

**THESIS**

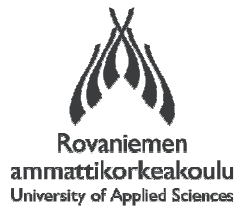
Mira Koskinen 2013

**CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION  
IN BARENTS TOURISM:  
INSIGHTS FROM FINNISH LAPLAND**



Rovaniemen  
ammattikorkeakoulu  
University of Applied Sciences  
LUC

**DEGREE PROGRAMME IN TOURISM**



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SCHOOL OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT  
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Thesis

**CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION  
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INSIGHTS FROM FINNISH LAPLAND**

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Commissioned by: BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism

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The main aim of this thesis project was to obtain a better understanding of how the tourism industry in the Barents Region could be developed through multilateral cross-border cooperation. The main focus was on discovering the needs and expectations that the tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland have. Furthermore, the thesis gives an introduction to the prevailing conditions in the Barents Region and connects them to the historical and political frameworks affecting the current matters. The theoretical underpinning of the cross-border cooperation phenomenon is introduced in a general level with paying particular attention to the European context. Moreover, as to uncover the prospective benefits and challenges of cross-border tourism cooperation, a review on the respective literature was conducted consequently supplying some critical notions and suggestions for the tourism-specific cross-border activities.

In order to uncover the needs and expectations of the tourism practitioners, an empirical research was conducted. The used research methods included semi-structured theme interviews and surveys with tourism practitioners operating in Finnish Lapland. The acquired data was categorized and both the interview and survey data were analysed using content analysis. Four data-driven focus themes were selected to address the issues, namely, forms of cooperation, knowledge and education, accessibility and facilitators. The research questions were formulated in accordance with the selected themes, including 1) Which forms of cooperation are of interest to the tourism practitioners? 2) What kind of knowledge and training is needed among the tourism practitioners? 3) Which issues related to accessibility should be tackled and enhanced in the Barents Region? and 4) Which actors are important for improving the cross-border tourism cooperation?.

The empirical findings suggest that the tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland are interested in cross-border tourism cooperation, especially in tourism product development and marketing. The findings also indicate that the tourism practitioners need further training in foreign languages and cultures, tourism marketing, information technology and business management, among other things. Russian visa, the border crossing regime, as well as the poor condition of roads and infrastructure were seen as pressing development needs in the Barents Region. Regional organizations were seen as important actors in and facilitators of the cooperation. Likewise, the involvement of the public sector was seen crucial along with the attainment of concrete results.

**Key words:** Barents Region, cross-border cooperation, cross-border region, tourism development, cross-border tourism cooperation



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Matkailu-, ravitsemis- ja  
talousala

Opinnäytetyön  
tiivistelmä

Matkailun koulutusohjelma

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Opinnäytetyön päätavoitteena oli saada parempi käsitys siitä, miten Barentsin alueen matkailualaa voitaisiin kehittää rajat ylittävän yhteistyön avulla. Tutkimuksen pääpaino oli Suomen Lapin matkailualan toimijoiden tarpeiden ja odotusten selvittämisessä. Lisäksi opinnäytetyö esittelee Barentsin alueella vallitsevat olosuhteet ja yhdistää ne historiallisiin ja poliittisiin puitteisiin, jotka vaikuttavat alueen nykytilaan. Työn teoreettinen perusta koostuu rajat ylittävän yhteistyön ilmiöstä yleisellä tasolla kiinnittäen erityistä huomiota ilmiön eurooppalaiseen yhteyteen. Selvittääkseen mahdollisia etuja ja haasteita rajat ylittävän matkailun yhteistyölle, työ tarkastelee kyseistä kirjallisuutta tehden kriittisiä huomioita ja ehdotuksia valtioiden rajat ylittävää matkailualan toimintaa ajatellen.

Empiirinen tutkimus toteutettiin selvittämään matkailutoimijoiden tarpeita ja odotuksia tulevaan matkailualan kehittämiseen liittyen. Tutkimuksessa käytettiin puolistrukturoituja teemahaastatteluja ja kyselytutkimusta, joiden kohteena oli Suomen Lapissa toimivat matkailualan ammattilaiset. Sekä haastattelu- että kyselytutkimustiedot analysoitiin sisällön analyysin avulla. Neljä aineistolähtöistä teemaa valittiin tutkimuksen kohteiksi: yhteistyömuodot, tietämys ja koulutus, saavutettavuus ja tärkeät toimijat. Tutkimuskysymykset muotoiltiin valittujen teemojen mukaisesti: 1) Mitkä yhteistyön muodot kiinnostavat matkailualan toimijoita? 2) Millaista tietoa ja koulutusta tarvitaan matkailualan toimijoiden keskuudessa? 3) Mitä saavutettavuuteen liittyviä asioita pitää parantaa Barentsin alueella? ja 4) Mitkä toimijat ovat tärkeitä rajat ylittävän matkailun yhteistyön ylläpitämiseksi ja edistämiseksi?.

Tutkimustulokset viittaavat siihen, että rajat ylittävä yhteistyö kiinnostaa Suomen Lapin matkailutoimijoita, etenkin tuotekehityksen ja markkinoinnin parissa. Tulokset osoittavat myös, että matkailualalla on suuri jatkokoulutuksen tarve muun muassa vieraisiin kieliin ja kulttuureihin, matkailumarkkinointiin, tietotekniikkaan ja johtamiseen liittyvissä asioissa. Venäjän viisumi ja rajamuodollisuudet sekä infrastruktuurin ja teiden kunto Barentsin alueella koettiin suuriksi kehittämistarpeiksi. Tärkeiksi toimijoiksi rajat ylittävälle matkailun yhteistyölle koettiin alueelliset organisaatiot. Julkisen sektorin osallistuminen yhteistyöhön koettiin erittäin tärkeäksi samoin kuin konkreettisten tulosten saavuttaminen yhteistyön avulla.

Avainsanat: Barentsin alue, rajat ylittävä yhteistyö, raja-alue, matkailun kehitys, rajat ylittävä matkailualan yhteistyö

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, international borders have been perceived as barriers for human interactions. Along with the establishment of nation-states, industries have developed in a state-centric manner leaving the border regions in a rather peripheral and marginal position. Also, the political and mental boundaries have had a tendency to obstruct cooperation, oftentimes resulting in imbalances in the use, development and management of shared resources of adjacent countries. The geopolitical changes of the past decades have, however, altered the perceptions of borders as barriers, and a shift from seeing the border regions as barriers to considering them as a potential resource to fruitful interaction has taken place. (Timothy 1999, 182; Prokkola 2008, 31–33.)

Hence, cross-border cooperation implemented between the contiguous sub-national organizational arrangements takes place in a myriad of border areas today (Perkmann 2003, 153–155). Especially in Europe, cross-border cooperation is a common phenomenon owing to the openness of the internal borders of the European Union and the European post-war trend of neoregionalism (Perkmann 2003, 157, 167; Ricq 2006, 17, 27–28; Prokkola 2008, 31, 36).

Therefore, as a result of national and regional policies promoting good neighbourly relations and contacts, the opportunities of cross-border tourism cooperation have also increased. (Prokkola 2008, 31; Timothy 1999, 182.) The Barents Region is of no exception. Indeed, the Barents Region, abundant of natural resources and characterized by pristine and exotic surroundings, offers the interregional tourism development a great platform for growth and development. (Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017; García-Rosell et al. 2013, 4.)

The Barents Region – the sparsely populated, vast territory covering the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Northwest Russia, is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a geopolitical post-war macroregion in

2013 (Arctic Centre 2013a; Plouffe 2013, 1–2). As a consequence, the 20-year-old cooperation has stimulated discussion and the pens of academics into reviewing the success of the collaboration (see Sirén 2013; Plouffe 2013). Recently, the Barents Region has also attracted more attention on the European as well as global scale due to the increasing international interest in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. Moreover, the abundance of the natural resources and their future utilization has raised also the region's importance in political agendas. (International Barents Secretariat 2012.)

The tourism industry, however, has not received similar attention despite its potential to increase economic growth resulting in increased wellbeing of the regions' inhabitants (Finnbarents 2010). Though, in a research, the tourism industry has been recognized as a tool for developing border regions (Vodeb 2010, 227). Similarly, cross-border cooperation has been noted contributing to better management of sustainability in borderland areas abundant of natural and cultural tourism resources and to the development of more sustainable forms of tourism (Timothy 1999, 183; Hall 1999, 280). That in mind, it is worthwhile to further examine the possibilities of cross-border cooperation on developing the interregional Barents tourism.

Indeed, the main aim of this thesis project was to obtain a better understanding of how the tourism industry in the Barents Region could be developed through multilateral cross-border cooperation. The main focus was on discovering the needs and expectations of the tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland. The thesis project was commissioned by an international tourism development project called BART – Public-private partnership in Barents Tourism administered by the Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences. Consequently, the results and suggestions of this thesis project are utilized for direct and indirect dissemination of the information closely related to the aims and activities of the commissioner.

The thesis first gives an introduction to the prevailing conditions in the Barents Region connecting them to the historical and political frameworks affecting the current matters. The theoretical underpinning of the cross-



border cooperation phenomenon is introduced in a general level with paying particular attention to the European context. Moreover, as to uncover the prospective benefits and challenges of cross-border tourism cooperation, a review on the respective literature was conducted consequently providing some critical notions for the tourism-specific cross-border collaboration.

In order to uncover the needs and expectations of the tourism practitioners, an empirical research was conducted. The used research methods included semi-structured theme interviews and surveys with tourism practitioners operating in Finnish Lapland. The research questions were: 1) Which forms of cooperation are of interest to the tourism practitioners? 2) What kind of knowledge and training is needed among the tourism practitioners? 3) Which issues related to accessibility should be tackled and enhanced in the Barents Region? and 4) Which actors are important for improving the cross-border tourism cooperation?.

