
Progress Report 2004
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. Kjell Rosanoff	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Norway, Chairman
Mr. Juha Parantainen	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland
Mrs. Kerstin Lokrantz	Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden
Mr. Vyacheslav Parfenov	Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation (until autumn 2004)
Mr. Boris Sitkov	Ministry of Railway Transport of the Russian Federation (until autumn 2004)
Mr. Alexander Kurtov	Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation (since autumn 2004)
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 and Komi, the Oblasts of Murmansk and Archangelsk, and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

Progress Report

This is the sixth Progress Report of the Steering Committee of 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 established a Steering Committee for BEATA co-operation.

Norway has held the BEATA chairmanship since October 2003 for the current two-year period. The Finnish Ministry of Transport has supported the permanent secretariat in Helsinki, which provides assistance for the Steering Committee.

Earlier Accomplishments

The Steering Committee of BEATA has implemented the measures specified in the Action Programme 1999 – 2003. The new Action Programme 2004-2008 was drawn up and approved at the end of 2003. The new Programme has been followed in 2004.

Accomplishments of the BEATA Steering Committee are in general terms 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.
7. Assisting the financing and launching of the Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region (STBR) project.
8. Inclusion of the Republic of Komi in the BEATA cooperation.

The Norwegian Chairmanship

In 2004, two Steering Committee meetings have been held. The first was in Kirkenes, Norway, April 26, 2004, and the second in Tromsø, Norway, December 9, 2004. Both of these meetings have been held jointly with the STBR Steering Committees. In addition, representatives for other transport projects in the region have participated, such as Northern East-west Freight Corridor, Northern Maritime Corridor and the Barents 2010 project. Work meetings have been held between the Steering Committee meetings.

In 2004, the main focus of the BEATA Steering Committee has been to support and monitor the implementation of the Interreg IIIB project, *Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region, STBR*. 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 project. The process has, however, at all times been very closely coordinated with and strongly supported by the BEATA Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is Advisory Board of the STBR project.

The more detailed status of the STBR project is described below.

Completed studies:

- Passenger and Freight Flows in the Barents Region (September, 2004)
The study produced a comprehensive description of passenger and freight flows and transport infrastructure in the Barents region. Also a tentative flow model format was introduced.

Due to the limitations of the Interreg rules the study area covered only the northern provinces of the Nordic Countries: Norway, Sweden and Finland. With the support of the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications similar data collection was carried out also in the Russian provinces of the Barents region.

Completed pre-studies:

- Barents Regional Aviation (September, 2004)
The study provided the overall understanding of the aviation services in the region and pointed out the way forward.
- Logistics system in the Barents Region (September, 2004)
The study produced an overall understanding of the logistics system in the region and outlined the way forward.

Studies underway:

- Road Transport Corridors in the Barents Region (to be completed April 2005) is composed of the following sub-studies:
 - 1) Tourism Roads in Barents Region.
 - 2) Heavy traffic: traffic safety and transports of dangerous goods.
 - 3) Terminal Study in Barents Region.

The intention of the three studies is to develop a common view of road and road transport development needs in the region. The study will be carried out jointly under the supervision of all regional road districts.

- Evaluation methods of cross border transport projects (to be completed April 2005)
The project will study the difficulties that are encountered when evaluating transport infrastructure projects that cross international borders. Recommendations for such a project evaluation will be given.
- Barents Railroad (first phase to be completed May 2005)
The project intends to build a common vision with a concrete action plan for the heavy freight transport system in the Barents region. The railroad project is composed of two phases: (1) needs study, and (2) optional case studies, which will be decided later.

Studies and activities under preparation:

- Regional Aviation (2005)
Regional aviation is one of the most pressing issues in the region due to sparse population and extremely long distances between the places of economic activity and social contacts. Ways will be recommended to maintain and improve low cost air services in the region.
- Logistics system (2005)
Logistics in the Barents region are two-fold: freight flows are either very heavy, or very light. A system for logistics services in this situation is explored. The intent is to delegate this as thesis work to the universities in the region.

- **Barents Forum for Seaport Cooperation (2005)**
Most transport activities in the Barents region depend on sea transports at some point. However, cooperation between seaports is not well developed. The Seaport Forum is aimed to increase this cooperation and dialogue between different parties so that foreseen problems, such as increasing sea transport, competitiveness and environment of the region are taken into consideration in a balanced way.

Parallel activities:

- **Barents Information and Data Task Force**
The Data Task Force is unique in the sense that it tries to create a common, easily updateable and usable transport database covering the entire region. Common data will assist the regional authorities in their mutual discussions of development objectives and harmonise the approach to infrastructure and traffic management so that the entire region is positively impacted.

Other developments

Sweden and Norway have prepared National Transport Plans for the period until 2015, which were approved by the respective Parliaments in spring 2004. In Finland, a Ministerial Working Group produced the strategy for the development of transport infrastructure in 2004-2013 in February. Similarly in Russia the new Federal Transport Strategy until 2025 has been drafted. All these plans and strategies include projects and measures targeted for implementation in the Barents region. It might be added that in Russia the two separate ministries of transport and railways were merged together in spring 2004 and the new Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation was formed.

In Norway the National Transport Plan allocates new finance for trunk roads and the Nordland railway line. In Sweden the focus is on the coastal railway up to Umeå, the Haparanda railway upgrading at the Swedish-Finnish border, and improving the ore line Kiruna-Narvik. In Finland the strategy calls for railway electrification and new fairways to seaports of Tornio and Raahen. The Russian strategy concentrates on expanding the oil export capacity of the seaports, improving railway connections to seaports, and railway electrification (St. Petersburg-Murmansk). In addition, a new Northern Road Corridor Petroskoi - Syktyvkar has been mentioned. The Russian national strategy has prompted also the regions to draft own strategies like the one in Murmansk, which lists as priorities the building of new port capacity, improving regional roads and border crossings, and improvements of the Murmansk airport.

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

1. With the help of the EU the preparation of a full-scale test of the railway gauge changing system at the Finnish – Swedish border (Tornio/Haparanda) is underway. The tests with steel products and paper will start in 2005.
2. Construction of the new railway Ledmozero – Kotchkoma (Karelia, Russia) was completed at the end of 2001, but further procurement and installation of appurtenances (electricity, train control system and stations) have been under way until now.
3. Increasing the allowed axle-load to 30 tons on the Ore line (Norway/Sweden)
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. In 2004, the Murmansk-Borisoglebsk road was given the status of a federal road, which raises its importance and allows federal financing of road improvement measures.
5. The North East West Freight Corridor (N.E.W.) project initiated the first steps for a demonstration run with container trains from China.

Future Work

The Norwegian chair foresees the following BEATA activities in 2005:

1. Close involvement in the STBR project
2. Review of national planning processes in partner countries
3. Maritime transport along the Norwegian and Russian coastline as well as in the Gulf of Bothnia (Finland, Sweden).
4. Road traffic safety
5. Improving coordination of the on-going projects in the region

The Norwegian chair plans to organise two Steering Committee meetings during 2005.

Kjell Rosanoff
Chairman of
the BEATA Steering Committee
Oslo, April 15, 2005

Martti Miettinen
Secretary of
the BEATA Steering Committee
Helsinki, April 15, 2005