



Barents Regional Youth Council

Annual Report 2015

Sunna Kokkonen

Chair of BRYC 2015

4.2.2016

For JWGY & Norwegian Barents Secretariat

## **Summary**

Barents Regional Youth Council (BRYC) is a subordinate body to the Joint Working Group on Youth by the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and Barents Regional Council. The Norwegian Barents Secretariat fulfils the secretarial and economic functions of BRYC: the task was implemented by Laila Dalhaug in 2015 (as during earlier years). BRYC's work is representing youth from all the Barents region, providing them with activities that promote good life quality, equality, tolerance and cooperation in the high north. BRYC's activities are based on the Barents Regional Youth Program.

In 2015, BRYC organized events, realized own projects and was a cooperative partner in numerous other Barents youth related projects. BRYC also represented Barents youth's opinions in various conferences and seminars.

This report consists of an overall timeline about BRYC's own activities and individual reports by the BRYC members.

## **BRYC 2015**

Sunna Kokkonen, chair, Finnish board member (Lapland)

Jaakko Joentakanen, Ms Kokkonen's stand-in (Lapland)

Tuure Vairio, representative since September 2015 (Oulu region)

Isa Tolonen (Kainuu)

Johan Berglund, Swedish board member (Norrbotten)

Alexander Falck, representative until April (Västerbotten)

Anna Valverius, representative since November (Västerbotten)

Timme Ellingjord (Nordland)

Rikke Håkstad, Norwegian board member (Troms)

Inna Fedorova, chair deputy, Russian board member (Murmansk)

Alexey Tsykarev, representative until November (Republic of Karelia)

Maksim Mashin, representative since November (Republic of Karelia)

Svetlana Guseva, representative until November (Arkhangelsk)

Anastasia Oparina, representative since November (Arkhangelsk)

Ekaterina Konevskaya (Republic of Komi)

Irena Ulyanitskaya (Nenets)

Olga Egorova, indigenous board member until October (Indigenous representative)

Natalia Nosova, indigenous board member since October (Indigenous representative)

*Note! Individual reports will be represented in this order. Not all BRYC members sent a report as they have retired from the organization during the year or have recently joined and have no activities yet.*

## **Timeline**

BRYC major events and meetings.

**April 2015:** Annual meeting in Petrozavodsk.

**June 2015:** Barents Reunion in Haparanda/Tornio; UnCapitals event in Apatity.

**July-August 2015:** Board meeting in Oslo.

**September 2015:** Barentsize education in Oulu.

**October 2015:** BEAC Ministerial meeting in Oulu.

**November 2015:** BRYC annual event and annual meeting in Inari.

### **Sunna Kokkonen: Chair, Finnish board member (Lapland)**

As the chair of BRYC, I had numerous tasks I completed throughout the year on everyday basis. I had the main responsibility of maintaining BRYC's contacts by e-mail, phone and physical meetings. I also updated BRYC's social media pages on regular basis and coordinated projects and events. Below is a specific timeline of my actions. In addition to that, I contacted BRYC members and partners on daily basis and mediated information within this network of actors. In addition to the meetings and events on the timeline, I participated in dozens of smaller meetings and discussions with BRYC members, cooperative partners, bodies BRYC is subordinate to and

regional administration representatives. There is a 3-month-long gap in my activities in summer, as I worked abroad during that time. I took care of my BRYC duties via Skype, e-mail and other telecommunication during that time.

18.3 Representing BRYC in JWGY meeting, Helsinki

23.-26.4 BRYC annual meeting, Petrozavodsk

31.7.-2.8 BRYC board meeting, Oslo

8.9 Promoting BRYC in Joint Working group of Youth of Council of Oulu region meeting

18.-20.9 Barentsize event, Oulu

30.9 Speech on behalf of BRYC for Barents Ministerial Conference, Helsinki

5.-6.10 Representing BRYC in JWGY meeting, Helsinki

14.-15.10 Speech on behalf of BRYC in Barents Euro-Arctic Council Ministerial meeting, Oulu

5.-9.11 Managing the Barents Roots BRYC annual event, Inari

### *Barentsize*

I planned, coordinated and implemented a small scale educational project together with Mr Berglund (Norrbotten). The project was funded by the Finnish Ministry of Culture and Education and it was aimed at participation-oriented youth in Oulu and Norrbotten regions. The event itself was a three-day training in project management, funding and cooperation in the Barents area. 14 people took part in the workshop.

