



## THE BARENTS WORKING GROUPS ANNUAL REPORT

Name of the Working Group:

Regional Working Group on Investment and Economic Cooperation (RWIEC)

The current Chair and the Chairmanship period:

Jenny Mikkelsen Spring, during the Finnmark Chairmanship period.

### 1. Priorities of the Chairmanship

For several years, there has not been much activities in the RWIEC. Further the previous appointed Chair of the group, was neither asked nor informed about the proposed position. Therefore, a new Chair was nominated in May 2018 and will be the acting Chair for the remaining period of the Finnmark Chairmanship until October 2019.

Based on the introduction above, the priorities of the Chair have been to revitalize the work and activities of the group.

The priority was to review if the members still were active in the group. The result of the review, was that many of the members had changed their positions or were retired, in addition to a lack of members from several regions.

The second priority was to recruit new members for the group in cooperation with the International Barents Secretariat, and regional county administrations.

The third priority has been to secure funding for meetings in the working group. With new members, and a need to revitalize the RWIEC, it has been essential for the members to meet in person. Finnmark county confirmed to support the first meeting in 2018, in addition to two meetings in 2019.

The fourth priority was to plan the first meeting, which was conducted the 15<sup>th</sup> of November in Murmansk, during the Murmansk International Business Week.

The fifth priority is to propose a mandate based on the results of the workshop and conversations at the first meeting.

The last priorities will be to plan the meetings in 2019.

## 2. Meetings (meetings held, main topics and outcomes of the meetings)

The Chair of the RWIEC participated at the Working Group on Economic Cooperation meeting the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 and meet the members at the national level.

### **Meeting in Murmansk 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018:**

**Topic: Revitalization of the Regional Working Group on Investment and Economic Cooperation.**

#### **Present members:**

- Elena Tikhonova,
- Arja Nevalainen
- Aleksey Prosuzhyhk
- Jenny Spring

#### **Other participants:**

- Tomas Dahlman
- Tomas Hallberg
- Olga Yumatova
- Timo Leinonen

#### **Short minutes:**

- All members introduced their regions and held a presentation about the economic situations.
- Presentation from Tomas Dahlman who is the Chairman of the Working Group on Economic Cooperation during the Swedish Chairmanship.
- Workshop and conversation on the mandate for the regional working group. A draft proposal will be provided to all members.
- The members decided that the next meeting will be at the end of April 2019 in one of the capital cities, and the last in October 2019 (back-to-back with the Ministerial meeting in Umea in Sweden, when the chairmanships are rotating).

### **Planned meetings for 2019:**

- April 2019 in one of the capital cities, because it will reduce costs and time needed for travel.
- Last meeting during the Finnmark County Chairmanship period will be in October 2019 back-to-back with the Minister meeting in Umea, Sweden.

3. Other activities (projects, events, programmes etc.)

- Recruitment of new members is still an ongoing process.
- Propose a draft mandate based on the results of the workshop and conversation from the first meeting.

4. Results of the year (decisions, new initiatives, improvements)

The results of the year are that the members of the working group are recruited, active and motivated to contribute, there are secured funding for meetings, a mandate will be provided, and the group is revitalized to begin its actual work!

5. Evaluation of the work (What went well, what needs improvement)

- The recruitment process of members needs to be improved, to ensure members form all regions.
- It should be guaranteed funding available from the Chairmanship Counties for at least one meeting each year.

The results of the first meeting were good, and the members present were positive to the revitalization of the group.

6. Other

Picture of participants of the first meeting in Murmansk, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

