

## Minutes for the Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Tourism of the Barents Euro Arctic Council

**Date:** June 10-12, 2019

**Venue:** Camp Ripan

**Address:** <https://ripan.se/>

**Chair:** Monica Lejon, County Council of Norrbotten

**Minutes:** Satu LUIRO, Regional Council of Lapland

**Time:** 10 June, lunch kl 13, meeting kl 14 -18, the meeting continues the next day 11 June 8.30 - 11.30, kl 12.00- Study visits

### Participants:

Monica Lejon, Regional Council of Norrbotten

Erika Rosander, Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth

Olivia Häggqvist, Swedish Transport Agency

Anna-Mari Ruisniemi, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten

Hanna-Mari Kuhmonen, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

Satu LUIRO, Regional Council of Lapland

Tuomo Tahvanainen, Kainuun Etu

Pekka Huovinen, Regional Council of North Karelia

Konstantin Baranov, Republic of Komi

Roman Gokkoev, International Barents secretariat

Elli Alasaari, International Barents secretariat

Ann-Christin Samuelsson, Municipality of Kiruna

Monica Risenius, Kiruna Lapland

Susanna Lantz, County administrative Board of Västerbotten

Mats-Rune Bergström, County administrative Board of Västerbotten

### 1. Welcome to the municipality of Kiruna and the tourism destination Kiruna Lapland

Ann-Christin Samuelsson, Municipality of Kiruna (presentation attached)

Monica Risenius, Kiruna Lapland (presentation attached)

### 2. Opening of the meeting June 10

Chair Monica Lejon opened the meeting and welcomed everybody.

Introduction

Minutes will be written by Satu

Participants: Not participants from Norway this time, hopefully in the next meeting. Anna Isaeva is no longer the Russian representative, the new one will be appointed soon.

Approval of the minutes from last meeting – approved

Approval of the Agenda – approved

### 3. Introduction – Information from Sweden

Erika Rosander Swedish Agency for economic and Regional Growth (presentation attached)

**Decision:** To be noted for information.

### 4. The State of Play from countries

Each participant had the possibility of breaking news from their own region/country max 5 min

Komi: The new member of the group, Konstantin Baranov introduced himself and told news from Komi republik. There's a big hot balloon festival taking place and lot of guests are expected to visit Syktyvkar. Later there will be also gastronomical event. Konstantin is also a member in the WG of Culture.

North Carelia: Tourism company Visit Carelia is being re-organized, all the destinations will become owners in the company. The North Carelia has approximately same number of overnight stays as in Kiruna. In tourism marketing North Carelia belongs to Finnish Lake Land area, co-operating with Visit Finland.

Kainuu: Area is experiencing good growth even this year. Tuomo's presentation about results of Winter Wonders 2018 Event in Brussels attached.

Finland: Tourism is still developing well, +3,1 % growth. Domestic travel is also increasing. There's the new government in Finland now and the new Minister of Economic Affairs and Employment comes from Lapland. Tourism is strongly presented in a new government programme. More money to tourism development is to be expected. Sustainable tourism and natural parks will get more attention. National tourism strategy is being updated currently, it should be ready in the end of June.

Lapland: New infographics available about the development, there's still relatively good growth, but slowing down. Uncertainty caused by Brexit has some effects for the winter demand. Turkish airlines starts a new direct connection from Istanbul in December. Lapland tourism strategy is also updated, ready in September.

Russia: Electronic visas will be piloted from the beginning of 2021. The EU and schengen countries included. but not the UK, US and Canada. The duration of the evisa will be 16 days and it will cost 50 dollars. In the beginning there will be entry points in big cities like Moscow and some other cities. No invitation needed.

**Decision:** To be noted for information.

## 5. Results from cooperation with Working Group on Transport

Progress report on cooperation with the WG of Transport and the tourism perspective in the Barents transport plan. Olivia Häggqvist, Swedish Transport Agency (presentation attached)

Main issues of the Joint Barents Transport Plan were presented in Olivia's presentation. Members of the JWGT have given output to draft separately, but not as a group. The draft has been in some respect incomplete. There was a discussion in the group about the possibility to still comment the JBTP.

Roman told that there's also the Barents Transport project in Kainuu, that is involved in updating the plan. The project manager is Jussi Huotari. The project started in January and will last three years. Jaakko Ylinampa from Lapland ELY is in charge on both projects.

