



NORDREGIO
Nordic Centre for Spatial Development

Tracing young people and their mobility

Presentation of a study on youth perspectives in the Arctic

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Nordic Demography Programme



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Presentation overview

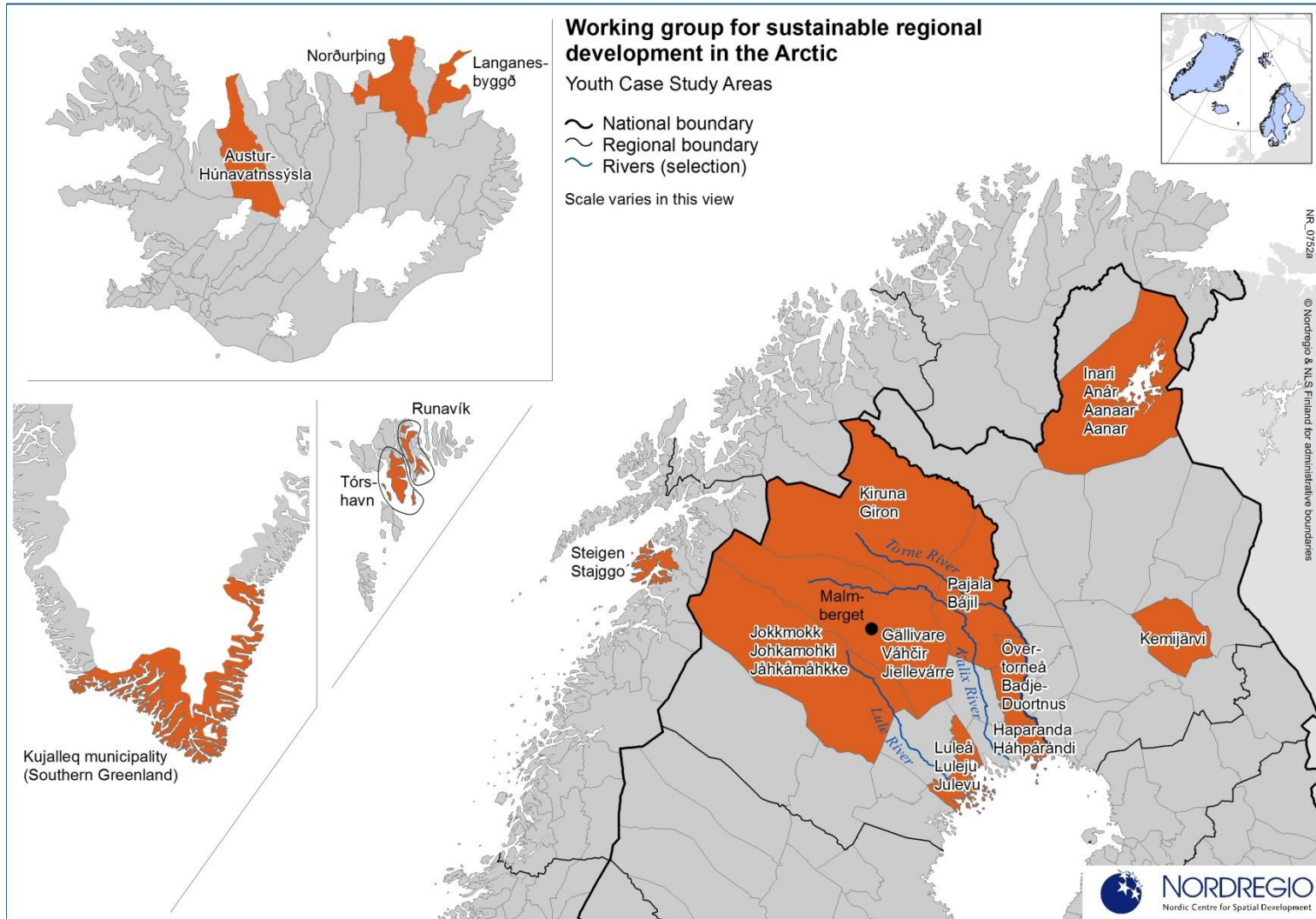
Case study areas, and methodology

Examples of visions and influence of life stage

Comparisons across regions

Findings and suggestions

Geographic foci Youth study: Case study sites



Life stage and mobility are interconnected

- Educational choices and vocational options as well as job related
- Age, life situation and frequency (Greenland)
- People want to travel
- Mobilities are encouraged



Photos: Matthias, Anna and Jonas!



