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Module 10

New External Political Structures

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Key Terms and Concepts

- the international system and international politics
- international, external or supra-national relations
- international relations and international politics
- globalization
- regionalization
- international actors (including external political structures such as inter-governmental organizations [IGOs] and non-government organizations [NGOs])
- unified/nation state, the unified-state system
- region, regional and inter-regional co-operation, regional dynamic, region-building, regionalization
- national borders and boundaries, borderlands, transboundary or cross-border co-operation
- “polity puzzle,” circles of internationalization
- the Cold War period, transition period
- northern dimension

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to:

1. Understand both the tradition and current state of international and inter-regional co-operation in the Circumpolar North
2. Describe the external political structures and explain the current state of international relations in the Circumpolar North
3. List and describe both the different categories of international actors and the main external actors of the North
4. List, describe, and briefly explain the aims and functions of the main northern IGOs and NGOs



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5. Define the transition period of the 1990s in general, especially from the point of view of international relations and external political structures
6. Recognize and describe the main relations between the external northern political structures (NGOs, IGOs and global actors) and the inter-linkages, both within the Northern polity puzzle, and between different levels of internationalization
7. List the main international actors of your region and to recognize and describe the external political structures present in your region

Module Readings

Read the Overview and Lecture for Module 10, then read the assigned readings from the *Reading File* given below.

Reading 28: Arctic Council, “Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council”

Reading 29: Lassi Heininen, Olli-Pekka Jalonen, and Jyrki Käkönen, “The Arctic in International Society: The Current State”

Reading 30: The Rovaniemi Declaration, “Declaration on the Protection of the Arctic Environment”

Overview

The main aim of this module is to provide a basic knowledge and understanding of the current international system from the point of view of the North. With that in mind, the module focuses on the external political structures and the current state of international relations in the Circumpolar North. First, the module presents a theoretical framework describing two main contexts of international relations and lists briefly the different categories and the main international actors of the Circumpolar North; Second, it gives a brief overview of international co-operation and of the external political structures of the Cold War and the rapid change in the international system from the Cold War through the transition period of the 1990s. Third, the module describes the main external political structures and their aims and functions, including IGOs (such as the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, Arctic Council, The Standing Committee for Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, the North Atlantic Marine Mammals Commission [NAMMCO], the Barents Euro-Arctic Region [BEAR] and the European Union’s Northern Dimension) and other kinds of external structures (such as subnational-based and civil organizations and networks of northern Indigenous peoples, environmental organizations, counties and municipalities and the scientific community). Fourth, it explores the



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importance of inter-regional co-operation in the Circumpolar North in general, and especially in the European North. Finally, the module gives an overview of the main international actors and external political structures in your region.

Lecture

Introduction

The Circumpolar North can be seen in several ways at the beginning of the twenty-first century: as a frozen, extreme, and exotic area; as a home land for Indigenous peoples and settlers; as a traditional Klondike, a rich reserve for industrial countries; as a military theatre; as a region needing environmental protection because of post-industrial influences, such as long-range pollution and climate change; as a multi-use region with potential for conflicts; or as a region for co-operation.

The world has a political interest in the Circumpolar North for various reasons:

- it is rich in natural resources;
- climate change is having profound effects in the Arctic;
- the Arctic is a sink for pollutants;
- radioactivity and nuclear safety are ongoing issues;
- the Arctic is a distinct component of the diversity of life on the Earth;
- northern peoples, communities, and cultures are a distinct component of socio-cultural diversity;
- and northern sea and air routes are important in international transportation and logistics.

The various interests mentioned above are the subjects of the so-called Arctic boom—the increasing, region-wide, co-operation in the Circumpolar North and the growing intergovernmental co-operation either in the North or dealing with the North.

The five starting points of this module are:

1. the geopolitical situation in the region; that is, as an important security region and a military theatre that changed dramatically in the 1990s because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and because of internal changes in the region;
2. the region is no longer primarily a security region, however, the military remains a major influence;
3. increasing intergovernmental co-operation across national borders has taken discussion beyond security policy to the political agenda of the



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northern unified states, and has taken over the elements of traditional security and military policy;

4. the new emerging phenomenon of new actors in international co-operation with their own interests, who are actively influencing the situation and creating special regional dynamics with the features of co-operation, competition, conflicting interests, and fresh and innovative attitudes;
5. and finally, both regionalization and internationalization have become an important and ongoing phenomenon in the Circumpolar North.

International Actors

A phenomenon of globalization and regionalization in the 1990s was the emergence of new participants in international relations. This is also the case in the Circumpolar North where both government and non-government actors and both regional actors and actors from outside the region are involved.

Although theorists of international relations have not compiled an official list of international actors, there are several broad categories. The unified states and IGOs, those having more influence and using more power in international co-operation can be called macro actors. NGOs, multi-national corporations (MNCs), and subnational groups can be designated micro actors. Dougherty and Pfatzgraff (1990, 22–28) have, however, provided an adequate set of categories including individuals, subnational groups, unified or nation states, transnational non-governmental organizations not made up of states (NGOs) and MNCs, IGOs and, finally, the whole international system. In this module this set of categories has been applied to the Circumpolar North (Heininen 1999, 98–103 and 386–387).

