

RESOLUTION

of the 9th Barents Parliamentary Conference

17-18 September, Haparanda, Sweden

On the invitation of the Swedish Parliament, the Riksdag, representatives of the national parliaments of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden, and representatives of the regional parliamentary bodies of the Arkhangelsk Region, Republic of Karelia, Murmansk Region, Nenets Autonomous District, the Nordic Council, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Parliamentary Association of the North-West of Russia, the Sami Parliamentary Council, as well as invited guests and experts from relevant governmental authorities and non-governmental organisations, met on 17-18 September 2019 in Haparanda, County of Norrbotten, Sweden.

The main topic of the Conference was Connecting the Barents Region – Infrastructure for a Sustainable Future. The Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, Dr Andreas Norlén, opened the Conference.

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE

taking into account the principles and provisions of the 1993 Declaration on Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Kirkenes, Norway) reiterated in the 2013 Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation, adopted at the meeting of the Heads of Government of the members of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in Kirkenes, Norway, which forms the basis for multilateral cooperation in the Barents region;

taking into account the Resolution of the 8th Barents Parliamentary Conference (Naryan-Mar, 2017), reaffirming the importance of promoting various forms of parliamentary cooperation in the Northern part of Europe;

taking into account the programme of the Swedish Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2017-2019, focusing on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement at the regional level, with the youth perspective as a top priority;

recognizing the central role of the Barents Regional Council;

recognizing the important role of indigenous people and taking note of the IV Barents Indigenous Peoples Congress and II Barents Indigenous Peoples Summit (Lycksele, Sweden, 2019);

emphasizing the uniqueness of the Barents region in terms of climate, population, culture and industrial activity;

highlighting the need for further action aimed at harmonization and synergy within the framework of regional and cross-border cooperation between various forums such as the Arctic Council, Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Nordic Council of Ministers and Northern Dimension Partnerships;

highlighting youth as an important part of the Barents cooperation;

underlining the role of interaction with civil society and people-to-people contacts within Barents cooperation;

acknowledging the importance of respect for democratic values and human rights, lack of discrimination, gender equality and minority rights;

RECOMMEND THAT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS OF THE BARENTS REGION

Regarding cross-border cooperation and coordination within the transport sector

1. Recognize the important role of cross-border transport connections and welcome the revised Draft Joint Barents Transport Plan;
2. Welcome the outcome of the BEAC Ministers of Transport Meeting on 11-12 September 2019 in Umeå, Sweden;
3. Create an efficient and sustainable cross-border transport system in the Barents region;
4. Take the lead in implementing the 2030 Agenda, for example, Sustainable Development Goal 9 “To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive sustainable industrialization and foster innovation” and develop qualitative, reliable and sustainable infrastructure, including regional and cross-border infrastructure.

Regarding transportation and economic development in the Barents region

5. Recognize that sustainable cross-border cooperation promotes the development of industry and commerce in the Barents region;
6. Increase cross-border cooperation to stimulate entrepreneurship, especially among young people;
7. Implement initiatives within the field of transport aimed at sustainable, integrated, efficient transport systems, connecting ports, railways and road transport;
8. Increase cooperation between actors to improve logistics systems and to harmonise different modes of transport.

Regarding green transportation and sustainable solutions

9. Recognize the challenges of climate change and the need for cooperation and joint action in the transport sector in the region;
10. Recognize the need to properly and resolutely address climate change and have the ambition to develop an efficient transport system in the Barents region in order to reduce the region’s carbon footprint.
11. Cooperate in developing coordinated transport plans, while paying particular attention to the rights and traditional way of life of the indigenous peoples and to the specific climate and environmental conditions of the Barents region.

Regarding public transport, mobility and people-to-people contacts in the Barents region

12. Stress the importance of transport and infrastructure for social development and people-to-people contacts in the region, meeting the needs of both women and men in efficient transport systems;
13. Improve cross-border public transport and passenger traffic in the region to facilitate and encourage people-to-people contact and cooperation;

14. Recognize that passenger traffic is an important aspect for the development of sustainable domestic and international tourism;
15. Support activities aimed at creating effective transport systems that reflect the needs of local populations, the climate and geographical features in the Barents region;
16. Strengthen and increase coordination of mobility by facilitating exchange programmes which involve students and young people in the Barents region;
17. Continue the important cooperation on preparedness and response, such as the Barents Rescue exercise, in order to improve safety for the people and the environment.

Regarding digital mobility and connectivity, the need for intelligent transportation systems and automation

18. Acknowledge that the interconnectedness of transport and spatial planning, as well as recognize that the concept of "mobility as a service" and the promotion of environmentally friendly alternative modes of transport could contribute to sustainable development in the Barents region;
19. Cooperate across borders to develop and implement new digital ITS solutions including broadband infrastructure and telecommunication;
20. Improve digital access and solutions as a tool in improving health services and business opportunities, especially in the sparsely populated areas of the region.

Regarding road safety and vision zero

21. Increase cross-border cooperation in order to improve road safety;
22. Adopt measures to reduce mortality, recognize the concept of zero mortality in road accidents as a long-term goal along with Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 "By 2020 halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic", and strive for positive development in the region aimed at improving road safety;
23. Take appropriate measures, including promotion of emergency response systems in accidents, in order to realize the right of road users to safety and to receiving timely assistance in road accidents and other emergency situations on the roads.

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 9th BARENTS PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

Reaffirm their commitment to cooperation in order to consolidate and further develop the Barents region as a peaceful, stable, innovative and prosperous part of Europe;

Welcome the upcoming chairmanship of the Parliament of Norway of the 10th Barents Parliamentary Conference in the year 2021;

Welcome the upcoming chairmanship of Västerbotten, Sweden, of the Barents Regional Council 2019-2021;

Promote further strengthening of cooperation between parliamentarians participating in the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation.