



Barents Joint Working Group on Culture

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**November 27-29, 2012
Luleå, Sweden**



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Agenda

- § 1 Opening of the meeting
Joint chairing by Bendik Rugaas, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Elisabeth Lax, Head of Cultural Affairs, County Council of Norrbotten (Sweden)
- § 2 Presentation of the delegates and the work in the regions (appr. 10 minutes each)
- § 3 Minutes from the JWGC meeting in Kirkenes, February 2012
- § 4 Update from Norrbotten Chairmanship in the Barents Regional Council and Committee 2011-2013
Elena Haapaniemi, County Administrative Board of Norrbotten
- § 5 How are the plans for the Barents profiled projects during 2013 developing in your region? What cultural events in your region are relevant to highlight during 2013, the 20th Anniversary for BEAC?
- § 6 The Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC); information and possible cooperation
Bendik Rugaas, Senior Adviser, Norwegian Ministry of Culture
- § 7 Presentation of the progress in the application for the joint ENPI project
Tomas Lind
- § 8 Information about current issues regarding culture in the EU
Pia Erson, Swedish Ministry of Culture
- § 9 Other business
- § 10 Next meeting; dates, city / location and agenda
- § 11 End of meeting

§ 1 Opening of the meeting

Bendik Rugaas and Elisabeth Lax, current co-chairs of the JWGC, opened the meeting and welcomed all the participants. Bendik Rugaas presented the agenda of the meeting, paying a special attention to item 5 and reminding that it has been agreed during the last meeting of the JWGC in Kirkenes that the regions will share information about cultural events that they are going to conduct in relation with the 20th anniversary of Barents cooperation. These events will be then put together in a Barents Cultural Calendar for the anniversary of BEAR. Such calendar will be made available to all via internet.

§ 2 Presentation of the delegates and the work in the regions

2.1. Calendar of events

The participants shared the information about major cultural events that will have a Barents theme and will take place in their respective regions during 2013.

Elisabeth Lax opened the discussion presenting the overview of the events to be organized in Norrbotten. Thus, a **Festival for Children and Youth** will be organized in Luleå. It is a Theatre Festival to be held in May with theatre groups coming from the Barents region. In June, Dance and Performance Art Festival **IKRA** will take place. This festival, held in Haparanda, always has a Barents theme and the year 2013 will be no exception. In 2012, the festival was held in a reduced format due to a number of constraints, but this will not be the case in 2013, also thanks to the support provided by the County Council of Norrbotten. The **Art Biennial**, which is a part of the ENPI project, will be held in June in Luleå. At the same time, an art exhibition will be held in Havremagasinet (“the Oats Warehouse”), art gallery in the town of Boden. A two week **European Festival of the Night** will start on December 1st in Korpilombolo. This festival is about philosophy, film, art, theatre, literature and so much more. **Music on Top** festival will be organised in March. Also, Norrbotten participates in the Troms International Film Festival. **Book and Visual Arts festival** will be organised in October. Last but not least, quite a few activities will be organised within the framework of the ENPI project New Horizons 2013-2014, though the exact dates are still to be agreed upon.

Annette Kohkoinen further informed about the fact that a lot of events in Norrbotten is being organised on the municipality level. In addition, several municipalities in Norrbotten are also planning joint events with their Barents counterparts. Thus, for instance, Kiruna and Gällivare municipalities are planning joint events with Narvik.

Elisabeth Lax stressed that all the above-mentioned events will have a Barents theme.

Bendik Rugaas underlined again the importance of preparing a joint Barents Cultural Calendar and stressed that a relevant request will be sent to all the regions by the Norwegian chairmanship.

Tomi Aho from Lapland reminded about the ongoing project **Northern Beauty**. More detailed information is available on the relevant project website. Another project worth mentioning is **Raija Rock** which is taking place in October. **Path Way**, an art exhibition about changes in the ecological environment, will be organized between February 22 and May 26. Furthermore, a number of indigenous festivals will also take place, for instance the Sami arts **Ijahis Idja** and **Film Festival Skabmakovat**. Furthermore, an **International Midnight Film Festival** with a Barents theme and the annual Folklore festival **Jutajaiset**, with the participation of folklore groups from Russia and Sweden, will be organised in the course of 2013. Lapland Arts Council, together with the Finnish and Norwegian Consulates in Murmansk, will be also organising **Nordic Days** in Murmansk in April. Finally, **Finnish-Russian Cultural Days** will be taking place in October.

