

Working Group on Economic Cooperation (WGEC)

The BEAC WGEC met one time during 2011, on February 16 at the premises of the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications in Stockholm. The aim of this, the third, meeting during the Swedish Chairmanship was to discuss the status of the implementation of the Working Plan.

Some of the action points in the Working Plan were left as they were since no action had been taken since the last meeting. Other action points was modified due to progress in implementing the tasks, one point was removed from the Working Plan due to lack of interest in pursuing it further. (For further explanation on the each action points see the Working Plan for the BEAC WGEC 2010-2011).

The BEAC WGEC was involved in the planning of the Barents conference wich take place in the European Parliament on March 15, 2011 hosted by the EP and the Swedish BEAC Chairmanship.

The BEAC WGEC has assembled information on the state of the current cooperation between key universities in order to find out if and to what extent there exists co-operation and what possibilities there are to start or develop such a co-operation. According to Luleå Technical University it exist a close cooperation between them and Oulu University with focus on the mining industry. These universities have created a joint initiative in education in geology, mineral and engineering. This initiative is called Nordic Mining School (NMS). NMS has begun negotiations with Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim in order to start a co-operation.

Informal discussions have taken place between the Working Group and the chair of Working Group on Customs Cooperation (WGCC), Mr. Jan Sixten Pekkari. According to Mr. Pekkari, there is currently no need for any deeper co-operation between our working groups.

The BEAC WGEC was involved, in close cooperation with the County Administration Board of Norrbotten, in the planning of the 8th Barents Industrial Partnership Conference, in Haparanda in June, 2011. The following theme was discussed: Investments in the Barents Region, Ensuring the supply of qualified personnel/Labour market and Financing opportunities in the Barents Region.