**Decision:** The JWGT suggested that the chairs of the WG's should check the JBTP content before publishing.

## 6. Discussions and approval of the new action plan

See proposed Action plan

After Riga workshop the action plan has been moderated and simplified. Now it is a very focused, concrete plan for next few years, and can be followed more easily.

The action plan was approved with these slight changes:

- The transfer to the next chairmanship will be mentioned in the text
- Good communication should be highlighted and co-operation between WG's should be continued.

There was a discussion about the next steps in the WG. Next it's important to get the Norwegians more involved, because the chairmanship on the national level will shift to them next year. Regional chair will be Västerbotten.

WG should also investigate possibilities to get finance. Roman told that there won't be any earmarked money in the future, but a joint Barents funding instrument is coming. There's also some Kolarctic money left for the small seed projects (max. 100 000 €). The call will be launched in January 2020 and the applying process will be more simplified.

**Decision:** The action plan was approved with the changes mentioned

## 7. Networking dinner kl 19.30

---

## 8. Introduction June 11, kl 8.30

The chair welcomed everybody to the second day of the meeting. Guests from Västerbotten joined the meeting a bit later.

## 9. Tourism project in Kolarctic program

Anna-Mari Ruisiniemi, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten (presentation attached)

Anna-Mari is replacing Kairi Pääsuke in the JWGT. Kairi has started the work in the Ministry of Environment in Estonia.

The last call in Kolarctic program will be launched in January 2020, if the EU commission approves it. The project funding will be about 100 000 €/per project, if there's Norwegian partner. Simplified applying process.

There's only one tourism project in the Kolarctic programme now, it's called Phenomena of Arctic Nature, and project manager is Riina Tervo from the Forest administration.

**Decision:** To be noted for information.

## 10. An update on the Barents WG activities

Roman Gokkoev, International Barents secretariat (presentation attached)

Roman encouraged everybody to use website [Barentscooperation.org](http://Barentscooperation.org), because it's a very important source of information, news, events, meetings etc.

Intern Elli Alasaari produces videos to Youtube (Check the link in the presentation). Barents Youth Photography Contest winners are also published in Youtube.

**Decision:** To be noted for information.

## 11. Report to the Joint Working Group on Youth (JWGY).

Susanna Lanzt, County administrative Board of Västerbotten, JWGY (presentation attached)

There was a discussion in a group regarding youth oriented recommendations to help to make the youth perspective, issues and participation a key part of all aspects of the Barents cooperation. What recommendations our group could give?

The following suggestions were discussing as a JWGT recommendations for the youth:

- Collection of information from the youth, how can we help?
- Next theme for the photography contest
- Streaming event to the schools
- Internships etc.
- Something to do to adapt to climate change, communication is important

The book has been published: Barents - being young here

**Decision:** Monica will collect further recommendations, have email communication with participants and then send the recommendations forward to the BRYC

## 12. Cooperation with the working group on Environment

Mats-Rune Bergström, County administrative Board of Västerbotten, WGE (presentation attached)

The WGE is purely national group with several sub groups. They will report directly to the ministerial level every second year.

The group cooperates closely with the RWGE.

NEFCO is financing environment investments, provides loans

Action Plan on Climate change

Idea: Ministerial meeting together with WGE, e.g. ministers responsible on tourism in every country to meet?

How to encourage the youth to trust to the future?

**Decision:** To continue cooperation with WGE

## 13. Tourism Quality and Sustainability Programmes, Labels and Criteria in the Barents Region

A presentation and discussion of the informative “one-pager” that categorize labels and communicates them to companies and customers

**Decision:** The one-pager was approved with slight changes in order to make it more readable and the front page should have the Barents map. The one-pager will be translated also in Russia and available on the web. Further comments can be sent to Monica, deadline for them is the end of the June.

## 14. Other matters

No other matters

## 15. Date and place of the next meeting

Next meeting will be held in Stockholm on the 4th and 5th of November, 2019. Suggested points; Norwegian participation, possibility to apply Kolarctic money and concept paper for that, update of other activities, co-operation. with other WG's.

## 16. Summary and close

17. Study visits at Icehotel <https://www.icehotel.com/>, Nutti Sami Siida <https://nutti.se/> Minetour and study visit <https://www.kirunalapland.se/en/see-do/guided-tours-to-lkabs-visitor-centre/>