The empirical findings are presented in the latter part of this thesis. Similarly, the evaluated implications and drawn conclusions are found at the end of this paper.

## 2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

### 2.1 Outlook on the Barents Region

The Barents Region, officially referred to as the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR), comprises the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Northwest Russia (Figure 1) (Arctic Centre 2013a). Covering a territory of approximately 1.75 million square kilometres, three times the size of France, the Barents region is the largest European region for interregional cooperation (Barents 2013; Arctic Centre 2013a; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a). The region extends from the Norwegian Sea to the Urals including thirteen sub-national regions, namely, Finnmark, Troms and Nordland in Norway, Norrbotten and Västerbotten in Sweden, Lapland, Oulu and Kainuu in Finland and Murmansk, Karelia, Arkhangelsk, Nenets and Komi in Russia (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a; Arctic Centre 2013a; Rafaelsen 2010, 25). The biggest population centres in the Barents Region are the towns of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk in Russia and Oulu and Umeå in the Nordic part of the region (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a).



Figure 1. The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (Indigenous Entrepreneurship 2013)

Nonetheless, the vast region is sparsely populated with approximately 5.3 million inhabitants – 75 percent of the territory and population being Russian (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a; Arctic Centre 2013a; Plouffe 2013, 1; County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2013). The region is also home to several indigenous peoples, including the Sami of around 60 000 people, the Nenets totalling around 7000 people and the Vepsians with altogether 6000 people living within the Barents Region. Also, a minority group of Komi people inhabit the Russian part of the Barents. (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a; Arctic Centre 2013a; The Norwegian Barents Secretariat 2013.)

Consequently, different languages, distinctive cultural traditions as well as diverged socio-economic features are characteristic of the extensive territory of the Barents Region (Pettersen 2002, 15). Also, two different kinds of economic and political systems prevail within the Barents Region, namely, the Nordic commonwealth and Russia. Similarly, differences in the forms of state power and civil society take place within the region. (The Barents History Book and Encyclopedia Project 2013; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013b.) Adding to the discrepancies, the region is home to both members and non-members of supranational institutions such as the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Also, each of the four nation-states is trading in the global markets with different currencies, distinct business traditions and numerous alliances. Characterized by the salient heterogeneity, the Barents Region is nowadays considered a post-modern macro-region stimulated by the post-war trend of European integration and regionalization. (The Barents History Book and Encyclopedia Project 2013; Plouffe 2013, 1; Heininen 1997, 239–240.)

Furthermore, being such an extensive region with dispersed population, there is a considerable gap in the standards of living, life expectancy, social security and other social matters between the inhabitants of the Barents Region (Tennberg–Riabova–Espirito 2012, 17; Pokka 1997, 24; Lassinantti 2013). In addition, migration possesses considerable challenges, especially as the population is the main resource of the region, skilful labour force

representing an essential asset. (The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 4; Wiberg 2013; Lassinantti 2013.)

Nevertheless, both challenges and opportunities can be found from the region. Namely, the region possesses an incredible wealth of natural resources such as gas, oil, minerals, diamonds, timber and fish (Arctic Centre 2013a; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a; Mälkki 1997, 71–77; Tennberg–Riabova–Espiritu 2012, 17) as well as high quality human resources, processing and engineering industries, prominent education and research institutions and scientific centres (The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 12; County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2013; International Barents Secretariat 2012). The potential of the abundant resources yet remains unexploited to a great extent. Indeed, the future development of the region lies much on the natural resource and knowledge-based economies. (Mälkki 1997, 71–77; Tennberg–Riabova–Espiritu 2012, 17; Plouffe 2013, 1; The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 4.)

The traditional livelihoods, nonetheless, are still fostered in the region. Especially reindeer husbandry, fishing and hunting are still practised by the indigenous peoples in the northern areas. (Heininen 1997, 226; The Norwegian Barents Secretariat 2013; Henriksen 2010, 95.) The member regions share also many similarities such as harsh Arctic climate, unique nature and vulnerable environment, vast wilderness and tundra landscapes as well as remoteness and long distances (County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2013; International Barents Secretariat 2012; The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 3). In addition to posing challenges, the similar preconditions within the Barents Region hold potential for mutual cooperation in several fields as well as new innovations concerning the industries and living conditions in the region (The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 3; County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2013). In particular, the unique features of the Barents Region offer tourism industry an outstanding and original platform for development and growth (García-Rosell et al. 2013, 4).

## **2.2 Tourism in the Barents Region**

Indeed, tourism plays an important role in the economy of the Barents Region today. As a tourism destination, the region attracts millions of travellers annually generating billions of euros and employing tens of thousands of people, especially the youth and women (García-Rosell et al. 2013, 4; Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017). Sometimes, tourism even represents the only source of income in certain sparsely populated areas within the Barents Region (Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017). Currently, the tourism sector in the Barents Region consists almost solely of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) established by entrepreneurs with little or no tourism related training (Finnbarents 2010, 9). Furthermore, the tourism sector in the Barents is dispersed in nature in that it includes multiple stakeholders such as tourism enterprises and companies, numerous local tourism organizations, regional tourism boards, educational institutions as well as research centres, regional and national authorities and other stakeholders from different industries (Konovalenko 2012, 25; Finnbarents 2010, 9). The challenges faced by the Barents tourism sector and the Barents Region as a whole include the availability of transportation and a shortage of west-east travel connections and road networks (Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017, The Barents Programme 2009–2013, 4).

For the visitors, the region offers exotic and unique tourism destinations, natural attractions and urban environments with intriguing cultural aspects and rich historical heritage (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013a). Especially, the location mainly north of the Arctic Circle provides memorable experiences in terms of dark polar nights and cold winters, the northern lights as well as the midnight sun (Arctic Centre 2013a; García-Rosell et al. 2013, 4).

## **2.3 Formation of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region**

Celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in January 2013, the Barents Euro-Arctic Region is a rather novel region (The Barents History Book and Encyclopedia Project 2013; Plouffe 2013, 1–2). However, the eventful history of the area's

people, their cultures and livelihoods as well as people-to-people contacts extend far back in time before the political establishment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (The Barents History Book and Encyclopedia Project 2013; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013b; Pokka 1997, 23).

The geopolitical construction of the region started first with cautious signs of a changing era in 1987 when Mikhail Gorbachev gave a speech encouraging more regional cooperation with the adjacent Nordic countries. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 opened up new opportunities for cooperation. (Rafaelsen 2010, 25.) Indeed, the era of the Cold War had ended and the erstwhile Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg saw the occasion to present an initiative on Barents Cooperation which would bind the Northwest Russia and the Nordic countries together promoting stability and peace in the former region of tensions and military confrontation (Pettersen 2002, 18). As a consequence, the Barents Region was formally established in 1993 when Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, the Russian Federation and the European Commission signed a political document, the Kirkenes Declaration, at a Foreign Minister's Conference in Norway (Figure 2) (International Barents Secretariat 2012; Arctic Centre 2013b; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 1993; Pokka 1997, 23).

The Kirkenes Declaration launched the Barents Cooperation as to advance the political reconstruction of Northern Europe and to promote sustainable development. (Tunander–Stokke 1994, Dellenbrant–Olsson 1994, Pettersen 2002, Brynstad et al. 2004 according to Tennberg–Riabova–Espiritu 2012, 16). The signatories of the declaration agreed to examine how to improve the conditions for local cooperation between local authorities, institutions, industry and commerce across the borders of the Barents Region (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 1993).



Figure 2. History of Barents Cooperation (applied from Rafaelsen 2012, 25; Prokkola 2008, 36; Plouffe 2013, 1)

## 2.4 Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

In the year of the Kirkenes Declaration, in 1993, the cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region was launched on two levels: intergovernmental and interregional. The general objective was to reduce possible tensions and the meaning of the national borders and to promote sustainable development in the region. Nowadays, the overall objective of the cooperation is to generate social and economic growth through the knowledge and natural resource driven economy – at the same time making the region competitive

on the world market (The Barents Programme 2009–2013). Thus, the Barents cooperation is realized, in practice, through two different councils: Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and Barents Regional Council (BRC). (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013c; International Barents Secretariat 2012; Arctic Centre 2013b; Heikkilä 2006, 52–53.)

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) represents the forum for intergovernmental cooperation between its members: the Nordic countries, Russia and the European Commission (Heikkilä 2006, 52–53; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013d). It is meant to serve as an implementation instrument for today's bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fields of economy and trade, infrastructure and transport, environment, science and technology, tourism, educational and cultural exchange and raw materials and natural resources. In addition, projects striving to improve the indigenous peoples' conditions are implemented with sustainable development in mind. (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 1993; County Administrative Board of Norrbotten 2013.) The Barents Euro-Arctic Council meets at Foreign Ministers' level on issues concerning the Barents Region (Heikkilä 2006, 52–53; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013d). The chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council rotates every two years between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia – Norway chairing the period 2011–2013 (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013c).

Founded simultaneously with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, the Barents Regional Council (BRC) represents the interregional level in the Barents cooperation: the counties, regions or similar sub-national entities of the Barents Region. The Barents Regional Council unites the northern parts of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia, comprising altogether 13 member counties. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 12; International Barents Secretariat 2012; Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013e.) The establishment of an interregional forum was a recognition of the importance of local knowledge, the ability to acknowledge the most pressing issues and the capability to actualise common programmes and cross-border projects (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013e). Together the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council constitute a vital cooperation



arena for the multi-level stakeholders: the governments, the regional administrative officials, the nongovernmental organisations, the industries and the inhabitants of the Barents Region (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 12; International Barents Secretariat 2012).

