



LIVE, WORK OR LEAVE? YOUTH- WELL-BEING AND THE VIABILITY OF ARCTIC TOWNS

Day: Wed 13 Nov, 2019

Time: 09:00-16:30

Venue: Arktikum

Moderators: Florian Stammler and Lukas Allemann, Arctic Anthropology Research Group, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

PROGRAM

09:00 – 09:20 Keynote: **Elena Omelchenko**, Professor, Director of Centre for Youth Studies, St.Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies, HRU "Higher School of Economics - St. Petersburg"

City as a scene. Young people's profiles in Russian cities: from Saint-Petersburg to Ulan-Ude

09:20 – 09:30 Discussion of keynote

09:30 – 09:45 **Maria Pitukhina, Anna Simakova**, Budget Monitoring Center, Petrozavodsk State University

Live, Work or Leave? Arctic youth survey results

09:45 – 10:00 **Florian Stammler**, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland and **Aytalina Ivanova**, North Eastern Federal University

More than money? What makes young people happy to stay in Russian Arctic Cities

10:00 – 10:15 **Lukas Allemann**, Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

Revda and Poliarnye Zori – two poles on the spectrum of mono-industrial town development in the Russian Arctic

10:15 – 10:30 **Matrena Okorokova**, North Eastern Federal University

The notion of political leader in the ideas of student youth in Sakha Yakutia

10:30 – 11:00 Discussion


11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 11:45 **Ria-Maria Adams**, Research affiliate, PhD student, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

Youth Well-being in Northern Finnish Pre-Industrial Towns: Opportunities and Threats

Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit

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11:45 – 12:00 **Tanja Joonas**, Senior researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland
The Finnish Youth Act – in theory and in practice

12:00 – 12:15 **Tatiana Oglezneva**, North Eastern Federal University
The Youth legislation of the Russian Arctic

12:15 – 12:30 **Alla Bolotova and Elena Gorbacheva**, Aleksanteri institute, University of Helsinki
Recycling initiatives of youth in industrial cities in the Russian Arctic: environmentally responsible behaviour in the absence of structural opportunities

12:30 – 13:00 Discussion of presentations

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 14:15 **Eduard Galimullin**, Ph.D. Candidate, Russian Academy of National Economic and Public Administration, Moscow
Snow, cold and polar bears: a study of Russian youth attitudes towards life and work in the Arctic

14:15 – 14:30 **Manon de Courten**, freelance consultant and trainer and **Christina Stadlbauer**, freelance researcher and artist
Interrogating well-being through a joint creative process: the Ritlu project

14:30 – 14:45 Discussion of presentations

14:45 – 15:15 Coffee Break

15:15 – 15:30 **Mathieu Boivin**, PhD candidate of Applied Human Sciences in University of Montréal, Canada
Indigenous Youth As Leaders For Sustainable And Socially Innovative Dwelling In Northern Canada

15:30 – 15:45 Discussion of presentations

15:45 – 16:30 Final discussion



City as a scene. Young people's profiles in Russian cities: from Saint-Petersburg to Ulan-Ude

In the focus of my presentation are key trends particular for youth societies and cultural youth scenes of six Russian cities. The attention will be leaned towards peculiarities of inter and outer group communications, different values choices of young people, intersection specifics of religious, ethnic and gender scales of youth societies.

The report is based on the analysis of the project “Creative fields of interethnic interaction and youth cultural scenes of Russian cities” (2015-2019, the Russian Science Foundation grant) results.

The project was conducted in 6 Russian cities, selected in accordance with geographical, ethno-cultural and religious characteristics: St. Petersburg, Ulyanovsk, Kazan (the capital of Tatarstan), Makhachkala (the capital of Dagestan), Elista (the capital of Kalmykia) and Ulan-Ude (the capital of Buryatia). During the project implementation mix methods were used: interviews with students (Total N = 4800), in-depth interviews with young people involved in cultural urban activities (N = 120); focus groups with religious youth (N = 18), biographical interviews with young religious women (N = 45); ethnographic case studies (N = 12); production of sociological documentary films (5 films). A reach, large-scale material has been obtained considering the coverage of topics. This material has already become valuable and will be an important scientific material years ahead for our thoughts on key changes and dimensions of the youth space of modern Russia.

