

PROTOCOL

BARENTS REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS

Meeting in Kajaani 22.03.2011, at 15:30

Participants (*participated):

*Hannu Heikkinen, Joint authority of Kainuu Region, FI **

*Tuomo Palokangas, Council of Oulu Region, FI **

Eija Salmi, Council of Oulu Region, FI

Sami Laakkonen, North Karelia, FI

Kari Riikonen, North Karelia, FI

Ernest A. Belokorovin, Arkhangelsk, RU

*Nikolay N. Ostapchuk, Murmansk, RU **

Mikael Bergström, Västerbotten, SE

Mårten Edberg, Västerbotten, SE

*Bo Erik Ekblom, Norrbotten, SE **

*Per Stromhaug, Nordland, NO **

Others:

Eirik Selmer, Finnmark, NO

*Ismo Vendelin, Joint authority of Kainuu Region, FI**

*Roman Gokkoev, Council of Oulu Region, secretary**

*Irina Nazarova, International Barents Secretariat**

1) Item BRWGC 1/2011, Adopting the agenda

Discussion about the agenda.

Resolution:

The agenda was adopted.

2) Item BRWGC 2/2011, Adopting the protocol

Resolution:

The item 4) of the protocol was adopted in the meeting. The protocol will be adopted otherwise in the next meeting.

3) Item BRWGC 3/2011, The composition and the mandate of the BRWGC (appendix)

Discussion about the composition and the mandate of the BRWGC

Resolution:

The composition and the mandate of the BWGRC were included in the protocol. The chair of the BRWGC will urge the regions of Lapland, Karelia, Komi, Troms and Finnmark to nominate their representatives in the working group.

4) Item BRWGC 4/2011, Name of the BRWGC.

The name of the Barents Regional Working Group on Communications describes not very well the mandate of the working group, with a main emphasis to be a regional cooperation form on transport issues. The present name seems to give quite a wrong impression that the main focus on the work of BRWGC is to cooperate on telecommunication issues.

Discussion about the name of the working group.

Resolution:

To make a proposal to the Barents Regional Committee to change the name of the BRWGC into the Barents Regional Working Group on Transport and Logistics. The resolution was adopted.

5) Item BRWGC 5/2011, Action Plan for the WG activity in 2011 (appendix)

Discussion about the Action Plan.

Resolution:

The Action Plan for the BRWGC activity in 2011 was adopted with the following additions:
- *“and sea transport” in the second last sentence of the second paragraph;*
- *“aiming at updating the Barents regional transport strategy” in the last sentence.*

6) Item BRWGC 6/2011, Barents Transport Strategy

According to the mandate that has been given by the BRC, the BRWGC should be working out a regional reflection on Barents Transport Strategy. The Barents Transport Strategy should summarize and coordinate all the national and regional initiatives and thus serve as a guideline for development of a sustainable and well-functional multimodal transport infrastructure in the region.

The STBR II –project (2003-2007) presented as one of the results of the project the document “Transport Strategy of the Barents Region 2008”. This document has had an unclear status. It has also some faults such as being mainly focused on the separate transport forms and less on the integrated systems. The document has also been based on some information that has been quite old for making a future-aiming strategy. Instead of all these faults the Transport Strategy of the Barents Region 2008 offers a good base to start a new work with the transport strategy. One of the major challenges to make a reasonable regional transport strategy is that all the important decisions about developing the transport system will be made in national level. So the Barents regional strategy has to be involved in the national strategies. Another challenge is the resources, how to finance the strategy work.

Norway is aiming to start a nationally financed pre-study about the Barents Transport strategy. The BRC has adopted, that BRWGC could work as a steering group for the Norwegian study. Some authorities represented in BRWGC are going to be also the partners in a project called Bothnian Green Corridor, which will by the project plan deal with the transport strategy of Bothnian Corridor and the NEW Corridor. The funding of these two projects are still open. After getting confirmation for these projects to be realized or not, it could be possible to consider if there is any need to go on and how to go on with the Barents Transport Strategy.

Discussion about the Barents Transport Strategy.

Resolution:

To take part in the Norwegian pre-study of the Barents Transport Strategy. To observe other projects dealing with the transport strategies in the Barents region. To find out project funding possibilities (e.g. Baltic Sea Programme and Kolarctic) to start preparations for making a regional transport strategy.

7) Item BRWGC 7/2011, other issues

No other issues were discussed.

8) Item BRWGC 8/2011, Next BRWGC meeting

Discussion about the date and the place of the next meeting.

Resolution:

The next meeting will be held on 19 October 2011 in Murmansk or Rovaniemi.