The International Barents Secretariat (IBS) located in Kirkenes, Norway, was launched in 2008 with the main task of making the Barents cooperation more coherent and effective providing support to the coordinated activities in the region and administrative and analytical services to the governmental and regional levels. It also maintains archives and operates the web sites disseminating Barents related information as well as publishes the newsletter called BarentSaga. (The Barents Programme 2009–2013, International Barents Secretariat; Arctic Centre 2013b. All in all, the multilateral cooperation extending beyond the national borders of the Barents member countries and the status of the indigenous peoples involved in the Councils make the Barents Cooperation unique in a global perspective (International Barents Secretariat 2012; Rafaelsen 2012, 25).

## **2.5 Europe's Northern Dimension**

In 1995, Sweden and Finland joined the European Union establishing a 1300-kilometre borderline between the EU and Russia. As a result, it was seen crucial to take notice of the northern regions and create a specific policy for the North. First, the idea of integrating Northern perspective into the EU policies was presented by then Prime Minister of Finland, Paavo Lipponen, at the Kirkenes Declaration reunion in Rovaniemi in 1997 where the former Prime Ministers had gathered to discuss the progress of the five-year-old Barents cooperation. Officially, the initiative of the Northern Dimension was introduced at the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997. During the Finnish EU presidency in 1999, the first Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the Northern Dimension was held placing the initiative permanently on the EU's agenda. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 1–4; Heikkilä 2006, 16–19; Summa 1997, 65.)

The Northern Dimension is based on equal cooperation between its four partners: the European Union, Russia, Norway and Iceland. Due to the inherent interest of the USA and Canada towards the Northern politics, the two countries were granted Northern Dimension observer status. The EU's Northern Dimension policy aims at promoting sustainable development, stability and economic cooperation in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea region. Also, one of the main goals is to prevent conflicts and to preserve peace in the Northern areas. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 1–4.)

The partners of the Northern Dimension are the European Union, Russia, Norway and Iceland, the USA and Canada being the observer countries. In practice, the cooperation is implemented through three regional councils in the North: the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Arctic Council (AC). Also, the Nordic Council of Ministers is involved, but it has a distinct role as well as history in comparison with the regional councils in the North. However, all four councils are intergovernmental cooperation forums that operate in their respective geographical region in accordance with their own development targets. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 10; Heikkilä 2006, 25–26, 49.) All four intergovernmental councils, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Arctic Council (AC) and the Nordic Council of Ministers, nevertheless, engage in joint cooperation and coordination of tasks where appropriate (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2013c).

The Northern Dimension's activities are practice-oriented with the intention to improve the well-being of the citizens through concrete results. The main focus areas are health promotion, environment protection and the creation of favourable conditions for economic development in the region. A concrete way of putting the Northern Dimension policy into practice are partnerships that differ in the nature and modes of operation, all striving to combine policy-making, expert-level work and practical-level project activities. All Northern Dimension states as well as the observer countries, the United States and Canada, are entitled to participate in the partnerships in accordance with

their interests. Indeed, the partnerships have proved to be an effective way to realize concrete cooperation due to the distinct nature, compositions and tasks of the partnerships. Even large infrastructure projects can be realised through cooperation owing to the involvement of international financial institutions. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 2, 5–7.)

The key resources in furthering the Northern Dimension objectives are cross-border cooperation between the EU and Russia and the EU's financing programmes (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 1–4). The activities of the Northern Dimension partnerships and cross-border cooperation programmes at the external borders of the region are supported by EU funding that comes from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI CBC). The ENPI CBC programmes are designed to develop cooperation for common and mutual interests of the EU and its neighbouring countries. Altogether eight ENPI CBC programmes are being realised in the Northern Dimension region, of which three programmes are implemented at the Finnish-Russian border: Southeast Finland – Russia, Karelia and Kolarctic. During the years 2007–2013, the total programme funding approximates 190 million euros. EU funding comprises nearly 88 million euros of the total amount. The Neighbourhood Programmes and their successor ENPI CBC can be regarded as the first concrete achievements of the Northern Dimension as the programmes succeeded in acquiring both EU's external and internal financing for the first time. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, 13–14.)

### **3 THEORETICAL APPROACH TO CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

#### **3.1 Border – Barrier or Bridge**

Traditionally, international borders have been perceived as barriers for human interaction, mobility and trade, among other activities. Along with the establishment of nation-states, industries have developed in a state-centric manner leaving the border regions in a rather peripheral and marginal position. The political and mental boundaries have had a tendency to obstruct cooperation, oftentimes resulting in imbalances in the use, development and management of shared resources of adjacent countries. The geopolitical changes of the past decades have, however, altered the perceptions of borders as barriers. Indeed, a shift from seeing the border regions as barriers to considering them as a potential resource to fruitful interaction has taken place. (Timothy 1999, 182; Prokkola 2008, 31–33.)

#### **3.2 Conceptualizing Cross-Border Cooperation**

Cross-border cooperation is a form of international cooperation, along with interregional, transnational and transfrontier cooperation, involving non-central governments and encompassing the extension of state-centric governance to subnational and supranational bodies (Perkmann 2003, 154; Prokkola 2008, 33; Ricq 2006, 11). The definitions for cross-border cooperation, however, vary from loose to more precise ones in the literature. In general, the municipal and regional authorities of contiguous nation-states cooperating with their counterparts beyond the national borders through more or less institutionalized structures is perceived to represent the activities of cross-border cooperation, referred to with the abbreviation CBC. (Perkmann 2003, 154–156.)

Moreover, cross-border cooperation promotes democratic and inclusive decision-making by empowering and engaging local and regional levels in the issues concerning transnational cooperation. Hence, cross-border cooperation facilitates a certain degree of decentralization and autonomy of subnational regions in that it empowers the respective authorities. (Ricq 2006, 11–13.) The main goal in establishing cross-border cooperation between different regions is to pursue synergic advantages, joint solutions to

shared problems and economic development. Furthermore, sharing of knowledge and preserving common resources are similarly important. For achieving sustainability and continuity, impartiality and mutual benefits between all partners are essential factors. (Ricq 2006, 17; Prokkola 2008, 43; Laine 2007, 52.)

Furthermore, Perkmann (2003) introduces four criteria for defining cross-border cooperation. Firstly, cross-border cooperation requires a public intermediate for the facilitation of the activities. Secondly, transnational collaboration occurring between subnational authorities implies that the actors do not possess legal authorization, hence often resulting in rather informal cross-border cooperation arrangements. Thirdly, cross-border cooperation is practised most importantly with the motivation to solve diverse administrative problems. Lastly, cross-border cooperation is concerned with gradual establishment of long-term transnational contacts. (Perkmann 2003, 156). Hence, the criteria implies that cross-border cooperation is an interregional phenomenon that requires public facilitators, i.e. international, national, local and regional level authorities, for the practical implementation of the cooperation, yet, without the sovereignty of a national government. Furthermore, the first and foremost objective of the cooperation is long-run regional integration and institutionalisation along with the consequent decentralization of mere state power. (Perkmann 2003, 167–168; Ricq 2006, 11–13.)

Indeed, more and less formal organizational arrangements along with the variable mix of the involved actors exist in the context of cross-border cooperation. Yet, the cross-border cooperation can be categorized also in accordance with the geographical scope of the activities. The small-scale initiatives, referring to spatial arrangements of about 50–100 kilometres in width, can simply be regarded as ‘cross-border cooperation’ whereas the cooperation extending over multiple nation-states, often including five or more subnational regions, is referred to as ‘interregional cooperation’ or ‘multi-lateral cross-border cooperation’. (Perkmann 2003, 158–159.) However, despite Perkmann’s categorization of the initiatives, the term

'cross-border cooperation' is employed in this thesis for describing multi-lateral cross-border cooperation, the phenomenon occurring between several subnational entities.

### **3.3 Synthesizing Cross-Border Regions**

Some sources suggest that only functional regions, that is, regions characterised by relatively dynamic interaction, intrinsic affiliation and a certain degree of commonalities compose a cross-border region, whereas the more liberal, observational definition suggests that cross-border regions can be constructed by joint pragmatic exploitation of mutual opportunities or resources resulting in a social construction between the respective subnational entities. Perkmann denotes briefly that a territorial unit can form a cross-border region (CBR) merely through the engagement of the respective regional authorities in cross-border cooperation initiatives. Thus, the less strict definitions allow rather heterogeneous settings to be interpreted as cross-border regions – perhaps portraying the diversified nature of such regions more realistically. (Perkmann 2003, 154–157.)

All cross-border regions are unique in multiple ways. However, different cross-border regions can be discriminated according to their spatial scope similarly to the spatial categorization of the cross-border cooperation itself. Hence, the small-scale groupings can be referred to as micro-CBRs, also called as Euroregions or EUREGIOs in the European context (Perkmann 2003, 159; Ricq 2006, 27–29). Consequently, larger multi-regional cross-border units practising multi-lateral cross-border cooperation are referred to as Working Communities, or Scandinavian Groupings as regarded in Europe in the case of high cooperation intensity in large cross-border areas (Perkmann 2003, 159).

### 3.4 Cross-Border Cooperation in European Context

Cross-border cooperation implemented between the contiguous sub-national organizational arrangements takes place in a myriad of border areas today (Perkmann 2003, 153–155). Especially in Europe, cross-border cooperation is a common phenomenon owing to the openness of the internal borders of the European Union and the EU policies striving for neoregionalism and the building of the EU as a macro-region (Figure 3) (Perkmann 2003, 157, 167; Ricq 2006, 17, 27–28; Prokkola 2008, 31, 36).



