

NEW HORIZONS IN THE BARENTS REGION

3RD PROGRAMME OF CULTURAL COOPERATION 2011-2013

"The General Assembly of the United Nations invites all Member States, intergovernmental bodies, organizations of the United Nations system and relevant non-governmental organizations to promote capacity-building, where appropriate, at all levels for the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector, in particular by encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting the development of sustainable cultural institutions and cultural industries, providing technical and vocational training for culture professionals and increasing employment opportunities in the cultural and creative sector for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development"

Resolution of the United Nations adopted by the General Assembly 20 December 2010 (2c)



Introduction

Culture plays a fundamental role in human and regional development in the Barents Region. The right to experience, enjoy and practice culture is a human right. The Programme of Cultural Cooperation 2011-2013 “New Horizons in the Barents Region” is the framework for inter-regional cultural cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. It highlights cultural diversity and the importance of culture and cultural industries as unique tools for the development of the region. The cultural potential must be recognized and utilized to the full.

This is the third cultural programme since the Barents cooperation in the field of culture started in 1993. The first programme “Voices in the Barents Region” was implemented during 2003-2006. The objectives set in the first programme have been achieved. The second programme “New Winds in the Barents Region” has proven to be successful and therefore constitutes the basis for the 3rd programme. Cultural cooperation and exchanges are as lively and vibrant as ever and the Barents region with its cultures have also gained more visibility in a European context.

Changes in the cooperation environment raise new challenges. The international and European processes offer new opportunities and challenges for future work. The mandate approved for the Working Group 2011-2013 ensures continuity as well as stability for further developing cooperation in the cultural field and for enhancing the visibility of Barents culture.

The overall objective of the Programme of Cultural Cooperation 2011-2013 is to further strengthen cultural cooperation and thus increase the impact of culture in the development of the Barents Region. The aim is to promote cultural diversity and multicultural dialogue and culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development and to create new cultural meeting places.

It is important to increase cooperation between the cultural sector and other sectors such as education, youth, business and industry. The challenge is to develop cooperation as a part of the implementation of the Northern Dimension Policy and the envisaged EU-Russia Cooperation Action Plan for Culture in interaction with other international structures, in particular the Arctic Council, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Council of Europe.

Taking into account the aims defined by the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council, the Programme will also contribute to the strengthening of the horizontal level objectives of the Barents region.

The means of cooperation include multilateral/bilateral projects, networks, exchange of best practices, capacity building and improvement of information exchange.

The Programme of Cultural Cooperation 2011-2013 “New Horizons in the Barents Region” will be found at: www.beac.st.

The Joint Working Group on Culture (JWGC) is responsible for developing, coordinating and monitoring the Programme implementation. The Programme will be implemented during a three-year period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.

1. General basis for the programme

The Programme “New Horizons in the Barents Region” is based on the recommendations of the Conferences of the Ministers of Culture (Kirkenes 1993, Arkhangelsk 1998 and Oulu 2002) and the objectives set out in the Mandate of the Joint Working Group on Culture adopted by the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council.

The Conclusions of the International Forum “Culture of the Barents Region” in Arkhangelsk 2008 further complements the basis for this programme.

The Conferences of the Ministers of Culture have stressed the importance of strengthening the common identity in the Barents region and emphasized the need to support the development of regional identity and cultures and the cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples.

The core message is to integrate cultural and economic development and to develop cultural cooperation in interaction with other international structures.

The Programme has been derived from the experiences gained in the implementation of the previous programmes “Voices in the Barents Region” and “New Winds of the Barents Region”. The programme also takes into account the Joint Communiqué issued by the Barents Euro-Arctic Council at its 11th Session in 2007 and the strategy for the Barents Region (Barents 2010) adopted by the Regional Council.

The aims in the Political Declaration and the Framework Document on the Northern Dimension Policy, the envisaged EU-Russia Culture Action Plan and the Resolution of the EU Council of 16 November 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World have been taken into account as well.

2. Objectives for cooperation

The aim of the Programme is to meet the special needs of cultural cooperation in the Barents region.

The overall objective is to further strengthen cultural cooperation and thus increase the impact of culture in the Barents Region. The target is to strengthen the cooperation with and between other working groups of the Barents Region. Taking into account the above-mentioned general basis, the objectives for the cooperation are to promote:

- cultural diversity and multicultural dialogue, thus increasing tolerance and interaction;
- culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development – focusing on the strong relationship between culture and cultural and creative industries;
- new cultural meeting places where people could interact, particularly youth

2.1. Cultural diversity and multicultural dialogue

The Barents region is a unique area in terms of both its history and its culture. It is a region with numerous cultures and languages. The wealth of the region is its cultural diversity and the cultural cooperation increases mutual understanding and respect.

