



High North Dialogue & Generation Barents

Bodø 19.-22.4.2023, Travel Report

KAINUUN LIITTO

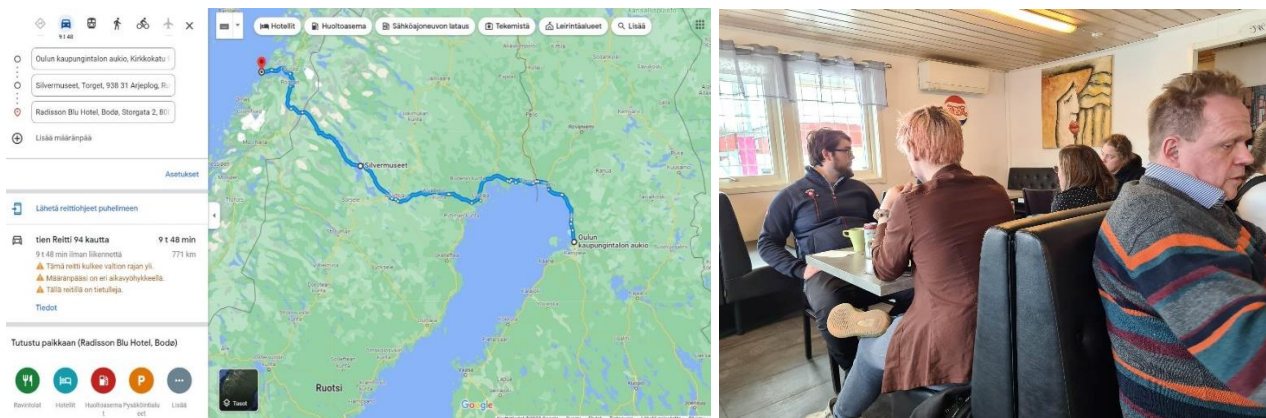
Traveling to Bodø

After some last-minute cancellations, there were 13 people on the bus (plus the driver) on the way to Bodø and 14 people on the way back. About half of them were young representatives, either coming from the regional youth councils and/or representing their regions in Barents Regional Youth Council BRYC.

For some participants, the trip began already on Tuesday 18.4.2023. The representatives from North Karelia, who were invited to the same bus with the rest of the group, traveled to Oulu on the west coast to stay for a night. Also, some of the Kainuu participants traveled to Oulu on Tuesday night by train, to be ready for the bus leaving at eight o'clock on the following morning.

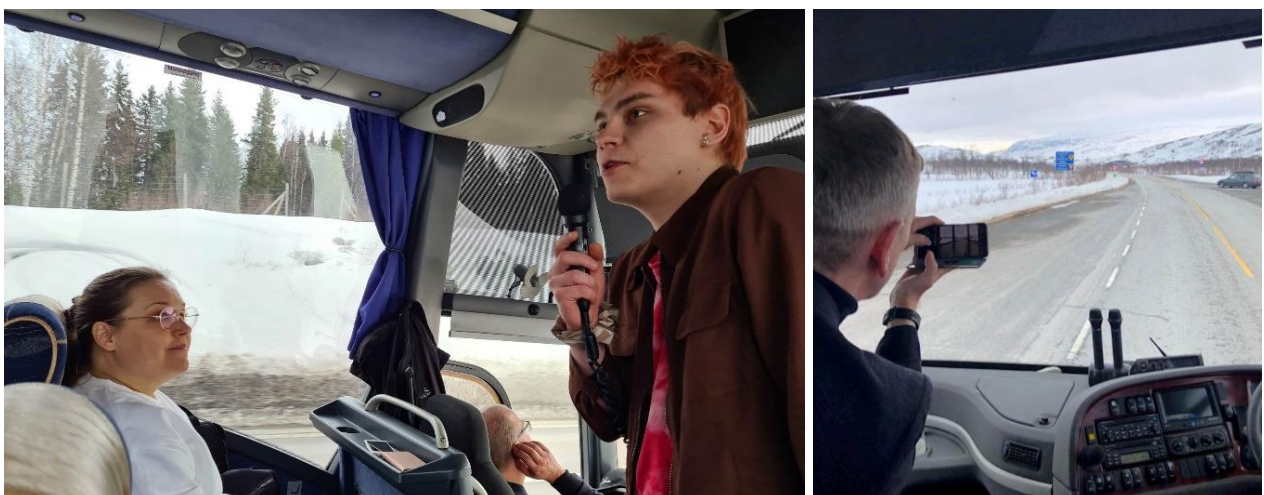
The joint bus transportation was organized on Wednesday with the departure from the City Hall of Oulu at Kirkkokatu 2A. Along the way, each of the participants got to be on the "stage" and tell something about themselves and their expectations towards the trip.