Figure 3. European Union (S&T Gate RUS.EU 2013)

After favouring a more legalistic approach in the post-war period, implementing EU's regional policies through more pragmatic and economic orientation in cross-border cooperation has become more common (Perkmann 2003, 155). Nowadays, the EU is indeed a significant driver for cross-border cooperation initiatives in Europe (Perkmann 2003, 154). The

impact of the EU's support programmes can be seen in increased amount of cross-border cooperation initiatives as well as in the way the cooperation arrangements have been able to institutionalize themselves and stabilize their operations (Perkmann 2003, 167). Also, the European Commission allocates a significant amount of resources to the support of cross-border cooperation whereas the Council of Europe strives to enhance the legal conditions for more fluent cross-border cooperation. (Perkmann 2003, 154.) (Prokkola 2008, 36)

The EU's significance for financing Barents projects is also considerable. A large part of the political priorities of Barents Region are realized through cross-border projects. Thus, the EU-based and other funding schemes are vital for achieving the goals set up by the different bodies of the Barents cooperation. The Northern Dimension has a growing key-role focusing on issues of specific relevance to the North, such as transports and logistics, the environment, and social issues and culture. The relationship of the EU with Russia has not been easy and, thus, the Northern Dimension policy was modified in 2006 as to better consider the difficult relationship between EU and Northwest Russia (Sirén 2013; International Barents Secretariat 2012.)

Recently, the Barents Region has attracted more attention in a European and global scale due to the generally increasing international interest for the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. Moreover, the abundance of the natural resources and their future utilization has raised also the region's importance in political agendas. (International Barents Secretariat 2012.)

Lastly, as the EU itself has no implementation agency for executing the policies, the Member States realize the agendas by obeying the set regulations. Thus, in Europe, the fragmentation of national sovereignty does not imply diminished role of the central government but is rather an administrative tool for implementing the EU's cohesion and regional development policies. (Perkmann 2003, 168; 2007, 9, 27.)



## **4 CROSS-BORDER TOURISM COOPERATION**

### **4.1 Driver of Tourism Development**

In the process of nation-building, the industries have traditionally been integrated with the national centres, thus modifying them vis-à-vis the spatial location from the centre. Today, the effect is still visible in the borderlands. Similarly, tourism industry has evolved alongside national construction where border interactions have had a secondary role. Thus, tourism destinations in the border regions and in the national peripheries have been constrained by the state-centric governance. (Prokkola 2008, 33; Timothy 1999, 182.)

However, the negative perception of borders has changed rapidly in many regions leading to increased contacts and cooperation. Also, the tourism destinations in borderlands have started to attract more attention as they are perceived more as a potential resource. Therefore, opportunities of cross-border tourism cooperation have increased as a result of national and regional policies promoting good neighbourly relations and contacts. (Prokkola 2008, 31; Timothy 1999, 182.) Today, tourism industry is even recognized as a tool of developing border regions (Vodeb 2010, 227).

In general, the prospective benefits of collaboration and partnerships include shared costs and risks, increased sales, larger scope of marketing and better access to bigger markets, transfer of knowledge and expertise, elimination of the negative effects of rivalry through joining of forces, synergy from harmonisation of resources and increased flow of capital between the partnering parties (Tefler 2001, Lynch 2003 according to Vodeb 2006, 201). Also, cross-border collaboration can result in more holistic planning and prevention of duplicated efforts (Timothy 1999, 185). In the field of tourism, cross-border cooperation can lead to valorisation of joint tourism opportunities, harmonisation of infrastructure and accommodation of more uniform policies (Toplak 1999 according to Vodeb 2006, 203). All in all, cross-border tourism cooperation can result in attainment of competitive advantages and increased competitiveness – attributes much pursued by today's tourism operators in the landscape of increased global competitiveness (Vodeb 2006, 200–201).

In particular, borderlands can gain competitive advantages through cooperation with their adjacent counterparts in that a part of the tourist appeal in such areas emerges from the heterogeneity of the larger entity – from the discrepancies in the political and economic conditions as well as in cultures and natural resources, for instance.

As Timothy (1999, 183) argues, cross-border cooperation can contribute to better management of sustainability in borderland areas abundant of natural and cultural tourism resources. Also, the development of more sustainable forms of tourism may follow as a result from the cooperation and networks (Hall 1999, 280).

#### **4.2 Risks, Challenges and Critical Success Factors**

Together with the prospective benefits, cross-border tourism cooperation entails challenges and risks that must be considered as to be successful. Firstly, the collaboration can face obstacles related to customs restrictions, different languages, contrasting management regimes, poor international relations and the lack of sovereignty of the respective administrative bodies (Timothy 1999, 185).

Additionally, due to the intrinsic transversal and diffused nature of tourism industry in terms of numerous different industries and levels of stakeholders involved, the cooperation bears many challenges related to different aims, visions, organisational and managerial cultures, organisational structures and abilities to take financial risks (Santanusana 2012, 292–293). However, each industry either directly or indirectly involved in the tourism production is indispensable component in the creation of a unified tourism product. Also, both public and private sector actors are vital for the success of cross-border cooperation in tourism due to the interdependency of the two levels. Namely, the private sector relies much on the promotional aid, infrastructure development, governing and facilitation as well as financial support of the public sector whereas, in turn, the public sector depends on the private actors as producers of tourism products and facilitators of the consumption

along with many other processes executed by the private sector. (Santanusana 2012, 291–292, 297; Timothy 1999, 183.)

Indeed, managing international tourism destinations and partnerships is a challenging undertaking as it requires more careful planning and formalisation than such activities within one nation-state (Timothy 1999, 184; Vodeb 2006, 200). Yet, it is no different in terms of critical principles making the destination competitive and sustainable. Namely, forming common goals and targets is crucial for the efficacy of the destination and cooperation, balanced and optimised use and management of the resources being similarly important. Also, involvement and commitment of all stakeholder levels, from public to private, is utmost important in terms of democratic and inclusive decision-making and financial participation. In addition, the objective is to involve as many industries touched by the tourism activities as possible taking into account also the public interests (for the sake of considering the actual end users of the industry). (Santanusana 2012, 297.) However, the dispersed multi-level governance does not explicitly lead to democratic decision-making as the power may merely be dispersed to a few privileged resulting in troubled governance (Hall 1999, 285–286). Nevertheless, for promoting socio-cultural sustainability, transparency and integrity are crucial as not all are able to or interested in participating in the decision- and policy-making. Lastly, financial stability and self-sufficiency in mind, the goals and efforts should be forward-looking intending to stabilise and institutionalise the activities with appropriate reserves of funding. (Santanusana 2012, 297.)

However, the formalisation of cross-border partnerships runs the risk of creating more bureaucracy whereas solving joint administrative problems and minimizing the duplication of efforts and projects in the contiguous regions is a general aim of cooperation and partnerships (Perkmann 2003, 156; Timothy 1999, 185, 202; Vodeb 2006, 202). Similarly, increased competition between the regional authorities and tourism destinations is a potential risk in cross-border tourism cooperation as it may lead to rivalry over the

administrative power and in appealing tourism offering (Timothy 1999, 202; Prokkola 2008, 41).

Lastly, one pitfall in cross-border tourism cooperation lies in the motivations for which the partners decide to participate in the joint activities. Namely, the cooperation and partnership formations might not necessarily imply a motivation for efficient planning and rationalised operations as sometimes organizations get involved in the collaboration schemes merely by following a rational institutional regime suggesting stronger legitimacy for the involved (Zapata–Hall 2012, 64–65). Also, in some cases cross-border cooperation initiatives are pursued primarily for obtaining financial support from different financial institutions and instruments. Yet, the mere participation in the cross-border partnerships does not, in any terms, enhance sustainable tourism development. (Prokkola 2008, 41.) Instead, cross-border cooperation is undoubtedly time-consuming and costly (Timothy 1999, 185). That in mind, it is worth considering whether the motivations for engaging in tourism collaboration and partnerships derive merely from a desire or need to conform under institutional pressures, from a need for co-funding or from an authentic belief in the purpose and effectiveness of the collaborative activities.

#### **4.3 Types of Cross-Border Tourism Partnerships**

Vodeb employs a typology of cross-border interactions that segregates different stages and progress of the cross-border partnerships in general. The typology, introduced by Toplak, includes six different categories: complete absence of interaction, exchange of information, consultation, collaboration, harmonisation and integration. The classifications of cross-border partnerships, however, vary slightly in the respective literature. (Vodeb 2006, 205–206.) In order to uncover the types of cross-border partnerships specific to the tourism sector, another typology is examined further.

Indeed, Timothy (1999, 184–185) adopts a way of distinguishing cross-border partnerships in tourism from each other – with a minor alteration regarding the above mentioned classification. Namely, by building on the typology of Martinez (1994) he presents five types of partnerships with particular focus on the intensity of the tourism collaboration occurring in the border areas. Hence, the levels of cross-border partnerships in tourism are: alienation, co-existence, cooperation, collaboration and integration (Figure 4). Alienation, the least developed level of tourism partnership, depicts absence of any cooperation. Co-existence, in turn, implies that the contiguous nation-states merely co-exist without considerable partnerships. Cooperative partnerships, however, indicate preliminary efforts to engage in common problem-solving and utilisation of resources. The occurrence of well established initiatives and active interest towards cooperation in development issues refers to the fourth level, collaboration. Lastly, the integrated partnerships, representing the most intense form of cross-border partnerships in tourism, exist in functionally merged regions where all border restrictions are removed and the partners seek mutual good even in the expense of greater individual benefit.