The traditional institutional structure based on the nation-state system underlines the role and importance of states and their international contacts and the importance of security and security policy. From that point of view, the Circumpolar North, because of its geopolitical situation and the international environment, is important in international relations in the post-Cold War period. The increase in interest in northern regions and co-operation includes examples like the BEAR, based on the Norwegian initiative; the Northern Dimension of the European Union based on the Finnish initiative; and the northern dimension of the Canadian foreign policy (e.g., Conference of Foreign Ministers in Kirkenes 1993; Council of the European Union 2000; The Northern Dimension of Canadian Foreign Policy 2000).

There are not only states and IGOs, but many NGOs and MNCs having an influence in international co-operation. Indeed, the increase in the number of new participants is one of the most interesting phenomena of the international system of the post-Cold War period. This new phenomenon



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began with the transition of the international system, such as that which occurred in the Circumpolar North, and includes the activities of government, sub-national, and civil actors. Their interests include elements of both co-operation and of competition and conflict. International relations in the Circumpolar North can be characterized then, by the existence and influence of many actors in international co-operation, a decrease of the importance of the military-based security, and an emphasis on the utilization and competition for natural resources.

The economic interests of outsiders, motivated by rich natural resources, are having a strong influence on the political, economic, and regional development of northern regions, especially in Northwestern Russia. This dramatic increase in the number of new actors started in the 1980s, just before the end of the Cold War, and extended throughout the Circumpolar North.

From the Cold War to the Twenty-first Century

In the North, there has traditionally been regional co-operation across national borders on a daily basis by many people, especially by northern Indigenous peoples.

International Co-operation and External Structures

During the Cold War, the Circumpolar North was divided into two areas of influence, with NATO and the Warsaw Pact the main rivals. In the twentieth century, the Arctic went through a process of militarization where the region transformed first into a military flank and then a military front. The ice-free reaches of the Barents and Norwegian seas were heavily militarized during the Cold War. The Kola Peninsula and the nearby seas still have one of the biggest concentrations of nuclear weapons and military power and facilities in Russia, and probably in the world.

When comparing the list of international actors of the Circumpolar North of the 1990s to the number during the Cold War, there is quite a change. If only considering the real, region-wide actors in the Circumpolar North, the list of Cold War actors is even shorter. In the Cold War there were the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, each with their military and industrial agendas. Because they are Arctic Ocean rim countries and NATO members, Canada, Denmark, and Norway were keeping a watch on the sovereignty of their northern regions. Among the IGOs there was NATO and, on the European side, the Nordic Council, but there were few economic or other transnational relations across national borders. The Saami Council, Pohjola-Norden associations, and the North Calotte Peace Days (traditional peace festival between the northern counties



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of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Soviet Union between 1964–1996) were among the few NGOs promoting international and inter-regional co-operation. The scientific community was involved due to the International Geophysical Year of 1957–1958, which meant a real start to international scientific co-operation dealing with and in the Arctic.

Likewise, there were few international agreements concerning the Circumpolar North and its environment. For example, the Treaty of Spitzbergen (1920) demilitarized the archipelago and gave Norway sovereignty and jurisdiction but allowed the utilization of natural resources by all treaty partners. Correspondingly, the Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears (1973) is a comprehensive agreement to protect polar bears from commercial hunting and to protect their habitat. There was also the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946), which had relevance for both the Arctic regions and northern Indigenous peoples.

Due to the national interests of the Arctic Ocean rim countries, there were several disputes over natural resources; for example, the fishery dispute (the Cod War) between the United Kingdom and Iceland in the North Atlantic in the 1970s, the dispute between Norway and Russia in the Barents Sea, the dispute between Iceland and Norway in the waters around Jan Mayen, and the disputes between the Icelanders and Norwegians in the waters of Svalbard in the mid-1990s. Most disputes with fisheries have been resolved by intergovernmental arrangements like the Barents Sea Fisheries Regime between Norway and the Soviet Union-Russia, the joint development zone on Jan Mayen between Iceland and Norway, and the Bering Sea Fisheries Regime between the Soviet Union-Russia and the United States. However, the dispute between Norway and Russia, the so-called the Grey Zone, is still without a solution because it deals with the rich oil and gas resources of the Barents Shelf.

In the 1970s, environmental problems (e.g., DDT in polar bears) increased interest in the Arctic environment among scientists, Indigenous peoples, and environmental organizations, and there was subsequently more interest in the political and economic geography of the Circumpolar North (Armstrong, Rogers, and Rowley 1978; Young 1985; 1986).

Environmental problems were caused by pollution both from outside the region (long-range air and sea pollution) and from regional sources (industry, traffic, military). Therefore, several multi- and bilateral agreements with relevance to the Circumpolar North were signed: the London Dumping Convention (1972); the Enmod Convention (1977); the Convention and the Protocols on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (1979); the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979), with an explicit mention of the northern Indigenous peoples; the New International Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) (1982), with a mention of special features of the Arctic environment; the Vienna Convention (1985); the Montreal Protocol of 1987 on ozone depletion; and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.



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At the end of the Cold War, just before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the geopolitical situation of the Circumpolar North began to change. A number of bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union and other Arctic states, such as Canada, Finland, and Norway, had already been signed. However, a real turning-point was the so-called Murmansk speech by President Gorbachev in October 1987, which outlined six proposals for arms control and peaceful international co-operation in the Arctic. The speech opened up interesting new perspectives and started a new page in international co-operation dealing in the Arctic. Although the West suspected the proposals and hesitated to respond, a new kind of international Arctic and northern co-operation, known as the “Arctic boom,” began even before the end of the Cold War.

