



Steering Committee of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme under the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues

Progress Report 2010

Organisation

National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) carries responsibilities of former STAKES and KTL, including coordination of the Steering Committee of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme.

The implementation of Barents HIV/AIDS Programme was organized so that the responsible organization THL and the Programme Co-ordinator (PC) operating under THL were holding primary responsibility. The PC was also acting as a Secretary and Drafter to the Steering Committee of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme under the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues (SC). Members of the SC have been appointed from countries or regions in the Barents region. The SC reports to the WGHS through an annual report. (SC members are listed in the **Annex 1**.)

Development of the HIV situation in the Northwest Russia

According to the Northwest District AIDS Centre, St. Petersburg, the cumulative number of HIV-infected people in Northwest Russia was 82,244 by December 31, 2010. Altogether, 10,972 HIV-infected people have died, and thus amount of PLWHA is 71,272.

Transmission routes in NW Russia during 2009 were the following: IDU – 44.1%, sexual contact – 27.6%, mother-to-child – 0.8%. By the end of 2009, cumulatively 6875 children have been born to HIV-positive mothers. MTCT rate is 8.7% in 2008 and 7.1 – 2009.

Registration of new HIV- cases and prevalence in the regions of Northwest Russia

	Region	Cases in 2005	Cases in 2006	Cases in 2007	Cases in 2008	Cases in 2009	Cases in 2010	Prevalence* per 100 000 1.1.2011
BARENTS REGIONS OF NW RUSSIA	<i>Archangelsk Region</i>	49	62	62	68	71	84	32.5
	<i>Murmansk Region</i>	241	371	416	421	446	387	371.1
	<i>Republic of Karelia</i>	81	55	92	123	89	108	108.5
	<i>Republic of Komi</i>	135	147	134	140	115	173	137.9
	<i>Nenetsk Autonomous District</i>	2	2	4	7	6	2	52.4
OTHER NORTHWEST REGIONS	<i>Leningrad Region</i>	1094	973	1165	1212	1401	1349	727.2
	<i>St. Petersburg</i>	4045	4459	4548	4727	4666	4150	1000.0
	<i>Vologda Region</i>	119	134	133	154	147	191	120.2
	<i>Kaliningrad Region</i>	414	454	501	434	431	403	506.0
	<i>Novgorod Region</i>	77	96	134	118	130	176	171.8
	<i>Pskov Region</i>	30	46	44	49	61	62	60.4
	TOTAL		6287	6799	7233	7453	7563	7085

Source: Northwest District AIDS Centre, St. Petersburg

*Cumulative number of cases minus deaths per 100,000 inhabitants

Activities in 2010

The Steering Committee had two meetings in 2010, in Ivalo in March 10-11 and in Murmansk in November 10. Concluding seminars of several projects under the Programme were organised, e.g. of the pilot project on development of low threshold services in the Murmansk Region.

At the **Steering Committee meeting in Ivalo**, the situation on HIV and tuberculosis co-infection in the Barents Region was discussed.

Representatives of Murmansk, Republic of Komi, St. Petersburg (representing Northwest Russia), Norway, Sweden and Finland took part at the meeting. Lapland Province Administration presented their preventive work against drug use; and University of Lapland presented their collaboration and research with Murmansk Region concerning substance abuse.

The Ivalo meeting was hosted by National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland and partly sponsored by Norwegian Directorate for Health. Ministry of Health and Development of the Murmansk Region covered travel between Murmansk and Ivalo for the Russian participants.

The second **Steering Committee meeting** was organised in Murmansk in November 10. It was preceded by the closing seminar of the pilot project on development of low threshold services in the Murmansk Region, and this gave opportunity for more experts from Finland and Murmansk to participate. Norway was well represented; Archangelsk and Komi had sent high-level experts. Sweden was not able to participate, but sent several comments and messages for the meeting ensuring their involvement. Republic of Karelia sent their apologies and invited the next meeting in Karelia.