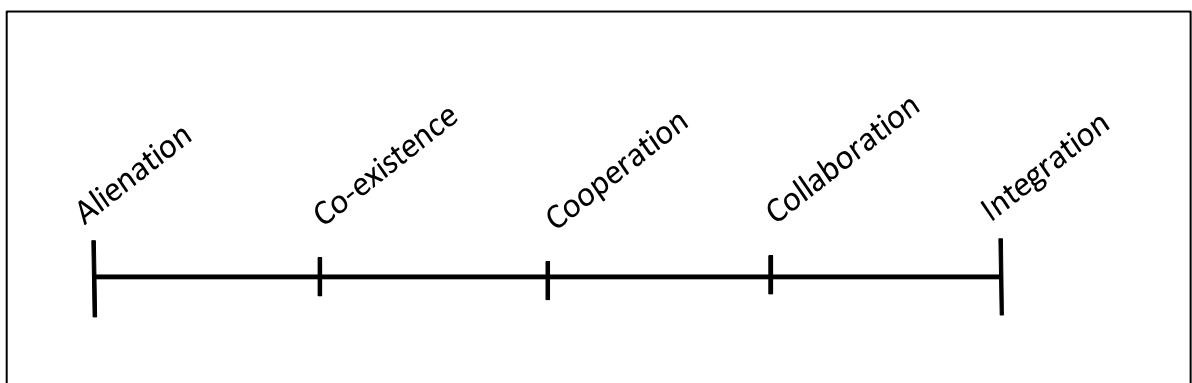


Figure 4. Levels of Cross-border Partnerships in Tourism (Timothy 1999, 185)

#### 4.4 Development of Interregional Barents Tourism

The development of the tourism industry within the Barents Region is rather imbalanced, Finland leading the progress with most advanced tourism development in Finnish Lapland. However, the Barents Region is highly

diverse in terms of expertise on different types of tourism in each region. While Finnish Lapland focuses on mass winter tourism, Norway on green tourism and small-scale ecotourism and Sweden on skiing tourism, the Russian areas are still considered underdeveloped in respect to the potential it has, e.g. in extreme tourism. (Finnbarents 2010, 8.)

Despite the discrepancy in the main forms of tourism practised in the member countries, the different regions offer several attractions based on similar preconditions such as the Arctic nature, diverse cultural attractions and outdoor activities, thus, creating an opportunity for complementing each others' touristic offerings and creating internationally appealing tourism destinations. The opportunities in the field of tourism development in the Barents Region are, indeed, various including networking and sharing of knowledge. (Finnbarents 2010, 8; Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017.)

In order to gain higher competitiveness in the international tourism market, the Barents Region must strengthen the provision of trainings to increase the entrepreneurs' and other tourism stakeholders' market knowledge. It holds the potential of strengthening the tourism sector and the regional economy as a whole. (Finnbarents 2010, 8; Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017.) The long-haul objective in the further development of the Barents tourism region is based on efficient cross-border cooperation and networking, including the activation of research, the improvement of business knowledge and the assistance for the work of the existing transnational institutions such as the Barents Joint Working Group on Tourism (Finnbarents 2010, 9).

However, the interregional tourism development in the Barents Region involves a multitude of actors, hence, implying challenges for the coordination and management of the collaboration. Also, the fluctuating commitment and interest of the different actors involved create challenges for the collaboration. Moreover, the existing networks between the regions – nationally and internationally, are not utilized sufficiently, the infrastructure in

the region as a whole is poorly developed and the authorities do not always grant the tourism sector adequate attention in the economic strategies and political agendas. (Finnbarents 2010, 8.)

With financial support from international sources, various development actions can be initiated and finalized as to ensure beneficial cooperation between all tourism stakeholders (Finnbarents 2010, 8). However, project funding does not provide the necessary continuity for the cross-border cooperation (Prokkola 2008, 42). Thus, it is essential to find and develop alternative and more sustainable ways to finance the collaboration.

Adding the intriguing cultural curiosities and the rich historical heritage to the abundant natural resources and the exoticness of the surroundings, the region has a great potential to develop into a more appealing international tourism region. However, the tourism industry needs to be developed in a sustainable way considering the preservation of ecological, economic as well as socio-cultural aspects in the region. Sustainability is especially important when encountering the challenges of climate change which can have considerable effects on tourism industry. (Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017.)

Given the demanding socio-cultural conditions, the fragmentation of political interests and the fragility of the environment along with the intensified climate change, it is essentially important that the tourism industry acts in a sustainable way. (Mandate for the Joint Working Group on Tourism 2013–2017). That in mind, formulation of common goals, joint strategic development and consolidation of efforts in the Barents tourism are highly needed (Konovalenko 2012, 25). All in all, the region offers a fruitful but also a challenging platform for tourism development (García-Rosell et al. 2013, 4).

## 5 THESIS PROJECT

### 5.1 Commissioner

The commissioner of this thesis project is an international tourism development project BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism funded by the European Union Kolarctic ENPI CBC programme. The operating area of the BART project, instead of the entire Barents region, comprises the counties of Troms and Finnmark, Norrbotten, Lapland and the regions of Murmansk and Archangelsk (Figure 5). (BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism 2013.)



Figure 5. Operating Area of BART project (Barentsobserver 2013)

The project is administered by the Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences, the lead partner of the project. Other partners include different institutes from Finnish and Swedish Lapland, Northern Norway and Northwest Russia: the Multidimensional Tourism Institute and the Regional Council of Lapland; the Luleå University of Technology; the Barents Institute in the University of



Tromsø; the Ministry of Economic Development of Murmansk Region, the Murmansk State Humanities University, the Murmansk State Technical University and Monchegorsk Town Authorities and the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Sport and Tourism of the Arkhangelsk Region and Northern (Arctic) Federal University. The managing authority of the Kolarctic ENPI CBC programme is the Regional Council of Lapland. The implementation period of the project is 2.5 years, from December 2010 until June 2013. (BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism 2013).

The long-term objective of the BART project is to contribute to strengthening and advancing public-private partnerships and the achievement of common goals for the benefit of the tourism industry in the Barents Region. In particular, the project is to produce an action plan that addresses the pressing development needs of the tourism industry in the region. Hence, the project has undertaken an extensive data acquisition process involving all the project partners from the different regions. First, strategic tourism development and the existing expert knowledge in each partner area were mapped to create a comprehensive view of the present state of tourism in the Barents Region. Also, altogether 71 interviews with the Barents Region's tourism practitioners were conducted in Finnish and Swedish Lapland, Northern Norway and Northwest Russia during the spring 2012. All the acquired data is employed in the action plan that the respective authorities are meant to implement in the future. (BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism 2013.)

## **5.2 Involvement in the Project**

In the framework of the project studies included in the degree programme, the author participated in an international training workshop organized by the BART project in Rovaniemi in autumn 2011. A group of students from the partnering institutions were to take part in the field work by conducting the regional interviews with the tourism practitioners. The author was thus involved in the production of the 15 interviews conducted in Finnish Lapland. The interviewing phase was followed by transcribing, categorising and analysing all the acquired material.

Moreover, during summer 2012 the author completed a three-month period of advanced training as a research assistant in the BART project. The main task was to contribute to the action plan by drafting a preliminary version of the analyses that addresses issues to be developed in the Barents Region for the benefit of the tourism sector. In particular, the writing was focused on the analyses of Finnish Lapland.

As a result of the continuous involvement in the BART project, the author was interested in composing also the thesis project for BART. Thereby the initiation of the thesis project took place in the early summer 2012 when returning the idea paper introducing the main idea and aim of the research. Currently, the author also works in the project as a research assistant editing the action plan that is published in April 2013 as the main outcome of the project.

### **5.3 Aim of the Research**

The main aim of the empirical research was to obtain a better understanding of how the tourism industry in the Barents should be developed in the future as to serve the needs of the tourism practitioners – particularly so through multilateral cross-border cooperation practised by the stakeholders in the region. The focus of the empirical research was on the needs and expectations of tourism practitioners operating in Finnish Lapland.

The researchers working within the BART project are composing an academic journal article to the Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism under the theme 'Cross-Border Tourism Development in the Barents Region'. Hence, this thesis project serves as background material for the journal article. Furthermore, the financiers of the project are interested in obtaining prepared conclusions on the project's focus themes.

The author's personal aspiration is to utilize an additional arena for dissemination of the information produced within the project and to provide a critical grass root perspective beside the more predominant political and historical approach to the Barents related issues.

## 5.4 Research Process and Used Methods

### 5.4.1 Semi-structured Theme Interviews

The interview data used in this thesis project was produced in the framework of the BART project during the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012. The interview data was acquired through semi-structured theme interviews with representatives of tourism companies in Finnish Lapland. The semi-structured interview was selected as the research method in order to obtain qualitative in-depth material (see Ruusuvuori–Nikander–Hyvärinen 2010, 17; Phillimore–Goodson 2004, 157).

The interview questions were divided in three parts according to the topic; firstly, questions about the company or organisation; secondly, questions about tourism development in the Barents region; and lastly, regional questions (see Appendix 1). The questions were designed by the researchers and experts from the partnering institutions involved in the project.

First, based on a list of 30 pre-selected tourism companies in Finnish Lapland, the company representatives were contacted by telephone by a number of tourism students. Altogether 15 company representatives agreed on participating in the interviews. Each representative was interviewed by one or more of the Finnish tourism students, one interview lasting from 0.5 to 2 hours. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and recorded on digital voice recorder.

Consequently, the interviews were transcribed by the interviewers. The data was also categorized into a chart to make the data visually more clear and compact. Next, the data was processed through content analysis thereby creating descriptive text of the needs and expectations of the tourism practitioners.

