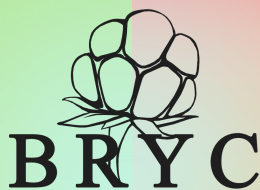
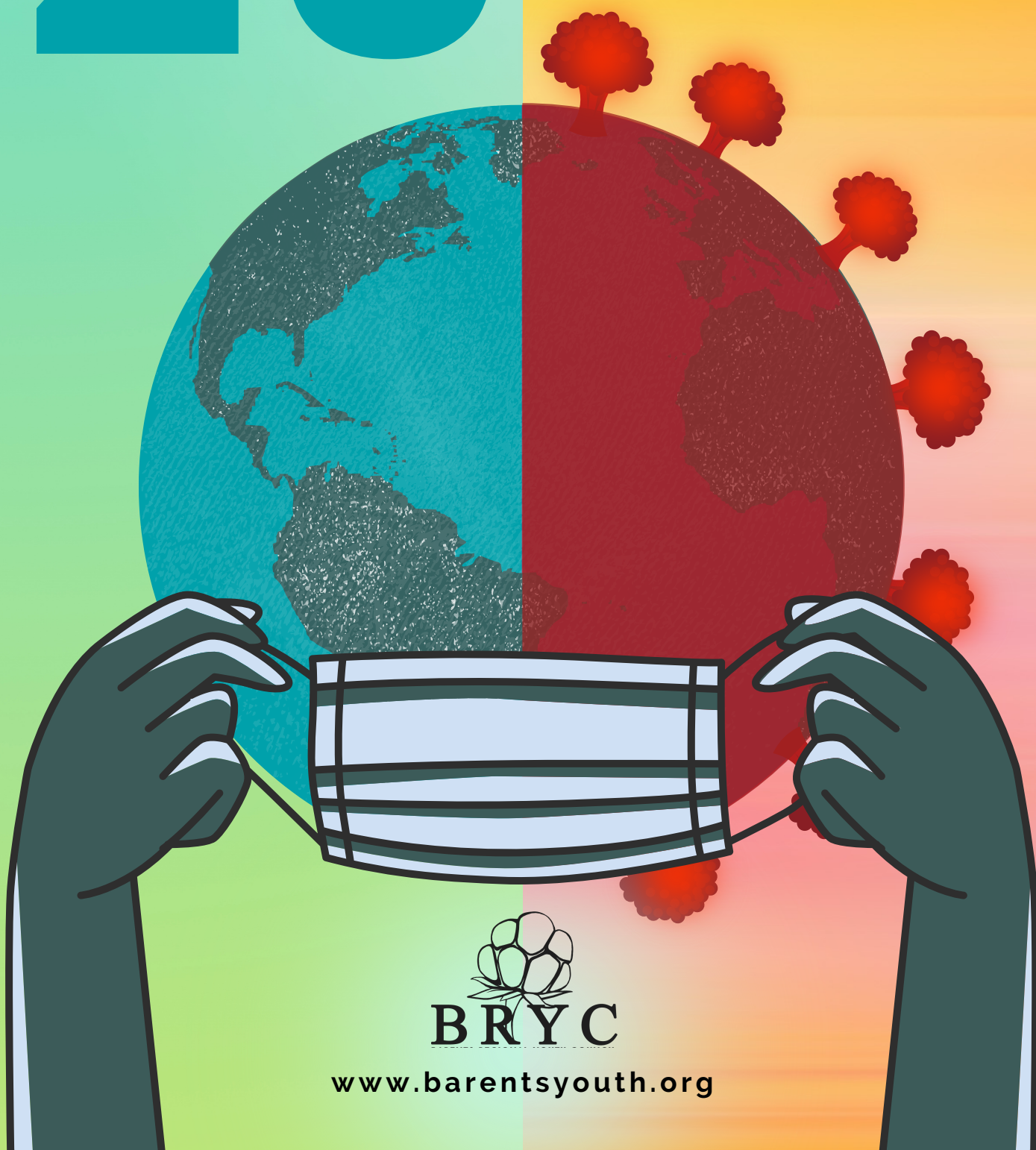


BARENTS
REGIONAL YOUTH
COUNCIL

20

20

ANNUAL REPORT



www.barentsyouth.org

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This report was prepared by Elizaveta Vassilieva, Youth Adviser at the Norwegian Barents Secretariat. The secretariat is responsible for the administration and finances of BRYC. The secretariat is also responsible for the facilitation of BRYC's meetings and annual reporting.