Anna Tomchick presented an update of the planned cultural events in the Republic of Karelia. A whole range of events is foreseen within the framework of **Cultural Days of Karelia in Northern Finland** which will last from February to November 2013. An **Epic Forum** will be taking place in June and it will include, among others, two major events : **International Song Festival** and **Festival of Traditional Finno-Ugrian Choreography**. Furthermore, a whole range of events will be organised within the framework of the ENPI project “**Network of Cultural and Heritage**



Organisations". At this stage however their exact timing is unknown since the contracts have not been signed yet.

Lev Vostryakov chose to highlight two performances, **Arctic Fairytales** to be held in January, and **Arctic Music Festival** to be organised by Arkhangelsk Philharmonic Society and to last from February to December 2013.

Ellen Østgård mentioned **Tromsø International filmfestival** that will start on January 15, 2013. Furthermore, **Nordlysfestival** will also take place in January, organised in cooperation with Mariinsky Theatre. **Arctic Art Impulse**, an event bringing together young artists from all over Barents, will be organised between February 28 and March 3, 2013. Furthermore, an indigenous peoples festival, **Riddù, Riddù**, will be held in July. **Music on Top** festival will take place during the coming year as well. Finally, **Stumfilmfestival** will be organised in September in cooperation with Russian musicians and filmmakers.

Nina Badendyck informed the participants about **Lofoten International Art Festival** to be held in September. Furthermore, **Norwegian-Russian Cultural Days** will take place on September 16-18. But the main cultural event that will unite participants from the whole BEAR, will be the **Barents Youth Film Festival**. The Festival will take place in April in Bodø, and the program will include both workshops and presentation of the movies created by young people. Also, a number of music festivals will be arranged, for instance **Narvik Vinterfestuka** (which is Norway's second oldest festival celebrating its 60th anniversary) in March and **Mo i Rana Smeltdigelen** in October.

Maria Juurikka mentioned **Children and Theatre Festivals**, as well as **Dance Festivals** to be organized in Oulu in 2013, and promised to confirm the dates at a later stage.

After these brief presentations from the participants, it has been agreed to contact the regions that were not present at the meeting in order to get the information about cultural events that these regions are planning for the year 2013. This will allow having an overall picture of the cultural cooperation in the whole of BEAR during the anniversary year. This information shall be then disseminated as broad as possible, first and foremost through BEAR official website, www.beac.st. Other possibilities, including social networks, for instance Facebook, should be explored. The County Council of Norrbotten will coordinate this work.

2.2. Barents Cultural Prize

Following a question coming from Norwegian chairmanship in BEAR and after an animated discussion, JWGC members came up with the suggestion to introduce a Barents Cultural Prize according to the following criteria and conditions.

The regional authorities in the Barents region can nominate one candidate each.

The JWGC will name 4 candidates - one from each country for the finals, with priority by number.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council will decide and announce the winner.

The prize should be biannual and will be presented by the cultural minister in the country that has the chairmanship in the Barents Region (BEAC). The prize should be named **The Barents Prize** and consist of a diploma and at least 100 000 euro. The prize should be presented at an event of some size that has a potential of getting good media coverage.

The prize intends to support and recognize extraordinary work/effort in cultural or artistic cooperation within the Barents region. The prize intends to create a stronger awareness of the Barents region and the existing cultural cooperation.

Criteria for nomination :

- The candidate can be a single person or a group, institution or organization (official or NGO);
- The candidates' efforts, work or projects should have involved partners in the regions of at least 3 Barents countries;

- The work or projects should have a clear Barents profile, or support the Barents identity. The work should be, or intend to be sustainable i.e. intend to support joint cooperation over time;
- The work should be extraordinary and of high quality and on a high cultural or artistic level.

2.3. JWGC input to the new Kirkenes Declaration

After a brief introduction made by Bendik Rugaas and having the 1993 Kirkenes Declaration as a starting point, the participants discussed the matters that should be highlighted in the new Kirkenes Declaration that will be adopted at the Prime Ministers Barents Summit in June 2013 in Kirkenes. Bendik Rugaas specified that the proposal to introduce a Barents Cultural Prize will be also included into the draft Kirkenes Declaration.