### *Barents Roots*

I worked as the project manager for Barents Roots, BRYC annual event for 2015. The event lasted for five days and a total of 83 participants took part in it. It was organized in Inari, Finland. As the manager, I was responsible for applying for funding, finding and booking accommodation, activities and food, hiring workshop leaders and all other general tasks. I was also coordinating the participant recruitment process, organizing travels for a great percent of the total participants and responsible for the Finnish team in the event. During the event, I worked as a coordinator and completed whatever managing tasks needed, eg. timetables, transportation, cleaning, safety and good atmosphere. After the event, I reported the project together with Ms Fedorova and Mr Berglund.

### **Jaakko Joentakanen, Ms Kokkonen's stand-in (Lapland)**

When Sunna Kokkonen first asked me to join BRYC, I had no idea what I was signing myself into. But it turned out that this organization is way above average. In fact, I think BRYC offers something that very few organizations do. It offers genuine, feeling-based networking and bonding between young people from all over Barents region. BRYC is not here to change the world through some kick-ass political programs or protests. It is here to connect the future decision makers and to make the borders in Barents "disappear".

That was the first thought that came to my mind when I was asked how I feel about my first year in BRYC. So, why do I feel like this, then? I had the honour of being involved in organizing the annual event in Vasatokka, Inari with our amazing chairperson, Sunna Kokkonen. The event was about inspiring and connecting young people through activating workshops and free time –sessions. And this really worked: we did actually learn about politics, influencing, acting, media, cultures and most importantly, people.

So, this event was my main BRYC project during this past year. It was very rewarding to arrange a four-day event with all the program and practical organizing. Those short nights and big responsibility weren't always easy to handle, but in the end when we saw that people had a great time, it was worth it.

So I'm really looking forward for what BRYC yet has for me to offer. This year the most impressing thing about it was, that it really gives young people resources and inspiration to make a difference for example by organizing an event. Despite my busy schedule with school and some other organizations I'm working with, I hope that I will actively be part of this council, too.

### **Tuure Vairio, representative since September 2015 (Oulu region)**

8.9. I learned about BRYC in the meeting at Joint Working group of Youth of Council of Oulu region and I was very excited about that. I started lobbying a member (myself) for Oulu region and we got that.

8.10. Meeting at Council of Oulu Region office about BRYC. We agreed how Oulu University of Applied Sciences and Oulu University will take part in BRYC. We discussed also about the

political situation and how important it is that youth will make contacts around the region with each other.

4.-8.11. Barents Roots event. I took part in the event. That was the first time for me at any BRYC event. It was awesome, and I enjoyed my time there.

4.12. I discussed the funding of BRYC from Council of Oulu Region. I informed the BRYC Board about the results.

### **Isa Tolonen (Kainuu)**

-May: BRYC info on Kainuu Youth forum and on Kainuu future forum

-September and October: BRYC promo and info for the Youth Councils and youth workers

October 6-7th: BRYC promo and info at annual youth meeting in Kainuu

-November 4-8th: BRYC annual meeting in Inari, Finland

### **Johan Berglund, Swedish board member (Norrbotten)**

**Summary:** 2015 is my 3:rd and final year in BRYC. It has been an eventful one with countless skype meetings, project planning and networking. I have been representing BRYC regionally in Norrbotten at various events and conferences and coordinated different cross-border projects.

Below is a short summary of meetings, representation and activities that I have undertaken during the year.

