
Progress Report 2002
on the Barents Euro-Arctic Pan-European Transport Area
(BEATA)

Submitted by the Chairman of the BEATA Steering Committee
to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the European Commission

Steering Committee:

Mr. Vyacheslav Parfenov	Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation, Chairman
Mr. Boris Sitkov	Ministry of Railway Transport of the Russian Federation
Mr. Juha Parantainen	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland
Mr. Kjell Rosanoff	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Norway
Mr. Tomas Brodin	Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden
Mrs. Kristina Geiger-Weichbrodt	European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport

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 fourth Progress Report on the Barents Euro-Arctic Transport Area (BEATA) to be submitted to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council 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 co-operation. Norway was the first chairman of the Steering Committee in 1998. Finland assumed the BEATA chairmanship in March 1999, and Russia in March 2000. The current chairman is Sweden since March 2001. Norway will take the chairmanship in October 2003.

The Finnish Ministry of Transport has supported the permanent secretariat in Helsinki, which provides assistance to the Steering Committee.

Earlier Accomplishments

The Steering Committee of BEATA has implemented the measures specified in the Action Programme 1999 - 2003, more specifically the following:

1. Creating the framework for co-operation in BEATA.
2. Defining the first backbone network for transport in the Barents area.
3. Developing the BEATA database (GIS) and collecting network data.
4. Reviewing the existing traffic forecasts in the Region
5. Collecting current and planned project information in the Nordic Countries and northwest Russia.
6. A website.

The Swedish Chairmanship

In this period, the rules of chairmanship have been revised to correspond with the new BEAC practice. Now the chairman will be nominated for a two-year term instead of one year previously. Under the Swedish chairmanship, started in 2001, three Steering Committee meetings have been held. The first was in Haparanda, Sweden, September 26, 2001 and the second in Umeå, Sweden, February 6, 2002. The latter meeting was a joint seminar with the Barents Council's Working Group on Economic Co-operation (WGEC). Representatives of local industries participated in the meeting as well. The third meeting was held in Luleå, Sweden, on January 22, 2003. Between the Steering Committee meetings several work meetings have been held.

In late 2001 and 2002, the main effort of the Steering Committee has been supporting the preparation of an application to Interreg IIIB in order to initiate a major project in the Region, *Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region*. As Interreg III B is primarily a program for and between the regions, the members of Communications Group of the Barents Regional Council were the main partners in the application process. The process was, however, at all times closely coordinated with and strongly supported by the members and secretary of the BEATA Steering Committee. The Committee continues to be closely tied with the implementation of the Transport Project in its role of an Advisory Board. In December 2002, the Interreg III B Management Committee approved the application and granted co-finance for the Project. The Project budget amounts to 2.6 million euros in the years 2003-2005. It is

envisaged that the Sustainable Transport Project will become the main driving force for the cross-border transport development in the Region in those years.

Other developments

Transport infrastructure improvements impacting more than one country include but are not limited to the following:

1. Testing of the railway gauge changing system at the Finnish – Swedish border (Tornio/Haparanda).
2. The road connection Nickel – Prirechnyi (Russia) has been upgraded by a joint Russian/Norwegian effort.
3. Construction of the Russian border post at Salla (Finland/Russia) has been completed with Tacis assistance. Inauguration of the border station was in September 2002. The road to the Salla border is also being upgraded in Russia.
4. Norwegian and Russian authorities have completed the modernisation of the Russian border station at Borisoglebsk/Storskog (Norwegian/Russian border). Inauguration of the new border station was in January 2003.
5. Construction of the new railway Ledmozero – Kotchkoma (Karelia, Russia) was completed at the end of 2001. Commercial traffic is expected to start shortly.
6. Co-operation between the northern customs districts of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden is bringing results. Among others, better information between the customs officials and the clients through a web service on the BEATA site is now available.

Future Work

Due to the rules of procedure, which require the chairmanship period to be identical with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Sweden will continue to hold the BEATA chairmanship until early October 2003. Norway will be the next chairman in the period 10/2003 – 10/2005.

The activities in 2003 include:

1. Drafting a new Action Program 2004-2008. The current five-year Action Program 1999-2003 will end in 2003.
2. Opening up the Backbone network for the Barents Region for revisions. This is the first round of revisions after the creation and approval of the first network layout in 1999.
3. Preparing a summary and an assessment of the known investment projects in the Region.

The most prominent activity of BEATA Steering Committee will be the role of an Advisory Board for the “Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region” project. The project will start in February-March with the following tasks:

1. Organising the work and establishing a project secretariat in Luleå.
2. Launching the implementation of Work Package 1, which entails, among others, data collection and preparation of regional forecasts for people and freight transport.
3. Drawing up a Tacis CBC application for the participating regions in Russia.

Tomas Brolin
Chairman of
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Stockholm, January 31, 2003

Martti Miettinen
Secretary of
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Helsinki, January 31, 2003