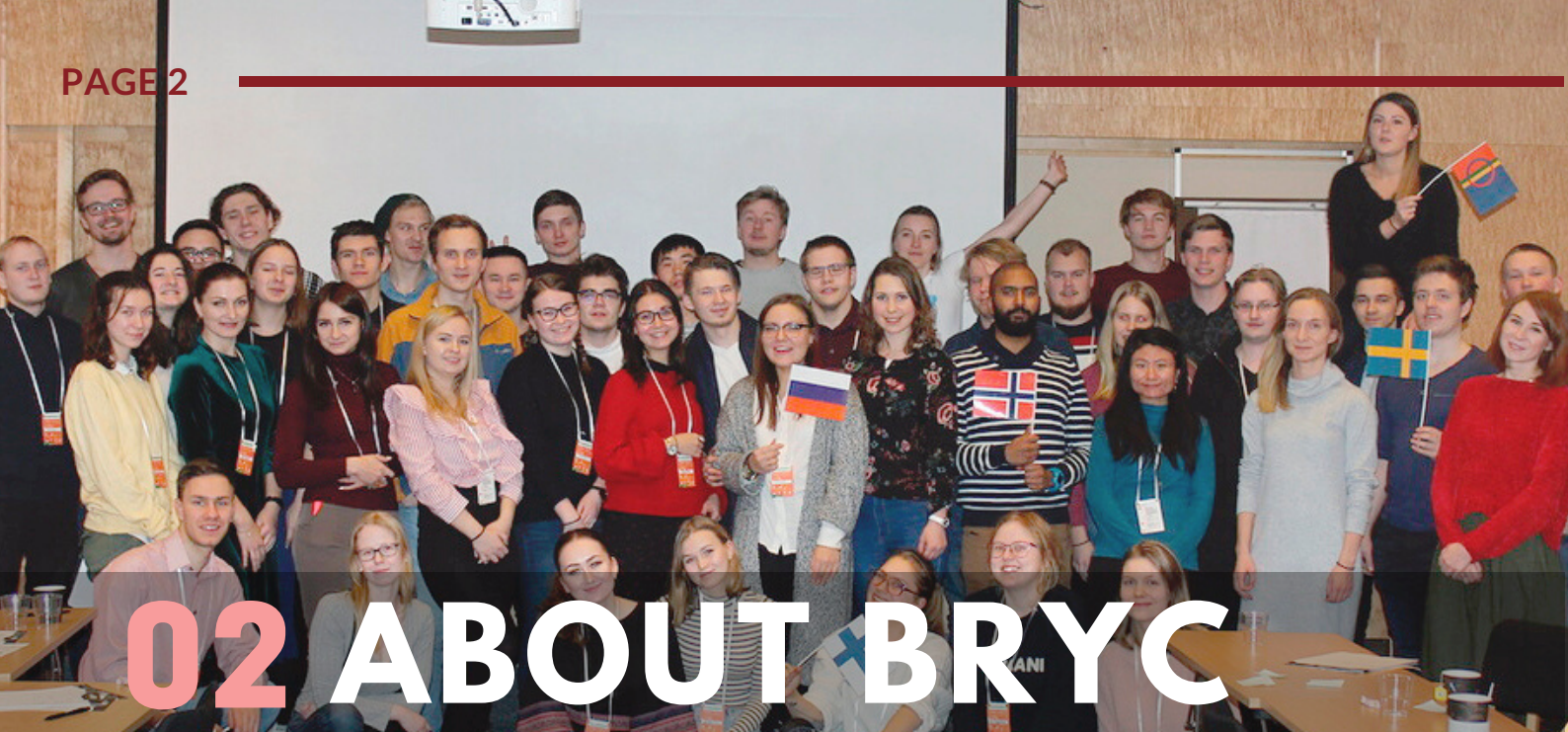
01 MESSAGE FROM THE BRYC CHAIR



2020 has become a challenging year not only for BRYC, but for us all. With such a great start and numerous opportunities for the voices of youth to be heard on various scientific and political platforms we were forced to go fully digital. We received an honour to become speakers at Arctic Frontiers conference, Kirkenes conference, held numerous workshops and seminars and provided youth with new experiences and knowledge. And even though the pandemic put a strong effect on youth cooperation, we are not giving up. We used this year for restructuring the

Council, we welcomed new members, found new partners and established new connections. We, as always, kept our focus on environment, education and career, gender equality and human rights and well-being of indigenous peoples. We truly missed each other, because the most valuable aspect of our work is to bring people together despite all the circumstances, such as weather and distances. I am happy to be the chair of such a wonderful organisation and work back-to-back with so many bright minds. We hope for the brighter future and continuation of our existing projects and seminars in a physical form. Please enjoy this annual report and don't lose us off your radars!

**DARIA MAKHOTINA
CHAIR OF BRYC
MURMANSK, RUSSIA**



BRYC (Barents Regional Youth Council) was established in 2004 to promote the interests of young people living in the Barents Region. Our mission is to strengthen people-to-people cooperation among youth and empower young people to be active participants of their societies.

BRYC's five core values are: Cooperation, tolerance, reliability, fairness and respect.

The youth council consists of 15 members from Sweden, Finland, Russia and Norway. These youths represent each of the 14 member regions of the Barents Cooperation as well as 1 person representing indigenous youth.

The council meets 2 times a year to discuss youth activities in the Barents Region, inform other representatives about the news from their regions and plan and arrange a big youth event every year.