**Meetings:** Attended a total of ~20 physical meetings, and a number of skype meetings during the year. Physical meetings have mainly consisted of meetings within Norrbotten with regional actors and youth workers such as Norrbottens Läns Landsting, Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten, Luleå Kommun, Nytänk, Föreningen Norden.

Out of the physical meetings 5 have been BRYC meetings. These include:

- 1. Annual meeting, 22-25/04, Petrozavodsk Russia*
- 2. Board meeting, 31/07-02/08, Oslo Norway*
- 3. Board meeting, 05/11, Inari Finland*
- 4. Council meeting, 07/11, Inari Finland*

## 5. Board Meeting, 16/01/2016, St. Petersburg Russia

**Representation:** Represented BRYC at various regional/local events and conferences in Norrbotten during the year. Some examples are:

- *Kraftsamling - a regional conference for citizens companies and decision makers in Norrbotten*
- *Cashflow - an event where young people can get help finding funding for their ideas.*
- *Barents Reunion - an annual conference in Haparanda/Tornio that highlights business, youth and entrepreneurship in the high north*
- *Nytänk final ceremony - the final ceremony of Nytänk, a project that aims to help young people realize their ideas in rural areas.*

### **Activities:**

Worked on numerous projects in various roles. Mostly on coordination and project applications. Worked on a project application for youth exchange with BYCO for Erasmus+ and planned a a project for young entrepreneurs in Sweden to start in 2016.

#### Fokus Unga Norrbotten (FUN)

Participated in the founding of FUN, a regional network for youth workers to share ideas, methods and information.

#### UNCAPITALS

Coordinated the Swedish delegation and recruited participants for the event in Apatity/Kirovsk, Russia.

#### Barentsize

Planned, coordinated and executed a small-scale project with BRYC Lapland's Sunna Kokkonen. The project aimed to increase understanding and participation in the barents cooperation for youth in the Norrbotten and Oulu regions.

#### Barents Roots (BRYC annual event)

Coordinated the Swedish delegation for the event. Also assisted in funding and reporting.

### **Timme Ellingjord (Nordland)**

#### Spring

Phone and skype-meetings with youth parliament of Nordland. *Planting the seed of what hopefully should grow into a bigger Barents Youth conference on environmental issues.*

Annual meeting were held in Petrozavodsk 23.-26.4.2015. *Trying to sell in the conference for BRYC to take a more active participation. Its decided that BRYC shall not organize the event itself, but can help with promotion, finding partners and attenders.*

#### Summer

Common meeting between the Youth parliament of Nordland and Troms held in Steigen 26. - 28. june 2015. *Attended the meeting mainly as a counsellor for the Barents Conference, but were also presenting brief information about the Barents cooperation in general. In the meeting it was decided to continue with the planning for the Barents Conference, and it was established a joint workgroup between the two parliaments.*

#### Fall

Annual Event where this year held in Inari, Finland between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> of November. *I recruited, or tried to recruit the participants from Nordland, this proved to be hard. The youth parliament itself doesn't consist of many members above the age limit of 18 years old that are set, and didn't find suitable people trough there channels. I tried to recruit trough other organisations, like the Student organisation (EO), my at the time employee; Young Friends of the Earth Norway (YFoEN/Natur og Ungdom) and universities, but to no or little use. The participants were in the end mostly recruited from people I know and trough facebook. Otherwise I also organized the travel for the participants from Nordland. I attended the event myself.*

*Except for official meetings like this, I also spread information about BRYC trough my work in YFoEN, at arrangements both in Russia, Norway, and under COP21 in Paris where I met delegates from both artic cooperation and natives from the region.*

