

**JOINT WORKING GROUP ON YOUTH (JWGY) OF THE BARENTS EURO-ARCTIC COUNCIL (BEAC)**

**Terms of Reference**

Set up by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) as the Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP) in 2002 and by the Barents Regional Council (BRC) as the Working Group on Youth Issues (WGYI) in 2003, and integrated into a joint working group (JWGY) by Foreign Ministers in their XIII session in Kiruna, Sweden, October 2011.

Terms of reference valid from: **1 January 2015 until 31 December 2016**

**Main tasks**

Under the authority of the Committee of the Senior Officials of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Joint Working Group on Youth (JWGY) will further develop youth cooperation in the Barents region. Taking due account of relevant transversal perspectives, the overall aim is to stimulate co-operation between the governments and regions within the Barents region, with a view to developing youth policies which are likely to ensure young people´s successful integration into society.

With this purpose, the JWGY is instructed to [see the Plan of Action]:

* enhance the cross-sectorial youth policy
* strengthen the dialogue between the young people and the decision makers
* increase the knowledge in the current youth issues in the region by promoting the cooperation between all structures
* promote and support multilateral cooperation between youth groups and non-governmental youth organizations in the region

**Composition**

Maximum two representatives of the Ministry or governmental body responsible for child and youth policy in each member state of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council;

four representatives of the regional structures of the Barents Regional Council representing Finland, Norway, the Russian Federation and Sweden (one representative from each country);

one representative of the indigenous peoples in the Barents Region nominated by the Working Group of Indigenous Peoples.

All representatives are participating on an equal basis. The travelling and subsistence expenses of the representative(s) shall be covered by the sending organization.

The Executive Officer of the Barents Youth Cooperation Office will be invited to the meetings of the JWGY.

**Chairmanship**

The Chairmanship of the JWGY rotates among the BEAC member states every two years. In order to enhance an active participation both of the representatives of the Ministries and the regions, a system of Co-chairing should be realized.

**Quorum**

A quorum will consist of two representatives of the Ministry or governmental body responsible for child and youth policy from different countries and two representatives of the regional structures of the Barents Regional Council.

The decisions are made by consensus with the exception of those mentioned under “Specific responsibilities”.

**Working methods**

Minimum two meetings a year, two meetings in 2015, two meetings in 2016

(held in parallel with the meetings of BRYC, where possible).

All decisions shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

All relevant documents should be published at the BEAC website.

The meetings of the JWGY are held in the country holding the Chairmanship of the BEAC.

The JWGY shall report on its activities to the CSO and the BRC annually.

**Observers**

The following bodies may send representatives to the JWGY meetings:

* the European Commission
* the Council of Europe
* the International Barents Secretariat (IBS)
* the Norwegian Barents Secretariat
* Barents Regional Youth Council (BRYC)

The expenses of the representative of BRYC will be covered by the country holding the Chairmanship of the BEAC. The expenses of other observers are borne by the sending bodies.

The observers have an advisory role.

**Specific responsibilities**

*Barents Youth Cooperation Office BYCO*

The JWGY is the Steering Group of BYCO. The JWGY members representing the ministries responsible for child and youth policy in the participating countries have the responsibility for the funding of BYCO.

*Barents Regional Youth Council BRYC*

The JWGY has a supportive role towards BRYC. The JWGY members representing the regions have the responsibility to secure funding to BRYC.

*Barents Regional Youth Program*

The JWGY has a consultative role in the drafting and implementation of the program. The JWGY members representing the regions are encouraged to be actively involved with the preparation of the program in cooperation with BRYC.