Our main activities include the BRYC Annual Meeting (for council members) and the BRYC Annual Event (open to all youths). These activities are organized by BRYC in co-operation with various partners. Every year BRYC picks a new location for these activities.

The youth council also actively engages in other youth projects and events across the Barents Region.

BRYC is (since 2018) seen as an official member of the Barents Regional Council (BRC). This platform is our most important way of promoting youth's interests to regional and national decision makers.

BRYC's activities are funded through annual regional grants, as well as project funding. The Norwegian Barents Secretariat functions as BRYC's financial manager and youth coordinator.

THE STATE OF BARENTS YOUTH

There is no escaping the COVID-19 pandemic has been the number one issue worldwide and in the Barents Region this year. All four Barents countries have been affected by the pandemic, and everyone's first priority has been to stop the spread of the virus. Restrictive measures were put on physical gatherings, which also affected the local and regional youth councils. Social distancing became the new norm, information about handwashing was flourishing in the media, education was digitalized and public events were cancelled. Many business sectors were forced to minimize their activity, which lead to serious financial challenges and job loss across the Barents Region.

The majority of youth events planned in the Barents Region in 2020 have been cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic. With schools and universities closed, it has been challenging for local and regional youth councils to recruit new representatives. While digital technology has helped us stay connected, isolation and the lack of real interaction makes it much more difficult to reach out to young people and keep up the enthusiasm around youth cooperation. Some youth have also struggled with mental health and cyber bullying due to increased digital and social media prescence.



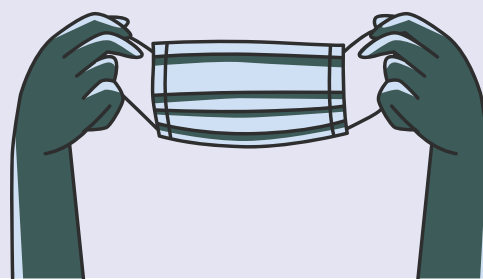
Our mission is to strengthen youth cooperation in the Barents Region and empower young people to shape the societies in which they live.

