

Rural Futures?

Finding one's place within changing labour markets

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Edited by
Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæk
and Gry Paulgaard

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Linda Hiltunen, Pentti Luoma, Irina A. Miljukova, Larissa P. Shvets © 2019

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PREFACE

The chapters presented in this volume derive from a five year research project with the project title “Young people in Barents – work and welfare”. The research project was funded by the Research Council of Norway under the program for welfare research (Welfare, Work, Migration) during the time period 2005-2009.

The main goal of the research project was to investigate young people in the Barents region and their relations to the labour market, as well as the links between welfare and employment status. This was done by focusing on changes in structural conditions on the labour markets in the Barents region and young people’s positions on these markets, by investigating where young peoples’ actions and choices - or the lack of choices – would lead them when it comes to labour market status, education and place of residence, and by focusing on young peoples’ experiences of their own labour market status, especially attached to being unemployed.

The problems we deal with in this volume are as relevant today as ever. Prior to this study, which started in 2005, unemployment had been rising throughout the Barents region. After a positive trend in the years following, with decreasing unemployment, we now face another negative trend following the financial crisis in 2008, with Norway as an exception with a low and stable unemployment level. Young people is an especially vulnerable group on the labour market, and throughout the Nordic countries unemployment is almost three times higher in the 20-24 year age group than the average for the work force (Nordisk Ministerråd 2010). The situation in Russia is still more severe.

Researchers from all the countries in the Barents region have been involved in the research project; mapping national characteristics, collecting data and analyzing data – *and* contributing to the realization of this volume. This has

truly been a cross-border, an interdisciplinary and a multi-method endeavor, involving researchers from 4 countries, representing the fields of education, sociology, economics and planning, and with different methodological intakes.

Unfortunately it is not possible to acknowledge all those who have in one way or another contributed to the research project and thus to the realization of this volume. Especial thanks, though, are due to the researchers and students who assisted the project team in conducting interviews in Finland, Norway and Russia: Anu, Inger Marie, Taisia, Ekaterina, Olesya S., Anna, Olesya P., Nina, Elena and Misha.

Especial thanks also to all the young people in Russia, Sweden, Finland and Norway who have shared with us their experiences and their outlooks on what life is like when you are young in one of the outskirts of Europe in the beginning of the 20th century. You have taught us a lot!

The economic funding awarded by the Research Council of Norway made the research project – and thus this book – possible, but we would also like to acknowledge the support afforded by the Barents Secretariat, Norut Tromsø (Northern Research Institute), the University of Tromsø and The Non-Fiction Literature Fund.

Tromsø, December 2011

Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæck & Gry Paulgaard

– CHAPTER 1 –

INTRODUCTION: CHOICES, OPPORTUNITIES AND COPING IN THE FACE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæck and Gry Paulgaard

Remote fishing villages, pine covered inlands, small, vibrant farming communities, drizzling urban cities and breath taking landscapes. This is only some of what you will see as a visitor to the Barents region – a region furthermore characterised by vast geographical areas, scattered population and rich natural resources. The region has undergone significant changes during the past 20-30 years and modernisation is a concept often used in order to characterise the kind of changes that have taken place. There has been a shift from economies primarily based on local natural resources, to a situation where local industries are threatened and where especially rural areas face severe challenges when it comes to industrial structures and labour markets. An important part of this picture is increasing unemployment throughout the region, and unemployment is a serious challenge especially facing the younger generations of the northernmost regions of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. These younger generations are who we are preoccupied with in this book, and together the different contributions aim to shed light upon young peoples' struggles when it comes to finding their place within changing labour markets and when it comes to coping with situations of unemployment and uncertainty.

THE BARENTS REGION

All the chapters in this book are based on empirical investigations carried out

in the Barents region. The Barents region comprises a total of 11 counties in 4 nations: Nordland, Troms and Finnmark in Norway, Norrbotten and Västerbotten in Sweden, Lappland and Oulu in Finland, and Arkhangelsk, Murmansk, Karelia and Nenets in Russia. Together, they have a population of 5 million. The region is in part characterised by ethnic diversity and cultural and economic heterogeneity. North-western Russia differs particularly strongly from the Nordic countries as regards religion, living standard, political and welfare traditions, and aspects of history. Whereas the Nordic nations have been welfare states with well-functioning schemes with regard to labour market measures, etc., for a very long time, the situation in Russia is otherwise. The collapse of the socialistic welfare society has resulted in growing problems in every sphere when it comes to social services (Milyukova, 2002). A population decline, partly arising from a reduction in the life span in Russia and rising emigration from Russia, is leading to a drop in the domestic product and fewer resources to fund the welfare benefits secured during the Soviet period. The welfare state is being deconstructed at the same time as unemployment is rising.

Despite great differences between the nations, it is also possible to find similarities that make comparison interesting. The most obvious similarities concern climate and geography. As Waara (2002b) sees it, the great distances and the climate are the most striking differences between the Barents region and rural areas in the rest of Europe. Whereas most rural inhabitants in Germany, for instance, are only a few hours' drive from several large cities, the majority of inhabitants in the Barents region must depend upon a local centre and must drive for one or more days to reach a larger regional centre or a town. The peripheral position of the areas in the Barents region is another common feature, in the sense that these areas represent peripheries in relation to the respective national centres in Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway. In addition, decades of secularisation are reducing the religious differences in the Barents region, and political and economic processes in Russia are beginning to make Russia more like the West.

A CHANGED LABOUR MARKET

The Barents region is experiencing an economic downturn. As pointed out by Pedersen & Olsen (2003), what is new about the trend in unemployment here in recent years compared with that in the previous economic downturn, in 1988-1994, is that the opportunities in the labour market have changed in ways that make it difficult for new groups of young people to become established. Whereas well-educated people had few problems obtaining jobs during the previous downturn, this is the case now. Reductions over the entire central government, county municipal and local authority sector have resulted in comparatively large reductions in the numbers employed in the public sector, especially in rural authorities (Pedersen & Olsen, 2003). In northern Norway, for instance, public sector employs 40-50 per cent of the work force in most local authorities, and it is therefore obvious that changes in this sector have great consequences for unemployment in these areas. These changes will affect women in particular, since women strongly dominate the public sector.

