

Joint statement of the Regional Partnership on the European Parliament resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic.

The Regional Partnership is a formal collaboration between municipalities, counties, authorities and organizations in Norrbotten. On 17 June 2014 the partnership met in Luleå to discuss the increasing global geopolitical interest for the Arctic region.

1. The Regional Partnership welcomes the European Parliament resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic¹, which supports national, regional and local cooperation in Arctic issues. In line with the resolution, the regional partnership calls for an active participation of the civil society and industries in the implementation of the Arctic strategy.
2. Multilevel governance implies collaboration between different levels of society. The Swedish structure entails two regional levels in Norrbotten; the County Council (regional elected politicians) and the County Administrative Board (state authority responsible for regional development). In parallel, there is also the Sami Parliament, which is both a state authority and an elected Sami parliament. The cooperation in the Arctic must take place on all levels, including the regional level, the Sami Parliament and the local level.
3. The Regional Partnership agrees with the European Parliament that a unified EU strategy for the Arctic need to consider all issues in the region. The regional development strategy of Norrbotten² includes development priorities for the Swedish part of the Arctic. The Regional Partnership believes that the strategy for Norrbotten, and similar strategies in other Arctic regions, should form the basis for a joint EU strategy for the Arctic.
4. The strategy should be developed in collaboration with local and regional stakeholders in the European part of the Arctic. To ensure a bottom-up perspective, the strategy should also be anchored in political assemblies at the local and the regional level in the European part of the Arctic before it gets adopted by the European Council.
5. The Regional Partnership appreciates the resolution's call to coordinate resources that strengthens the position and attractiveness of Norrbotten and Sweden in the

¹ European Parliament resolution on the EU strategy for the Arctic, 12 March 2014
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2014-0236+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

² The regional development strategy of Norrbotten (in Swedish)
<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/norrbotten/Sv/publikationer/2012/Pages/regional-utvecklingsstrategi-for-hallbar-framtid-i-norrbotten-2020.aspx>

Arctic.

6. With significant natural and energy resources in the region, the Regional Partnership wants to emphasize the importance of the resolution's request to considerate environmentally sustainable exploration and exploitation of these resources.
7. In this context, the Regional Partnership underlines the importance of EU's only indigenous people, the Sami people, to be actively involved in the implementation process, as they are dependent on and living in the nature and the environment of the region.
8. The Regional Partnership also highlights the importance of Arctic research to support important regional research projects that promotes sustainable economic, environmental and socio-economic development in the Arctic. Climate change and the melting ice cover of the Arctic yields several consequences for the development of the region.
9. The Regional Partnership supports the European Parliament in their request to further develop transport infrastructure within the European part of the Arctic and with the rest of Europe.
10. The Regional Partnership stresses the importance of regional cooperation and participation to create an understanding of industrial challenges and opportunities in the Arctic region.
11. The Regional Partnership supports the demand for safe shipping to improve the environment.
12. The Regional Partnership recommends EU to have a clear definition of the European Arctic. The Partnership considers either the Arctic Circle or the Barents region to be defined as the European Arctic.
13. The Regional Partnership welcomes the call from the European Parliament to the Commission, to frame a concrete action plan for EU's commitment and implementation of the Arctic strategy, and encourages close cooperation between the national level and regional level in this issue.

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The Regional Partnership, Luleå, 17 June 2014

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