The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Health and Social Development of Murmansk Region together with the Regional AIDS Centre, and sponsored by Finland. The Chair, Arkadi Rubin informed the SC on his resignation from the post of the chair in the end of 2010. *Vice-minister of health of the Republic of Komi, Evgenia Kotova, was elected as the new chair*, starting in 2011.

During this meeting, an evaluation process of the Programme activities in 2005-2010 was started on basis of questions sent beforehand. The process will be continued during spring 2011.

The **concluding seminar of the pilot project on development of low threshold services in the Murmansk Region** was organised in November 9 in Murmansk. The project was coordinated by Murmansk Regional AIDS centre and THL, Finland; and it had two phases: 2005–2007 and 2008–2010. During the project two Low Threshold Service Centres were established - one in Murmansk (in 2005) and another in Kandalaksha (in 2007) - in order to prevent HIV and other infectious diseases among drug users, sex workers and bridging populations. The centres have been functioning successfully, among other indicators of success are: increasing amount of visits (more than 2600 in 2009), hidden HIV cases detected at the centres (43 new cases in 2009, 173 since the end of 2005) and decreasing of IDU transmission of HIV from 72,6% to 62,4%. Altogether 104 experts took part at the closing seminar.

Another important **concluding seminar** was organized by the project "**Governance of HIV/AIDS Prevention in North-West Russia**" which took place in Archangelsk in 2 December. During this project a collaborating group of Russian and Norwegian researchers has been studying attitudes towards HIV prevention among health professionals and vulnerable groups, and other aspects in the field of HIV prevention in Arkhangelsk oblast, Leningrad oblast, and the city of St. Petersburg. The project was coordinated by the Norwegian Institute of Urban and Regional Research (NIBR). The results will be distributed in several international fora, and they will be useful in order to improve prevention work.

The third **concluding seminar** was organised in August in Archangelsk by the project "**Social partnership against drug addiction, HIV/AIDS in Northwest Russia**", financed by Nordic Council of Ministers.

A **seminar** for authorities and mass media campaign was organized by the **TB/HIV collaboration project in Murmansk** in 1 December. The audience represented high authorities from Moscow,

WHO Euro, Murmansk administration, Duma and the church. A TV spot was launched and received a lot of positive publicity.

The TB/HIV collaboration project, as well as the project on development of low threshold services (the latter in the presentation "Northern Dimension cross-border cooperation in combating HIV and HIV/TB") was presented at the **41st Union World Conference on Lung Health in Berlin**, Germany, 11–15 November 2010.

Representatives of the Barents HIV Steering Committee participated in development of a **new Barents Tuberculosis Programme**. A preparatory planning meeting was held in Arkhangelsk in April 2010, and a Logical Framework workshop in Repino, Leningrad Region, in June 2010.

As Finland and the Republic of Komi are chairing JWGHS during 2010–2011, the Programme Coordinator participated in organization of many activities of the chairmanship, including tuberculosis meetings mentioned above and JWGHS meeting in Syktyvkar in September 2010.

The **financing of coordination** of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme is implemented through a Finnish-Russian project, the second phase of which was completed in the end of 2010. Due to this, a new **application** was submitted for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland.

Regular contacts were kept with the NDPHS Expert Group on HIV/AIDS and Associated Infections. The Barents activities were reported to the meetings of the Expert Group of NDPHS, and vice versa. The Chairperson of the Expert Group participated at the Barents HIV meeting and Murmansk seminars (LTSC and TB/HIV).

Projects

In the end of 2010, totally 13 projects were ongoing, 6 proposals under consideration and 21 projects completed within the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme (Annex 2).