The second part of the twentieth century included the general dramatic change to the international system due to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, but there were also the following regional phenomena. First, the European North and the ice-free reaches of the Barents and Norwegian Seas were transformed from a military flank into a military front, almost a “military theatre,” by the Soviet and American militaries. Second, pan-Arctic and horizontal co-operation in the North, which was started in the 1970s and 1980s by the northern Indigenous peoples, other regional and local actors, and the scientific community, grew into the Arctic boom at the end of the 1980s. Encouraged by the Murmansk speech, governments began co-operating to protect the Arctic environmental (the so-called the Rovaniemi Process with the first ministerial meeting in 1991), which in turn began the co-operation between the Arctic Eight states. Third, the existence and influence of regional, local, and other non-governmental actors in the 1990s meant a substantial increase in international and inter-regional co-operation in the North.

The Transition Period of the 1990s

In the 1990s, what was once primarily a security area and a military theatre, started to evolve towards a region of international co-operation with new actors and their interests (Heininen 1997). That started a “race” or competition of national initiatives dealing with international co-operation by governments and other state bodies, and a parallel competition of initiatives by non-state actors.

Following one of the six proposals of Gorbachev’s Murmansk speech, the Finnish government took the initiative in international co-operation for Arctic environmental protection. The Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS), or Rovaniemi Process, was signed in June 1991 and was the first institutionalized framework for international co-operation. Before that, the Arctic Eight met in Leningrad to sign a foundation for the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC), which was established in 1990. At the meeting, Canada launched its proposal for the Arctic Council, which was established in 1996. Norway made an initiative for the Barents



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co-operation region in 1992, which was established in January 1993. The Standing Committee for Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region was initiated by the Nordic Council in 1994. The initiative for the University of the Arctic was made by Canada and Sweden in 1996, and the official launch of the “University without walls” was in June 2001. The Finnish Government launched its initiative for the Northern Dimension of the EU in September 1997, at the same time that the US government launched its Northern European Initiative (NEI). The idea to create a special forum for discussion on northern research was made by the President of Iceland following the first Northern Research Forum (NRF) in November, 2000, in Iceland.

Non-government actors were also creative, starting initiatives and efforts for circumpolar co-operation like the Circumpolar Universities Conferences (later CUA) started by Lakehead University, Canada; the Northern Forum, established in 1990, was based on activities of Hokkaido, Alberta, and Alaska; the International Calotte Academy, started in 1991, was managed by TAPRI and the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland; the World Wide Fund for Nature started its Arctic Programme in 1992; the Barents environmental organizations’ co-operation in the early 1990s was run by Inari and Syd Varanger; the Barents university co-operation started by the University of Tromsø in 1993; Barents Press, that is, inter-regional co-operation between journalists started; the Barents Cultural Forum based on activities of Oulu and Rovaniemi started in the middle of 1990s.

When comparing the current situation to the “frozen” time of the Cold War, there is a great, even dramatic change. The two main features at the new stage of the North are the decrease in the importance of military based security and an increased emphasis on the utilization of and competition for natural resources. In general, northern regions are under a fundamental structural change, and many peripheries are becoming more and more sparsely populated. There is no traditional solution for this situation, but a need for comprehensive thinking between stakeholders in the regions, those from outside the region, and between all sectors of each northern society.

The continuing activities of non-government and regional actors, such as counties, northern Indigenous groups, environmental organizations and universities, and the whole scientific community, have made them key players in international and inter-regional co-operation in the North. Like government actors and others from outside the region, they have divergent and multi-functional interests and, in many cases, conflicts of interest and competing agendas. Behind all the activity and new government policies are interests in northern regions, natural resources, and environmental protection, but also a need to control the new situation dominated by these many actors and their interests, especially with the relationship of man with nature. Thus, it can also be interpreted as a means, if not to control, to be involved in the North and create a new kind of relationship between the north and south and northern and southern actors.

When describing the modern stage of the Arctic, Oran Young has used the concept of a multiple-use region to characterize the stage of development in



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the area (Osherenko and Young 1989). An example is the international research project on the Arctic by Tampere Peace Research Institute and the International Kuhmo Summer Academy, where the point of view of regional and non-government actors and their common co-operation was taken as parallel to that of the unified states and their international co-operation (Heininen, Jalonen, and Käkönen 1995). International and inter-regional co-operation in the European North have been described and analyzed, partly due to the establishment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in 1993, in several studies, such as the Barents Region (1994), Bröms, Eriksson and Svenson (1994), Dreaming the Barents Region (1996), and Heininen (1999).

The New External Political Structures

During the 1990s, a confusing number of new geographical and political concepts and new international organizations, all of which dealt with northern regions and issues or were located in the Circumpolar North or Northern Europe, entered the political discussion. The changed international system after the end of the Cold War encouraged a renaissance of region-building and regionalism. This was especially the case in Europe where co-operation and integration between the two rival blocs was promoted to increase stability and security by new forums like the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) established in 1992 by Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and the EU Commission.