Youth Perspectives on their Future in the Nordic Arctic

The questions of how to retain and attract young populations are central issues for regional policy development in the Nordic Arctic. Nordregio has carried out an analysis to uncover young people's own perspectives of their future possibilities in Arctic communities. This policy brief summarises the main findings of qualitative case studies about young people living in remote locations. The aim is to voice the ambitions and future expectations of the young generation.

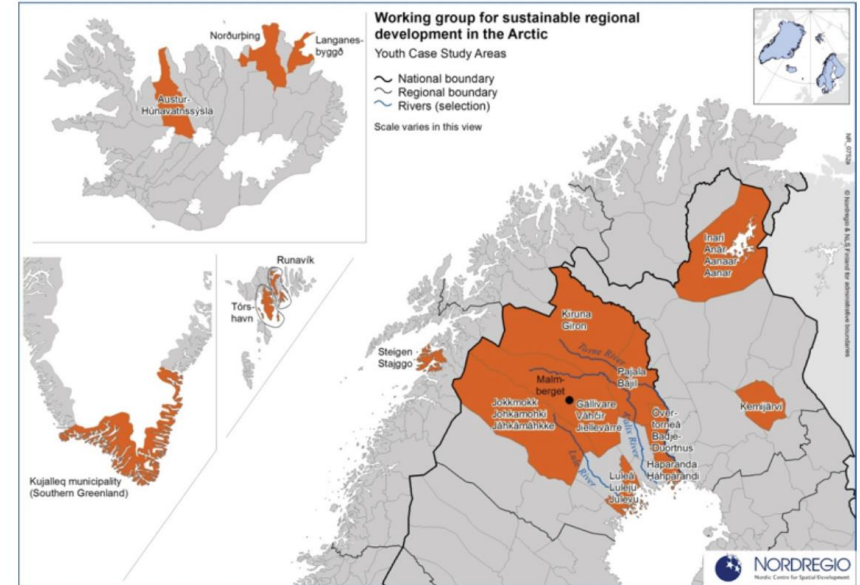
MOST RURAL COMMUNITIES in the Nordic Arctic share fate with Europe's northern periphery in that demographic development is characterized by a population decline that has been going on for decades. It is often difficult to get skilled young people that have moved away and obtained an education to come back to help create growth and optimism. In many cases, there is also a deficit of women, both because of the limited job opportunities and because they consider the op-

portunities for personal expression and recognition to be insufficient.

The purpose of this policy brief is to present how participating youth from the Nordic Arctic see their future and perceive changes in the local communities in relation to their own development. Based on the views of young people from Iceland, Greenland, Faroese Island, Northern Norway, Sweden and Finland participating in the study, the following section will present the main findings of the study.

Education and work expectations

Many young people across the arctic region imagine themselves holding secure and well paid jobs in the future, and they see education as one way to achieve this. These students expect longer school weeks together with an extended curriculum because they believe that the requirements will need to be much higher for



Empirical study sites. Map by Linus Rispling.

them the concept of nuclear families. Current shifting demographic patterns of the family as an institution being dissolved by divorces, mixed families, and single households are not reflected as part of the youths' future visions.

Gender equality issues are, according to many of the youth groups participating, central in future societal progress and should be highly prioritized in all political strategies and daily processes. Yet, it is striking how traditional gender roles are envisioned in Northern Finland. Here, many portray women as those primarily taking care of the house as well as kids. Also, the articulations about equality do not entail that young male and female have same type of focus. Generally, it seems like many of the female youth are more concerned about relational aspects of development in terms of health care, child-care

and equal access to education for all, while men take a more individual stance in their perceptions about the future.