Such a project was challenging for the research team both theoretically and methodologically. For research and analysis, the theoretical framework of the youth cultural scene was chosen, which made it possible for us to consider authentic urban spaces where participants not only communicate with each other, but also jointly produce community values through cultural, civic, everyday practices. Immersion in the group contexts helped to consider the diversity of youth experience, to see how the global trends of cultural youth life, being refracted through the local infrastructure, produce unique forms of youth communities. The ability to look through the prism of the youth cultural scene helped us to understand how, in the context of everyday life, the dimensions of group identities that are significant for youth groups meet and interact: class, sub / cultural, ethnic, religious, gender.

We still have to master and analyze the obtained unique empirical data and to continue testing theoretical and methodological approaches. At this stage, I will focus on a general review of the results of the survey and a brief excursion into a urban youth ethnography based on case studies.

Prof. Elena Omelchenko
Head of the Centre for Youth Studies
HSE, SPb, Russia

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Live, Work or Leave? Arctic youth survey results


The report deals with sociological survey results of a mutual Russian-Finnish project devoted to both youth living and working in the Arctic.

The project titled “Live, Work or Leave? Youth – wellbeing and the viability of (post) extractive Arctic industrial cities in Finland and Russia” was supported by both the Finnish Science Academy and Russian Foundation of Fundamental Research for the period of 2018-2020.

Analyzing the attractiveness of (post) industrial cities in the Arctic (Kemijarvi, Kirovsk, Revda, Kovdor, Neryngri, Novy Urengoy, Aldan, Khandyga) as places both to live and work, this project mainly focuses on youth qualitative data (youth welfare determinants) and quantitative data (Finnish and Russian statistics on youth, youth survey results) in (post)industrial cities of the Arctic. Arctic municipalities’ both perspectives and sustainability will depend on how younger generation sees personal development prospects. Youth survey results would be presented in order to observe the issue. The survey results have shown that generally Arctic youth is happy, and these attitudes relate rather to psycho-emotional factors rather than to socio-economic ones. There was no correlation found between level of youth happiness and municipalities’ socio-economic situation. As a proof, level of youth happiness in Novy Urengoy (gas production) and Aldan (gold production), the richest municipalities, is quite low and amounts to 44% only. The happiest youth (more than 70% of respondents) turned out to live in Murmanskaya oblast (Kirovsk, Revda, Kovdor). Generally, comparing to Yamal and Yakutia, Murmaskaya oblast turns out to be the driver in many positions such as youth migration outflow, youth high social activity, youth happiness, the safest place to live etc. As a result, a number of maps visualizing youth flows would be outlined for Murmaksaya oblast, Republic of Sakha(Yakutia), Yamalo-Nenetsky Autonomic District and Finnish Lapland.

Maria Pitukhina and Anna Simakova
Budget Monitoring Center
Petrozavodsk State University

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More than money? What makes young people happy to stay in Russian Arctic Cities

The Russian Arctic has a special legal status within Russia, with higher salaries compensating Arctic residents for living in a region with increased harshness. In the south of the country Arctic residents are therefore often seen as the 'rich uncles from the north'. On the other hand, quantitative research within the WOLLIE project shows (see Pitukhina and Simakova presentation) that what is called the 'happiness index' is higher in the region with the lower level income in the Russian Arctic. In this presentation we contribute with qualitative research evidence from Siberian Arctic industrial cities on factors that influence young people's quality of life in these cities. We find that in places with higher salary, it is mostly non-monetary factors that determine young people's well-being. Factors such as work-life balance, quietness and peace, the absence of hectic, opportunities for self-realisation, access to services and facilities, quality of housing and the beauty of nature are positive factors that make northern cities attractive for young residents to plan their life there. These findings point to a specific "Arctic" notion of well-being and suggest ways towards building sustainable communities in the Arctic.