It was of general accord that BEAR should be emphasized as a region with rich cultural traditions where extended cooperation in the field of culture has always played an important role. A brief summary of what has been achieved in the field of cultural cooperation in the past twenty years could be included in the Declaration as well, along with the priority areas of cooperation for the future.

Furthermore, provision on gender equality could be included. The role of NGOs in further development and strengthening of cultural ties between the regions should be emphasized as well.

It was agreed that the following provisions should be included :

- Culture as a tool for social and economic regional development continues to be of great importance.
- It is essential to continue strengthening cultural cooperation between all the regions, and people, working in the field of culture and creative industries.
- Continued efforts aimed at strengthening the Barents identity are of vital importance. All parties should seek to enhance people-to-people cooperation, creating possibilities for people to meet and to consider themselves as inhabitants of Barents. These efforts will be further strengthened during the anniversary year through a series of cultural events across BEAR.
- The importance of cultural development and artistic development in the Barents region was found as an important issue. In parallel, exchanges between artists and their possibilities to work in different Barents countries is of importance.
- The youngsters, young people, in the cultural field (not only entrepreneurs) should be supported to develop into different sorts of artists and to have possibilities to participate in exchanges between regions.
- The cultural tourism and the cultural heritage are issues that many of the regions find of great importance and would like to emphasize in the Declaration.

One of the conclusions of the discussion was that creative industries should not be emphasised in the new Kirkenes Declaration. It is an important field, however the absence of a commonly recognised definition thereof, even within one single country, as well as the slender borderline between "art" and "industry", might result in confusion and lack of coherence.

Finally, the participants stressed the importance of facilitating travelling between country borders in BEAR. Complicated visa procedures, bad infrastructure and occasional problems with communication are still impeding efficient cooperation.

Concluding the discussion on this item of the agenda, Bendik Rugaas reminded the participants that since the first draft of the new Kirkenes Declaration will be made available earliest in the beginning of 2013, the regions are welcome to come up with additional suggestions, ideas and comments to the text until then.

2.4. Creative industries and cultural tourism

Bendik Rugaas mentioned the fact that there are a lot of discussions about creative industries on regional, national and European level, with a lot of white papers and other documents circulating.

There was quite an animated discussion concerning creative industries and difficulties when it comes to their exact definition. It is indeed a very broad term and so far there is no consensus about it. Often, it depends on the context rather than on the concrete country or region. Tomi Aho told about his personal research in this matter mentioning that he came across several dozens of definitions of creative industries. Elisabeth Lax suggested eventually organizing a special working group as to explore how to come forward in this discussion.

Bendik Rugaas also informed the participants that the Russian Ministry of Culture has been entrusted with the matters of tourism, and they are going to put a particular focus on cultural tourism, which obviously is a positive development. Here again, there are a lot of definitions of what actually is covered by the term "cultural tourism", so this remains an open question and the dialogue in this regard is ongoing as well.

The discussion further focused on cultural events organized by public organizations in different countries, and on how it often relies on the support of volunteers. Indeed, in all Barents regions, the volunteer support is very important.

Finally, the issue of financing of various cultural events, be it an important festival or a modest exhibition, remains high on the agenda. It is not always easy to find financing and it indeed represents a big challenge for implementing concrete cultural projects. There is however some positive development in Lapland in this regard, according to Tomi Aho.

§ 3 Minutes from the JWGC meeting in Kirkenes, February 2012

The minutes from the previous JWGC meeting held in Kirkenes have been adopted.

§ 4 Update from Norrbotten Chairmanship in the Barents Regional Council 2011-2013

Elena Haapaniemi informed about the activities carried out by the current chairmanship of Norrbotten in the Barents Regional Council and Committee, namely about the recently adopted Terms of Reference¹. The document provides a legal framework for the regional cooperation in BEAR, and also stipulates a number of important principles of cooperation, such as respect for human dignity and human rights, rule of law, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between men and women. The role of youth in Barents cooperation as well as the principle of gender equality are furthermore expressly stressed. Another novelty consists in the fact that from now on any organisation, institution or even a whole region that wish to actively support Barents cooperation, may do so by becoming a "cooperation partner" of the Barents Regional Council. A special framework agreement providing for such cooperation has been adopted as an annex to the Terms of Reference. The current chairmanship hopes that this will open the door for a broader cooperation on the regional level and also help implement more concrete projects.