The changes in the labour markets in the Barents region, described above, have many consequences for young job seekers in the region. Recurring crises increase the chances for prolonged unemployment which, in turn, significantly increase the chances for future unemployment. This applies to both well-educated and poorly-educated people. Common features in the welfare policies linked with the labour market followed by the authorities in the Barents region countries are that the threshold for obtaining unemployment benefit has been raised, the benefits have been limited, and other terms have been made significantly more rigorous. People who have not earned unemployment benefit rights are compelled to be financially dependent on their family or social security. In Norway, we also see that the use of labour market measures directed at young people has been significantly curtailed. The intention is to increase mobility and protect the public sector from expenses, but when unemployment rises this brings more and more young people into difficult living situations with strong feelings of loss of welfare which, with repeated or longer periods of unemployment, has an effect on their ability to be breadwinners later in life (Halvorsen, 1996; Hammer 1999, 2003).

The migration of young people in the Barents region is closely linked to the situation in the labour market. It is taking place within the region, from peripheral to central districts and out of the region to more central areas in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Studies from various parts of the Barents region have shown that the most important reasons behind this migration are work and education (Bæck, 2004a; Soininen, 1998; Viinamäki, 1999; Waara, 1996). According to Soininen (2002), in recent decades young people in Karelia and Lappland have developed a migration culture because of poor opportunities for education and work. One consequence of this is the development of an uneven age structure, particularly in small communities, as shown in studies by Waara (2002a) and Paakkunainen (2002) from the Swedish and Finnish parts of the Barents region, respectively. Young people migrate and leave the local communities which, little by little, become dominated by old people who, in turn, become fewer and fewer. This leads to the local communities experiencing difficulty caring for old people and maintaining other public and private services (Waara, 2002a).

THE MEANING OF WORK

As pointed out by Bæck (2012) in this volume, a number of studies show that work is an important element in the life of young people, in the Barents region as much as in the rest of Europe (for example Almås, 1997; Baethge et al., 1988; Hammer, 2003; Heggen et al., 2003; Karlsen, 2001b; Paulgaard, 2001, 2002; Shvets & Ilyina, 2002; Tuhkunen, 2002), and that it is an extremely important factor in the migration pattern of young people in the Barents region (for example Bæck, 2004a; Soininen, 1998; Viinamäki, 1999; Waara, 1996). Studies of young people in Russia show that they place a great deal of emphasis on work when they are considering their future life (Shvets & Ilyina, 2002). None of the young people studied by Shvets & Ilyina envisaged unemployment as an element in their life. For young people of today, work represents more than simply a way of gaining the means necessary for living.

As also pointed out by Bæck (Chapter 8), work is today also viewed as essential for gaining self-development and self-realisation, perhaps more than as a means of securing material welfare. This is also emphasised by Bæck (2004a) who claims that the ability of fringe regions to offer jobs for young people is inadequate for keeping them in the small communities. The work offered must have qualities that go beyond the purely material, and those kinds of qualities are often impossible to realise through jobs in rural communities. This does seem to vary somewhat from one country to another in the Barents region. Studies from Russia show that most young people look upon work as an external necessity, a means leading to material prosperity, but not as an independent value or a way leading to self-realisation (Titarenko, 1995 (referred to in Shvets & Ilyina, 2002); Shvets & Ilyina, 2002). According to Shvets & Ilyina (2002), research into young people in Russia in the 1990s revealed a trend towards them being less motivated for work. Their studies from Petrozavodsk, moreover, show that Russian boys in rural areas seem fairly realistic in their expectations regarding their future working life, and most of them envisage having manual work.

EXPERIENCING UNEMPLOYMENT

The way young people experience unemployment is influenced by a number of factors. First, by social images of work and unemployment, and, here, cultural, ethnic and religious aspects can play a part. Second, by how they understand their own situation relative to that of others of the same age (reference group) and to social images of what it is like to be young.

The *expectation gap* is an expression used by, among others, Thomas Ziehe (1993) to describe the situations young people in modern societies find themselves in when dealing with choices. Modern societies offer individuals an infinite choice of opportunities and selections, and almost everything seems open for the individual to reflect on and choose between. However, this concept of opportunities often only exists on an awareness level (Karlsen, 2001a; Paulgaard,

2002). Whether the individuals actually find themselves in a position where they can make use of the opportunities is an entirely different question. Ziehe claims that, as a consequence, an expectation gap arises between dreams and realities. There is not necessarily any correspondence between what individuals expect out of life and what they are really capable of achieving. Modernity and reflexivity have both winners and losers (Giddens, 1991; Lash, 1994). Youth becomes for many individuals the time when they discover that there are opportunities and obstructions when it comes to realising their own ambitions (Heggen et al., 2003). As pointed out by Bæck (2004b) with reference to Giddens (1991), as freedom of choice is one of the most central imperatives in the late-modern society, it is particularly obvious and extra painful for those who have taken the wrong decisions or experience that they do not have these extensive opportunities to choose.

In addition to a wider range of opportunities and choices, individualisation is a phenomenon often put forward as a feature of modern society. Individualisation refers to the fact that modern individuals are to an increasing degree torn out of social structures linked to gender roles, social class, status, etc. (Beck, 1996; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Paulgaard, 2002). Beck (1996) and Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (2002) claim that as individuals are given full responsibility for realising their own existence, problems rooted in social crises or events can be misinterpreted as products of individual incompetence. A privatisation of social problems takes place. According to these theorists, social crises can be transferred to the individual in the form of individual risks. Unemployment may, for example, be looked upon as a consequence of a lack of individual abilities rather than as a result of a decreasing demand for manual workers due to technological and economic changes. As Beck & Beck-Gernsheim see it, social problems may therefore be directly converted into psychological dispositions like feelings of guilt, concern, conflict and neurosis (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Something created externally, by society, becomes an attribute the individual is ashamed of, and he or she can direct their anger, fear and opposition inwards against themselves (Seabrook, 1985).

THE PROJECT

The chapters in this book is the result of a research project financed by the Research Council of Norway, and also with economic support from the Barents Secretariat, the University of Tromsø, Norway and Northern Research Institute, Tromsø. The main aim of the project was to investigate young people in the Barents region's relations to the labour market. Through the project different kinds of data material have been collected; register data, survey data and qualitative interview data. The articles in this book are based on empirical findings from these different kinds of data and represent as such a diversity when it comes to research design and methodologies. In the different chapters of the book the respective approaches are presented.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS

The chapter entitled 'The northern Scandinavian regions – similarities and differences' written by Paul Pedersen and Mikko Moilanen describes similarities and differences within the three countries, Finland, Sweden and Norway, concerning young peoples' opportunities to become independent members of society. The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part gives a brief description of the welfare regimes, examines similarities and differences in the educational systems and the labour markets at the national level, particularly focusing on recent important changes. The second part of the chapter concentrates on central developmental trends in the northern Scandinavian region with respect to geographical variables, settlement patterns and relations to the national centres in the three countries. The similarities and differences are analysed along demographic variables, in relation to business structure and the labour market. In part three, the chapter describes how the young adult population inhabiting the three countries of the northern Scandinavian region had adapted to the structural conditions under which they live.