Aside from the pandemic, there are many other youth related issues currently going on in the Barents Region that are worth mentioning. Inclusive policy making has been an important topic addressed by the youth community this year. In order to ensure sustainability in our region, we need "real youth involvement" in policy making. A good example of this can be illustrated by Norway. In 2020, the Norwegian government made an innovative approach in its preparation of the Arctic whitepaper, by appointing a youth panel of 50 youths from Northern Norway to provide advice and insight in connection with this policy document. Youth is also being actively involved in the ongoing preparations for the Bodø European Capital of Culture 2024.

Finland also has some interesting developments concerning youth. Oulu is currently bidding for the European Capital of Culture 2026, and has launched an extensive campaign called "Oulu 2026", part of which focuses on youth. Workers of the city are teaching students how to participate in politics and make a change in their society. As a result, there has been a stronger focus on youth councils, something that has been very interesting and successful. In January, the Oulu Region established a regional youth council, in addition to the already existing Oulu City Youth Council. In the Lapland region, there is also ongoing work to establish a regional youth council.

Human rights and gender equality are issues often addressed by youth in the Barents Region these days. As a result, the regional governor of Västerbotten, Sweden, has expressed an interest in raising awareness around the topic of youth and gender equality. The region is now planning to organize webinars on this topic. One particular project to mention is called "Passionista" – a pilot study about increasing the number of young women in business and technology. Youth in the Murmansk region, Russia, are also actively working towards empowering female solidarity, particularly through the project "Glitter".

Environment and climate change continues to be an area of special concern for young people, and especially indigenous youth, as a part of their heritage. This topic is often addressed in both regional and national youth gatherings. Our region is facing the largest environmental problems, which is why young people want to raise awareness around this topic and learn how to make eco-friendly choices in their daily lives. In November 2020, youth from all four Barents countries participated in the digital event "ICE Global: The Green Arctic Innovation Challenge", where they developed business ideas aimed at promoting sustainable waste management.



BARENTS REGION



7 500 000

5 000 000

2 500 000

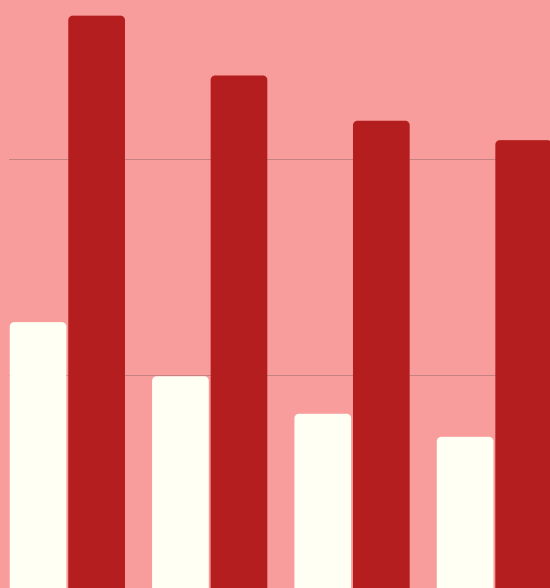
0

1990

2000

2010

2020



POPULATION

5.2 mill

Total population (2020):

1.8 mill

Population under 30 (2020):

