



**BARENTS CROSS-BORDER UNIVERSITY (BCBU)  
MEETING OF THE VICE-RECTORS  
PETROZAVODSK / NOVEMBER 3, 2009**

**MINUTES**

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**Joint opening of the meetings of the vice-rectors and the working groups**

The Barents Cross-Border University meetings took place in Petrozavodsk (Republic of Karelia, Russia) on November 3, 2009. The meetings were jointly hosted by the Karelian State Pedagogical Academy (KSPA) and Petrozavodsk State University.

Sergey Grippa, Rector, KSPA on behalf of the hosts welcomed the participants to the meetings in Petrozavodsk and expressed appreciation that so many representatives of the partner universities managed to participate. Wishing the participants all the success at the meetings, Rector Grippa looked forward to see the results of the joint work and discussion.

Vice-Rector Fedorov gave a short introduction outlining the general programme and the major themes of the meetings. The agenda of the joint meeting of the vice-rectors and working groups was approved. The [programme](#), [agenda](#) and the [list of participants](#) are appended (apps. 1-3).

**MEETING OF THE VICE-RECTORS**

**1. Election of the Chair and the Secretary of the meeting**

Mr. Alexander Fedorov, Vice-Rector for Research, KSPA was elected as the chair of the meeting and Mr. Denis Pyzhikov, International Office, KSPA as the secretary of the meeting.

**2. Agreements: possible update of the “General Agreement on joint master’s programmes leading to joint/double degrees” (further referred to as “General Agreement”)**

Jaana Orava, BCBU coordinator, made a presentation on the current legal framework in which the BCBU is functioning ([app. 4](#)). She informed the participants about the assignment of the last BCBU rector forum held in Oulu in Feb 2009 to see whether the General Agreement signed by the rectors in Oulu in March 2007 ([app. 5](#)) needs revision. The agreement issue and possible updated version should be presented in the next meeting of the rectors (Rovaniemi, March 2010).

Ms. Orava, underlining the importance of the General Agreement, pointed out that there might be, for example, some updating to be done what comes to the status of the different partner universities in the different BCBU master's programmes. Furthermore, since signing of the General Agreement there has been introduced a new master's programme in the BCBU cooperation namely the Master's Programme in Law.

In addition to the updating process of the General Agreement the rector forum assigned to the BCBU Master's Programmes to draft individual agreements on development and implementation of each programme. The Finnish BCBU steering committee and coordination team have already started to prepare for this and the programmes have received some material for the drafting including, for example, a draft structure of the individual agreements ([app. 6](#)). It was emphasised that three of the five master programmes have already started in 2009, and therefore the legal issues related to the programmes should be settled finally as quick as possible.

An important debate took place concerning the key articles of the General Agreement. The Chair reminded the participants that the initiative to develop Cross Border University was fully supported by the Russian Minister Fursenko and Finnish Minister Kalliomäki which made a solid political basis for the creation of the BCBU. It was suggested to consider including this fact in the preamble of the new agreement. It was further proposed that the reference to the Barents Euro-Arctic Cooperation as some sort of umbrella for the BCBU could also be made.

With reference to the General Agreement, section "Terms for Joint Degree Cooperation", paragraph 3, the participants discussed the obstacles hindering the process of joint/double degree recognition at the partner universities.

Galina Komarova, Archangelsk State Technical University, draw the attention to the fact that the introduction of new generation of the state standards for higher education in Russia has been delayed until 2011, which hampers the progress with the development of joint BCBU master programmes.

With a view of the upcoming BCBU Rectors meeting to be held in Rovaniemi in March 2010, it was agreed that the BCBU partner universities would come up with recommendations for the update / amendments of the General Agreement not later than December 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. It was also agreed that the BCBU partner universities would nominate a contact person responsible for this assignment as soon as possible. In addition to being responsible for receiving the comments to the current General Agreement the contact person is also responsible for circulating the possible updated version as well as the drafts of the individual agreements among the relevant officials and bodies of his/her own university.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

1. General [programme](#) of the meeting
2. [Agenda](#) of the joint meeting of the vice-rectors and working groups
3. [List of participants](#)
4. [Presentation](#) made by Leena Lehtinen, Research Director for the Russian Law, University of Lapland, in Archangelsk in October 2008, updated for Petrozavodsk meeting by Lehtinen and Jaana Orava, BCBU coordinator, University of Oulu
5. General [Agreement](#) on joint master's programmes leading to joint/double degrees
6. [Draft](#) structure of the individual agreements to be signed for each BCBU Master's Programme