The group had lunch near Luleå and made a second stop in Arjeplog at Silver Museum, also picking up one additional passenger. After crossing SE-NO border the group stopped for a break at the Nordland National Park Center, before arriving to Bodø full of energy and in time to have dinner together and to get a good night's sleep before joining the official events on the following morning. The accommodation was booked at one of the seminar venues, Radisson BLU hotel.



Pictures above: The long travel route on Google Maps and a stop at the restaurant near Luleå.

Pictures below: Kainuu BRYC representative presenting himself. Trip coordinator photographing the crossing of SE-NO border.



High North Dialogue

Registration at the High North Dialogue conference started at 8 o'clock local time at Radisson hotel and the official programme at 9 o'clock. The first session [of the programme](#) discussed opportunities in outer space and the use of an increasing number of satellites and the second session was about sustainable ocean economy. The third session held before the lunch break discussed the challenges of recruiting young people to Arctic universities and keeping them in the region. In addition, the Ambassador Panel discussed the challenging issues regarding cooperation within the Arctic Council. Norway is to take the Presidency from Russia in May. This was the last day of the High North Dialogue (HND) 2023 and the whole week of HND Academy, and Master & PhD Courses. For our project delegation, though, this was just the start.



Pictures above: starting the First Day in Bodø.

After the event day, their programme continued with a reception dinner of the Generation Barents side event to follow on Friday, and a concert at the same location at the Aviation Museum. There, the Executive of Education and Competence, Mr. Fredric Martinsen Persson, welcomed the guests. After that, the guests had a chance to take a tour of the museum and enjoy some food and listen to speeches. The evening ended with a concert by a local Bodø band [Pure Instinct](#) (warm-up act) and [Katarina Barruk](#), one of Sábmie's most talented live artists.



Pictures above: interactive program arranged at the Aviation Museum.

Generation Barents

Registration at Generation Barents (Beddingen House of Culture, appr. 500 m from hotel) started at 9 o'clock on Friday, 21.4.2023.

From the bus group, Ms. Riikka Pulkkinen, currently working for the city of Kajaani, was an invited participant at the panel discussions representing the [Young Leaders in Barents \(YLIB\)](#). Also, Mirja Syrjälä from Oulu Cultural Foundation presented the plans for the European Capital of Culture in 2026 in the panel hosted by Bodø as the European Capital of Culture in 2024.



Pictures above: opening of the Generation Barents event and the first panel discussion.

Lunch was served at the venue. In the afternoon two parallel sessions were held, one about different Dialogue Schools and Methods and one about engaging youth in project planning and implementation. Tatiana Petrova moderated the Dialogue session and organized a small dialogue experiment. Young representatives had a special task to facilitate the discussions.



Pictures above: parallel sessions in the afternoon.

The event ended with a light pizza dinner kindly provided by Nordland County Administration at Egon (located between Beddingen and Radisson) as a host of the Generation Barents event. On Friday evening, the group was invited to a concert with the Arctic philharmonic, the tickets were a courtesy of Bodø2024 project team.

Conclusions on the Way Back

The group departed from Bodö early in the morning of Saturday, 22.4.2023. On the way back, they had lunch in Arvidsjaur, kindly provided by Oulu Cultural Foundation.

The time during the long bus trip together with young representatives was used effectively both on a way from and back to Oulu for networking, presenting each other, socializing, and having good discussions on how to better plan the upcoming events based on the new experiences received and lessons learned in Bodö. All the trip participants rated the program as excellent throughout the trip (a questionnaire was made using the WhatsApp group created for this trip).

High North Dialogue is being held annually and next time it will be organized in coordination with the larger Arctic Congress, supported by the Norwegian Arctic Council Presidency in 2024. It will also showcase Bodö as European Capital of Culture. More info: [Arctic Congress 2024 Bodö](#)

The group had a discussion on different possibilities for the Finnish regions and respective youth delegations to increase the cooperation across the border with organizations and youth in North Sweden and North Norway, utilizing several options for funding (Interreg Aurora, Interreg NPA etc.). It was emphasized that the Barents Regional Youth Council BRYC shows a good example of continued cooperation as a unique arena for cross-border cooperation among young people in the North between Finland, Sweden and Norway.

Young representatives started already to think of and to plan the follow-up youth event to be organized in October 2023 in Joensuu, coordinated with the high-level meeting of Friends of the Finnish BEAC Presidency. In the view of the trip participants, it was very exciting to have a reception at the Aviation Museum in Bodö, so the premises and the concept of the follow-up youth gathering could also follow some elements and patterns of the Generation Barents event.

Simple things like crossing the borders between three states within one day or seeing wind power plants and other infrastructure along the way could be very exciting for youngsters.

The feedback from the trip was positive. It was agreed among the youth to fill in a separate Questionnaire prepared during the Aurora project on the pitfalls of involving young people. All the participants of this trip will be also invited to the final webinar of the Aurora pilot project to be held later this Spring presumably in June.



Picture above: a tunnel towards the NO-SE border on the way back



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