The Arctic boom also includes a growing interest in the political science of the Arctic and other northern regions. (See, for example, Young 1985–86; *The Arctic Challenge. The Nordic and Canadian Approaches to Security and Cooperation in an Emerging International Region* 1988; Heininen, Jalonen, and Käkönen 1995.) For example, for the European Union, the Northern Dimension can be understood against a background of the interests of the EU in the North. After Greenland left the European Economic Community in 1985 after a referendum, the European Union no longer reached the North geographically. There was no acute need for the European Union to show its flag in the North or to have its own northern policy, so the EU's interests in the North are relatively recent. In the first half of the 1990s, the EU started to be more interested in the North and northern affairs, and joined the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. Through the 1995 accession of Finland and Sweden, the EU acquired its geographical and natural northern dimension, reaching almost to the Barents Sea, and the Northern Dimension Action Plan was accepted in 2000. As an example of the new kind of political process, before 2000, the EU Committee of Regions and the EU Parliament both made resolutions to welcome Norway, Iceland, Canada, and the United States to the process and to emphasize the role of the Indigenous peoples and civil organizations. Steps towards the North by the EU began before the launch of the Finnish initiative (Heininen 2001).



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The Circumpolar North seems to be in a fruitful position for international co-operation, both horizontal co-operation in the North and vertical co-operation between the EU as an IGO and regional actors as subnational groups and NGOs. While the international environment of the Circumpolar North is still in a transition, there are trends, co-operative processes, institutional frameworks, and many challenges for change that form a “polity puzzle” at external, transnational, national, and subnational levels, such as the Saami Council, the Northern Forum, the IASC, the AEPS, the BEAR, and the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS)

Based on the common aim of the Arctic states (mentioned in the Murmansk speech) to protect the Arctic environment, the AEPS (Rovaniemi process) started in early 1989 through a Finnish initiative. As a result of the first ministerial meeting of the Arctic Eight and three northern Indigenous peoples’ organizations, the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) was accepted. It was not signed by the governments of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Soviet Union, and the United States until June 1991 in Rovaniemi (Rovaniemi Declaration 1991).

The AEPS included four working groups: the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), which has studied the state of the Arctic environment; Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR); and Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME), with the main objectives of preventing marine pollution, implementing existing international agreements, and assessing the need for further actions or measures. The AEPS and its four working groups merged in 1997 with the Arctic Council, which is now the other pillar of its structure. (For more information see, for example, Mähönen 1997.)

The Arctic Council

Although the original idea (based on a Canadian initiative of former prime minister Brian Mulroney) and the feasibility study were launched at the end of the Cold War, the start of the Arctic Council had to wait until September 1996 when it was established by the Arctic Eight states and three organizations representing northern Indigenous peoples meeting in Ottawa.

The Arctic Council is an intergovernmental, high-level forum to:

- provide a means for promoting co-operation, coordination, and interaction among the Arctic states, with the involvement of the Arctic indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants, on common



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Arctic issues,¹ in particular issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic;

- oversee and coordinate the programs established under the AEPS on the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP); conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME); and Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPPR);
- adopt terms of reference for, and oversee and coordinate, a sustainable development program;
- disseminate information, encourage education, and promote interest in Arctic-related issues. (Arctic Council 1996)

It is also an international advisory body that provides support to the governments of the Arctic Eight that are seeking consensus-based solutions to the problems in the Arctic. The two main activities are to protect the Arctic ecosystems, including human populations and to identify, reduce, and eliminate pollution (AEPS) and sustainable development.

The Arctic Council includes the four working groups of the AEPS and the Working Group on Sustainable Development (WGSD), established at the first ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council in 1998. There is also the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS).

The Arctic Eight are the highest category members of the Arctic Council. A second category includes permanent participants (open to Arctic organizations of Indigenous peoples). Currently there are six permanent participants: the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the Saami Council, the RAIPON, the Aleut International Association, Arctic Athabaskan Council, and the Gwich'in Council International. There are currently 21 observers, including non-Arctic states (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, UK), IGOs (the Nordic Council, the Nordic Council of Ministers, NAMMCO, the Standing Committee of Arctic Parliamentarians, UN-ECE, UNEP), and NGOs (IASC, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, IASSA, IUCH, Northern Forum, WWF).

The Arctic Council is an official, high-level, inter-governmental (although low-profile) forum in international co-operation and in co-operation between states and Indigenous peoples' organizations. Although it is relatively new, there are critical questions and challenges for the Arctic Council (Young 2000). For example, does the Arctic Council succeed in raising its profile "as a promoter of Arctic issues of global significance in relation to other international institutions," will "the participation of inhabitants and Indigenous peoples of the Arctic" be strengthening or not; does it address how to implement sustainability in general, and especially in the case of the large-scale utilization of natural resources; is international Arctic co-operation in the context of the Arctic Council legally or morally binding; and finally, does the Arctic Council present the voice of the Arctic,

¹ The Arctic Council should not deal with matters related to military security.



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that is, what is the status of regions and regional actors, like counties, and would the Indigenous organizations become equal with the governments.

Standing Committee for Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region

The Standing Committee for Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region started its work in 1994. Before that, the first meeting of parliamentarians from different Arctic regions was held in July 1993 in Reykjavik at the invitation of the Nordic Council. One of the original primary aims of the Standing Committee was to support and promote the Arctic Council, and later, the aim of promoting human capacity building in the Arctic was added.