Florian Stammler
Arctic Centre
University of Lapland

Aytalina Ivanova
North Eastern Federal University

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Revda and Poliarnye Zori – two poles on the spectrum of mono-industrial town development in the Russian Arctic

Despite their territorial closeness, the cities of Revda and Poliarnye Zori, both located in the Murmansk Region (Russia), represent two opposite poles in the wide Russian mono-industrial cityscape. Revda, a mining-town, struggles with strong youth outmigration, high fluctuation and absence rates at the town-forming enterprise, low wages and one of the lowest living standards of the region. Conversely, Poliarnye Zori, the town around the northernmost nuclear power station in the world, attracts young people and enjoys high workforce motivation and retention rates, high wages and the highest living standard in the region. While the industries around these towns are of very different nature, their respective products are in high demand and could potentially contribute to wealth and well-being in both cities. Through an ethnographic, interpretative approach with longer research stays among both youth and administrators I looked into the manifold reasons why, then, there is such an immense discrepancy between these two single industry towns.

By looking into and juxtaposing corporate policies towards youth (15 to 30 years age) and the actual wishes and aspirations of young people in the town, this paper aims at refining an anthropology of well-being, against the backdrop of what Sherry Ortner called the era of “dark anthropology”: working against widespread dichotomies of happiness versus social suffering, and towards seeing the mutual entanglements between the making of happiness and navigating the “dark” sides of life in Arctic single industry towns.

Lukas Allemann
Researcher
Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

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The notion of political leader in the ideas of student youth in Sakha Yakutia

This presentation analyses survey data among Students in the East Siberian Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on the idea what constitutes the ideal leader among youth. This image – we argue – has the potential to influence youth election behaviour as they become political personalities in the Russian Arctic. The success of a leader in the view of the studied students depends mainly on the correlation of the personal qualities of the person and the demand for leadership in society. The presentation shall focus on the complicated interplay of background factors, the social-psychological situation of the young people, the political socialisation and the ideals of the youth. In the end, we present the results of the survey, according to which the ideal leader is male, between 35-50 years old, having higher education in the field of political sciences or law, and displaying foremost the qualities of honesty, responsibility, fairness and the will to work hard.

Matrena Okorokova
North Eastern Federal University

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Youth Well-being in Northern Finnish Pre-Industrial Towns: Opportunities and Threats

How do young people see prospects for their own personal development in the pre-industrial Northern Finnish towns of Kemijärvi, Pyhäjoki and Kolari? This presentation focuses on discussing the preliminary results from the Finnish field sites of the Finnish Academy funded project 'Live, Work or Leave? Youth – wellbeing and the viability of (post) extractive Arctic industrial cities in Finland and Russia'. In engaging with the theoretical concept of well-being and by adding through empirically grounded fieldwork new perspectives to the current discussion in social sciences, the aim is to show how authorities, civil society and industrial companies provide conditions for youth well-being. Furthermore, the focus will be on voicing young people's own perspective on how sustainable communities are constructed in such places with an outmigration tendency.

If young people do not see their well-being and future prospects in their home-towns, they will leave and it will be impossible for such cities and municipalities to maintain a socially balanced cohesive society. The preliminary results suggest that there are push and pull factors, opportunities and threats, which lead to individual decisions in staying or leaving. Educational and work opportunities, the connection with nature, functioning infrastructure, safety, sufficient services and social ties can either serve as push or pull factors. By incorporating young people's perceptions in policy-making decisions, a more sustainable Arctic can be envisioned and will have positive societal impacts on local communities.

Ria-Maria Adams

Research affiliate

PhD student

Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

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The Finnish Youth Act – in theory and in practice

The objectives of the Finnish Youth Act from 2017 is to promote young people's social inclusion and opportunities for exerting an influence; improve their skills and capabilities to function in society; support their growth, independence and sense of community and facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, adoption of skills and pursuit of free-time hobbies and activities in civic society; as well as to promote non-discrimination and realisation of civic rights while improving young people's growth and living condition.