The next chapter, also written by Paul Pedersen and Mikko Moilanen,

analyses patterns of migration among young adults in the northern part of Scandinavian in a period of five years (2000–2005). This is done through the use of extensive, longitudinal register data, which for Norway and Sweden comprises the whole population of young people in the age 18–25 living in the northern parts of these countries in October 2000, and for Finland comprises a random sample of half of the youth population in the same age group. Pedersen and Moilanen focus on variables such as family relations, education, labour market position, income and place of residence when they examine migration patterns. The analyses show that the majority of the young population (60 per cent) were stable residents and did not move during the 5-year period. 15–20 per cent had moved to other municipalities within the region, while 20–25 per cent had moved out of the region. The chapter shows that the migration pattern of the young population exhibits a great deal of commonality across the north Scandinavian area related to gender, social background, education and income.

Mikko Moilanen's chapter "Job is where the heart is?" is an analysis of geographical labour mobility among young adults, focusing on labour mobility behaviour among young adults in northern Sweden. The starting point of Moilanen's chapter is the hypothesis that individuals who have a stronger attachment to their place of residence will be more reluctant to leave in order to find work, because leaving represents a higher loss than staying. Also, these individuals are more prone to commute because commuting makes it possible for them to accept a job offer and at the same time continue to live at the current place of residence. Moilanen investigates these assertions through econometric analyses of register data. As the author points out, large areas in the northern part of Sweden are sparsely populated and the job opportunities at one's place of residence may be severely limited. In order to secure a position on the labour market, young adults are therefore often faced with the decision to either leave the local community behind and move to a place where there are jobs available or to undertake daily, weekly or monthly commuting. Moilanen operationalises place attachment as whether or not the individual grew up and spent his or her childhood at the current place of

residence (more specifically; whether the municipality of residence at the age of 15 is the same as the present location). Through analyses of register data based on 37 000 young adults in northern Sweden, Moilanen finds that the propensity to search for and accept a job in other regions are lower among young adults displaying high place attachment than among those displaying lower attachment. Also, young adults residing in the municipality where they grew up are less likely to migrate than to commute. In this sense, Moilanen finds that the answer to his own question mark in the title of the chapter, “Job is where the heart is?”, is yes. For many young adults, having spent their childhood and continued to live in the same place as young adults, will work as a barrier against migrating, whether the reasons behind this mechanism are family obligations, social relations or location specific capital.

The chapter written by Linda Hiltunen is based on interviews with young people in northern Sweden, all of them with rather loose relations to the labour market. The chapter focuses on young people in a geographical and economic periphery, their experiences and living conditions, their contingencies of restricted resources and opportunities. Discussing differences in coping strategies, due to e.g. age, gender and degree of marginalisation, mental as well as concrete, the chapter shows how individuals view themselves as a kind of waste (in society) and a burden (for society). In relation to the presentation of different coping strategies, the study also proposes some possible analytical and interpretative perspectives. One perspective is inspired by Anthony Giddens, and discusses identity work and reflexive processes under uncertain conditions and restricted possibilities. Another perspective is inspired by Pierre Bourdieu, and actualizes the question of life trajectories and life forms viewed against a background of habitus and available capital resources.

In his chapter “Job training as an activation strategy: young people’s views on work, unemployment and job training in northern Finland”, Pentti Luoma, presents findings from an interview study conducted among young job seekers in two regions in the northern part of Finland; Oulu and Pudasjärvi. The topic of Luoma’s chapter is how young job seekers in these regions view their situation as unemployed, and he also investigates their experiences with job

training as part of the unemployment authorities' policies directed at helping young people to find work. Luoma shows how the young unemployed are forced to impose restrictions on their own lives because of financial strain. He also portrays the young job seekers as both creative when it comes to alternative means of earning money and proud when it comes to their need to go by without too much help from their parents, but he also shows how comments from voices in the surrounding environments as well as bureaucratic demands from the unemployment authorities, pose challenges to the everyday lives of these youngsters.

In Irina A. Miljukova, Larissa P. Shvets and Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæck's chapter, "Coping with unemployment in rural and urban Karelia", the focus is on unemployed young people in two regions in the Republic of Karelia; the rural settlement of Kalevala and the city of Petrozavodsk. These two regions represent what can be described as two extremes within the Republic of Karelia; Kalevala with its remote location that is even difficult to reach with modern transportation and Petrozavodsk with its metropolitan qualities, cafes and rich cultural life. At the same time, however, unemployment, and especially youth unemployment, is a major problem facing youth in both locations. Through analyses of qualitative interview data collected among young unemployed in these two regions, the authors aim to shed light upon the way young people in two very different settings cope with the situation as unemployed. Miljukova, Shvets and Bæck find that unemployed youth in both locations face similar challenges when it comes to coping with being unemployed. Relocation as a job search strategy is prevalent in the minds of these youngsters, but the ability to relocate is for many severely restricted by lack of economic and other resources. The lack of faith in the employment agency as a resource in their search for work and the strong dependence on family resources and parental support, are issues that spring to mind when examining the situation and experiences of young unemployed in Russia.

Self-esteem is the main topic of Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæck's chapter "Unemployment, self-esteem and the interplay between latent functions of unemployment". She focuses on the link between personal welfare and labour market

relations of young people in the northern parts of Sweden and Finland and asks if joblessness negatively influences how young people think and feel about themselves. She also investigates which factors that determine to what extent joblessness influences young people's self-esteem. The empirical analyses are based on survey material from Sweden and Finland. Bæck finds that unemployment has an independent effect on self-esteem, irrespective of issues such as economic hardship, social network etc., which means that being unemployed and being associated with the status as unemployed in itself is experienced as negative by the young. However, there are factors that have the potential to make the situation as unemployed easier to cope with, and one such factor is social network. Social support from people in the immediate surroundings works to counteract the negative experience of being unemployed.