Another task of the current chairmanship consists in drafting the proposal for a new cooperation program for Barents for the years 2014-2018. The Council Administrative Board of Norrbotten, that is currently holding the regional chairmanship, is taking this work very seriously and hopes to come up with a concise and practical program that can indeed be implemented during the coming four years. This issue will be a priority item on the agenda of the upcoming meeting of the Barents Regional Council in Rovaniemi in February 2013, and the idea is to invite all working groups, including JWGC, to actively participate in the discussion as to make the program as concrete and as adapted to the reality as possible.

Also, the current chairmanship, in close cooperation with the North Sweden office in Brussels, organised a workshop for the representatives of the academic circles in BEAR in order to, first and foremost, provide a meeting place and initiate a dialogue between the universities but also to inform about the upcoming new EU financial instrument Horizon 2020 and to mobilize the efforts as to lobby a special financing for Barents/Arctic research projects, including projects involving indigenous peoples, within Horizon 2020. The workshop, held in St Petersburg in November 2012, was a

¹ Cf. <https://www.barentsinfo.fi/beac/docs/Regioan-Council-Terms-of-Reference-2012.pdf.pdf>

success and the chairmanship now intends to closely follow up on the possible input to the Horizon 2020, this too in close cooperation with North Sweden as well as with the Barents joint working group on education and research.

Finally, the County Administrative Board of Norrbotten is planning to organise a series of open lectures, Barents Readings, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of BEAR. The topics will include various aspects of cooperation in Barents, but also the analyses of the current political and security situation in the region. Barents Readings will take place from January to May 2013 in Luleå, Norrbotten.

In October 2013, the County Administrative Board will be handing over the chairmanship to one of the regions in the Russian Federation (to be confirmed).

§ 5 How are the plans for the Barents profiled projects during 2013 developing in your region? What cultural events in your region are relevant to highlight during 2013, the 20th Anniversary for BEAC?

These issues have been discussed under § 2 of the agenda (see above).

§ 6 The Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC); information and possible cooperation

Bendik Rugaas informed the participants about the development of the discussions within NDPC.

§ 7 Presentation of the progress in the applications for the joint ENPI project

Tomas Lind reminded that during the last meeting of the JWGC held in Kirkenes, Norrbotten came up with the initiative to apply for a joint ENPI project involving as many Barents regions as possible. This initiative resulted in the project New Horizons 2013-2014. The application was filed in April 2012 and it has been approved with some adjustments in September 2012. Final negotiations and tender procedures are currently underway, and all preparatory actions are expected to be finalised before the end of the year 2012 so that the project implementation can start already in January 2013. The County Council of Norrbotten is preparing all the necessary documentation and is in charge of the follow up.

Annette Kohkoinen noted that this will be the most important ENPI project so far in terms of the budget and in terms of the participating regions. The total budget amounts indeed to 3 mln euros² and all Barents regions, except Nenets, are parties to it. A total of 25 partners plus 2 associated partners will be involved in project implementation.

Elisabeth Lax reminded that the project consists of the following five sub-projects.

1) Barents Forum for Strategic Cultural Planning and Policy Implementation

Leading representatives, heads (chiefs) of regional cultural departments, from each participating region will meet for an annual conference with the explicit aim to formulate strategies and programs for the development of cross border people-to-people cooperation. This conference will be held once a year during the project period.

2) Young Cultural Entrepreneurs for the Creative Sector

Totally 30 persons, < 30 years of age, 4 from each Russian region and 2 from each Scandinavian region, will participate in this 1-year program. Participants can be running micro-companies, working within NGOs, institutions or administration. Participants will meet in four seminars during the 1-year program. One program held in each participating country. The seminars will provide focus on enhancing the participant's skills necessary to be a successful cultural entrepreneur in the creative sector and also targeting possibilities to build networks and cross border contacts to further develop border crossing activities between the participating countries.

3) Museum Cooperation

This sub-project includes three main areas :

² After it has been subjected to a 20 per cent reduction.

- A) Increased cooperation between museums in the four countries. By joint meeting, seminars and study visits colleges from different museums will meet and study best practices, learn about each other specialties and on-going research. This will also include topics as pedagogical and technical issues.
- B) Archeological research. A special program aimed at linking up-to-date archeological research, especially from Russia, to new knowledge in Scandinavia, will be conducted. This includes seminars for specialists and researchers.
- C) Joint public programs and exhibitions. Focusing on the common subject "Rock Art", institutions from all countries will cooperate on developing a joint exhibition including photo-exhibition, performances and pedagogical programs.