#### 5.4.2 Qualitative Surveys

Also, a short survey was designed and conducted by the author as to complement the information gained in the interviews. The survey was drafted to uncover more information on certain themes that were found most interesting in the interview data (see Appendix 2).

The survey was targeted to the tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland and hence executed in Finnish. It was conducted at the Barents Fair in Saariselkä in autumn 2012. The surveys were handed out to all prospective tourism practitioners at the fair venue by the project manager of BART representing the project. The completed surveys were collected from the respondents. Also, one response was received in electronic form through e-mail few days after the fair. Altogether six responses were hence received.

Instead of attempting to generalize the points of view of the practitioners, the objective was to discuss their individual ideas and perceptions in a meaningful manner (see Smith 2010, 206). Thus, the data acquired through the questionnaire was also processed as qualitative data by utilising content analysis. That was initially enabled through the design of the questionnaire that included mostly open questions and only few multiple-choice questions.

### **5.5 Research Population**

The interviewed company representatives and the survey respondents were from different tourism companies and organisations from different parts of Finnish Lapland. Transportation, accommodation, program services, DMCs, meeting services and tourism marketing and other fields of tourism services were represented. Judging by the varying size of turnover and the number of personnel in the companies, a diversified range from SMEs to bigger companies and organisations was covered in the data acquisition. Also, a good coverage from new to rather old companies was attained. Hence, considering the types, sizes and ages of the represented companies, the base of the herein described research population was rather versatile and reliable. However, in order to secure the anonymity of the interviewees and the questionnaire respondents, deeper description or more detailed

demographic information of the research population cannot be provided in this context.

## **5.6 Analysing and Interpreting the Results**

The main aim of the research was to uncover how tourism industry should be developed from the practitioners' point of view with respect to Barents cooperation. Four data-driven focus themes were selected to address the issues. Both the interview and survey data were analysed using content analysis and categorized under these four themes: forms of cooperation, knowledge and education, accessibility and facilitators.

The research questions were formulated in accordance with the themes in the following way: 1) Which forms of cooperation are of interest to the tourism practitioners? 2) What kind of knowledge and training is needed among the tourism practitioners? 3) Which issues related to accessibility should be tackled and enhanced in the Barents Region? and 4) Which actors are important for improving the cross-border tourism cooperation?.

In order to provide answers to the chosen research questions presented above, interpretation of the analysed data is presented in thematic sections in Chapter 5. The sections are divided into interpretations of the interview and the survey data, both presented separately one after another.

The first section, forms of cooperation, describes the ways and forms of collaboration that the tourism practitioners would like to engage in. Also, perceived opportunities and prospective partners for cooperation, unexploited strengths of the region and the practitioners' attitudes toward the cross-border cooperation are articulated in the first section. Accordingly, the second section, knowledge and education, explains the sources of information utilized by the practitioners, their need for specific knowledge and know-how as well as the demand for further training.

In the next section, accessibility, the issues hindering cross-border cooperation or tourism development in general are introduced by denoting, for instance, the shortage of accessible information, the absence of decent infrastructure and the complexity of visa regimes. The fourth and last section,

facilitators, depicts the actors that are perceived important for promoting, assisting and sustaining interregional cooperation. Also, the section explains the importance of the respective stakeholders and what is expected of them in the future. To conclude, the result of the content analysis and the subsequent interpretation of the data is presented in the following chapter that is organized in four thematic sections, each divided in two parts: interview and survey findings.

## **6 INSIGHTS FROM THE TOURISM SECTOR**

### **6.1 Forms of Cooperation**

#### **6.1.1 Interview Findings – Forms of Cooperation**

The interviewed tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland express interest towards interregional business-to-business cooperation and networking. They are eager to find suitable business partners from Sweden, Norway and Russia. Some practitioners mention only one or two of the countries as interesting business partners whereas others find combining the region into one entity intriguing. In particular, some of the tourism practitioners see travel organizers and tourism agencies as their potential partners.

Moreover, creation of common tourism product packages and products interests Finnish tourism practitioners. The interest is particularly reflected towards concrete tourism products and packages that combine different features and areas of the Barents region into one attractive entity. The practitioners also note that productizing and the creation of product packages should lead to even more easily salable and feasible solutions. For instance, interregional round tours that would take the customers around the Barents Region are suggested by a few of the Finnish interviewees as to be developed in cooperation with the region's stakeholders.

In addition, the interviewed practitioners agreed that work-related tourism holds the potential for filling the tremendous seasonal gaps between winter and summer tourism in Finnish Lapland. Hence, there is an urge to develop summer tourism as well as work-related tourism in cooperation with other operators in the Barents Region.

#### **6.1.2 Survey Findings – Forms of Cooperation**

The survey respondents express interest towards marketing cooperation, creation of joint tourism products and intensified networking among the practitioners. Some respondents felt that the absence of business networks at the moment is a hindrance for productizing and marketing in tourism.

Furthermore, the respondents recognise great potential for the development of tourism sector in the Barents. Attractive tourism destinations, versatility and uniqueness are mentioned as the best assets of the region. Also nature, culture and the exoticness of the northern location were seen as strengths that could be further utilized in tourism. Moreover, competent operators and the possibility to develop cooperation were also seen as a good resource in the region. The respondents also claimed that the development of travel routes, sea tourism and experience and ecotourism are good possibilities and unexploited assets for tourism development in the Barents Region. All in all, mutual interest towards developing the region in collaboration and through joint efforts was expressed in the surveys.

## **6.2 Knowledge and Education**

### **6.2.1 Interview Findings – Knowledge and Education**

The Finnish tourism operators have observed national and international tourism statistics quite actively. Also, economic indicators, competitors' prices, hotel nights, different company registers and weak signals interest them. Some interviewees admit collecting different comparable data from their customers and competitors in order to have a comprehensive understanding of their own position and current state of the business. Hence, the operators express a need for easily attainable, reliable information that they can utilize for the benefit of their businesses.

In addition, the operators express a need for obtaining more knowledge on the target customers and customer structure, and they wish to acquire better understanding of their potential and present markets. Furthermore, attaining a comprehensive understanding of the current tourism offering in the entire Barents region seems important for avoiding unnecessary duplication of the tourism products and services. The interviewees mention benchmarking and matchmaking activities as an example of an interesting way to see what is being done and how in the other areas. All in all, research data of the markets and relevant tourism related information is important for the practitioners as well as concrete ways of attaining complementary knowledge.



Moreover, the operators in Finnish Lapland seem to need training and education in several fields. Especially a lack of culture knowledge and language skills is repeatedly mentioned as a hindrance for international cooperation. In particular, Russian language is seen as an important asset in customer service as well as in business-to-business cooperation. Also, better culture knowledge is seen vital for mutual understanding and fluent cooperation. Yet, beside the languages and cultures, the interviews revealed that many Finnish operators have very little knowledge of the geography and general matters of the neighbouring countries and regions within the Barents.

Further training is also needed in the fields of information technology, e-commerce and tourism marketing. The operators seem to need updating and further education in ICT-related issues. Also, more knowledge on product and service marketing is obviously needed among the practitioners for enabling them to attract the potential customers and appreciate their needs and expectations. Many entrepreneurs state that they need also training in financial management and economics in order to manage their business more efficiently.

Similarly, safety is stated to be an area in which the operators still need training and updating as safety know-how is an imperative in tourism field in Finnish Lapland. The interviewees state that safety is a cause of slight concern on an interregional scale, regarding the whole Barents Region. Lastly, interpreting contracts and knowing the legislation seem to be valuable skills in tourism sector as the nature of the business becomes more and more international and the number of cross-border partnerships is increasing. Thus, a need for such know-how was oftentimes expressed in the interviews.

### 6.2.2 Survey Findings – Knowledge and Education

The most pressing needs concerning knowledge and education expressed by the survey respondents were linguistic competence and cultural skills. Especially lack of language skills in Russian was seen as an obstacle for successful cooperation. It was also mentioned that a shortage of competent

Russian speakers is a general problem in the tourism field in Finnish Lapland.

Nevertheless, quality and safety awareness and know-how were also seen as essential development needs within the tourism sector. Lastly, general knowledge about the Barents Region and the adjacent countries were rather weak, hence indicating a need for improved dissemination of information and further education on the interregional matters.

### **6.3 Accessibility**

#### **6.3.1 Interview Findings – Accessibility**

Difficult accessibility, long distances and remoteness are seen as obstacles and challenges for tourism in the Barents Region. The infrastructure and the condition of roads are claimed to be rather good in Finland whereas those in other regions in the Barents are said to suffer from insufficient development and maintenance. Especially travelling to east is seen as a challenge due to poor condition of roads, infrastructure and the border crossing. Yet, the west-east road connections are inadequate also in Finnish Lapland, south-northward road networks being predominant.

In addition, Russian visa is perceived as a challenge and an obstacle among the tourism operators in Finnish Lapland, especially among practitioners located in Eastern Lapland near the Russian border. It is said that travelling to Russia is complicated due to the visa procedures, and that it may also be an obstacle for the development of international tourism and interregional cooperation. Moreover, it seems to cause more arrangements for travel organizers and tourism providers resulting in less work efforts toward the eastern tourism. So, the importance of the Russian visa seems to be rather high in terms of the development of Barents tourism and cooperation.

Furthermore, too few flight connections within the Barents region, especially in Finnish Lapland was seen as a problem. Also, a small number of different flight operators was said to elevate the flight ticket prices. In Finland and within the Barents region in general, travel connections are claimed to be

poor, and reaching tourism destinations and resorts in Finnish Lapland is difficult due to the poor transportation linkages.