The chapter written by Gry Paulgaard focuses on important similarities between young unemployed people across national borders. These are similarities caused by a gradual downsizing of possibilities for work which makes peripheral places even more peripheral and marginal in relation to regional and national centres. Even though living conditions vary between the different countries in the Barents region, Paulgaard shows how uneven development between centre and periphery influences the choices and opportunities for a majority of young people. The chapter explores important aspects of the small scale processes of social learning among young unemployed men living in specific rural communities. Through this, the author demonstrates how a geographical approach combined with a theory of social learning can serve to document how place matters in the study of social inequality among young people in a changing world.

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– CHAPTER 2 –

THE NORTHERN SCANDINAVIAN REGIONS
– SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Paul Pedersen and Mikko Moilanen

INTRODUCTION

In this book, we are using different viewpoints to shed light on the living conditions and geographical mobility of the young adult population in the Barents region. The areas studied in this chapter are located in the three countries, Norway, Sweden and Finland, and can be regarded as three different cases. Comparison is a key methodological technique used in this chapter, as comparative case studies are a well-suited instrument to seek more general relationships across various contexts (Yin 1993). Comparison presupposes comparability (Kjelstadli 1988). Comparability does not necessarily mean equality in every aspect, but that the cases which are compared are correlative. In other words, the variables that are to be compared, and into which context they enter, must be clarified.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe similarities and differences within the northern Scandinavian region in the three countries in key areas that influence the opportunities of the young adult population to become established as independent members of society. This concerns structural differences in relation to the labour and education markets, similarities and differences in the institutional structure and differences in relevant policies. The chapter is divided into three main parts. In the first part, we begin by briefly comparing the three countries, clarifying the Nordic model or the Scandinavian welfare regime. We then examine in greater detail the similarities and differences in the education systems and whether there are major differences

between the countries in the results these produce. We have also placed great emphasis on investigating the similarities and differences when it comes to regulations in the labour market and in describing recent important changes in the labour market that particularly affect the young adult population. We conclude this part by examining differences between the countries when it comes to levels of employment and unemployment. All these comparisons are made on the national level.

Part two concentrates on central developmental trends in the northern Scandinavian region. We start by giving a brief characterisation of the region with respect to geographical variables, settlement patterns and relations to the national centres in the three countries. The similarities and differences are then analysed along demographic variables, in relation to business structure and the labour market. In part three, we give an initial account of how the young adult population inhabiting the three countries of the northern Scandinavian region had adapted by the end of our analysis period in 2005.

Data

The first part of our account is based on analyses undertaken in the three countries regarding similarities and differences in relation to the education system, the labour market, the institutional structure in various support networks and the pathways taken by the young adult population from school to working life in each of the three countries (Petterson 2008, Julkunen & Salovvaara 2008, Olsen et al. 2008), and also on comparative analyses where the various Nordic countries are compared internally and in relation to other European nations (Olofsson 2008, Olofsson & Panican 2008). In part two, we use regional data concerning demography, the labour market and the business structure acquired from Internet-based databases at the statistics agencies in the three countries. Part three is based on specially selected variables at the individual level generated by the statistics agencies in the three countries. This database is specifically described in Chapter 3, and is not dealt with in more detail here.

Structural similarities between the three countries

There are many tangible similarities between Norway, Sweden and Finland. If you visit cities like Tromsø, Umeå and Rovaniemi, and ignore the physical geographical conditions, it is the similarity in material structure and lifestyle that strikes you. This similarity goes deeper than the eye can see. All three nations are wealthy, with a high gross national product per inhabitant and an economic growth that is well above the average for the EU.¹ The economic systems are regulated in approximately the same way² and the countries have had a common labour market for a long time. Norway, Sweden and Finland trade widely with one another. Large flows of tourists cross the borders, particularly in summer, and the countries have well-developed political and institutional cooperation. All three countries have a high level of employment, also as regards women (Olofsson & Panican 2008). The educational and social security systems are fundamentally alike, which is also reflected in the level of expenses relative to education, child care, care of the elderly, social services, health services, the police and defence. In 2005, these expenses amounted to 22 per cent of the GNP in Norway and Finland, while Sweden spent rather more (28 per cent). Both Norway and Sweden spent far more on pensions, and also on other social security, unemployment benefits and housing benefits than other European nations. In 2005, these kinds of benefits amounted to 11 750 EURO in Norway and 10 316 EURO in Sweden. Finland was somewhat lower (7 760 EURO), but above the EU average (EU 15). The distribution of income is also very similar measured by the Gini coefficient. This was 0.30 in Norway, 0.24 in Sweden and 0.26 in Finland (Olofsson & Panican 2008). This coefficient has a value of 0 if income is totally equally distributed and 1 if its distribution is maximally unequal. The same similarity is found when we examine the degree of poverty measured by the proportion having an income that is lower than 60 per cent of the median income over a period of 3 years. The proportion of impoverished

1) The comparison is made relative to EU15, i.e. excluding Sweden and Finland (cf. Olofsson & Panican 2008: 24).

2) After the EEA agreement came into force in 1994, the business community, except primary industries, in the three nations has been subject to the same framework terms.

people in Norway and Finland was 10 per cent, whereas it was close to 11 per cent in Sweden. Corresponding figures for the EU were 14 per cent and in Great Britain it was as high as 19 per cent (Olofsson & Panican 2008). It is therefore not surprising that all three countries are highly placed when the world's nations are ranked according to the quality of life more generally. According to the UN Human Development Index,³ Norway was the best country to live in, Sweden was ranked number five and Finland number 11 (Human Development Report 2006). These similarities, which to a greater or lesser degree distinguish these three countries from the other OECD nations, are denoted as the *Nordic model* or the *Scandinavian welfare regime* in international studies (Olofsson 2008). In the following section, we will describe the similarities and differences between the three countries in areas that have particular significance for the living conditions of the young adult population.

Education system, pupil throughput and higher education

There are many similarities in the way further education is organised in the three countries, but also differences. Upper secondary schools in all three countries are mainly state-run and state-funded. In our analysis period, further education was a right available to all young people who had completed their primary and lower secondary education. More than 90 per cent of the pupils began upper secondary education in Norway, Sweden and Finland, and this proportion was high compared with the average for the OECD countries. In all three countries, theoretical and vocational subjects are integrated in the same educational organisation, where different systems of courses enable those taking vocational training to obtain university and university college admission certification (Petterson 2008, Julkunen & Salovaara 2008, Olson et al. 2008).