In order to both increase visibility of culture and cultural heritage of the Barents region and to recognize the contribution of all cultures present in the region it is important to foster cultural diversity in a context of openness and cultural exchange, especially promoting intercultural dialogue and competence, including the promotion of the traditional cultures of the indigenous peoples in the region.

2.2 Culture as a tool for regional, social and economic development

The cultural and creative sectors contribute substantially to regional, social and economic development in the Barents region. It is important to explore and promote the role of culture in supporting and fostering creativity and innovation in the region.

An essential aspect of the cooperation is to increase contacts and develop creative partnerships between the cultural sector and other sectors such as business and industry, research and education. For instance the film and tourism industries represent great potential in the cultural sector. In the constantly growing tourism industry, culture and cultural heritage are increasingly important attractions for tourists seeking authenticity and experiences.

It is important to develop cultural tourism in ways which ensure that the indigenous and other local cultures are respected.

2.3. New cultural meeting places

People-to-people interaction is an important part of the Barents cooperation. Education, culture, sports, child and youth work and volunteer activities are some of its key components. Opportunities for people to come together in joint activities will foster mutual understanding and trust, which again will foster stability and development in the Barents region. Cultural contacts promote mutual understanding and communication.

Cultural activities create meeting places and networks, build trust and often lead to cooperation in other areas. Ensuring good living conditions for young people in the Barents region is not just a question of providing employment and health services; equally vital are good cultural services and opportunities to participate in the development of society.

Promoting cultural entrepreneurship among young people and encouraging children and young people to take part in different activities will help strengthening civil society and democracy in the Barents region.

Due to the fact that the Barents region is a geographically large and sparsely populated area, there are special needs to strengthen cultural cooperation and to create meeting places where cultural practitioners can convene to develop joint cooperation projects.

3. Activities

The objectives, which will guide the Barents cultural cooperation in the future, will be realized through the following priority activities:

- facilitating and promoting networking – especially networks between professional arts and cultural institutions (including festivals) and between these institutions and regional NGO's
- capacity building and advocating activities (training programmes)
- cooperation and exchange in the fields of arts and culture
- developing information exchange both internally and externally by utilizing new technology
- creating different kinds of new cultural meeting places where people, particularly youth, can interact. All activities shall be open for and contain participants irrespective of genders
- developing contacts and synergies with other relevant structures such as the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) and between the

regional councils in order to avoid overlapping work and to highlight the overall core objectives

- exploring financing possibilities through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)

The above mentioned activities should be open for all, irrespective of social, economical and cultural background.

The aim is to encourage joint projects and other forms of cultural cooperation, to promote contacts between regions, municipalities and cultural practitioners and the inclusion of other structures. The importance of involving young people in the cultural activities is stressed.

All objectives of international cooperation will be realized through priority-oriented multilateral projects (cultural festivals, forums, conferences, exchange programmes, exhibition, research projects) and bilateral projects in the regional and local areas.

The IBS (International Barents Secretariat) is important for the continuity of the programme and may, depending on resources, provide the JWGC with updates on basic trends and research/new knowledge in the region.

4. Monitoring

The JWGG will monitor the Programme on the basis of its objectives. Progress of the activities will be reported by the regional administrations at JWGC meetings. The JWGC will submit an annual report of its activities both to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council.

5. Funding

There are a wide variety of ways to finance the Barents cultural cooperation. The JWGC will keep in contact with and seek to obtain support for projects from existing national, Nordic, EU and international sources of financing. The responsibilities for realizing and funding of the projects rests with the implementers of the projects. The projects, including the financial resources, will be analyzed in the annual progress reports.

6. Evaluation of projects

This Programme enables for the participation of all the BEAR regions in realizing both bilateral and multilateral projects. New project ideas and proposals from the regions participating in the cultural co-operation within the framework of the Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region will be discussed at the annual meetings of the Joint Working Group on Culture (JWGC). The projects currently in the process of being realized and the results of accomplished projects will also be discussed in these meetings.

The following information concerning multilateral or bilateral projects are advised to continuously be prepared and posted at the webpage of the IBS/JWGC: www.beac.st

Project title

- Partners (participants: countries, organizations, cultural institutions),
- Background information,
- Aims and objectives,
- Plan of practical implementation,
- Place of a project realization (country, city, town),
- Time span and schedule of a project realization,
- A project budget (only a total sum and a list of the financing sources; the *main* financial source should be listed first).

The initiator of a project, currently in the process of being realized or already accomplished, is responsible for providing all detailed information about the state of affairs (achieved results and any obstacles) at the annual meetings of the Joint Working Group on Culture.

