

**Pan-European Transport Area**

**Progress Report on**

**(BEATA)**

Submitted by the Secretary of the BEATA Steering Committee  
to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the G-24 Transport Group  
and the European Commission

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The Barents Euro-Arctic Pan-European Transport Area (BEATA) is a multi-modal transport area established in the Pan-European Transport Conference in Helsinki in 1997. The BEATA covers the northern provinces of Finland, Sweden and Norway, as well as the northwest part of the Russian Federation; the Republic of Karelia, the Oblasts of Murmansk and Archangelsk, and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.



## Progress Report

This is the second Progress Report on the Barents Euro-Arctic Transport Area (BEATA) to be submitted to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the G-24 Transport Group and the European Commission.

The Ministers of Transport of the BEATA countries and the Transport Commissioner of the EU Commission signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Copenhagen in May 1998. In the MoU the Ministers also established a Steering Committee for BEATA cooperation. Norway was the first chairman of the Steering Committee in 1998. Finland assumed the BEATA chairmanship in March 1999, and the third chairmanship was held by Russia starting in March 2000.

The Finnish Ministry of Transport has established a permanent secretariat in Helsinki to assist the Steering Committee.

### The Finnish Chairmanship

The Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications held the chairmanship of the Steering Committee of BEATA between March 1999 and March 2000. Main objectives of the Finnish agenda for the BEATA chairmanship were to implement the first year of the Action Programme, more specifically the following:

- 1 Creating the framework for co-operation in BEATA.
- 2 Defining the backbone network for transport in the Barents area.
- 3 Creation of the BEATA database and collection of network data.

### The Russian Chairmanship

Under the Russian chairmanship two major events took place:

- 1 **The fourth Steering Committee meeting** took place in Murmansk on May 24, 2000. The meeting was particularly useful, as a large number of Russian authorities, local and national, took part in it.
- 2 **Meeting of Ministers of Transport** of the members of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council was arranged in connection of the Second Euro-Asian Conference of Transport held in St. Petersburg on September 13, 2000. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation, Mr. Frank, and the Secretaries of State of Finland, Norway and Sweden, as well as a number of observers. The meeting provided a good forum for the exchange of information on new developments in each country, and strengthened the political process supporting the BEATA initiative.

In addition, exchange of information has continued between the parties involved in the Barents Euro-Arctic work.

Under the BEATA secretariat further development of the BEATA GIS database has continued. In 2000, the geographic (GIS) database has been brought to the Internet and the data is now freely available to all willing users.

The work to identify joint projects that can be promoted through the BEATA framework has started under Swedish leadership.

### **Other developments**

There are a number of other developments contributing to the improvement of east-west transport connections in the area. They include but are not limited to the following:

- 1      Testing of the railway gauge changing system at the Finnish – Swedish border (Tornio/Haparanda) has progressed well.
- 2      Construction of the Russian border post at Salla (Finland/Russia) has started with Tacis assistance.
- 3      Test runs on the new railway Ledmozero – Kotchkoma (Karelia, Russia) have been carried out at the end of the year indicating that the long-lasting construction of the railway is nearing its completion.
- 4      Co-operation between the northern customs districts of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden is bringing some results. Among others, better information between the customs officials and the clients through a web service on the BEATA pages is now available.

### **Future Work**

The BEATA chairmanship will be handed over to Sweden in March 2001. The fifth meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in Norrbotten, Sweden, in September 2001.

Martti Miettinen Secretary of the BEATA  
Steering Committee Helsinki, March 26,  
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