The North Atlantic Marine Mammals Commission (NAMMCO)

The NAMMCO was established by an agreement signed in 1992 between Iceland, Norway, Greenland, and the Faeroe Islands. Thus, the NAMMCO is an international and inter-governmental body of two states and two autonomous but non-sovereign entities. Officially, its mandate is for co-operation on the conservation, management, and study of marine mammals in the North Atlantic among users of marine mammals.

Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR)

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region, with its two councils, is an example of a multi- and bilateral, international co-operative group. The BEAR was established at a ministerial meeting of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden), the Russian Federation, and the EU Commission, in January 1993, in Kirkenes, Norway (Conference of Foreign Ministers in Kirkenes 1993).

The BEAR was established as a forum to decrease tension in the North, especially in the Barents Sea, through cross-border co-operation, and as a framework for European integration of the Nordic countries following the Cold War (Stokke and Tunander 1994; Co-operation in Arctic Europe 1994). It deals with an interesting geographical area in a dynamic time.

The BEAR, through the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) or the Regional Council, deals with co-operation in the fields of “low” politics, such as environmental protection, culture, economy, and science. Nuclear safety is one of the top priorities of the member-states. The BEAC is the principal assembly and forum, but is not a real IGO. It has three working groups: the Environmental Task Force, the Working Group on Economic Cooperation, and the Group for the Northern Sea Route. The BEAR includes



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provinces, counties, and Indigenous peoples as participants through the Regional Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, a forum for extensive regional co-operation. It is composed of representatives from counties or regions in Russia with working groups on various issues, such as the Indigenous Working Group. There are also observers, including Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, and the United States. The BEAR is, however, a top-down political concept and forum with the unified states as the main actors.

The BEAR deals with an artificial geographical region created by the unified states and the EU Commission. It contains elements of new realism and functional co-operation, but also those of region-building. Officially, the existing agreement does not cover the Barents Sea or security and military affairs. They are “forgotten” and excluded due to the problematic and sensitive role of security policy and because of the on-going disputes over the natural resources of the Barents Shelf.

As participants, the regions have become frustrated because of many barriers and hindrances and a lack of resources and power. For these actors there are more institutions and meetings, challenges and dreams than deeds or real results. Therefore, so far it is difficult to consider the Barents Region as an international region. When drawing this conclusion, I take into consideration the current BEAR co-operation, the existing economy, the political transactions inside the Barents Region, the infrastructure of the region, divided interests of security policy, and the fact that outside the region there are many economic and political engines dealing with it. These external engines may, however, potentially push the region into more intensive co-operation in the future.

The Process of the EU’s Northern Dimension

The Finnish government launched the initiative for a northern dimension of the European Union in September 1997, and since then it has been part of the political discussion in Europe. The EU’s Northern Dimension finally came onto the political agenda of the EU, as a policy or as a part of the external and cross-border policies of the EU, through a special Action Plan (2000) accepted in the Feira European Council in June, 2000.

The Northern Dimension is a framework for international and intergovernmental co-operation across Europe in the post-Cold War period. It deals with Northern Europe and the Russian Federation, which has become an issue for the Western powers since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Geographically, the Northern Dimension covers the area from Iceland on the west across to Northwest Russia, from the Norwegian, Barents and Kara Seas in the North to the Southern coast of the Baltic Sea. The partner countries of the Northern Dimension are Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania,



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Norway, Poland, and the Russian Federation. Canada and the United States are mentioned in the Action Plan as co-partners. Despite this wide coverage, the political focus of the Northern Dimension is on the Baltic Sea region and Northwest Russia, with special attention to, for example, Kaliningrad through Accession Partnerships between the EU and the candidate countries, the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), and the EU's Common Strategy on Russia.

The Action Plan gives an official, though not very exact, mandate for the Northern Dimension in external and cross-border EU policies for 2000–2003 in the sectors where added value is expected to be greatest. The main aims and goals of the Northern Dimension are peace and stability—to have “positive interdependence” between the EU and the partner countries. The rich oil and gas resources of the Russian North, and the needed transportation and infrastructure for them, are a high, but sometimes hidden, economic priority of the Northern Dimension. The Action Plan includes environmental protection and nuclear safety as a main priority of the Northern Dimension. Nuclear safety is a good example of a field that has gained more emphasis during the process. Also, public health and human-resource development are mentioned as new priorities, with the aim of decreasing the social gap. Fighting organized crime is emphasised under the justice and home affairs banner. Local and Indigenous populations are mentioned, but do not play a relevant role in Northern Dimension activities.

Some of the special concerns of the Northern Dimension include: the vulnerability of the environment; critical levels of water and air pollution and nuclear wastes; long distances, sparsely populated regions, and long frontiers and subsequent high logistics costs; harsh climate; wide socio-economic gaps; rich natural resources with valuable economic potential; human and scientific resources; and local populations and Indigenous peoples. Several of the concerns are negative or mentioned in the context of wide social gaps or other kinds of problems, such as drugs and crime (Tennberg 2000). It seems, however, that special northern features, with the exception perhaps of natural resources and environmental problems, do not play a relevant role in Northern Dimension activities.