According to the Act, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the overall administration, coordination and development of the national youth policy. The Act sets out provisions on a governmental programme for national youth work and youth policy which serves as the key strategic document in the efforts to support the growth, independence and social inclusion of young people and improve their growth and living conditions. Municipalities are obligated, with due consideration to local conditions, to create the necessary preconditions for local youth work and activities by providing services and premises for young people and supporting their civic engagement. This presentation examines the Youth Act of Finland and how it has been implemented into practice, by looking at especially cities and municipalities in Finnish Lapland. The presentation provides statistics as well as qualitative information.

The presentation is part of the Finnish Academy funded project: WOLLIE, "Live, work or leave? Youth-wellbeing and the viability of Arctic towns and cities". We observe a trend of outmigration from the Arctic to southern metropolitan areas. By analysing the attractiveness of Arctic industrial cities as places to live and work, this project contributes interdisciplinarily to understanding the determinants of youth wellbeing in Arctic industrial cities.

Tanja Joonas
Senior researcher
University of Lapland
Arctic Centre

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The Youth legislation of the Russian Arctic

The regions of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation are fully or partially located on the territory of nine constituent entities of the Federation. The regions of the Arctic have competencies for implementing a policy of attracting and retaining youth in these territories on the basis of a balanced combination of material and moral incentives; among these are, in particular, a highly developed settlement system with the presence of cities and large urban settlements. The retaining of youth in the Arctic is possible on the basis of the introduction of modern technologies and a legislatively fixed system of preferences and benefits. To date, there is no systematic Arctic legislation with a mandatory separation of youth as a segment of the population. In order to interest young people in staying in the Russian Arctic, a comprehensive and concrete program is needed, based on well-developed legal regulation both at the federal center and at the regional level.

Legislative support for the life of young people in the Arctic regions is so far carried out as part of general legal regulation in the absence of any systemic coordination. Thus, the system of social obligations and guarantees is valid in all regions of the Far North and equivalent areas. Basic laws on youth at the level of subjects also do not take into account the specifics of the Arctic territories and often copy the contents of the foundations of federal youth policy. Individual districts in the Russian Arctic adopt laws in the field of promoting employment and youth employment, assistance to young families, youth public initiatives and organizations. The level of development of the Arctic territories highly depends on budgetary provision.

Therefore, in spite of all efforts, the youth legislation of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation remains curtailed, is for the most part declarative in nature, and mainly aimed at implementing federal projects.

Tatiana Oglezneva
North Eastern Federal University

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Recycling initiatives of youth in the Russian Arctic: Green behaviour in lack of infrastructural opportunities

This paper focuses on newly emerging recycling initiatives in several Arctic regions of Russia. In Russia the system of waste utilisation is mainly oriented on landfill disposal of waste, with low level of waste processing: there is almost no recycling infrastructure in the regions while many of the existing landfills are reaching their capacity limits. In the Russian Arctic the situation is further complicated due to underdeveloped transport infrastructure and low population density in the region. In recent years, grassroots recycling projects appeared in different Arctic cities initiated by young people, who are more environmentally concerned than older generations. In this paper we explore development of several such projects in two Arctic regions: Yamal-Nenets autonomous region and Murmansk region, analysing how and why pro-environmental behaviour becomes more popular among youth and how initiatives are implemented on the local level in a lack of recycling infrastructure.

*Alla Bolotova, Elena Gorbacheva
Aleksanteri institute
University of Helsinki*

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Snow, cold and polar bears: a study of Russian youth attitudes towards life and work in the Arctic

The Russian Arctic remains an unpopular place of permanent residence, although the realization of large infrastructure projects creates a demand for skilled specialists. Considerable out-migration and shrinking of the economically active population already set a question about the path government should further develop the region – to continue traditional socio-economic policy toward entities of the North or focus more on the control for employing workers on a fly-in-fly-out basis.

