- The aim is to find commonalities and synergies with other working groups, one example of which is a joint webinar / seminar with WGBC (Working Group on Business Cooperation). Other opportunities for cooperation and common themes will be explored.

Objectives and activities of WGT (2/2)

- Common themes for tourism that have been identified as important at present include: sustainable tourism, circular economy, business connections, joint service provision, accessibility incl. air and rail connections and the smooth operation of border crossings.
- For example, the Visit Arctic Europe projects have produced good and concrete results that benefit tourism in the region.
- The aim is also to find commonalities and synergies with the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Tourism Working Group.

WGT meetings during the Finnish Presidency (tentative plan to be updated as preparations progress)

1st meeting 03/2022 (virtual meeting)

Tentative agenda:

- Inaugural meeting of the Finnish Presidency
- Plans for WGT's work during the Finnish Presidency
- Barents Tourism Action Plan: approval of the renewal plan (followed by a call for tenders; WGT will act as a steering group and comment on the preparation during the process)
- Presentation of the project package of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Tourism Working Group; identifying commonalities and synergies with the work of the WGT

WGT meetings during the Finnish Presidency (tentative plan to be updated as preparations progress)

2nd meeting (physical meeting in the area) and workshop 09/2022

Tentative agenda:

- Barents Tourism Action Plan: workshop work led by an external expert (open competition) for team members
- a study visit to sustainable tourism companies as part of the programme

WGT meetings during the Finnish Presidency (tentative plan to be updated as preparations progress)

3rd meeting 03/2023 (virtual meeting)

Tentative agenda:

- Barents Tourism Action Plan: the external expert presents and submits the completed work report to the working group, information release about the publication
- Design of a joint WGBC & WGT webinar / seminar on sustainable tourism and the circular economy, including exchanging information and good practice on thematic projects in the Barents region and the Nordic countries

WGT meetings during the Finnish Presidency (tentative plan to be updated as preparations progress)

4th meeting 09/2023 (physical meeting in the region) + Joint WGBC / WGT webinar / seminar on sustainable tourism and the circular economy

Tentative agenda:

- Barents Tourism Action Plan: the working group agrees with measures to implement the action plan
- the closing meeting of the Presidency and the transfer of the Presidency to Russia

Thank you for your
attention and see you
virtually in March 2022!