



## **Minutes Joint working group on youth 2020-16-01, Oslo**

### **Participants**

Tommy André Knutsen	Norwegian Ministry of Children and Families
Torunn Skard	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Gøril Johansen	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Christine Olsson	Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society
Mikael Bergström	County Administrative Board of Västerbotten
Hanne-Sofie Roaldsen	Troms and Finnmark County Authority
Trine Grytøyr	Nordland County Authority
Åshild Opøyen	Nordland County Authority
Grigoriy Kovalev	Government of Arkhangelsk region
Ivan Zhernakov	Government of Arkhangelsk region
Tiina Moisala	Regional Council of North Karelia
Minna Mustonen	Regional Council of Kainuu
Tomas Hallberg	International Barents Secretariat
Elizaveta Vassilieva	Norwegian Barents Secretariat
Tatiana Egorova	Working Group of Indigenous Peoples
Michael Krotov	BRYC
Daria Makhotina	BRYC
Jere Juntunen	BRYC

### **Start of the meeting**

Presentation of participants

### **Selection of chair**

Tommy André Knutsen was selected to be the chair

### **Selection of secretary**

Trine Grytøyr was selected to be secretary

## **Priorities for the Norwegian Chairmanship**

Norway presented the priorities of its Chairmanship. Overall priorities are: Health, People-to-people contact and Knowledge. A purpose of the priorities is that working groups can address specific challenges related to these priorities. What challenges for youth in the Barents region should JWGY address in their work? Examples of challenges that should be addressed (list not exhaustive):

- Youth's own participation
- Support of multilateral youth priorities
- Education and work
- Mental health in the youth population
- Rights of indigenous people

It was also discussed whether it is a good idea for the group to work more policy based. The focus the last two years has mainly been on revising the group's mandate and to get the group up and running, which has been very important. Norway will take the administrative lead in presenting suggested themes going forward, but with the group's permission.

## **Youth conference**

Norway will finance a youth conference in the Chairmanship period, tentatively in the autumn 2020. Ideas for a conference were discussed, both topics and form.

## **Operationalization of the youth recommendations - how to implement them?**

Youth recommendations were presented at the end of the preceding Swedish Chairmanship. The goal of these recommendations is to ensure that youth issues are high on the Barents agenda and that they become a natural part of all aspects of the Barents cooperation. Another goal is to formalise the role of the Barents Regional Youth Council (BRYC) within the cooperation and encourage all the working groups to report on their youth-related activities in their annual reports.

In the meeting, operationalization of the following youth recommendations were discussed:

1. Invite a representative from the BRYC to take part in working group meetings on a regular basis, as an advisor.
2. Include a question in the working group annual report template, asking how the working group has included young people or worked with youth issues during the year.
  - At the beginning of discussions, election processes in BRYC were addressed
    - There are different systems in all regions. It is challenging to find a similar system for all countries. Each region in one country should use the same system.
  - Furthermore, the following areas are in need of improvement:
    - Communication between regions
    - Communication between members of BRYC and JWGY representatives
  - What can the JWGY do?
    - How can we make the elections as similar as possible? We need to find some common ground.

- National agreement on how to elect in each country one possibility
- Discussion on how the election of board members are elected
  - Every representative has a right to nominate themselves as a candidate - should be done one month in advance
  - The election is done by a democratic process within BRYC - secret vote
  - Suggestion (from Hanne-Sofie): Some members are more active than others. To improve communication, all members should be more involved in meetings and planning in BRYC. Also, share responsibility between the members to have contact with different working groups. How to make sure that the national representative on the board is connected and informed by the other regions.
    - BRYC fears this will complicate matters. The national representative in the board has a responsibility to be in close contact with the other regions in his/her country.
    - The regions should be involved in the process of electing their BRYC representative.
    - BRYC needs more active members to participate in all working groups. This is a capacity issue.
    - Make sure that the council has a complete list of members/candidates for BRYC.
  - When BRYC is advising the other working groups, could BRYC members have different areas of responsibility? Easier to attend meetings and act as an adviser. Share the list of competence areas with the JWGY.
  - Stand in representative - not all regions have a stand in. It would be good to have this back up. This would make the system more robust. Have some clear guidelines from the JWGY.
  - Could BRYC have an open meeting? Making BRYC more available for all youth. An event with input from youth in the Barents. Like an assembly (resembling Ungdommens fylkesting in Troms and Nordland).
    - There is an annual event each year, to try to engage more youth in Barents issues.
- Next meeting in BRYC will probably be in march. All regions should make sure to have their representatives ready by then.
- How do we ensure that the purpose of BRYC is fulfilled? How to take part in the policy making?
  - Questions of infrastructure, economics, education. BRYC as young people can try to affect policy making, but they need input from the JWGY and others on how to do this better or more efficient.
  - Provide the regions with their annual reports.
- Suggestion: Have a video made by BRYC representatives to sell this to the regions.

### **Conclusions/Suggestions to how to move forward:**

1. List of members/candidates for BRYC and contact person in the region [received after the meeting, on January 20<sup>th</sup>, from Elizaveta, additions to the list from BRYC is forthcoming.]
2. Each region should have a deputy/stand in member for BRYC
3. Possibly: Guidelines for election - by both regional members and members for the board

4. Norway will look into the founding documents of BRYC to see if they offer any guidance on BRYC's election principles, standardization of procedures, autonomy etc.

## **Sharing of information / upcoming events**

### ***North Karelia***

- The regional youth council have awarded 10.000 euro to arrange a youth festival, will be hosted next summer.

### ***BRYC***

- Annual event, most likely in Arkhangelsk
- GLITTER 2020, Summer School of human rights, gender equality in the high north.
- Career development project

### ***Working group of Indigenous Peoples***

- Working group of indigenous people will have a meeting in Tromsø at the end of January, and will elect a new representative for indigenous people.
- Cooperation between Sami organizations

### ***Nordland***

- High North Dialogue in March
- Environmental conference for youth
- Bodø2024 - a lot of events connected to this

### ***NBS***

- Kirkeneskonferansen and Barents Spektakel

### ***IBS***

- It is important to use the Barents secretariat's platform for information sharing
- Roman is ready to help with any sharing of videos or other information
- Assisting Västerbotten to arrange a conference in Arkhangelsk March 3rd to 5th

### ***Västerbotten***

- Youth is one of the main topics for the chairmanship of the regional council. Will continue to support BRYC. BRYC will be invited to attend committee meeting.
- Seminar on children, sports and health

### ***Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society***

- Checking funding for BRYC and other youth projects in Barents.

### ***Troms and Finnmark***

- Ungdommens fylkesting in mid February.

### ***Kainuu***

- Barents winter games in Kainuu 2020

### ***Arkhangelsk***

- Several global events in Arkhangelsk region, inviting JWGY and BRYC as guest

- April, federal forum, discussing topics for this forum. Agenda will be ready soon. Education and health are possible topics.
- In the summer there is an annual event with around 100 young people between 18 and 30 years. Discussing different international questions.
- Annual event for BRYC by the end of summer.
- Interesting experience during the last year concerning internship in a youth house in Arkhangelsk. Could this be interesting for any BRYC members or for young people from any of the Barents regions.

### **The next meeting**

The chair suggests having three JWGJ meetings in 2020.

In the next meeting, an important topic will be to discuss how far we have come in implementing the youth recommendations.

Most likely, the third meeting will be back-to-back with the youth conference mentioned above.

### **End of meeting**