

# BRYC 2022 Annual Report



The year 2022 was an eventful and challenging year for Barents Regional Youth Council (BRYC). It was a year filled with great plans and ambition despite at the start of the year we were still in a global pandemic. BRYC learned a lot about how to work digitally and conducting activity in a hybrid format during the pandemic and several of these new methods of working was adopted to continue working in an efficient manner. BRYC was able to connect with young people all over the Barents region despite the pandemic. Just as the pandemic restrictions started to lift in most of the Barents countries, the invasion of Ukraine took place, and changed how work in the overall Barents-cooperation as such was to be conducted. BRYC had to change the way it was working, with less activity from the Russian side. Young people are the key to secure a prosperous future for all people in the Barents region and the organizations ability to adapt and overcome in the face of challenges and change embodies the spirit of young people of the region. It has not been an easy year for the organization, but it has been able to adapt and overcome adversity and was able to organize activity for young people in the new geopolitical landscape.

## **January 2022**

- During the month of January in 2022 BRYC started its work for the upcoming year. It was still a challenge to figure out how we could continue our work during the pandemic, but the council was adamant to continue its work after the successful hybrid annual event in Kirkenes in December of 2021. The council had learned a lot about how to continue its work digitally and in a hybrid format.

## **February 2022**

- The Month of February BRYC started to prepare for a council meeting that would be held in March 2022. After Russia later invaded Ukraine, this meeting was postponed.
- In connection with Bodø becoming the European Culture Capital in 2024, Nordland County would like to establish a network of youth and people working with youth issues to create activities and projects for the youth. Nordland county invited the youth adviser from IBS to their meetings on 11th February, 28th March and 4th May. BRYC representatives from Nordland and Troms also attended these meetings. One idea that has emerged is to arrange a youth tour in Norway. The purpose of the youth tour is to give young people knowledge about international peace work in the Barents region and opportunities related to this. The purpose is also to provide young people with the tools and expertise they need to become skilled resource persons in the development of their own region. IBS was invited to these meetings as observers and to support the team with ideas and possible contact information to relevant people and organizations. This project would eventually evolve to become the Generation Barents conference in Bodø 2023.

## **March 2022**

- The month of March saw BRYC activity set on pause as the council worked on understanding how the organization was going to work in the new geopolitical framework. It was decided that we would try to have an “ad hoc” hybrid meeting in Tromsø.

- On 19th April IBS met and welcomed new BRYC members from North Karelia and introduced the Barents cooperation

### **April 2022**

- IBS met with BRYC Chair on 11 April to plan an ad hoc BRYC council meeting in Tromsø on 10th May

### **May 2022**

- Facilitated by IBS, BRYC held a hybrid (digital/physical) council meeting on 10th May from Tromsø. IBS has for this and the other similar board- and council-meetings assisted with agenda, zoom-meeting room, booking of accommodation and flight tickets, and venue for the meeting. The meeting in May was characterized by a very nice atmosphere. Some of the topics that was discussed was as follows:
- To establish a digital platform for BRYC/Barents youth. Bearing in mind the youth platform priority of the Finnish BEAC Presidency. Looking at municipalities in Nordland where they are developing an app for youth, e.g. containing info for youth on how to contact municipal services and where to find e.g. summer jobs etc. A similar app for Barents youth to be developed. Containing contacts, opportunities, promoting events etc. The idea is to be developed further.
- Look at the organization/administration of BRYC
- Develop a time wheel/calendar of events until 2025
- Develop a Barents road map
- Course for new members of BRYC
- Establish a BRYC archive
- Organize a larger event in Bodø in 2024
- Education and research

### **June 2022**

On 24th June IBS participated in a networking meeting Barents + Bodø2024 organized by Nordland County Council. Bodø2024, European Capital of Culture would like to establish a network of youth and people working with youth issues to

create activities and projects for the youth. A physical planning event of the network is planned for 21-23 October in Bodø. BRYC representatives from Nordland and Troms also attended the meeting. IBS was invited to participate as an observer.

### **July 2022**

Everyone enjoyed the summer. ☺

### **August 2022**

IBS met with BRYC chair Daria Makhotina on 16th August to discuss upcoming events in which BRYC would participate. BRYC has been approached with a proposal to cooperate by the Arctic-Barents Climate Change Adaptation Cooperation Network (ACAF) project and participation in the Arctic Circle Conference in Reykjavik.

### **September 2022**

This month was spent planning the BRYC Board meeting in October.

### **October 2022**

- BRYC Board Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022  
BRYC's chair Daria Makhotina represented BRYC at the Arctic Circle event in Reykjavik in October. On 22.-23. October BRYC Board met for their first physical board meeting since the start of the pandemic.
- During the BRYC board meeting the following things were discussed:
- Ambassador Vilén gave a 45-minute brief about the overall work in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council seen from the presidency and proclaimed his support to the work BRYC does. Vilén reminded BRYC Board their possibilities as youths to promote what they find most important in the Barents cooperation, and requested BRYC Board to consider the planning of a BRYC roundtable discussion held during the CSO friends of the Presidency meeting 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> December. The ambassador also stated that BRYC has a unique position within the Barents Co-operation, being a council consisting of youth themselves.
- BRYC Council meeting should decide name for the annual event, which should be related to the topic "The age of the climate crisis".