03

MEMBERS 2020



- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 1. Alexandra Möller | Norrbotten | Sweden |
| 2. Karin Burman | Norrbotten | Sweden |
| 3. Tim Andersson (until February) | Västerbotten | Sweden |
| 4. Jolanda Magga | Lapland | Finland |
| 5. Leevi Alakörkkö | Lapland | Finland |
| 6. Riikka Karppinen | Oulu region | Finland |
| 7. Kosma Rönkä | Oulu region | Finland |
| 8. Kaisa-Reetta Seppänen | Kainuu | Finland |
| 9. Jonna Kyllönen | Kainuu | Finland |
| 10. Anna Komulainen | Kainuu | Finland |
| 11. Jere Juntunen | North Karelia | Finland |
| 12. Oskar Mannelin | North Karelia | Finland |
| 13. Juho Räsänen | North Karelia | Finland |
| 14. Daria Makhotina | Murmansk region | Russia |
| 15. Irina Zhiganova | Arkhangelsk region | Russia |
| 16. Anastasia Dmitruk | Nenets AO | Russia |
| 17. Mansur Mirzoev | Nenets AO | Russia |
| 18. Anastasia Romanova | Republic of Karelia | Russia |
| 19. Alexander Terentev | Republic of Komi | Russia |
| 20. Anette Amalie Åbodsvik Bang | Nordland | Norway |
| 21. Martin Gamst Johnsen | Troms | Norway |
| 22. Michael Krotov | Finnmark | Norway |
| 23. Rosa-Maren Magga | Lapland | Indigenous |
| 24. August Sjøvoll | Nordland | Indigenous |

BRYC BOARD 2020

1. August Sjøvoll	Chair	Indigenous
2. Michael Krotov	Deputy Chair	Norway
3. Daria Makhotina*	Board Member	Russia
4. Jolanda Magga	Board Member	Finland
5. Alexandra Möller	Board Member	Sweden

*Daria Makhotina was elected as the new chair of BRYC at the annual meeting in November, and has therefore contributed with the introduction for this report (page 1).

ADMINISTRATION

Elizaveta Vassilieva Youth Adviser, Norwegian Barents Secretariat





Meetings 2020

15 January	BEAC Committee of Senior Officials meeting - Oslo, Norway
16 January	JWGY (Joint Working Group on Youth) meeting - Oslo, Norway
21 January	Meeting about the BRYC Annual Event 2020 (online)
28 January	Barents Regional Committee Meeting (AF 2020) - Tromsø, Norway
28 January	BRYC Board Meeting #1 2020 - Tromsø, Norway
30 January	Meeting about the BRYC Annual Event 2020 (online)
9 March	Planning meeting: BRYC Annual Event 2020 (online)
5 June	BRYC Board Meeting #2 2020 (online)
9 June	Barents Regional Committee Meeting (online)
15 June	JWGY (Joint Working Group on Youth) meeting (online)
26 June	BRYC Board Meeting #3 2020 (online)
29 September	Barents Regional Committee Meeting (online)
6 October	BRYC Board Meeting #3 2020 (online)
26 October	Barents High Level Meeting (online)
10 November	BRYC orientation meeting with new members from Kainuu Region (online)
13 November	BRYC Annual Meeting 2020 (online)
9 December	BEAC Committee of Senior Officials meeting (online)
15 December	Barents Regional Committee Meeting (online)

Youth projects and other events 2020

July/November	"Glitter 2020" - Narvik, Norway - POSTPONED TO 2021
September	BRYC Annual Event 2020 - Arkhangelsk, Russia / Digital - CANCELLED
26-30 January	Arctic Frontiers 2020: The Power of Knowledge - Tromsø, Norway
12-13 February	The Kirkenes Conference - Kirkenes, Norway
1 July	Meeting of the Norwegian Govt.'s youth panel on the Arctic whitepaper (online)
7 August	Digital workshop in modern presentation technique with Snacka Snygg
30 September	Baltic Meets Arctic – Young People in the heart of sustainable future (online)

ACTIVITY REPORT

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the work of BRYC in 2020. The sudden lockdown in the middle of March put a full stop to all cross-border movement and physical meetings in the Barents Region.

Before the lockdown, the BRYC Board took part in several Barents Cooperation events. In the middle of January, the board participated in the meetings of the BEAC Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and the Joint Working Group on Youth (JWGY), both of which took place in Oslo and focused on the new chairmanship period in the Barents Cooperation. During the CSO meeting, the BRYC vice chair presented a report about BRYC's activities in 2019 and plans for 2020 to the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The presentation also included an overview of the general challenges and opportunities for youth in the Barents Region today, and the respective recommendations for the Norwegian BEAC Chairmanship period. On the following day, the BRYC board members attended the JWGY meeting, where they joined the discussion about the priorities for the new chairmanship period and gave suggestions concerning youth issues and possible activities. One of the outcomes of this meeting was a decision to organize a big multinational youth conference later in the fall. The topic chosen for this conference was "mental health among youth in the Barents Region", and it was decided that BRYC would help recruit youth participants from the four Barents countries.