Annexes

- Annex 1** Members of the Steering Committee
- Annex 2** List of projects

**STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE BARENTS HIV/AIDS PROGRAMME
MEMBERS IN DECEMBER, 2010**

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List of projects under the umbrella of Barents HIV/AIDS Programme

List of projects being implemented (in December 2010)

ONGOING FINNISH – RUSSIAN PROJECTS

1. “Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Partnership Programme Regions. Phase II.” (2008-2010) Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland and Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Murmansk Region. Approximate budget EUR 600,000 (3 years). Financier: Finland.
2. "Further development of low threshold services in Murmansk and Kantalahti" (2008-2010). Continuation of the Pilot project of the above mentioned programme. Coordination: THL (Finland) and Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre. Approximate budget EUR 300,000 + local input (3 years). Financier: Finland.
3. Strengthening of municipal anti-drug networking in the Murmansk Region (2010–2012). Coordination THL (Finland) and Monchegorsk City Administration. Budget for 2010 - 90,000 EUR + local input. Financier: Finland.
4. HIV prevention among reproductive-aged women in the Republic of Karelia (2010–2012). Coordination: National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland and the Republican AIDS Centre, the Republic of Karelia. Budget for 2010 - 85,000 EUR + local input. Financier: Finland.
5. TB/HIV collaboration in Murmansk. Project planning phase 2009. Implementation 2010–2012. Coordination FILHA, Finland. Budget for 2010 - 106,000 EUR. Financier: Finland.

Development of low threshold services in Leningrad Region (2010–2012). Coordination THL and Leningrad regional AIDS centre. (- not officially Barents region). Budget for 2010 - 84,000 EUR. Financier: Finland.

ONGOING NORWEGIAN – RUSSIAN PROJECTS

1. “Cross action between STI Clinic in Archangelsk and Olafia Clinic in Oslo”. Coordination: Norway. Approximate budget for 2009: NOK 300,000. Financier: Norway (B504).
2. "Face the problem. Peer education. Coordination: Pertinax Group, Norway, partners in Archangelsk Region. Financier: Norway (B1001; NOK 135,000 granted in 2010).
3. Research project “The Governance of HIV/AIDS Prevention in North-West Russia”. Coordination: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Norway. Approximate budget: EUR 622,500. Financier: Research Council of Norway. Training and dissemination component of the project is financed by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs through NDPHS project pipeline.
4. Educational project "New View" in the sphere of the HIV/AIDS and drug addiction prevention, organization of voluntary group for the specialists, working with teenagers and young people, students of higher and special educational institutions. Coordination: Norwegian Sami Mission, partner "New Beginning", Murmansk Region. (Project B816;

granted NOK 200,000 in 2009).

5. "HIV and co-infections in Murmansk region, seminar". Coordination: University Hospital of Northern Norway. Project region: Murmansk Oblast, Russia.
6. Prevention and management of HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections in Northwest Russia with particular focus on capacity and capability building of partner consortium and local government. Coordination: DanChurchAid office in St. Petersburg, partners Botkin Hospital, Humanitarian Action Foundation and PSP-fund Ravnovesie. Financier: Norway.
7. "Camp Murmansk 2010". Health promotion, education and information concerning HIV and AIDS. Coordination: NGO New Beginning and Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre, University of Bergen, Norway. Financing: Norway.

NCM PROJECTS

1. Social partnership against drug addiction, HIV/AIDS in Northwest Russia (2009–2010). (Archangelsk and other northwestern regions of Russia). Financing NCM and Archangelsk regional government.

List of projects under consideration (in December 2010)

1. Enhancing of HIV prevention in Murmansk prisons and among ex-inmates and their families. Coordinators - the Murmansk Low Threshold Support Centre and THL. Applied from Finland.
2. Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Regions (Phase III): Technical assistance and coordination. Coordination of Barents HIV/AIDS Programme and the HIV/AIDS Expert Group of NDPHS (2011–2013). Applied by THL from Finland.
3. A project on HIV, TB and prisons to be developed together with the Primary Health and Prison Health Systems Expert Group (PPHS). This idea will be developed further under the new Barents Tuberculosis Programme.
4. VERA 2: HIV and STIs prevention among Russian-speaking female sexworkers in Norway and North-West Russia. Proposal submitted to Norway.
5. Enhancing tolerance in society to people with HIV/AIDS through training of media professionals. Geographic area: Republic of Karelia, Russia. Proposal submitted to Norway.
6. THINK Murmansk – a pilot youth empowerment. Proposal submitted to Norway.

