

APPENDIX 1

The Barents Regional Youth Program 2011-2014

Culture and sport

Culture is a good arena for young people to meet and make contact, thereby laying the foundation for extended cooperation in all the fields of the Barents Cooperation. Young people need knowledge of the different cultures of the region and opportunities to participate in cultural exchanges.

The traditional mainstream and minority cultures need to be kept alive and the traditional forms of livelihood have to be learned by young people. There is a need for more projects and activities to combat prejudice and negative attitudes towards the indigenous peoples. The aim is to build up strong self-esteem in all minority groups in the region.

The youth programme must be used as a tool to highlight cultural diversity e.g. by facilitating dialogue and joint activities of young people from multicultural, multiethnic and multifaith backgrounds. It is an important aim to contribute to the fight against racism and xenophobia

In the field of sport, efforts should be directed towards increasing the number and scope of multilateral activities. Networks and exchange schemes between sports clubs are useful measures in this process.

Possible activities in this field:

- *cultural exchange*
- *festivals*
- *attitude campaigns*
- *training courses*

Competence and entrepreneurship

Education is one of the priorities of the Barents programme and is highly relevant to young people. It's an aim to increase the possibilities for student exchange.

Entrepreneurship is an especially important tool that encourages economic development in the Barents Region by activating young people, and must therefore be considered an investment in the future.

The Barents region gives prosperous opportunities for business development within areas as tourism, culture, IT and trading. It is also important to highlight the possibilities within traditional fisheries and reindeer herding.

Its an aim to focus on internationalisation and development of international networks between young businessmen/women and innovators.

Possible activities in this field:

- cooperation and networks between educational institutions
- network of young entrepreneurs
- exchanges between students and trainees
- meeting places like conferences/seminars
- projects to coordinate educational standards
- projects on entrepreneurship and innovation

Human Rights and Democracy

Human rights are "rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled." Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

It is of high importance that the young generations have the knowledge about human rights and the importance of fulfilling the obligations in the UNs declaration on Human Rights. The young people's right to be heard in matters concerning them and their future is important and necessary to be aware of.

Youth need experience in democratic decision-making processes too understand the benefits of the democratic societies and to start believing that you can make a difference. To engage in NGOs and be active member in an non-governmental organization gives valuable experience in putting own initiatives into life and take part in decision making processes.

Possible activities in this field:

- cooperation between NGOs
- Democracy/HR in schools
- Seminars and conferences
- Projects promoting youth initiatives
- Methodology development

Environmental issues

The environment is an area of special concern to young people as it is part of their heritage. And the northern regions are facing huge challenges due to the climate changes.

It is particularly important to protect the natural environment of the Barents Region due to its vulnerability and its importance for people in the North's quality of life. Outdoor activities, hunting and fishing are of great importance for many northerners. The areas of unperturbed and beautiful nature also give opportunities for business development within tourism and must be protected from serious damage.

The region is rich on natural recourses and gives challenges related to exploitation for instance within forestry, fisheries and mining. The region is facing both short-term and long-term environmental challenges due to oil and gas exploitation in the Barents Sea. Furthermore, the climatic changes will have huge impacts on the northern areas.

Knowledge and competence must be built up and awareness rose at the local level so that local communities can deal with minor environmental problems themselves. Young people can make an important contribution here.

Possible activities in this field:

- Information campaigns
- Conferences/seminars on environmental challenges in the arctic
- Campaigns/seminars on Energy efficiency
- Establishment of environmental NGOs and support to their right to work independently from Government structures.

Community development

Including promotion of active citizenship

Throughout history, youth around the world have demonstrated the passion and the energy to trigger social movements. Experience demonstrates that young people in general are eager to participate in activities that improve their communities and their own lives. What is missing in many cases is not motivation and interest from young people, but rather structured opportunities that help young people to develop their skills, knowledge and values necessary to build strong communities and democratic and participatory cultures. Therefore it is important to strengthen the civil society through promotion of active citizenship, volunteer work and establishment of NGOs.

The participatory aspect of membership in NGOs contributes to a heightened understanding of the forces that shape governments and societies, leading to greater transparency, accountability, and improved governance. Empowering young people to play an active role in community development allows democracy to evolve according to the needs and traditions of diverse political cultures.

Furthermore, young people need to be given the possibility to study, live, and work in the areas where they grew up. Young people should also be consulted when local problems are being identified, and their views must be listened to, understood, and taken into consideration.

Possible activities in this field:

- Promotion of Voluntary work
- Cooperation and exchange of experience between NGOs
- Contact making seminars and youth expos for NGOs
- Training courses
- Methodology development