About the research:

A group of scholars from Iceland, Norway, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Sweden and Finland were asked to contribute to a study about «Future Perspectives among Young People» in the rural and/or remote areas of the Nordic Arctic. Nordregio is project coordinator for the overall project: Sustainable regional development in the Nordic Arctic. Empirical study sites (see map above) encompass: Steigen municipality Nordland (NO), Austur-Húnavatnssýsla, Norðurþing and Dörshöfn, Langanes (IS), Kujalleq municipality (GL), Tórshavn and Rúnavík (FO), Kemijärvi and Inari (FI) as well as Sápmi (SE). Sápmi covers Kalix, Torneådal, Gallivare, Malmberget, Kiruna, Jukkasjärvi, Jokkmokk, Luleå and Luleådal municipalities.

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Pictures by:

Anna Karlsdóttir (10 years reunion, Husavík).
Leneisja Jungsberg (Skater boy playing in the mountains, Nanortalik).
Rasmus Ole Rasmussen (Graffiti in Reykjavik and Young employee, North Karelia).

Nordregio conducts strategic research in the fields of planning and regional policy. We are active in research and dissemination and provide policy relevant knowledge, particularly with a Nordic and European comparative perspective.

Visions and perspectives on mobilities

- The youth from the rural regions in the Nordic Arctic will during the next 10-15 years either be engaged in getting an education or establishing as labour and professionals in the labour market. These young people expect to be mobile and move from their place of origin in order to achieve these future dreams. Only a minimal part of the participating young people expect to be living in their place of upbringing during the next ten years.



Next 20-25 years

- Looking 20-25 years ahead a large proportion of the rural youth have gone back to their region of origin if their prospects will come true. But in most cases it is the larger urban entities of the region rather than the rural part. If their future visions come true, smaller towns and villages as the rural countryside will still be struggling with further population decline.




Multilocational lifestyles wanted

- the young people explain it also depend on resources and qualifications.
- The multilocational lifestyle can also be seen as a way of examining the current zeitgeist.
- the zeitgeist pushing even further on existing trends of urbanisation and individualism.
- Social medias are a new element in the daily life of people and to an extent they are amplifying urbanisation in for example role models.



Mobility as life decision making condition

- has become a basic conditions to realise individuals needs and requirements.
- You have to move physically to get the job you wish for, or the education you want to pursue. Mobility programs of different ranks are enabling factor, whether they involve student exchange programs or voluntary work or voluntourism.
- As a young person it is assumed, that you can become wiser and mature by experiencing different places.

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in Iceland, showing a mix of colorful houses (red, green, white, blue) and a sandy beach. The town is situated on a peninsula or near a large body of water, with hills in the background. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

„I just want to see something new. I really would like to travel“ (Adam, 17 year old male).

„Yes, I will be here...somewhere in a tiny town. Both in Iceland and elsewhere. I will also be here in this region.“ (Aldís, female 18 years).

BETWEEN WISH AND REALITY

Frequency of mobility for this broad age group

■ Example Greenland

Example of mobility record for one respondent

Period 2007 Place Narsaq Reason for moving (no answer)

Period 2007-2008 Place Qaqortoq Reason for moving (no answer)

Period 2008-2011 Place Frederikshavn, DK Reason for moving Sports High School

Period 2011-2012 Place Somaliland Reason for moving Work

Period 2012 (½ year) Place Narsaq Reason for moving Work

Period 2012-2014 Place Nuuk and Sisimiut Reason for moving Courses and Practical Training

Findings and discussions

- Conventional/traditional primary occupations as a future lifestyle/job not a priority
- Sami youth not eager about mining activities and resource extraction is not on top of the plan for the youth
- While educational offers locally have increased, vocational training is in the back seat
- Living in the countryside will have to be a choice and some of the youth is conscious that what it involves will have to include entrepreneurship

Thank you !

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