However, there are also considerable differences between the countries, particularly as regards vocational training. In Norway, and to some extent Finland, the majority of vocational subjects have apprenticeship schemes to some degree. The model mostly entails two years training in school and two years in a work-

3) In the index, the level of the GNP is combined with information on such factors as state of health, education and equal opportunities (cf. Human Development Report 2006).

place or an institution. The apprenticeship schemes are regulated through a specific contract and apprentices receive pay during their training. In Sweden, all the vocational training takes place under the auspices of the schools. The proportion that chose vocational education in the three countries, however, differed widely. In 2006, the proportion for men was 66 per cent in Norway, 59 per cent in Sweden and 69 per cent in Finland. The corresponding figures for women were 53 per cent, 52 per cent and 63 per cent (Olofsson & Panican 2008).

Dropout during further education is a problem in all three countries, with little difference from one country to another. In Norway, the average dropout rate in the 20-24 year age group was 15 per cent, in Sweden 13 per cent and in Finland 14 per cent.⁴ The vocational subjects had the highest number of dropouts. There were, in part, considerably more dropouts in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland than the national averages. The proportions of each year-class starting university or university college education also proved to be approximately the same. In all three countries, rather more women than men take higher education, the percentages for women being 41 per cent in Finland, 35 per cent in Norway and 36 per cent in Sweden, and for men 30 per cent in Finland and Norway and 26 per cent in Sweden.⁵

The educational system in the three countries also shows great similarities as regards the results it achieves. In all three countries, socio-economic background factors have considerable influence on the choice of education and the achievement of the pupils. Pupils with low social status parents to a far greater degree choose vocational training than those whose parents have a high social

4) As Markusson (2010), for example, has pointed out, the statistical data in the Nordic countries are classified in a manner that makes comparisons unreliable. The figures that can be directly compared between Norway, Sweden and Finland are the proportion of dropouts from further education. Norway comes out best in these comparisons. The proportions there in 2006 were 7 per cent for men and 4 per cent for women, whereas corresponding figures for Finland were 10 per cent and 6 per cent, and for Sweden 13 per cent and 11 per cent.

5) The figures are based on the classification of education in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). This classification is unreliable with respect to how much education beyond compulsory schooling forms part of the concept of further education. Moreover, the statistics do not show how many completed this education, which is important when differences between countries are to be assessed with respect to how young people who have taken such education succeed in the work market.

status. In all three countries, more women than men choose to take higher education (Olofsson 2008, Nordli Hansen & Wiborg 2010).

Labour market regulations

All three countries have a considerable number of regulations directed at various aspects of the labour market. Earning and employment conditions are not determined by market conditions alone. A number of statutory provisions and various collective agreements between the parties in working life are most important as regards the shaping of the workplace environment, wages and protection against dismissal.⁶ Even though the three countries have much in common here, there are also differences attached to different traditions in relation to the role of the state in the labour market. The labour market in Sweden is to a greater extent regulated by the employees' and employers' organisations than is the case in Norway and Finland. This is also the case with the extent of trade union membership. In Finland and Sweden, around 90 per cent of employees are trade union members against only 50 per cent in Norway. This is closely connected with unemployment insurance having become mandatory as early as the 1930s in Norway, whereas in Sweden, and in part in Finland, this insurance is voluntary. In those two countries, the service is organised through the trade unions, which leads to the high proportion of union members. The level of compensation in the event of unemployment is, however, about the same. It is highest in Sweden (80 per cent) and somewhat lower in Norway (66 per cent) and Finland (60 per cent). In Sweden and Finland, the proportion covered by a collective agreement, that is, a negotiated agreement concerning wage and employment terms, is higher than the proportion of trade union members. The strength of the employees' and employers' organisations functions here as a guarantee that the collective agreements also apply to employees who are not union members.

⁶ In addition to child labour being banned in all three countries, there are a number of regulations concerning persons in the 16-19 age group. These completely or partially ban the employment of young people under a certain age and under certain terms in various sectors of working life. These rules are for the most part identical in the three countries.

Table 1. The proportion employed in the 25-64 year age group arranged according to their level of education in 2006.

	Primary and lower secondary	Upper secondary	University and university college
Norway	65	83	89
Sweden	67	82	87
Finland	58	76	85

Source: Olofsson & Panican 2008: 41.

The same applies in Norway, but here fewer (70 per cent) are covered by collective agreements due to a lack of legal authority to make collective agreements mandatory in all branches of business. However, these factors do not seem to have had much significance for the level of employment. In all the countries, the level of employment rises with the level of education (Table 1). Another aspect they have in common is that significantly fewer persons with only primary and lower secondary education are employed than those with further education or more. In Norway and Sweden, the proportion is almost identical irrespective of the level of education, whereas the level of employment is somewhat lower in Finland, particularly for those lacking university or university college education.

General changes in the labour market for young people

The post-industrial society has been given many labels like the *education society*, the *knowledge society* (Slagstad 2000), the *risk society* (Beck 1994) and the *network society* (Castells 2000). All these concepts allude to three fundamental factors that are characteristic for the post-industrial society: (1) Social changes take place much more rapidly than previously. (2) Knowledge, expertise and willingness to change are becoming increasingly important for successful careers in working life. (3) The combination of rapid change and an increasingly globalised economy creates fundamental uncertainty with regard to future choices of education. A successful integration or transition from school to working life does not happen by itself. Furthermore, the tran-

sition from school to working life may be disturbed by socio-economic crises. This took place to a major extent in all three countries in the first half of the 1990s, to some extent in 2002-2004 and again to a larger degree following the financial crisis in 2008 (Krugman 2009). The economic crisis in the early-1990s caused record high youth unemployment. This led to many people claiming that the labour market for young people would increasingly shrink so that those under 20 years of age had no alternative but education. In all three countries, this opinion lay behind the upper secondary school reforms, which gave young people under the age of 20 a legal right to education. The assumption that the labour market for young people would shrink has not proved correct. In Norway, for example, the proportion of young people in the 16-19 age group that were in employment was close to 40 per cent in 2006 compared to 32 per cent in 1992 (Olsen et al. 2008). The labour market for young people has expanded strongly in lines of business like the distributive trades, tourism and hotels and restaurants. These are also the sectors where there has been least demand for formal training. Repeated attempts to develop attractive education in these spheres of employment have met with little success. These occupations are characterised by low trade union membership, low contractual coverage and low contractual wages. They therefore offer an alternative to the upper secondary school for young people less than 20 years of age, some of whom are attracted to full-time work, but many who are attending upper secondary schools work part-time.