The BRYC Board met again at the end of January under the Arctic Frontiers week in Tromsø. The board members took part in the conference program, the BRC meeting and hosted a youth workshop titled "The force of youth in building tomorrow's Arctic". The workshop was organized as a part of Arctic Frontiers Young in cooperation with the Norwegian BEAC Chairmanship and was meant to build awareness and create a discussion around this topic. It was divided into two sessions, focusing on the importance of the youth perspective for the Arctic region, how the young can contribute to building strong Arctic societies, as well as challenges and opportunities for the future Arctic generations. Members of the BRYC Board and the BRYC Troms representative prepared and moderated the workshop.



In February, the BRYC vice chair participated in a panel discussion at the Kirkenes Conference. The panel raised issues like education, climate change and youth migration in the Barents Region. This was the last physical event BRYC attended in before the pandemic.

After that, all of the planned activities were cancelled or put on hold until further notice. Within BRYC, there was a long period of little or no communication due to the uncertainty around postponed activities. For a while, there was hope that borders would eventually open and things would go back to normal. However, all activities from the middle of March until the end of the year were held online, including the BRYC Annual Meeting, the board meetings, as well as meetings with the Barents Regional Committee and other partners.

The BRYC Board had four meetings in 2020 – one in January during the Arctic Frontiers week in Tromsø, two in June and one at the beginning of October. An additional board meeting was planned at the end of October, but was cancelled due to limited capacity within the board. During these meetings, the board exchanged information on how the COVID-19 situation is developing in their respective countries and how this impacts the youth sector. Other issues discussed included the annual meeting and annual event, the "Glitter" project, cooperation with external partners and networks, as well as measures to organize BRYC's work in a more inclusive and transparent way. One outcome of the latter is that the all BRYC members are now invited to attend the board meetings and give their comments on the issues discussed.

In October, representatives of the BRYC Board held a presentation at the Joint National and Regional High-Level Meeting hosted by the BEAC and the BRC Chairs. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange views and best practices on strengthening and further development of the Barents cooperation during and after the pandemic. The online conference featured national and regional representatives from the BEAC member states as well as the European Union. Barents youth and indigenous peoples representatives are also taking part in the meeting.

Throughout 2020, BRYC participated in four BRC meetings, two CSO meetings and two JWGY meetings.



ANNUAL MEETING

The BRYC Annual Meeting was initially planned to be held in March, in Bodø. When the pandemic broke out, it was rescheduled to August, back-to-back with a digital workshop in modern presentation technique. Unfortunately, most of the BRYC members were eventually not able to attend the annual meeting or the workshop at that time, which meant that the meeting had to be postponed again. According to the BRYC statutes, there must be a minimum of 10 participants/regions present at the annual meeting in order for it to be approved. The digital workshop was already paid for in advance and could therefore not be cancelled, so a small group of BRYC members attended. The BRYC Annual Meeting was then finally held on November 13th, where BRYC elected a new Board, chair and deputy chair. The council members also discussed the current COVID-19 situation and plans for 2021.

ANNUAL EVENT

The the BRYC Annual Event 2020 was supposed to be organized in the Arkhangelsk region. Planning began in the first quarter of 2020 in collaboration with the Arkhangelsk regional administration. The team chosen for this year's event was career development and the event was planned to be held in the fall. The outbreak of the pandemic called for a change of plans. A physical event was no longer realistic due to closed borders. The planning committee (which consisted of the BRYC Board, BRYC's youth representative in Arkhangelsk, BRYC's youth coordinator and a representative from the Arkhangelsk regional administration) made several attempts to digitalize the event. However, as mentioned earlier in this report, due to limited capacity and uncertainty concerning some aspects of the event, the BRYC Annual Event could not be implemented this year and was ultimately postponed to 2021.