Thus, the Arctic dimension has since been adopted as a new item on the political agendas both between the EU and Canada and between the EU and the United States. Co-operation with Iceland and Norway is not, however, so concrete, although it is mentioned under human resource development and research in the context of the EEA Agreement. The states of the Arctic region have been active in international co-operation since the beginning of the 1990s. All in all, the Northern Dimension, which includes the Arctic, the North Atlantic, and even an Urals, means added value to the EU and is an interesting co-operative context for North Europe. It can also be interpreted as a metaphor for a new kind of relationship between the North and the South in the European context.



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Subnational and Civil External Structures

As mentioned earlier, in the Circumpolar North there are both region-building processes and regional dynamics initiated by external, non-government groups and by subnational groups. Of relevance are the following subnational, civil, and external structures, which are also international in scope.

- Northern Indigenous peoples' organizations
- Environmental organizations and movements
- Counties, provinces, and municipalities
- The scientific community

These groups have influence on the development of the whole region through inter-regional co-operation, transboundary activities, and various other activities.

Northern Indigenous Peoples' Organizations

Over the last ten years, there has been an increase in interaction among northern Indigenous peoples, a strengthening of identity, and demands for self-determination. This is a part of the broader trend among Indigenous people throughout world. Northern Indigenous peoples' organizations include the Aleut International Association, the Gwich'in Steering Committee, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), RAIPON, and the Saami Council. All these are permanent participants in the Arctic Council.

They are active in international and inter-regional co-operation at different levels.

- At the global level, such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP)
- At the circumpolar level, both in multilateral co-operation in the context of the Arctic Council, including the Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat, and between and within other indigenous organizations for such activities as improving the health of Arctic people and their natural environment and to lobby Arctic countries to protect the natural environment, improve living conditions and health, and promote the cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples
- At regional levels, either toward the EU or within North America, or within the Russian Federation (e.g., RAIPON)
- At sub-regional levels, such as the Bering Strait region between Inuit in Alaska and the Russian Far East, the European North within the Saami Council, or between different Saami organizations through Saami conferences

The national interests of a state sometimes differ greatly from those of its Indigenous peoples. The international activity of the Saami has not been



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easy for the unified states, as the protection of the Arctic environment in the Rovaniemi Process has shown. For the governments, international organizations can be a way to take control of the “anarchic and disorganized” international activities of northern Indigenous peoples and NGOs. For example, there is potential for conflict between the organizations of northern peoples and governments in the Arctic Council when they try to define “sustainable development” in the Arctic, which the governments decided to make the main goal of the Arctic Council.

The trend towards politically active Indigenous peoples’ groups has been logical and cumulative since the 1970s; the Saami Council started in 1956. Indigenous peoples want their positions recognized and made clear and legal, with rights to their own languages, cultures, and traditional livelihoods, and with rights to use land and water according to the Indigenous Peoples Agreement of the International Labour Organization (ILO) of the UN (ILO 1989). Historically, the regions are Indigenous homelands, but have been divided by national borders. The broad tendency among the Indigenous peoples in the Circumpolar North, like the ICC in North America, is to operate more and more via international co-operation, through both their own external organizations and through intergovernmental organizations. Although Indigenous people have gained more self-determination in their respective countries through their organizations, the situation varies.

The Inuit Circumpolar Conference, established in 1977, gathers Inuit from Greenland, Canada, Alaska, and Chukotka. The ICC’s main aims are to defend the rights and interests of Inuit and to protect the Arctic environment and promote sustainable development. ICC currently maintains national offices in the above-mentioned four countries and has status as an official observer to the UN’s Economic and Social Council.

The Saami are a natural, pan-national actor and their organizations are active in inter-regional and international co-operation (Heininen in press). For the Saami, over the last twenty years their identity and demands have risen, one of the main goals being self-determination and “a collective right to decide their own future” (Common Objectives and Joint Measures of the Saami Parliaments 1997, 19). The Saami Council is acting in the WCIP, in the Arctic Council, toward the European Union, and within the European North. It has NGO status in the United Nations and the ILO. The Saami Council has also been involved in the Rovaniemi Process for the protection of the Arctic environment and is one of the permanent participants of the Arctic Council. It is interesting that, though the Saami are active in the their region, they have not been enthusiastic about nor active in the BEAR. This is perhaps the result of bad colonial experiences, fears of neo-colonialism, and the minor position in the organization offered by the governments. In the late 1990s, the Saami Parliaments in Norway, Sweden, and Finland established a common co-operative organization, the Saami Parliamentarian Council, for political co-operation among the Saami people across national borders.



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Environmental Organizations and Movements

Environmental organizations came into northern co-operation as early as in the 1980s, although the greatest activity was in the first half of the 1990s.

For example, Greenpeace International, together with some scientists, started to campaign for nuclear-free seas in the North Atlantic and against nuclear dumping into the Barents Sea in the second part of the 1980s. The Bellona Foundation continued the work, distributing new information on nuclear waste in Northwest Russia. The national and regional environmental movements of the early 1990s, like Stopp Dödsdyene fra Sovjet in Norway and Finland, and the Environmental Society in Nikel, focused to single issues or goals, such as air pollution from the smelter in Nikel. The World Wide Fund for Nature and its Arctic Programme, Greenpeace International and the Taiga Rescue Network, together with national environmental organizations and movements, have been active and partly influential in protesting the destruction of the old taiga forests in Finland and the Russian North by the pulp and paper industry, especially in the Karelian Republic. Together with environmental organizations and lawyers, the Saami reindeer herders and their organizations fought and won the first fights against global mining companies, such as Rio Tinto Zinc, that came to their lands to do experimental mining (Heininen 1999).