Lastly, access to information was described as rather unsatisfactory in respect to cross-border cooperation. For the interviewees, it has sometimes been difficult to find partners for co-operation, especially from abroad. Information on who to contact and what kinds of possibilities for cooperation exist is said to be rather poorly available. The Finnish operators note that there are very few channels that provide information of the Barents Region operators in the Internet.

### 6.3.2 Survey Findings – Accessibility

In respect to accessibility, the transport connections in the Barents Region were seen as an obstruction for the tourism sector. The formalities of the border-crossing as well as shortage of adequate infrastructure on the Russian border were experienced in a negative light. The advancements and the progress within the Barents Region regarding the mitigation and removal of the obstacles were perceived to be very slow. Moreover, the respondents felt that a visa-free regime within the Barents Region would increase the tourist flows significantly.

## **6.4 Facilitators**

### 6.4.1 Interview Findings – Facilitators

The interviewed practitioners state that regional organizations have a big role in accommodating and advancing cooperation and networking in Finnish Lapland. According to the interviewees, the public authorities are a significant intermediary power in assembling tourism operators together. Especially regional marketing organizations were mentioned as being beneficial for their stakeholders.

Moreover, the practitioners see that many challenges can be overcome by developing tourism industry through collaboration of public and private sector. However, the practitioners suggest that the regional organizations

and authorities should merely have a managing role as the cooperation in practice should be of business-to-business nature. Currently, the public sector's activities are claimed to be too bureaucratic, preventing tourism enterprises from succeeding in their business operations due to, for instance, complex legislation and taxation.

Furthermore, different projects and cooperation with educational institutions have been positive experiences for many operators but, at the same time, more pragmatic and concrete results are expected from the cooperation. However, as the entrepreneurs' resources for finding suitable projects and actors for student cooperation are limited, the entrepreneurs expect their counterparts to be more active in the initiation of the cooperation.

#### 6.4.2 Survey Findings – Facilitators

The financing and decision-making lead by the nation's governmental centre were seen exacerbating the economic development of the peripheral northern areas. The respondents felt that the potential of the northern dimension is easily disregarded by the administrative centre and the decision-makers.

Also, the pace of the development and the ability to follow the global evolution of the tourism field were denoted inadequate. It was experienced important to reach concrete results and progress through the executed projects and cooperation. Indeed, the survey revealed that the practitioners have some positive experiences of project cooperation as interregional projects led by Finland have been successful in the past. Yet, it was concluded that the current situation holds the potential for improvements through intergovernmental agreements benefiting the interregional business cooperation providing that open discussions and mutual forums can be contrived.

## **7 DISCUSSION**

### **7.1 Implications**

The empirical findings reveal that the tourism practitioners in Finnish Lapland share a mutual interest in the interregional tourism development in the means of cooperating with their cross-border counterparts in the Barents Region. However, the findings also suggest that several issues must be addressed as to provide the appropriate prerequisites for and advance the development of the tourism sector in the Barents Region.

The production of statistics, company registers, price analyses and other comparable and reliable data from tourism industry is important for the practitioners in Finnish Lapland. The research, educational and development organizations play a crucial role in the production of this material. In addition to the attainment of such information, the findings highlight a need for further training in several fields. Especially, enhanced linguistic competence and cultural knowledge could contribute to easier communication and more fluent cross-border cooperation between the partners within the Barents Region. Training in cultural issues could also lead to less misunderstandings and misinterpretations between the cross-border partners.

Furthermore, as information technology is a field of constant change and evolution, the operators need updating and further training in IT-related issues. In order to succeed and excel in the contemporary business environment, the operators must be provided with more knowledge on marketing and business management. In Finnish Lapland, many operators sign big contracts with foreign travel operators whose legislation and business customs are different and unfamiliar to the Finnish operators. Thus, training in commercial law would improve their stand in the contract-making.

Also, joint training in and creation of mutual standards for safety and quality could smoothen the imbalances occurring between the member regions. Disseminating information on how to cooperate in profitable ways and efficiently among different tourism operators could similarly contribute to greater mutual benefits.

The poorly developed west-east transport connections and the currently underdeveloped state of the infrastructure in the Barents Region are generally acknowledged. These issues were intrinsically reflected to the responses of the tourism practitioners as well. Indeed, appropriate development and relevant maintenance of the region's tangible facilities bear the potential of increasing the competitiveness of the Barents tourism region resulting in bigger tourist flows and higher incomes. Also, the visa regimes cause obstacles and challenges for the interregional tourism and collaboration.

Lastly, as the tourism sector expresses interest towards such interregional collaboration as development of joint tourism products and packages and joint marketing activities, the facilitators of the cross-border cooperation should grasp this notion and contribute to the creation of appropriate prerequisites. The cooperation itself should remain of business-to-business nature whereas the public sector's and regional organizations' support is needed as the connecting link between the practitioners and as the provider of the necessary financial support. The duplication of efforts and the unnecessary bureaucracy should be minimized as for ensuring fluent cooperation activities worth the time of the ever busy practitioners.

## **7.2 Limitations**

The Chapter 4 provides a description of the research process and the used methods. Yet, certain limitations regarding the empirical research must be further articulated. Firstly, the research was conducted with tourism practitioners operating in the geographic area of northern Finland, in the province of Lapland. The number of tourism practitioners participating in the research was satisfying and can be said to provide adequate credibility for the findings. However, the empirical results cannot be generalised to represent a wider population, any other business sector or another geographic region. Thus, the applicability of the results is limited as they cannot be regarded representative in other contexts. Also, the description of the findings is meant to exhibit the needs, expectations and perceptions of

the individual practitioners in the respective research area without the intention of quantifying the findings.

Secondly, the potential influence of the author regarding the interpretation of the conducted analysis must be acknowledged. Also, the inevitable decision between the inclusion and exclusion of specific topics and findings found appropriate for the chosen focus areas does not diminish the importance of the excluded findings in other contexts.

Lastly, the author's continuous involvement in the project activities and the inherent formation of one's own perceptions regarding the research subject constitute a potential for bias. This possibility has, however, been acknowledged and taken into consideration in the attempt to minimize the influence of any personal bias on the end result.

### **7.3 Suggestions for Further Research**

During the completion of the literature review and the composition of the theoretical section of this thesis, further research topics arose. Firstly, the contribution of projects to the achievements and progress of the interregional cooperation in the Europe's Northern Dimension and the Barents Euro-Arctic Region could be worth uncovering perhaps from both administrative and practical perspective. The inquest could provide vital information on the significance and usefulness of the European Union's interregional cooperation advancement policies and the importance of the financing instruments and programmes designed to serve those political agendas.

Another research subjects emerging from the execution of this thesis project were related to marketing and to the development of the tourism sector in the Barents Region. Namely, for increasing marketing knowledge and advancing the marketing possibilities of tourism in the Barents Region, it could be worthwhile to examine the region's identity and to discover how the population in the scattered areas within the vast region perceive themselves and their surroundings vis-à-vis the Barents Region. Similarly, a market research on the prospective consumers could help in determining the

quantity and quality of the demand for Barents tourism. It could also contribute to the possible destination-building in the region.

Lastly, it could be interesting as well as essential for the regional tourism industry to conduct a research on how the national and international legislation and taxation regimes could be improved as to support the development of the tourism industry in the future.



## 8 CONCLUSION

The general aim of this thesis project was to contribute to uncovering how the tourism industry in the Barents Region could be developed sustainably – by considering the needs and expectations of the local tourism practitioners. The conducted empirical research was rather successful in discovering the urgent needs experienced by the grass-root level of the tourism industry in the geographical scope of Finnish Lapland. Indeed, the empirical findings indicated that the tourism practitioners need further training in several fields including foreign languages and cultures, tourism marketing, information technology, business management, commercial law, safety and quality along with the knowledge on the adjacent countries and regions. Likewise, Russian visa, the border crossing regime, as well as the poor condition of roads and infrastructure are one of the biggest priorities to be developed in the Barents Region.

The increasing tourist flows can leverage the tourism income in the cross-border region. Indeed, the tourism in the Barents Region holds the potential to become a central and significant driver of economic development with ramifications of enhanced employment and increased social wellbeing. Furthermore, cross-border tourism cooperation between the cross-border counterparts can contribute to better management of sustainability in the Barents Region abundant of natural and cultural tourism resources as well as to the development of more sustainable forms of tourism throughout the region (Timothy 1999, 183; Hall 1999, 280). Providing that genuine interest and long-term commitment towards the cross-border tourism cooperation truly exists among all the multiple levels of stakeholders, the cooperation can flourish beyond the implementation period of international projects.

Whether the Barents Region is merely a geopolitical construct built upon declarations of good will and the EU's political schemes of neoregionalism or a successful cross-border region generating wealth, prosperity and wellbeing to its inhabitants through industries such as tourism yet remains to be seen. Nevertheless, it is surely much on the hands of all the individuals as well as the secretariats, councils and supranational instruments to take the interregional cooperation to the next level.

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## BART – PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN BARENTS TOURISM

### HAASTATTELUN kysymykset “2.3. Sidosryhmien tarpeiden ja odotusten arviointi Barentsin alueen matkailun kehittämisestä”

- Merkki kysymysten perässä tarkoittaa lisäkysymystä tai täydentävää tietoa.