4) Sound of Barents

The project will create cultural experiences for a wide audience and in different venues where choirs, young musicians, children and church musicians from all countries can evolve musically, socially and personally. The sub-project includes international youth music camps, international children's camps and church musician conventions.

5) Barents Art Biennial

Contemporary Visual Art, a Worldwide International Art Exhibition, that shows contemporary art from different parts of the world. Barents Art Biennial will take place in northern Sweden (Luleå), Finland (Rovaniemi) and Russia (Severomorsk) during 2013.

Tomas Lind further reminded that the project includes three levels :

- Immediate short-term cooperation.
- Long-term planning.
- Future cooperation.

Due to the extent of the project, there will be quite a few steering groups. Annette Kohkoinen noted that it would have been better to have less steering groups, however this is what has been agreed upon and time will tell if the chosen model will be indeed the most efficient one.

§ 8

Information about current issues regarding culture in the EU

Pia Erson provided an update on the latest developments in terms of cultural policies on the EU level. She namely presented a brief overview of the latest Communication adopted by the EU Commission on September 26, 2012 relating to promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU³. The document underlines the fact that cultural and creative sectors have a considerable impact on innovation in other industries. In fact, in the EU the cultural sector accounts for 3,3 per cent of GDP and employ almost 7 mln people. Moreover, between 2008 and 2011, employment in the cultural and creative sectors proved more resilient than in the EU economy as a whole. This new policy document comes up with a strategy as to use the maximum potential of the cultural and creative sectors in order to considerably contribute to the implementation of Europe 2020 Strategy, or, simply put, with a view to create growth and jobs. The document also outlines a number of specific financial tools, including Horizon 2020 and Cohesion Policy Funds, that should be widely used to support further development of the cultural and creative sectors, strengthening their contribution to the implementation of Europe 2020 Strategy.

§ 9

Other business

The discussion focused mainly on various Web-based tools, such as dropbox, which could be a useful instrument for the work of JWGC. Furthermore, all participants agreed that the existing official web-page of the JWGC on www.beac.st is sufficient and should be used as much as possible.

§ 10

Next meeting

The participants discussed several options for the upcoming meetings within the framework of ENPI project. It has been suggested to hold the first meeting on April 18-19 in Cortavala, Russia, and a subsequent meeting on September 18-20 in Norway. Oulu offered to host a meeting in 2014.

³ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/documents/com537_en.pdf

§ 11 End of meeting

Bendik Rugaas offered a brief summary of the meeting and expressed his appreciation of the positive development of Barents cooperation in general and of the efficient way the present meeting of the JWGC has been organised by the County Council of Norrbotten. He also told that this meeting was his last commitment within the JWGC and told the delegates of the meeting about his appreciation of all the years as a member of the work for Barents.

Elisabeth Lax expressed her gratitude to all those present for their active participation in the meeting as well as for their creativity and valuable contribution to continued successful Barents cultural cooperation. She and all the participants explained their gratitude to Bendik Rugaas for all his work in the Joint Working Group on Culture.

Luleå 2013-04-05

Elisabeth Lax

ANNEX**List of participants**

Elisabeth Lax (Norrbotten County Council, Head of Culture and Education)

Ellen Østgård (Head of Culture in Troms County)

Tomi Aho (Arts Council of Lapland, Secretary General)

Nina Badendyck (Nordland County Municipality)

Kerstin Hamre (Västerbotten, Project Manager, Culture for senior citizens / culture and health)

Anna Tomchick (Ministry of Culture, Republic of Karelia, Head of Project and Program Department)

Maria Juurikka (Council of Oulu Region, Senior Advisor on Culture and Education)

Pia Erson (Ministry of Culture, Sweden, Director)

Annette Kohkoinen (Norrbotten County Council, Development Manager)

Bendik Rugaas (Ministry of Culture, Norway, Senior Adviser)

Lev Vostryakov (Arkhangelsk region, Minister of Culture)

Elena Haapaniemi (Norrbotten County Administrative Board)

Noomi Hedlund (Norrbotten County Council, Assistant Development Manager)