However, international studies also show that the demands for education, and for business-specific and social expertise, have increased substantially in the past 20 years. This is regarded as having been particularly disadvantageous for young people with little education and limited experience in working life (World Employment Report 1998).⁷ Other factors indicate that young people today should be more capable of asserting themselves than older workers.

7) These factors contribute to an increase in the degree of network recruitment, and since young people from a strong resource background (parents with higher education) have a larger network than those with a low resource background, the chances of the latter getting a job are poorer. In a study of the Norwegian work market, Nordli Hansen (1997:198) concluded that: "what determines a person's chances in the work market is contacts and networks – not what they are capable of".

No previous generation has been as well educated, widely travelled and proficient in languages. The ever-increasing use of information technology both in business and industry and in public administration should also have the same effect. The same goes for demographic factors. The age-classes seeking jobs and training in the period we analysed (2000-2005) were relatively small in all three countries, which should have enhanced the opportunities for these young adults in the contexts of both education and work (Olofsson & Panican 2008).

*Extent of employment, unemployment and labour
market measures among young adults*

When the extent of employment in the 15-24 age groups was compared, Norway had a significantly higher employment level than Sweden and Finland. In Norway, just less than 55 per cent of this age group was employed in 2005, whereas the level was 10-15 per cent lower in Sweden and Finland. On the other hand, a higher proportion in Sweden and Finland was receiving education than in Norway, but the differences were not particularly marked. In 2004, the proportions were 70 per cent in Finland, 68 per cent in Sweden and 64 per cent in Norway (Olofsson & Panican 2008). Nevertheless, care must be taken when interpreting these data because apprentices in Norway are registered as wage earners, whereas this is not the case in Finland and is out of the question in Sweden. The number employed in Norway is therefore inflated and the proportion in education is reduced when Norway is compared with Sweden and Finland. These factors can, however, only explain some of the differences in the level of employment between the countries. The most important explanation is that the level of unemployment has been significantly higher in Sweden and Finland than in Norway. In 2005, the proportion of unemployed in the under-25 age group in Norway was 11 per cent, as opposed to 20 per cent in Finland and 22 per cent in Sweden. Another explanation for the lower level of employment is that the proportion of young people outside the workforce, i.e. persons not working, not receiving education and not registered as unemployed, was higher in Sweden and Finland

than in Norway. In 2006, this proportion was 5.7 per cent in Norway, 7.0 per cent in Sweden and 6.4 per cent in Finland (*ibid.*).

To avoid too much long-term exclusion from working life, all three nations have developed special labour market measures directed at young, unemployed workers who are in difficult situations, but the schemes differ somewhat. The scheme in Norway is called the Youth Guarantee. It guarantees young unemployed persons who are less than 20 years old either a place in an educational institution, a temporary job or work training. There is also a set of ordinary labour market measures for people in the 20-24 age group. Norwegian evaluations show that the effect on the whole has been positive, particularly in preventing exclusion and social retreat, but to a lesser extent as regards employment (Egge 1998, Pedersen & Møller 1998, Pedersen 2001, Hamre 2005). Sweden has a scheme that resembles the Youth Guarantee, but it is described as lacking generosity and being strongly biased towards education. Studies of its effects show small and in part negative effects relative to persons who have not taken part in such measures (Olofsson 2008, Petterson 2008). In Sweden, a clear distinction is also drawn between labour market training and the ordinary educational system, unlike in Norway and to some extent Finland (Petterson 2008). Finland has increased its efforts to tackle the problem of job seekers who are in difficult situations. The country is still suffering from the after-effects of the great depression in the early-1990s, which led to a third of the young people aged between 15 and 24 being unemployed in 1994. Many of those who were unemployed for a lengthy period then have experienced problems in getting permanent jobs since, which is also well known in Sweden and Norway.⁸ Since 2000, Finland has organised several schemes that are more differentiated and have offered a variety of employment and educational measures (Julkunen & Salovaara 2008).

8) A number of studies have shown that when unemployment in an area becomes high and the national work market is also weak, a large group of people is generated who continually drift between unemployment and various measures year after year (cf. Pedersen & Andersen 1995).

THE NORTHERN SCANDINAVIAN REGION

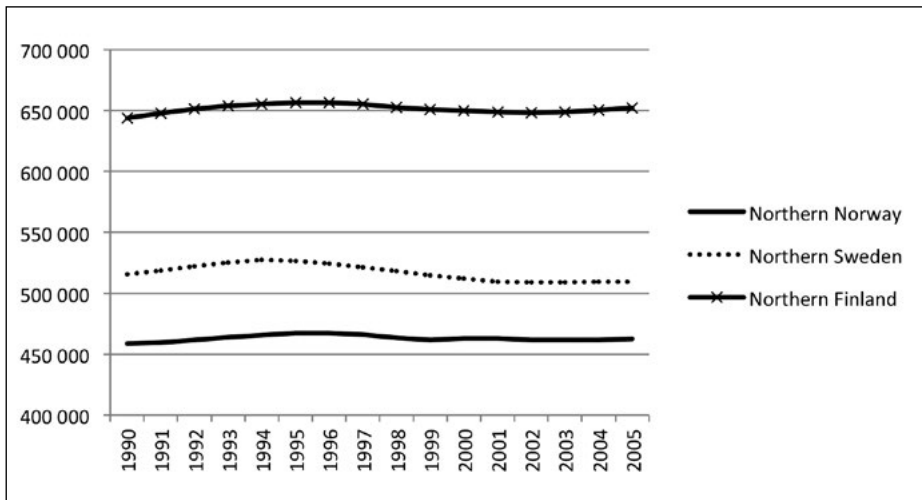
The northern Scandinavian region, as we have defined it, consists of the three northernmost counties in Norway (Nordland, Troms and Finnmark), the two northernmost counties in Sweden (Norrbotten and Västerbotten) and the two northernmost counties in Finland (Lapland and Uleåborg). It covers all of 416 250 km² and is about 29 per cent larger than the total area of Norway. The population density is extremely low. In 2005, its population was just over 1.6 million, compared with 4.8 million in the whole of Norway, which is regarded as a sparsely populated nation. The region is characterised by long distances between larger population nodes. There are large wilderness areas as well as extensive, very sparsely populated tracts, especially in the interior, which is also primarily the border area between the three countries. However, the northern Scandinavian region also has large cities, which, in their modernity, are no less advanced than in more urban areas in the southern parts of the three countries. In Norway, these are Tromsø, Bodø, Narvik and Harstad, in Sweden Umeå, Luleå and Skellefteå, and in Finland Oulu and Rovaniemi. All these towns or cities have a university or a university college and a highly differentiated labour market. All three countries also have a number of medium-sized regional centres with upper secondary schools and county municipal and governmental agencies and institutions. Each of the many local authorities in the region has a smaller centre where the municipal administration and various local service institutions are located. In all three countries, the northern Scandinavian region constitutes a *northern periphery* viewed from the perspective of both the large labour market cores and the central political and administrative pivots, which are located in the southern parts of all three countries. The region has been, and still is, regarded as being beset with problems, characterised by high unemployment and large net relocation. We will now compare the development in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland with regard to population trend, business structure and the labour market.