YOUTH PROJECTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Building on the success of last year's project "Glitter: Summer camp on female empowerment", BRYC was prepared to continue this work by organizing a new summer camp for youth this year. The work behind "Glitter 2020" started out in the spring. The project team, consisting of two board members and one council member, developed the project content, found an event location and established contact with partners and relevant networks. Glitter 2020 was going to raise awareness around topics like human rights, equality and female solidarity. The main event was supposed to be implemented in November, but due to the pandemic the project committee decided to postpone the project implementation to 2021, or to a time when the participants will be able to meet physically. The project committee has concluded that the digital format will not be suitable for this project, and is currently working to find a new date.

In August, the BRYC Board organized an online workshop in "modern presentation technique" for the other members of the youth council. The workshop was meant to create more interaction and learning in times of the pandemic. BRYC invited rhetoric coach from the company "Snacka Snyggt", founded by the Swedish rhetoric guru Elaine Eksvård. The workshop combined theoretical insights and practical exercises, based on improving the participant's presentation skills.

A youth panel was appointed in the spring of 2020 to provide advice and insight to the Norwegian Government in connection with the work on the new whitepaper on the Arctic. BRYC's representative from Troms took part in this youth panel and contributed with valuable input about the importance of the Barents Cooperation, and particularly the people-to-people cooperation.

In September, a few of the BRYC members took part in the webinar "Baltic Meets Arctic – Young People in the heart of sustainable future", organized by Oulu 2026.





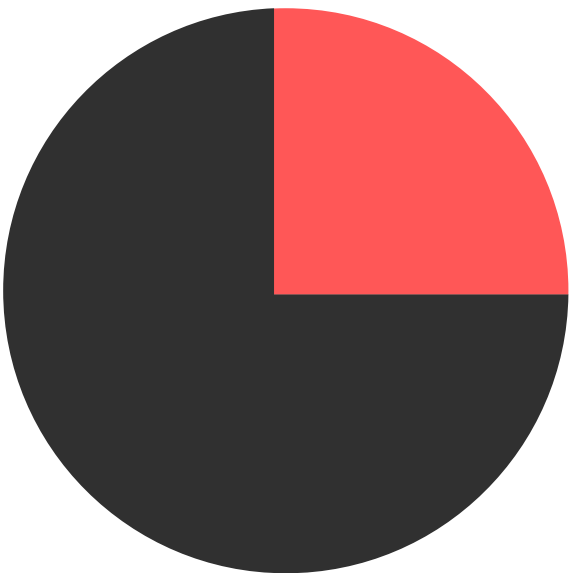
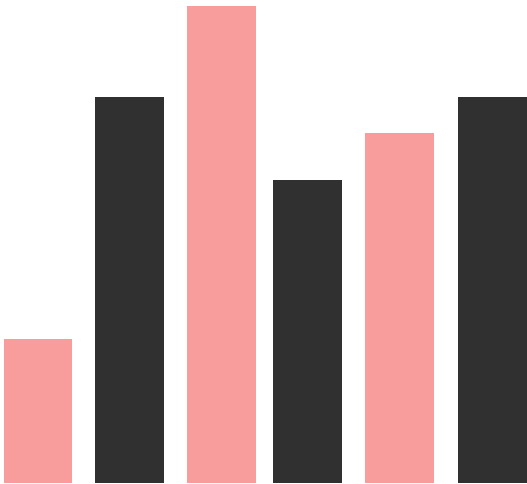
05 FINANCIAL REPORT 2020

INCOME

BRYC's main source of income is the annual regional grants. As agreed in the Barents Regional Council (BRC) and the Barents Regional committee (RC) in Kajaani May 2018, each region shall allocate 5000 EUR to support BRYC's meeting activities each year. BRYC's finances are administered by the Norwegian Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes.