A study of the motivation of young people towards relocating for permanent or temporary residence in the Arctic showed that this social group is dominated by the perception of a region characterized by rather negative associations, such as ice, cold, and snow. However, the author revealed the existence of specific material incentives, which, according to respondents, would have a positive impact on a possible decision to move. For example - the provision of additional paid holidays and rental housing. The author also defined the approximate limits of the minimum enough wage for the decision to move and compared the data with the results of similar studies.

The study thus demonstrates the current state of youth perception of the Arctic and discusses some mechanisms for its involvement in the entities of the North. It was implemented with grant funds and is a continuation of the author's study of the socio-economic situation of the Russian Arctic.

Eduard Galimullin, Ph.D. Candidate

Russian Academy of National Economic and Public Administration, Moscow

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Interrogating well-being through a joint creative process: the Ritlu project

To contribute to the discussion on the qualitative aspects of wellbeing for youth in the Arctic towns, Christina Stadlbauer and Manon de Courten suggest to bring in a creative approach to complement the theoretical and the practical approach of this session. In their social-artistic project 'Ritlu – Le Grand Voyage', named after the Chukchi term meaning 'Gift from the Sea', Christina and Manon engage with the communities of the most Northern coastal regions of the Earth, spanning the countries Russia, Norway and the United States, with a focus on the youth (15-25 years old).

The project aims to explore the impact of the irreversible melting of the Ocean and overall change of climatic conditions on the youth's livelihoods, using artistic means to enter into relation – visiting places, observing, talking – with locals, trying to experience and comprehend together. Based on these findings, the project will foster the creation of trans-Arctic networks to connect these remote and peripheral places, cultures and phenomena.

The starts journey from the main questions:

- How did and do the Arctic communities and individuals relate to the Sea?
- How does the climate crisis impact their and our perception of boundaries? Around these questions, the team will explore the relationship between well-being and creativity by creating jointly with the youth e.g. physical narratives, deep mapping, ephemeral interventions, and/or contemporary rituals.

Engaging creativity, the team hopes to unravel deeper, experiential layers of what well-being means for the younger generations living at the rapidly changing Arctic shores. These outputs will serve as a basis for discussion with their communities and decision-makers, and within the trans-Arctic networks about climate crisis.

Dr. Christina Stadlbauer
freelance researcher and artist

Dr. Manon de Courten
Freelance consultant and trainer

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Indigenous Youth As Leaders For Sustainable And Socially Innovative Dwelling In Northern Canada

The Indigenous youth now counts for more than 50% of the Indigenous population in Canada and a greater majority is wanting to head back to their home communities after their studies. With this demographic and economic shift adding on its traditional importance for Indigenous societies, youths can now transform the future drawn by their predecessors. The high birth rate and the dismal condition of housing and, in some regards, of social services inside the communities calls for new investments, planning, development and leadership for the North. Inspired by the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) thought by the elders, young leaders go past coping with generational traumas inherited by Canadian colonialism to implement change in their communities to become role-models for the whole of Canadian and Northern societies. By building sustainable city plans and housing, creating businesses adapted to their environment, economic needs and values, investing into TEK's generational transfer and modern education, reaching out to non-indigenous communities, youth and leadership through economical, artistic and political channels, Indigenous youth are reopening the way to a holistic approach to a society caring for social and environmental wellbeing.

This presentation will examine the case of specific communities that have paved the way several decades ago and of communities that are on the brink of an important turn towards this empowerment in northern Canada as inspired by their youth. It will present examples of youth led businesses and movements creating conditions to secure wellbeing in northern and remoted communities, thus acting demographic retainment and growth for the communities' viability. It will acknowledge leadership leaning towards a collective, social and societal wellbeing, cultural revalorization and reconciliation and engaging the homeland or home communities.

Mathieu Boivin
PhD candidate of Applied Human Sciences
University of Montréal, Canada

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