Population trends

In 1990, the northern Scandinavian region had just over 1 618 000 inhabitants. Fifteen years later, the population had risen by 1 per cent, or 16 000 inhabitants. As shown in figure 1, the population trend was broadly identical in all three countries and experienced the same kinds of fluctuations. Northern Finland experienced the biggest population growth (1.5 per cent); the corresponding figures for northern Norway and northern Sweden were 0.8 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively. The population growth in the northern Scandinavian region was much lower than in the southern Scandinavian region. The population growth in Norway in the same period was 9 per cent as opposed to 6 per cent in Sweden and just over 4 per cent in Finland. The main explanation is a long-term drain of, in particular, young people due to large net relocation to the southern Scandinavian region, but figure 2 shows that a low birth rate is a contributing factor.

Figure 1. The population trend in the northern Scandinavian region in 1990-2005.

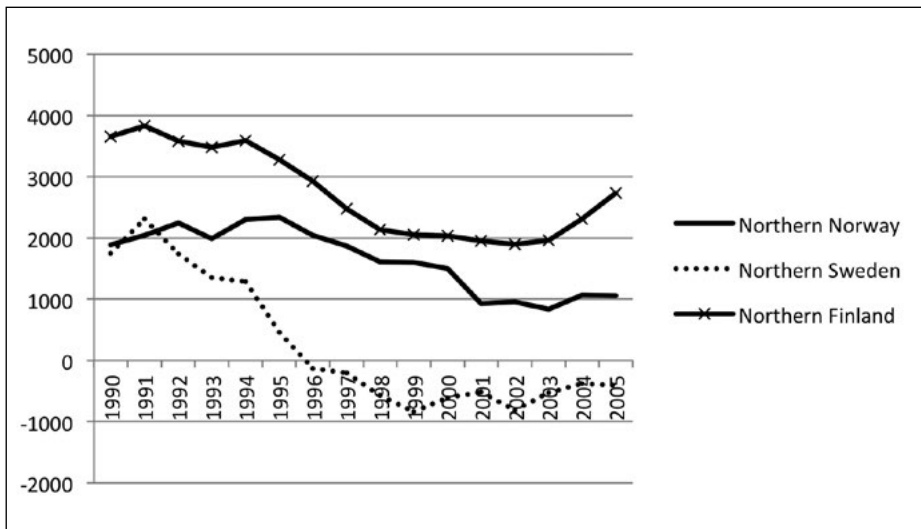
Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.



Excess of births

Figure 2 shows that the excess of births dropped sharply in all three countries from the early-1990s until nearly the turn of the century, when the figures varied somewhat from year to year before rising again after 2003. Throughout the period, northern Norway and northern Finland had an excess of births, even though that was greatly reduced. The excess of births in northern Norway in 2003 was only 37 per cent of what it was in 1992, but rose again until 2005 when it stood at 47 per cent of its level in 1992. Northern Norway then had an excess of births amounting to 1061. In northern Finland, the excess of births was halved between 1991 and 2002. After 2002, it rose strongly and in 2005 it was 71 per cent of its level in 1991, amounting to 2736 births. The excess of births in northern Sweden in 1991 was at about the same level as in Norway, i.e. just over 2000. Up to 1999, the excess of births dropped greatly and by 1996 northern Sweden had a negative excess of births or a birth deficit, i.e. more people died than were born. In 1999, 835 more died than were

Figure 2. Excess of births in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland.



Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

born. An improvement took place in 2002 so that the birth deficit in 2005 was reduced to about 400.

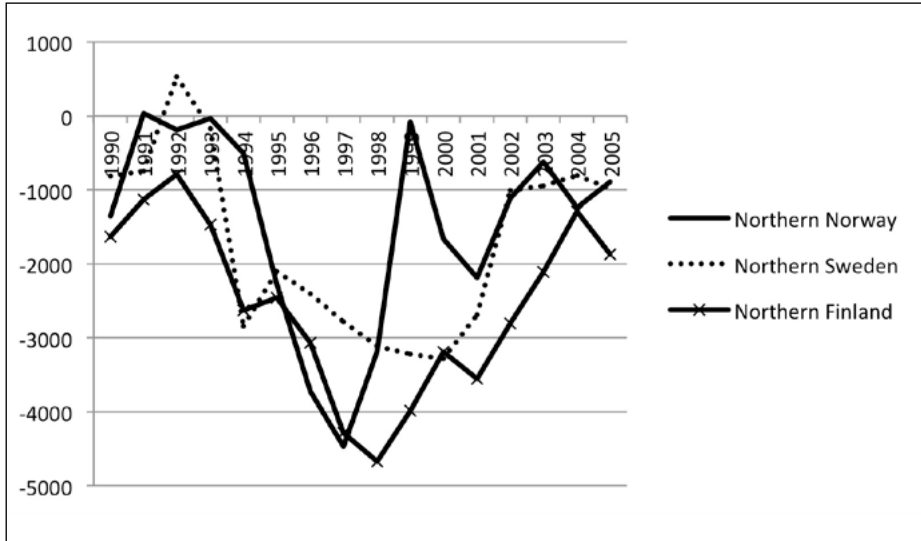
Net migration

The contribution of net migration to the population trend varied greatly in all three countries, mainly following the same basic pattern. In all three countries, the net outflow was greatly reduced during economic downturns and increased strongly during upturns, but was somewhat phase displaced between countries. Prior to the downturn period in the early-1990s, the net outflow dropped markedly, especially in northern Norway and northern Sweden where it was positive in some years. After that, it rose greatly in all the countries, especially in northern Norway and northern Finland. In northern Norway, it peaked in 1997 when some 4500 more people moved away than moved into the region. The corresponding figure for northern Finland was 4600 in 1998. Northern Sweden saw the same trend, but somewhat displaced in time, the peak occurring in 2000 when nearly 3300 more people moved out than in. The economic slowdown after 1998, due partly to the crisis in the data industry and the spillover effects from the economic crisis in Asia, led to a weak downturn until 2003-2004 (Krugman 2009). This downturn led to a drastic reduction in the net outflow, which dropped to around minus 1000 in northern Norway and northern Sweden, and to minus 1300 in northern Finland. This is reflected in a weak population growth (Fig. 1). However, the improvement in the economic situation from 2004 brought a renewed net outflow in northern Sweden and northern Finland.