List of completed projects

1. "Controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Barents and Northern Dimension Partnership Programme Regions in 2005–2007" Coordination of the Barents HIV/AIDS Programme and support to EG on HIV/AIDS for the ND partnership. Coordination: STAKES, Finland. Approximate budget EUR 715,000 (3 years). Financier: Finnish Government.
2. Development of Low Threshold Support Centre in Murmansk region". Pilot project of the above mentioned programme. Coordination: STAKES, Finland. Budget EUR 247,905.

- Financier: Finland.
3. "Workshop of workers in LTC sites for IDUs". Coordination: National Public Health Institute, Finland. Approximate budget EUR 20,000. Financier: Finland.
 4. "AIDS Alarm in North-West Russia". Coordination: Norway. Approximate budget NOK 151,000. Financier: Norway.
 5. "Sexual and reproductive Health of Adolescents in Northwestern Russia" Coordination: Sweden, RFSU. Approximate budget SEK 16,091,000 (1997–2007).
 6. "Activate patients at Murmansk Municipal HIV/AIDS Centre". Coordination: Norway and Murmansk AIDS Centre. Approximate budget NOK 16,000. Financier: Norway
 7. "The Bus" for Republican AIDS Centre, Petrozavodsk. Approximate budget NOK 250,000. Financier: Norway (Humanitarian Fund of Crown Prince Haakon and Crown Princess Mette-Marit).
 8. "The ConTact Bus – Arkhangelsk Region". Coordination: Norway. Approximate Budget: NOK 280,000 (Continues with financing by the Arkhangelsk Region)
 9. "Territory of Life. Mobile unit work for prevention of HIV in Murmansk Region" Coordination: Norwegian Institute of Public Health. Approximate budget NOK 270,000. Financier: Norway.
 10. HIV/STI and Drug preventive efforts in Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Karelia". Coordination: Sweden - Noaks Ark Barents. Approximate budget – SEK 980 000
 11. "Only for you". The ConTact Bus- Murmansk Region (B606). Coordination: Norway and Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre. Approximate Budget 34 700 USD
 12. "Love your neighbour". Arkhangelsk region. Coordination: Norway. Approximate Budget 330 000 NOK
 13. Youth peer education in Murmansk related to HIV, STI and communication skills (B710). Coordination: Pertinax Group, Norway, partner Murmansk Regional AIDS Centre. Approximate budget NOK 90,000. Financier: Norway. (Grant given in 2007, no grant received in 2008).
 14. Assistance in development of palliative aid in Arkhangelsk Region 2007. Coordination: Norwegian Church Aid and NGO Rassvet. Approximate budget 214 000 NOK.
 15. The Clinton HIV/AIDS initiative and Russia. Exchange of Russian and Norwegian clinicians". Coordination: Norway. Approximate budget - NOK 460,000.
 16. "HIV: to be aware means to live". Coordination: Norwegian Church Aid and NGO Rassvet, Arkhangelsk Region. Approximate budget: 250 000 NOK.
 17. Strengthening of inter-sectoral action to fight drug abuse and drug related harm in Murmansk Region 2008–2009". Coordination: THL, Finland and Anti-Drug Commission of the Murmansk Region. Approximate budget EUR 178,000. Financier: Finland through NDPHS project pipeline.
 18. ""Prevention of HIV infection in the Republic of Karelia in 2007–2009". Coordination: THL, Finland and Republican AIDS Centre of Karelia. Approximate budget EUR 300,000 (3 years). Financier: Finland.
 19. Vera". Development of international network of interaction between organisations dealing with women and adolescents, involved in commercial sex business and trafficking victims. Coordination: NGO Stellit, Russia (Pro Sentret, Norway). (No grants given for 2009.)
 20. (*"Psychological and social support to HIV infected women in Leningrad Oblast 2007–2009". Coordination: THL, Finland and Leningrad Oblast AIDS Centre. Approximate budget EUR 300,000 (3 years). Financier: Finland. - Leningrad oblast is not officially Barents region*)
 21. Youth peer education in Arkhangelsk related to HIV, STI and communication skills. Coordination: Pertinax Group, Norway, three partners in Arkhangelsk Region. Financier: Norway (B808; NOK 125,000 granted in 2009).