#### Osio I. Kysymyksiä yrityksestä/organisaatiosta

1. Yrityksenne nimi?
2. Montako vuotta yrityksenne on toiminut?
3. Mikä on tärkein toimialanne?
  - *majoitus, ravintola/pitopalvelu, kuljetus, ohjelmapalvelut, matkailun kehittämisorganisaatio tai vastaava tai jokin muu, erittele tarkemmin.*
4. Kuinka monta kokopäiväistä ja osa-aikaista työntekijää yrityksessänne/organisaatiossanne on?
5. Minkälaista vdinosaamista ja tietotaitoa löytyy yrityksessänne/ organisaatiossanne?
6. Onko yrityksessänne muuta erityisosaamista perusammattitaitonne lisäksi?
  - *esimerkiksi, kansainvälistymisen, verkostoitumisen, turvallisuuden, laadun, tuotekehittelyn, markkinoinnin, ennakoimisen erityisosaamista*
7. Voisitteko kuvata millä toimintaympäristön tasolla yrityksenne tai organisaationne toimii?
  - *Jos haastateltava ei erittele tarkemmin, pyydä määrittelemään, onko taso paikallinen, alueellinen, kansallinen ja kansainvälinen*
8. Voisitteko kuvata kenen kanssa ja miten yrityksenne/organisaationne tekee yhteistyötä?
  - *paikallinen, alueellinen, kansallinen ja kansainvälinen taso*
9. Miten kuvaisitte yrityksenne/organisaationne tämänhetkistä tilaa yleensä ottaen?
  - *vihjeitä: taloudellista kannalta, palvelumarkkinoiden kannalta*
10. Minkä tyyppisiä esteitä tai ongelmia yrityksenne/organisaationne on kohdannut viime aikoina? Tai on edessä tulevaisuudessa?
11. Minkälaisia taitoja tai tietotaitoa tai resursseja tarvitsette eniten yrityksenne/organisaationne kehittämistä varten lähitulevaisuudessa?
  - *joko laadun, liikevaihdon tai työntekijämäärän kannalta*
  - *esimerkiksi, tulevista asiakkaista, kohderyhmistä, kansainvälistymisestä, verkostoitumisesta, turvallisuudesta, laadusta, tuotekehittelystä, markkinoinnista, ennakoinnista*

12. Minkälaista tietoa käytätte ja sovellatte liiketoiminnassanne ja mitä tietolähteitä teillä on?  
➤ *esim., kehittämistyössä*
13. Minkälainen tieto tai koulutus auttaisi organisaationne kehitystä ja valmiutta tuleviin haasteisiin?
14. Onko joitain erityisiä esteitä liiketoimintasuunnitelmanne kehittämiseksi tai matkailun kehittämiseksi?
15. Onko yrityksenne mukana vapaa-ajan ja/tai työhön liittyvässä matkailussa?  
➤ *Määrittele työhön liittyvä matkailu*
16. Määritelmä yrityksenne tärkein asiakasryhmä/kohderyhmä?  
➤ *Minkälaisia asiakkaita teillä on?*
17. Tunnetteko ns. MICE-asiakasryhmän/ kohderyhmän (työhön liittyvä matkailu)?  
➤ *Kokoukset*  
➤ *Kannustematkailu*  
➤ *Kongressit ja konferenssit*  
➤ *Messut ja tapahtumat*
18. Oletteko mukana yhdessä tai useammassa näistä MICE-toiminnoista? Missä, tarkentakaa.  
➤ *Voidaan jättää välistä, jos toiminta vain vapaa-ajan matkailua, katso kysymys 15*
19. Miten kuvaisitte kiinnostustanne matkailun kehittämiseen yhdelle tai useammalle MICE asiakasryhmälle/kohderyhmälle? Mille?
20. Minkä mittakaavaan liiketoimintaa harjoitatte?  
➤ *henkilöstömäärän mukaan? vuosittaisena liikevaihtona?*  
➤ *jos ei halua vastata tähän, pyydä merkitsemään, mihin luokkaan yritys kuuluu:*

Henkilöstömäärä	Liikevaihto
➤ > 250	➤ ≤ 50 milj. €
➤ < 50	➤ ≤ 10 milj. €
➤ < 10	➤ ≤ 2 milj. €
➤ < 3	

## Osio II: Kysymyksiä Barentsin matkailun kehittämisestä

21. Mikä mielestänne Barentsin alue on?  
➤ *Haastattelijan on oltava valmis esittelemään aluetta (kartta / kuva)*
22. Onko yrityksellänne/organisaatiollanne rajat ylittävää liiketoimintaa tai muuta rajat ylittävää toimintaa Barentsin alueella? Jos kyllä, niin minkälaista toimintaa tai yhteistyötä teillä on ollut?
23. Mitä mahdollisuuksia näette yrityksellenne/ organisaatiollenne Barentsin alueella rajat ylittävällä toiminnalla?



24. Miten kuvaisitte matkailun kehityksen mahdollisuuksia ja/tai esteitä omalla alueellanne ja Barentsin alueella?  
 ➤ *suhteessa esim., julkiseen sektoriin, rahoitukseen, koulutukseen jne.*
25. Minkälaisia Barentsin alueen yrityksiä/organisaatioita pitäisitte potentiaaleina kumppaneina tai kilpailijoina?
26. Minkälaisia näkymiä Barentsin alueella on mielestänne MICE-kohteena tulevaisuudessa?
27. Miten arvioisitte MICE-matkailun mahdollisuuksia ja esteitä organisaatiossanne ja Barentsin alueella?
28. Minkälainen Barentsin aluetta koskeva tieto tai koulutus olisi mielestänne hyödyllistä liiketoiminnallenne?
29. Miten arvioisitte Barentsin aluetta kansainvälisenä matkailukohteena nyt ja tulevaisuudessa?
30. Minkälainen rooli mielestänne on alueenne alueellisilla kehittämisorganisaatioilla Barentsin matkailun kehittämisessä?  
 ➤ *Vai onko teillä odotuksia niiden suhteen?*

### Osio III: Alueelliset kysymykset

31. Tunnetteko Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutin ja sen toimintaa?
32. Minkälaista yhteistyötä organisaationne/yrityksenne on tehnyt matkailualan koulutusorganisaatioiden / MTI:n kanssa? Ja millaisia nämä yhteistyökokemukset ovat olleet?  
 ➤ *Lapin yliopisto/ matkailun koulutus, RAMK / matkailun ja hotelli- ja ravintola-alan koulutus, Lapin matkailuopisto*
33. Onko organisaatioillanne/yrityksellänne halukkuutta aloittaa/jatkaa yhteistyötä MTI:n kanssa (em. koulutusasteet huomioiden)? Jos on niin, minkälaista yhteistyötä organisaationne/yrityksenne haluaisi tehdä?  
 ➤ *Esim. opinnäytetyöt/tutkielmat, harjoittelu / työssäoppiminen, erilaiset liiketoiminnan kehittämiseen liittyvät opiskelijaprojektit, muunlainen projektiyhteistyö*  
 ➤ *Jos liiketoiminnan kehittäminen kiinnostaa, niin mikä/mitkä liiketoiminnan osa-alue(et) kiinnostavat*  
   ○ *Esim. Johtaminen (strateginen ja operatiivinen), laadun kehittäminen, markkinointi, tuotekehitys, turvallisuus, ennakointi, taloushallinto, matkailukohteiden kehittäminen, tapahtumat, kestävä kehitys*  
 ➤ *Onko yrityksellä halukkuutta ja/tai valmiuksia ottaa vastaan kansainvälisiä opiskelijoita ja englanninkielisiä toimeksiantoja*



## BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism

KYSELYLOMAKE

Barentsin messut 13. – 14.9.2012

Arvoisa matkailualan yrittäjä / yrityksen edustaja,

Kartoitamme Lapin matkailuyrittäjien näkökulmia ja mielipiteitä Barentsin alueen matkailun kehittämisestä. Kyselyn toteuttavat BART (Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism) -kehittämishanke sekä Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti (MTI). Kerätty aineisto käsitellään täysin luottamuksellisesti.

Pyydämme Teitä ystävällisesti vastaamaan kaikkiin kääntöpuolella oleviin kysymyksiin.

Kiitokset jo etukäteen panoksestanne Barentsin alueen kehittämiseen!

Yhteystiedot:

Mira Koskinen  
Projektiapulainen

Mari Vähäkuopus  
Projektipäällikkö

BART – Public-Private Partnership in Barents Tourism  
Matkailualan tutkimus- ja koulutusinstituutti  
Rovaniemen ammattikorkeakoulu  
Viirinkankaantie 1, 96300 Rovaniemi  
Puhelin 020 798 5790 / +358 40 137 3139

Edustamanne yrityksen nimi: \_\_\_\_\_

Toimiala: \_\_\_\_\_ Perustamisvuosi: \_\_\_\_\_

Mitä mielikuvia liitätte Barentsin alueeseen? Entä mitä alueita oletatte kuuluvan siihen?

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Oletteko kiinnostuneet osallistumaan rajat ylittävään matkailualan yhteistyöhön Barentsin alueella?

Kyllä

Ei

En osaa sanoa.

Jos vastasitte kyllä, minkälainen yhteistyö kiinnostaisi?

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Onko edustamallanne yrityksellä tällä hetkellä liikekumppaneita Barentsin alueen muissa maissa? Missä?

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Onko yrityksenne osallistunut Barentsin aluetta koskeviin projekteihin? Mihin? Millaisia kokemuksenne ovat olleet? \_\_\_\_\_

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Jos ette ole osallistuneet, miksi ette?

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Mitä vahvuuksia mielestänne Barentsin alueella on matkailualaa ajatellen?

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Mitä hidasteita ja esteitä näette Barentsin alueen matkailulla olevan tällä hetkellä ja tulevaisuudessa?

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Mitä mahdollisuuksia koette Barentsin alueella olevan matkailun kehittymiselle?

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Tarvittaisiinko yrityksessänne koulutusta, joka helpottaisi kansainvälistä yhteistyötä Barentsin alueella?

Millaista? \_\_\_\_\_

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