

Swedish Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2017–October 2019



Barents Euro-Arctic Region

- Northern Finland, Norway and Sweden and North-West Russia
- Area of 1.75 million km² (approx. the size of Western Europe)
- About 5.3 million inhabitants



Challenges and opportunities

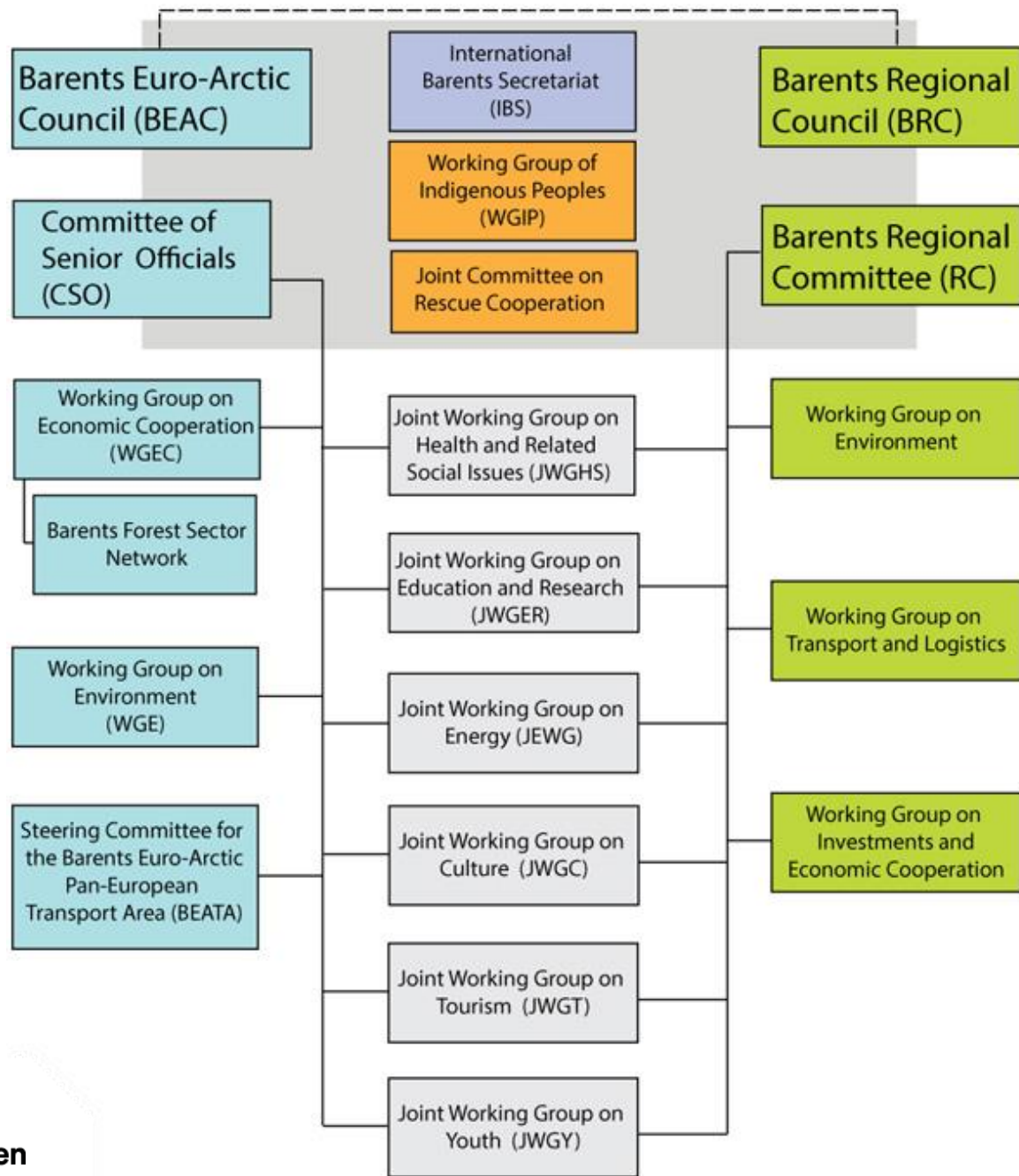
- Vast distances
- Vulnerable environment and ecosystems
- Negative demographic development
- Rich on natural resources
- High on regional innovation scoreboard
- Strong cooperation between academia and industry
- Unique technical solutions developed for ice and cold climate



The Barents Cooperation

- Established in 1993 in Kirkenes
- Members – Norway, Finland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, the EU, and 14 regions
- Objective – promote peace and sustainable regional development through cross-border cooperation and people-to-people contacts
- Unique cooperation with stakeholders on national, regional and local levels
- Unique advisory role for indigenous peoples (Sami, Nenets, Veps) in all areas of cooperation





Swedish Chairmanship Priorities



- "Regional Sustainable Development for the Future"
- Based on Agenda 2030 and SDG
- Environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainable development
- Youth
- Increased visibility



Swedish Chairmanship Priorities



Environmental Dimension

- Elimination of environmental “hot spots”
- Implementation of BEAC Action Plan on Climate Change
- Conservation and sustainable use of wetlands
- Perseveration of biodiversity and ecosystems

Social Dimension

- Youth engagement
- Promote Barents identity
- Strengthen academic cooperation and mobility
- Cooperation Programme on Health and Social Issues

Economic Dimension

- Revised Joint Barents Transport Plan
- Barents Forest Forum
- Sustainable tourism
- Strengthening bioeconomy

Visibility

- Elaborate communication strategy
- Enhance visibility on social media



Accomplishments so far



- A well-received “Youth Perspective for the Future” conference organised in Luleå in April 2018, in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of the cooperation
- Reduction of a number of environmental “hot spots”. Regional climate strategies are up and running
- Communication Strategy adopted in June 2018
- Outreach activities, e.g. Barents seminar held in Brussels in June 2018
- A search and rescue event week will be held in Kiruna in September
- A revision of the Joint Barents Transport Plan under way focused on improving east-west cross-border transport. Aim to have a priority list ready and to convene a Transport Ministerial meeting in September
- Barents Forest Forum will be held in Umeå in October
- Youth-oriented recommendations will be presented at the ministerial meeting to be held in parallel with the EU Arctic Forum, in Umeå on 3 October.
- Second Barents Scholarship for Cultural Cooperation will be awarded at the Council meeting



Thank you!



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