**Rikke Håkstad, Norwegian board member (Troms)**



This year it has been difficult to do as much BRYC-related work as I had in mind when I decided to continue as a BRYC representative and board member in April. This as a result of my life situation, as I served in the army from January to December. Even though I started the year attending the annual meeting in Petrozavodsk, Russia in April. After that I have attended all the following board meetings during the year as the Norwegian representative. Unfortunately I could not attend in the annual event and the meetings that were there. It was not possible to get so many days off from work at the same time. I helped as much as I could in the recruiting of participants from Troms, Norway, and tried to find someone from Finnmark as well, but that was quite difficult this year as well. In addition to this, I have reported from my meeting to the youth Coordinator in Troms Fylkeskommune, Hanne Sofie Roaldsen. She is also responsible for the youth county council in Troms, and I was there during their annual event informing youngsters from all over the county about the Barents region and BRYC, who we are, and what we do. Many of them were under the age of 18, but very interested in our work, so hopefully many of them are potential BRYC'ers in a couple of years.

**Inna Fedorova, chair deputy, Russian board member (Murmansk)**

January-February Murmansk, Russia	Working on the project description and application form for the project UnCapitals Tour.
23-25 April Petrozavodsk, Russia	Annual BRYC meeting in Petrozavodsk. Got new responsibilities in BRYC as a deputy Chair.
3-6 May Inari, Finland	Represented BRYC in Vasatokka. There was a meeting with researcher from Oulu, who was compiling information about the youth activity in Barents Region.
8-10 June Haparanda/Tornio, Sweden, Finland	I participated in Barents Reunion Convention with a presentation about BRYC. Have found some contacts and enlighten public with our activities.
25-28 June Apatity, Russia	I was one of the UnCapitals Tour project managers in Apatity, Russia. This was an art youth conference for young professionals, specialized in mural

	art, music and video-making. I represented BRYC there, Zhanna represented BYCO, so BRYC was promoted there.
31-2 August Oslo, Norway	Board meeting in Oslo. We made preparations and discussed the annual event in Inari. It was decided that I was responsible for the Russian delegation during the event (beginning with participants, ending with visas issue and transport question).
29-30 October, Nikel/Zapolyarny, Russia	I promoted BRYC in the Cross-Border Cooperation Days in Nikel and Zapolyarny, Russia. I gained some important contacts from Alta which helped later to establish partnership for the UnCapitals Tour Project.
4-8 November Inari, Finland	The annual event of BRYC was very big this year. The Russian delegation was over 30 people. I helped Russian BRYC members with issuing visas for participants, found the Workshop leader for Comedy Theater.
26-27 November Kosice, Slovakia	I represented not only BRYC, but the whole Barents Youth in the Cross-Border Cooperation Forum in Kosice, Slovakia. This Forum was very interesting one, as the people, representing Carpathian youth there, were very interested in BRYC, in adopting experience from BRYC. Together with board members and Zhanna I collected necessary documents and sent them to the youth workers of the Carpathian Region.
14 December Murmansk, Russia	Me and Zhanna visited Student Forum in the Murmansk Arctic State University. But it was mostly for the regional active youngsters and on the university level and I didn't have presentation of whatever else.
15-16 January Saint-Petersburg, Russia	Board meeting, where we discussed the results of the 2015 year and the coming 2016 year.

**Maksim Mashin, representative since November (Republic of Karelia)**

I was elected as a representative of The Republic of Karelia, Russia late in October.

**November**

I was carefully studying previous activity of the youth council in different spheres and also on the territory of my region in particular. I presented the BRYC at the local conference dedicated to international activity of NGO's and public diplomacy which took place 24 November 2015 in Petrozavodsk.

## **December**

I written an article about the basic information and major activity of the BRYC for local youth magazine "Hyperborea" and made a presentation about the BRYC to the new members of The Youth Parliament of the Republic of Karelia.

### **Svetlana Guseva, representative until November (Arkhangelsk)**

**BRYC meetings.** I participated in BRYC meetings only 1 time in 2015 (Inari, Finland, 4-8 November) due to big amount of work and no possibility to go to BRYC meeting in April.

**The annual event.** I took part in preparations of the Annual event 2015 in Inari, Finland, 4-8 November 2015. Usually my work includes making news about the event, sharing it with colleagues and friends, publishing the information on various web-pages and on social nets. My obligations also include interviewing applicants; choosing appropriate candidates, help with visa issues, organizing the best way for travelling to the place of event, contact with BYCO office and with Barents Secretariat.

