



## **BEAR Working Group on Higher Education and Research**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2002 - 2003**

#### **1. Meetings in the BEAR WG 2002-2003**

The WG has held 3 meetings in the report period:

- 28 May 2002 in Tromsø
- 21 November 2002 in Arkhangelsk
- 15 May 2003 in Lövånger

A meeting was planned for late autumn 2003, but was moved till January 2004, and was held on 15 January 2004 in Murmansk.

To the meetings in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk representatives from other higher educational institutions than the WG members and also representatives from the county administration were invited.

Minutes from the meetings can be found at <http://uit.no/bear/about/3?SubjectId=1&From=0>

#### **2. Projects initiated by the WG 2002-2003**

The following projects have been initiated by the WG in 2002-2003

- i. Writing a networking proposal as part of the BEAR Interreg III B application Barents 2010 and following up the second round of the application.
- ii. Survey of ongoing cooperation within higher education and research. This project was started out in 2002 by setting up a questionnaire which was sent to all institutions in the Fenno-Scandinavian part of BEAR. After summarizing the collected data, the WG decided to check the Russian institutions as well specially because of some critical comments about problems with the cooperation. The Russian part of the survey is now more or less ready.
- iii. The WG has been approached by the University of the Arctic that is interested in cooperation on further filling in the survey.
- iv. Also, a corresponding survey will be undertaken in connection with the Interreg project Barents 2010 Work Package 3. The already existing survey is a good point of departure here.

- v. A homepage has been created for the WG where one can find information about mandate, members, minutes, survey etc. Address: <http://uit.no/bear>
- vi. An important task to further cooperation within higher education is to further accreditation of that education in the Barents region. The WG suggested to the Regional Council that strengthening the Bologna process be included in the declaration from the meeting of the BEAR ministers of foreign affairs in October 2003. The WG is now discussing how to continue to support the process, for instance by information about programmes that are already approved.

### **3. Cooperation with the central working group (The Barents Programme Board for Exchanges in Higher Education and Research)**

The cooperation between the WG and the Programme Board was facilitated by the fact that the WG chair was also a member of the Programme Board. Thus the seminar “Cooperation in Higher Education and Research in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region” arranged by the Programme Board in Lövånger 14-15 May 2003 to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barents Council was closely followed by the WG and included in the WG’s plans.

The WG is, however, aware that as for BEAR health cooperation, there is one WG with representatives both from the regional and the national level, and the WG for Higher Education and Research is of the opinion that combining the regional group working within higher education and research with representatives from the national level would strengthen both groups. This is specially important in connection with the work on the Bologna process.

### **4. Planned activities 2004**

- i. The WG will follow up projects which already have been started as the Survey and facilitating accreditation.
- ii. The WG will be reference group for Work Package 3 of the Barents 2010 Interreg project and thus participate in the network seminar in Tromsø in June 2004.

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