



The Barents Regional Working Group On Youth Issues

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Barents Euro-Arctic Council's Regional Working Group on Youth Issues (RWGYI) Annual Report 2011

Members of the Regional working group on Youth Issues

Maria Östensson	Sweden/Västerbotten	until June 2011
Mikael Bergström	Sweden/Västerbotten	from July 2011
Lars Miguel Utsi	Indigenous representative	Chair
Anne Kenttäkumpu	Finland/Lapland	
Lene Hansen	Norway/Troms	
Olga Pokrovskaya	Russia/Murmansk	
Anastasia Starostina	Russia/Arkhangelsk	

Secretariat

Laila Dalhaug, The Norwegian Barents Secretariat

Activities in 2011

During 2011 the RWGYI has focused on the following activities:

Ordinary RWGYI meetings

RWGYI has had one ordinary meeting which was held in Umeå on March 9th – 10th. Issues on the agenda included ongoing activities of the Working group member regions, BRYC issues and discussions about merger with the Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP). The meeting in Umeå was held back-to-back with the WGYP and BRYC.

Meetings of the Barents Youth Field Stakeholders

During 2010 a Barents Youth Field Stakeholders meeting was initiated by the Swedish chairmanship. Two more of these meetings were held in 2011 also. These meetings gathered representatives from the Norwegian Barents Secretariat, the International Barents Secretariat, the Barents Youth Cooperation Office, BRYC and the two youth working groups and the purpose was to investigate the possibilities to increase the efficiency and synergies of the work being done within the Barents Youth field.

The meetings were held in Umeå on March 9th, back-to-back with the WGYP and RWGYI meetings, and in Kirkenes on October 4-5th. The meetings identified areas where improvements in cooperation could be done. The stakeholders meetings were also arena to discuss the potential merger between the two working groups.

Merger with Working Group of Youth Policy

A merger between the RWGYI and the WGYP was suggested on the international Barents youth conference which was arranged in Murmansk in September 2009. Discussions about a merger continued and intensified in 2010 with the meetings of the Barents Youth Field Stakeholders. In Umeå in March 2011 the two working groups decided to start the process of merging with each other. Terms of References were developed based on the Plan of Action of WGYP and the Regional Youth Programme of RWGYI and finally approved by the CSO and RC in October, which formalized the merger into the Joint Working Group on Youth (JWGY). Since October the Barents youth issues have been handled the JWGY.

Support of Barents Regional Youth Council

One important task of the RWGYI has been to support the Barents Regional Youth Council (BRYC). The BRYC consists of one youth representatives from each of the Barents member regions and one indigenous representative, altogether fourteen members. BRYC aims to strengthen the youth cooperation in the Barents region.

RWGYI has been the main support of BRYC within the formal Barents cooperation and the council is funded by the member regions of the Barents Regional Council (BRC). The funding is part of the Barents Regional Youth Programme, developed by RWGYI and adopted by the BRC.

BRYC has cooperated closely with the RWGYI with information sharing and planning of activities. The members of the RWGYI have also worked much with promoting BRYC within the Barents structure.

Plans for 2012

Since RWGYI has merged with WGYP into the JWGY all planned activities for 2012 of the RWGYI have been transferred to JWGY.