



THE BARENTS WORKING GROUPS ANNUAL REPORT

Name of the Working Group: Regional Working Group on Transport and Logistics, BRWGTL

The current Chair and the Chairmanship period: Mr Hannu Heikkinen, planning director, Regional Council of Kainuu, Finland

1. Priorities of the Chairmanship

The Barents Region Transport and Logistics project (BRTL), project monitoring, and cooperation with the both BEATA and NDTPL.

2. Meetings (meetings held, main topics and outcomes of the meetings)

In the 2020, the BRWGTL's members participated in activities of the Kolarctic CBC funded project KO1029: Barents Region Transport and Logistics (BRTL). During the second operational year of the project, BRTL organized three online seminars on the following topics: Green Transport, ITS and World Transport and Logistics market. In addition to seminars, three project reports were published in the spring 2020. These reports are available from the BRWGTL's webpage. The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in the first half of the 2020 forced BRTL to change the planned activities to the online format.

3. Other activities (projects, events, programmes etc.)

The working group members have taken actively part to the planning processes of the forthcoming Finland's BEAC Chairmanship and BEATA's activities. The Finnish members of the BRWGTL have actively participated in the planning process of the first national transport plan of Finland (Liikenne 12). Regional working group is preparing BRWGTL's joint comment for the national transport plan in the spring 2021. BRWGTL members participate in the BEATA expert group on 24 hours resting areas for heavy vehicles.

4. Results of the year (decisions, new initiatives, improvements).

The year 2020 has been the second operating year of the BRTL project. The running of the project has been the main task of the working group. Three out of six working packages are completed and reports from these are published. Contents for the rest of the project deliverables are planned and the work will be conducted in the spring 2021. Under the project activities, BRTL will carry out a pilot study on 24 hours resting areas in Norway and Sweden.

5. Youth involvement (how has the working group included young people or worked with youth issues during the year)

BRTL's Project Manager Jussi Huotari, together with the Project Manager of the Northern Axis – Barents Link ms. Tatiana Petrova, and Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK), organized an information session to about 100 students from KAMK. The purpose of the event was to share information on the Barents cooperation, but also to gain fresh ideas to future cooperation from students.

Link to a newsletter from the event: <https://kainuunliitto.fi/en/strengthening-collaboration-between-the-regional-council-of-kainuu-kamk-integration-of-state-of-the-art-knowledge-from-two-ongoing-international-projects-into-the-educational-process/>

6. Evaluation of the work (What went well, what needs improvement)

One of the biggest achievements during the reporting period was the continuation of the work as planned, despite travel restrictions and border closures. The working group succeeded in utilizing digital platforms as tools for continuing cooperation. Moreover, it is an indication that the working group members are committed to the implementation to the project activities.

The virus outbreak and the measures to restrain its influence pointed out the importance of well-functioning and secure digital infrastructure. Yet, one of the challenges is connectivity in the cross-border context. The development of digital infrastructure that is well-functioning throughout the BEAR should be one of the main priorities of the cooperation.

7. Other