The Future of Youth Cooperation in the Barents Region

BARENTS REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

Tim Andersson, BRYC Chair
Joensuu 2019
BARENTS REGION POPULATION (2017):

5.2 million
2017: YOUTH POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY REGION

= 860 THOUSAND AGED 16-29
"In the period between 1990 and 2017, the young population of the Barents Region (aged 16-29) has decreased with more than 500,000."
"The only regions where the number of young people has increased, are Västerbotten (Sweden) and Northern Ostrobothnia (Finland). These regions host two of the largest universities in the Barents Region."
YOUNG IN BARENTS

- Understand the Region
  14 regions across Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia
  From Syktyvkar, Komi to Tromsø
  From Kirkenes to Petrozavodsk

- 860 000 Youth in the region

- Large industries, natural resources extraction

- Large cities such as Murmansk, 307 257 and Arkhangelsk, 348 783

- Small cities Pajala, Sweden 1 958

- Vast differences

- Local youth initiatives, local councils mandated by regulation to student organisations

- No (or little) local youth initiatives in some regions

- A interest for International Cooperation, especially on the Russian side
BARENTS REGIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- Established in 2004
- 15 representatives of their local youth community and one representative from the Working Group of Indigenous Peoples
- Meets twice per year
- The Council elects a board which manages the day to day activities
- Funded jointly by all regions in the Barents Cooperation
- Completely voluntarily
- Main goal: Prevent youth emigration and brain drain of the Barents Region
  Trough projects make the region interesting to youth
  Addressing important topics which affects youth in the Region
WHAT WE DO

ANNUAL MEETING (spring)

• The meeting is the highest decision-making body of BRYC
• All the 15 council members gather
• Adopts the action plan and budget for the given year (where to participate/what project to initiate)
• Defines the date, theme and location of the upcoming annual event
• Elects a new board and (every 2nd year) a new chair

ANNUAL EVENT (autumn)

• Gathers around 60-70 participants from 4 Barents countries (aged 18-30)
• Program involves plenary discussions, workshops, as well as social and cultural activities
• 3-4 days
• Held in a new Barents location every year
• Promotes the Barents Region
• Aims: barents friendship, improvement of language skills, inspiration from workshops and fun!
OUR PAST AND FUTURE PROJECTS

• Annual Events hosted annually with a specific theme

• Partners in a wide array of projects
  Uncapitals, Inversia Media Festival

• Current projects
  BRYC Career Development (early 2020)
  Barents Gaming Event 2019
  Barents Sexual Health Conference 2019-2020
  BRYC Indigenous Conference 2019
YOUTH POLICY

- We are the joint voice of youth in the Region
- We are the future of the Region
- Infrastructure of Peace
THE FUTURE OF COOPERATION

• Ideas and interest at an all time high
• Barents Model as a model of peace
• The connected generation
• The generation of change
• Language barrier are decreasing
• Gaming and social media is inherently a cross border activity
• Create a stable environment of cooperation and project/initiatives support
PROJECTS

- Future projects 2020- De-urbanizing – harnessing technology for a diverse regional development

Barents Youth Musical Festival

BRYC Offices

Local projects in Regions
CHALLENGES

• Legislation
• Funding
• Lack of interested youth to lead
• Lack of outreach to a wider audience
• Finding common ground
BRYC BOARD 2018-19

TIM ANDERSSON
SWEDEN
Chair

AUGUST SJØVOLL
INDIGENOUS
Deputy Chair

ALEXANDER TERENTEV
RUSSIA
Board member

JOLANDA MAGGA
FINLAND
Board member

MICHAEL KROTOV
NORWAY
Board member

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IN CONCLUSION

- **YOUTH**
  - 860,000 youths

- **THE REGION**
  - Vast, rich in natural resources

- **BRYC**
  - Youth cooperation in Barents

- **FUTURE**
  - Funding and legislation
  - Bright, what else?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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www.barentsyouth.org