During the BRC/RC meeting in in Rovaniemi May 2018, it was decided that BRYC will be granted financial support from each member region of the BRC over the period 2018-20. Regions that are legally prevented from allocating such funding shall provide a so called "in-kind contribution" equivalent to the same amount. It is up to the respective region to define the form of the contribution. Since the current funding agreement expires by the end of 2020, there is ongoing work on a renewed agreement for the period 2021-24. BRYC and the BRC have put together a task force to prepare a new strategy document: the "Barents Regional Youth Program 2021-2024". The document shall be finalized in the first quarter of 2021.

Normally, BRYC also applies for grants from other souces to cover project activities beyond the council's running costs. However, due to the pandemic and cancelled activities, BRYC did not apply for any project funding in 2020.



Comment:

The financial overview on page 13 shows that BRYC's actual income in 2020 is significantly lower than expected. This is not spcified in the financial report, because the annual grants are usually allocated after the annual report is written. This also implies that the full income for 2020 will be transferred in 2021.

EXPENSES

BRYC's expenses be divided in three main categories: 1) travel, 2) accommodation and meals, and 3) other costs. The latter includes costs like remuneration fees for workshop leaders, rent of meeting premises, meeting equipment, promotional materials and unexpected costs.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2020

Income	Budget (EUR)	Report (EUR)
Regional grants 2020:		
Regional funding 2020: Norrbotten	0	5 000
Delayed transactions from 2019/2018:		
Regional funding 2019: Västerbotten	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2019: Lapland	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2019: North Ostrobothnia	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2019: North Karelia	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2019: Nordland	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2018 and 2019: Kainuu	10 000	10 000
Regional funding 2018: Västerbotten	5 000	5 000
Regional funding 2018: Nordland	5 000	5 000
Project grants "Sexual Health Conference", Västerbotten (delayed payment from 2019)	-	3 667
SUM Income	45 000	53 667

Expenses	Budget (EUR)	Report (EUR)
Travel expenses	31 000	3 856
Accommodation and meals	30 000	1 055
Venues	5 000	0
Administration and remuneration fees	5 000	6 822
Other expenses	5 000	1 137
SUM Expenses	45 000	12 870

Result 2020

Income	45 000	53 667
Expenses	45 000	12 870
Result (Income - Expenses)	0	40 796

06 2020 IN FIGURES

30 VOLUNTEERS

Youth volunteers have worked with BRYC and Barents related issues throughout the year.



MEETINGS 22



BRYC organized and/or participated in 22 youth related meetings and events in 2020, and contributed to the involvement of youth in the Barents cooperation.



505



1093

SOCIAL MEDIA

BRYC increased the number of followers on Facebook and Instagram in 2020.

07 PHOTO CREDITS

Page	Description	Credits
	BRYC logo	Designer: Olga Egorova
	Cover page illustration	Liza Vassilieva
	Table of contents, illustration	Canva.com
	Page 1, illustration	BRYC
	Page 2, illustration	BRYC
	Page 3, illustration	Ksenia Novikova (NBS)
	Page 4, illustration	Canva.com
	Page 5, illustrations	Canva.com
	Page 6, illustrations	BRYC, NBS, High North News, Yle.fi, Nordland UFR, and private photos of the members
	Page 7, illustration	Liza Vassilieva
	Page 8, illustration	International Barents Secr.
	Page 9, Photo 1	International Barents Secr.
	Page 9, Photo 2	International Barents Secr.
	Page 9, Photo 3	International Barents Secr.
	Page 10, Photo 1	Liza Vassilieva
	Page 10, Photo 2	Ksenia Novikova (NBS)
	Page 10, Photo 3	Liza Vassilieva
	Page 11, illustrations	Canva.com
	Page 12, illustration 1	Designer: Oxana Loginova
	Page 12, illustration 2	Snacka Snygg
	Page 12, illustration 3	Norwegian MFA
	Page 12, illustration 4	Oulu 2026
	Page 13, illustration	Canva.com
	Page 14, graphics	Canva.com
	Page 17, illustration	BRYC / Liza Vassilieva