Even before the BEAR was established, environmental organizations started their activities against transboundary pollution. The International Festival for Peace and the Environment in Murmansk, in the summer of 1989, was the first international demonstration in the Russian North. The first regional meeting of the BEAR happened in Kirkenes in January 1993, when the foreign ministers established the organization. When the ministers started the new organization, the environmentalists were skeptical of the BEAR's dealing with the future developments, and demanded real environmental action. In the European North, there are also some influential transnational movements and centres active in information and education, demonstrations, and creating publicity about environmental matters, such as the Kola Regional Ecological Information Centre "Ekonord," which concentrates on the education of young people of Finnmark, Norway, and the Murmansk Region.

The main activities of environmental organizations has been with transboundary environmental problems and with the risks and issues of land and forest use. The main demands and objectives have been against dumping of nuclear waste, forest destruction, over fishing, whaling and sealing, and mine development. In most cases, their demands and objectives are contrary to the interests of some other groups, such as northern Indigenous peoples, mining or oil companies, governments, or counties. This co-operation, competition, and conflict have produced different networks and alliances. For example, environmental movements have used the Internet and international mass media to influence the markets, especially buyers, through influencing public opinion among consumers.



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External Structures of Counties, Provinces, and Municipalities

Not only states, IGOs, and NGOs, but subnational units, such as counties, provinces, territories (in the Russian Federation oblasts, republics, and ograiks), and municipalities, are now active in international affairs; for example, the Twin City Haparanda-Tornio on the Finnish-Swedish border (Cronberg 1997; Ronkainen and Westman 1999). Some, like Lapland with its own identity and products, even have their own regional “foreign” policy.

Although institutionalized co-operation between provinces started in the 1950s in the North Calotte region, it was in the early 1990s that real institutionalized co-operation between northern provinces and counties started, either in the context of the Circumpolar North or in broader, international contexts. For example, the Northern Forum was established in September 1990 in Alaska, based on the International Conference on Human Environment in Northern Regions held in 1974.

There are both region-wide organizations, such as the Northern Forum and the Winter Cities Association, and regional ones, such as the Regional Council of the BEAR, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC), and the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC).

As an example, the Northern Forum is a Circumpolar organization comprised of members representing sub-national or regional governments (Alaska, Alberta, Arkhagelsk, Dornod, Heilongjiang, Hokkaido, Komi, South Korea, Lapland, Norbotten, North Norway, Sakha, St. Petersburg, Yamalo-Nenets) from ten countries. The UN officially recognized the Northern Forum as an NGO in 1994. The Northern Forum’s mission is, in general, to promote region-to-region co-operation, to improve the quality of life of northern peoples by providing Northern regional leaders a means to share their knowledge and experience, and to support sustainable development and the implementation of co-operative socio-economic initiatives among Northern regions .

The Scientific Community

The scientific community has been active in northern affairs and the Arctic since the International Geophysical Year. The Conference on Coordination of Research in the Arctic held in Leningrad in 1988 was a follow-up to Gorbachev’s suggestion to institutionalize scientific co-operation in the Arctic and establish international organizations, such as an association to represent Arctic social scientists (Gorbachev 1987).

There are many northern international scientific organizations, forums, and networks, such as the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC); the International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA); the Circumpolar Universities Association (CUA); the International Calotte Academy for the



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European North; the International Union for Circumpolar Health (IUCN); the University of the Arctic; and the Northern Research Forum (NRF).

North Meets North: The Context of Inter-Regional Co-operation

All in all, the new external structures of the Circumpolar North promote international and interregional co-operation, as is reflected in the activities of the IGOs, NGOs, and sub-national groups. They all have transboundary elements and are either government or regional tools to co-operate and increase interdependence among the Nordic states and Russia. When compared to the previous situation of the “frozen” time of the Cold War, the interregional co-operation across the Nordic-Russian borders between counties, universities, civil organizations, and others has meant a big change. Through the new situation, a “Europe of Regions,” based on an idea of regionalization was finally brought into the North. Here regionalization is seen as a realistic possibility, even as a new resource, for international co-operation.

An example of regional co-operation, regionalism, and even region-building in the Circumpolar North is the European North, which will be the case study for this module. West-Norden co-operation, which was institutionalized by establishing the West-Norden Council in the 1980s, brings together the rim of North Atlantic, Greenland, Iceland, the Faeroes, and some Norwegian coastal areas, a region of 2.5 million people. Another example is the Bering Strait area, shared by Russia and the United States, and strictly divided during the Cold War. In this region, the Inuit started regional co-operation with agreements such as the Bering Sea Fisheries Regime in the early 1990s after the Inuit from Chukotka entered in the ICC. Co-operation included humanitarian aid from Canada to the Russian far east (Fenge 1999). There are also planned projects, such as the creation of a “Beringian Heritage” international park in the Bering Strait Summits.