### **All the events where you represented BRYC.**

- Participated as a BRYC representative in the Arkhangelsk region Project contest and was an expert in International projects section's commission, January 2015. The contest was organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Arkhangelsk region.
- Organized the project "Russian North –Solovki Islands", 27 August – 2 September 2015, Arkhangelsk. The project was dedicated to the end of the Arkhangelsk region chairmanship in the Barents Regional Council. BRYC representatives from Västerbotten (Sweden), Nordland (Norway), Karelia and Komi (Russia) took part in the project as young leaders.
- Participated as a BRYC representative and led a delegation from the Arkhangelsk region at BRYC Annual event 2015 in Inari, Finland, 4-8 November 2015.
- Organized and participated in the III International "Belomorskiy Student Forum", 23-25 November 2015, Arkhangelsk. Organized the international section with wide participation

of young leaders. The project was also dedicated to the end of the Arkhangelsk region chairmanship in the Barents Regional Council.

- Organized Elections of the new BRYC representative from the Arkhangelsk region, 27 November 2015. Made a short report on responsibilities and the work done; told about BRYC and Barents, opportunities and perspectives of the new representative.

**All information related to BRYC you gave to different organizations/institutions.**

- BRYC presentation to students of the biggest university in the Arkhangelsk region – Northern (Arctic) Federal University – several times during a year.
- BRYC presentation during the Arkhangelsk region Project contest, January 2015.
- BRYC presentation at the Elections of the new BRYC representative from the Arkhangelsk region, 27 November 2015.

**All BRYC paperwork.** Different kind of work for the annual event and for the project “The Russian North – the Solovki Islands”, 27 August – 2 September 2015, Arkhangelsk.

**All preparations for some BRYC work.** Looking through BRYC presentation, translation, checking documents on Google. Drive, learning Barents Regional Youth Programme.

**Anastasia Oparina, representative since November (Arkhangelsk)**

*December 2015 – January 2016*

I studied different documents, web-pages, projects concerning BRYC; youth politics of Arkhangelsk region.

*Upcoming activities*

- As a BRYC representative I was invited to be an expert in International projects section’s commission of the project contest which is organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Arkhangelsk region
- I will start BRYC presentation to students of Northern Arctic Federal University and different youth organizations

### **Ekaterina Konevskaya (Republic of Komi)**

January – March 2015 – I communicated with Komi institutions of higher education, informing them about BRYC and our annual events.

April 2015 – BRYC Meeting took place in Petrozavodsk, Russia. All BRYC members participated in this meeting. We discussed forthcoming international events in the region, planned the annual event nearly in October-November and elected board members. This month is also notable for the difficult political situation in the Komi republic. Almost all local authorities were changed. I got acquainted with new local authorities responsible for the youth policy in the region.

May 2015 – I informed “new” local authorities and newspapers about BRYC meeting and forthcoming annual event and our plan for the year. This information about BRYC meeting also was given to the agency of youth Policy (cooperation partner – Irina Kazakovtseva).

June – July 2015 – Participation at the NArFU conference and presenting our regions.

August – October 2015 – All BRYC members started intensive preparation to the annual event. During the period of 1,5 months I got applications from young active people from the region who wanted to participate in the annual BRYC event. After the deadline I chose 6 best candidates with good level of English. We prepared all documents for getting visas and went to Saint-Petersburg to apply for visas. I sent invitations to all participants, local authorities and universities and asked to cover travel costs for the participants.

November 2015 – the annual BRYC event “Barents Roots” took place in Inari, Finland.

December 2015 – articles regarding BRYC event and BRYC's activity in local newspapers, institutions of higher education and to local authorities.

### **Natalia Nosova, indigenous board member since October (Indigenous representative)**

4 – 8 of November 2015 Barents Roots, BRYC annual event, organization