- There was a common agreement in BRYC Board to make the Annual wheel as one of the main “core” documents of the work in BRYC.
- Planning of Annual meeting 2022
- Adoption of Budget
- Each board-members presented a short update about BRYC-relevant work done in their respective countries.
- Sweden has in general tried to maintain some cooperation between the two Swedish Barents regions of Västerbotten and Norrbotten.
- In Finland the BRYC representative has initiated/taken part in some cooperation together with Nordic youth council.
- Norway: Highlighted Bodø 2024, ARCTIC council Pitch meeting, and Troms and Finnmark  
Anette Bang, Martin Johnsen, Åshild Opøyen and Eileen Zakariassen was appointed to the working group for Bodø 2024.  
Martin Johnsen invited to a brainstorm among the members of the Norwegian Youth Panel regarding possible youth-related priorities for the upcoming Norwegian chairmanship in Arctic Council. After this Martin brought the main outcome from this meeting to representatives from Arctic Council.

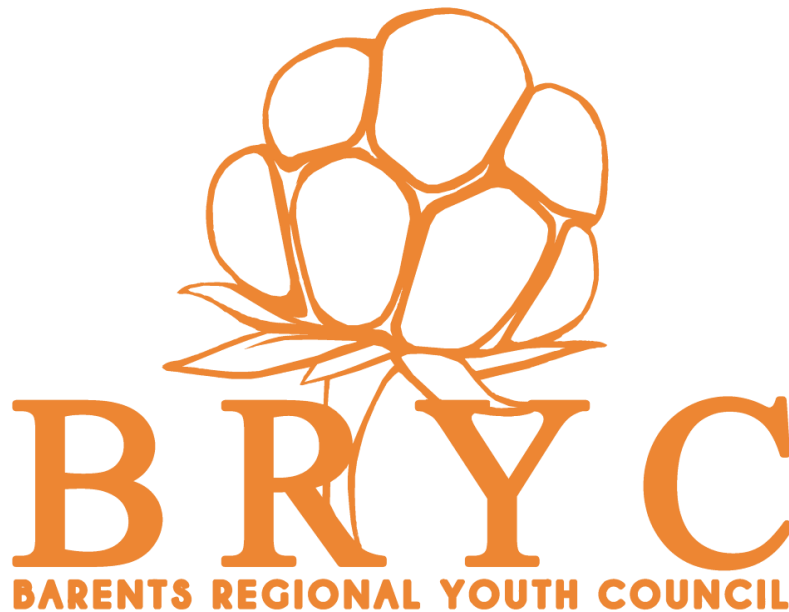
## **November 2022**

- BRYC Board meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 in Lappeenranta, Finland. On 19th-20th November the second in-person board meeting was held in Lappeenranta, were two advisers from IBS participated. The main aim with this meeting was the planning and preparation of the Annual meeting.
- The main topics that were discussed:
- Planning of Annual meeting 2022
- Discussion about BRYC Annual report for 2022
- Mapping of the funding opportunities and creation of the timeline for project applications, including NPA and Aurora-funding
- Review of Annual wheel and mapping of future meetings and events
- Education and training for BRYC Board and Council.

- BRYC's participation in Friends of the Finnish Presidency (FoP) BEAC and Friends of the Future Presidency of North Karelia (FFPNK) BRC-meeting in December
- BRYC's participation in work related to Generation Barents in April 2023
- Preparations prior to meeting with the Steering Committee on Children and Youth at Risk

## **December 2022**

- Annual Meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022 in Oulu, Finland.
- During December BRYC attended an online meeting with the Steering Committee on Children and Youth at Risk (CYAR), followed by an in-person workshop held in Rovaniemi 18th January 2023. The Annual meeting was held in Oulu 11th-12th December. During the Annual meeting an Annual wheel was adopted, according to the wishes from the council meeting in May. The main topics that have been handled by BRYC during the autumn of 2022 is the following points:
  - Planning of the Annual event 2023
  - Budgeting and remuneration opportunities for the council (BRYC)
  - Design and implementation of the Annual wheel for the work of BRYC
  - Preparation for youth Event in Bodø for Bodo2024
  - Distribution of the BRYC members in the FoP working groups
  - Mapping of the funding opportunities and creation of the timeline for project applications
  - Include NPA and Aurora-funding in the yearly funding possibilities for BRYC to consider
  - Strategy for Education and Training for BRYC members
  - Proposal for closer communication with CYAR (Children and youth at risk) working group



After a year of challenge and change BRYC Council was able to adapt and change into a stronger organization with a more robust framework. Despite the invasion of Ukraine BRYC has been able to uphold and maintain a level of activity. Several meetings with the help of IBS were conducted and the Annual Meeting was successfully completed. Several huge projects were started, that would have its completion in 2023. In the upcoming period it is planned that BRYC will participate further in work related to the preparing of Generation Barents. BRYCs Annual event is planned to be held in February 2023 in Rovaniemi. The event's cooperation partner is University of Lapland, that will support the event with a range of activities.

After a long year filled with much activity, BRYC is happy to say that it was able to start several long term projects that would give a lot of young people a better understanding for international cooperation in the Barents region. BRYC always aim to connect young people all over the Barents region despite of the circumstances and challenges we are facing. The work done in 2023 will hopefully give hope for a better future to young people in The Barents region. The council will continue its work for all youth for generations to come.

Martin Gamst Johnsen, BRYC Chair

Kirkenes, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023