Case Study: The European North of the 1990s

The northernmost regions of North Europe, the European North, includes the North Calotte, Northwest Russia, and the Barents Sea and the rim area. It is more or less the same geographical region as the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, but includes sea areas. It, like other northern areas of the globe, is sparsely populated, with the largest population concentrations on the Russian side where there are cities and other big settlements. The population of the European North comprises the Indigenous peoples, as a small minority, and non-indigenous citizens of the four countries. And thus, it creates its own special features and ethnic processes in the region.

The European North is shared by four states, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. As mentioned earlier, in addition to the states, there are several



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international actors, including regional groups active in international relations, and a complex of co-operative and competitive relationships among these actors. The international situation has changed greatly compared to that during the Cold War. Heininen (1999) analyzed the European North from the point of view of the region and the regional actors and NGOs, with an emphasis on the regional approach with the region itself as a focus. The main hypothesis is that, in the 1990s, the European North changed toward a new kind of regional dynamics created by different actors and their interests.

In the European North, the idea of a “Europe of Regions” includes co-operation between the northern parts of the Nordic states and Northwest Russia using both the concept of “region building” as a historical and mythical element and bottom-up activities by local and regional actors (Stokke and Tunander 1994; Käkönen 1996). This is not a new phenomenon. There has been regional co-operation on a daily basis by people, especially the Saami, for thousands of years. The Nordic part of the region, the North Calotte, has traditionally had its own identity, dynamics, and cross-border co-operation. The common identity of the North Calotte is historically grounded in regional co-operation at the civil society level, mostly by the Saami people. A spontaneous, dramatic increase in new participants started in the European North in the 1980s, just before the end of the Cold War.

The regional dynamics created by these different actors opens new opportunities both to analyze the existing changes in the European North and to describe the Saami people as a pan-national group in international co-operation. And further, the point of view represents both a more general point of view of the international system of the post-Cold War period, to the current state of the relations between the EU and the Russian Federation, and one way to conceptualize new dimensions in current East-West relations.

Conclusions

The high tension, competition, and conflicts between the states of the European North have changed into international co-operation centred on common interests, and competition. The main trend is from inter-state competition to international and inter-regional co-operation.

There are still interstate disputes over sea areas, like the Grey Zone between Norway and Russia in the Barents Shelf, and the fishery dispute between the Norwegian and Icelandic fishermen in the waters of Svalbard. These examples of disputes deal with national interests and use of natural resources. The traditional questions concerning rights to land and water use are also politically and legally open questions in some parts of the European North. They involve, on the one hand, the consumption of natural resources and geoeconomics, and on the other hand, the growing identity and understanding of the rights of Indigenous peoples.



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The Circumpolar North has become a part of the growth-oriented world economy, and is increasingly becoming a part of the globalized world economy, mostly due to its potentially rich natural resources, especially energy resources. Integration into the world economy is, however, more a process of general globalization and regulation by the unified states and political and economic blocs than by northern regions. These processes, new kinds of co-operation, and international actors coming from outside the region, will influence greatly the development and the future of the region. The international system has taken the North into consideration. It is deeply involved with resource extraction and integrated with the environment and technology, and is based on globalization and international co-operation. One example is Northwest Russia, which has until now been a northern periphery with an economy supported and subverted by the state. Due to economic problems in Russia, the economy of Northwest Russia has collapsed, and there are problems with regional development. In the future, the importance of Northwest Russia, and other northern regions, might increase because of growing demand of raw materials, bigger companies with more capital, and easier access to raw materials sources through better technology.

Study Questions

1. Explain the idea of international and inter-regional co-operation in the Circumpolar North.
2. Describe the external political structures and the current state of external political relations in the Circumpolar North.
3. List both the different categories of international actors, and the main external actors of the North
4. Describe and briefly explain the aims and functions of the main northern IGOs and NGOs.
5. Define the transition period of the 1990s in general, and especially from the point of view of international relations and external political structures.
6. Explain the inter-linkages between different levels of circles of internationalization.
7. Describe the main relations between the external northern political structures/IGOs and global actors.
8. List and describe the main international actors of your region and the external political structures present in your region.



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The Northern Forum <http://www.northernforum.org/index.php>

Abbreviations

AC	Arctic Council
AEPS	Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy
AMAP	Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme
BASU	Barents Association of Student Unions
BEAC	Barents Euro-Arctic Council
BEAR	Barents Euro-Arctic Region
BSSSC	Baltic Sea States subregional co-operation
CAFF	Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
CUA	Circumpolar Universities Association
CBSS	Council of the Baltic Sea States
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CN	Circumpolar North
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EC	European Communities
EEA	European Economic Area
EEC	European Economic Community
EPPR	Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response
EU	European Union
IASC	International Arctic Science Committee
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
IGOs	Inter-governmental organizations
ILO	United Nations International Labour Organization
IPS	Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat
IR	International Relations
IUCN	International Union for Circumpolar Health
MNC	Multi-national corporation
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Area
NAMMCO	North Atlantic Marine Mammals Commission



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NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NC	Nordic Council
ND	Northern Dimension
NEI	Northern European Initiative
NF	Northern Forum
NRF	Northern Research Forum
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PAME	Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
RAIPON	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
RTZ	Rio Tinto Zinc
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	New International Law of the Sea
UofA	University of the Arctic
WWF	World Wildlife Fund (for Nature)
WGSD	Working Group on Sustainable Development