Regional demographic consequences

These developmental trends have led to *major regional demographic changes* in the northern parts of all three countries. The population has become strongly centralised within northern Scandinavia to a few large and medium-sized areas, and correspondingly diluted elsewhere, especially in rural areas. Figure 4 shows the changes in the demographic growth factors from 2000 to 2005. Briefly,

Figure 3. Net outflow in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland in 1990-2005.



Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

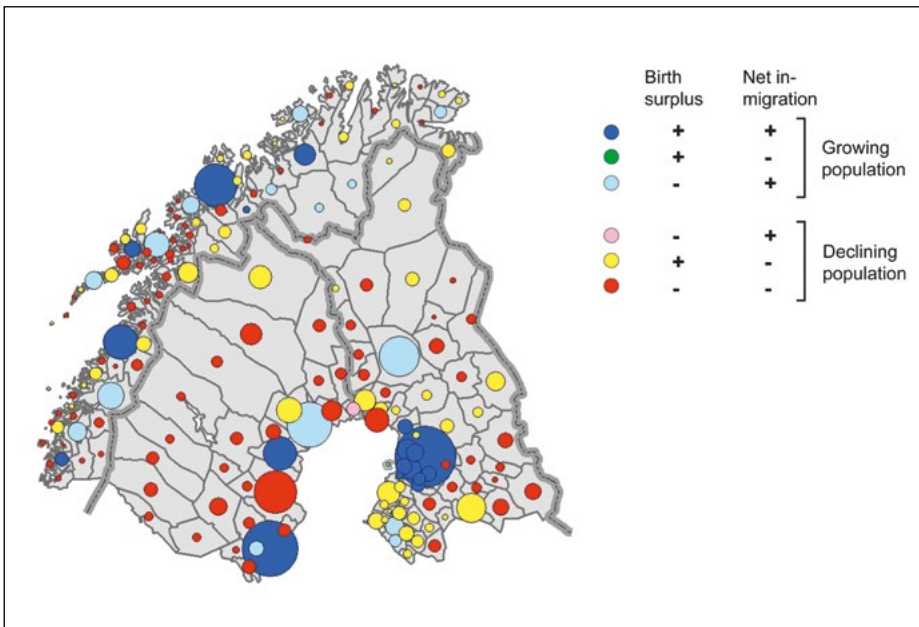
municipalities whose populations have risen are shown in dark blue, green and light blue, while those with reduced populations are shown in purple, yellow and red, and the differences in colour between those whose populations have risen or declined show the main trend in the demographic growth factors.

Municipalities marked in darkest grey have experienced a high population growth because of a large excess in births and a large net inflow. In Norway, this concerns the three largest educational centres, Tromsø, Bodø and Alta, but also two small towns, Sortland and Brønnøysund, and one rural municipality, Storfjord. In northern Sweden, it applies to Umeå and Piteå, and in Finland only Oulu and a few rural municipalities in its immediate vicinity. Light blue distinguishes municipalities characterised by a net inflow, but a birth deficit. In Norway, this applies to many medium-sized towns like Mo i Rana, Mosjøen and Harstad, and also smaller towns like Finnsnes, Hammerfest and Vadsø and a few rural boroughs. In Sweden, it concerns Luleå and a neighbour of

Umeå. In Finland, it applies to Oulu, Rovaniemi and a few municipalities in the extreme south.

The great majority of municipalities experienced a reduction in their population, and most had both a birth deficit and a net outflow. They are shown in red in figure 4. Most are small coastal and inland municipalities, but in Sweden and Finland they include several larger places, including the towns of Skellefteå and Malmberget in Sweden, and Kemi in Finland. The majority have been losing a large proportion of their fertile population for many years, partly to the large towns in northern Scandinavia, but not least to the large labour market cores in southern Scandinavia. The number of fertile couples still living in the areas was far too small to be capable of reproducing the number of births during the previous generation, at the same time as these municipalities were also losing inhabitants through net outflow. There

Figure 4. Population development and changes in the demographic growth factors in municipal boroughs in the northern Scandinavia region in 2000-2005.



Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

is also a large group of municipalities whose population was declining, but which still had an excess of births. This concerns medium-sized towns like Narvik in Norway and Kiruna and Boden in Sweden, and several medium-sized municipalities south of Oulu in Finland, as well as many small rural municipalities in all three countries.

Business structure

Table 2 shows that the business structure in the northern parts of these three countries displays many similarities, but there are also some differences. All the countries have a large public sector, particularly northern Sweden and northern Norway where public administration and other services employ 46-47 per cent of the working population. This figure is about 10 per cent lower in Finland. The areas also have approximately the same proportions employed in the provision of services related to business, finance and property administration. This figure varies from 7-13 per cent. The same applies to the building and construction sector, where the proportion is around 7 per cent. Both northern Norway and northern Finland have 6 per cent employed in the primary industries, but northern Sweden has only 3 per cent. However, a significantly larger proportion (17 per cent) is employed in industry and mining in northern Sweden, especially compared with northern Norway (9 per cent), whereas northern Finland has 14 per cent. Finally, northern Norway has a much larger proportion (24 per cent) employed in the distributive trade, hotel and restaurant, transport and communication sectors, particularly compared with northern Sweden (16 per cent), whereas northern Finland has 21 per cent.

Table 2. Employees in various business sectors in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland in 2005, and changes relative to 2000. Percentage of the working population.

	Northern Norway		Northern Sweden		Northern Finland	
	Proportion in 2005	Changes	Proportion in 2005	Changes	Proportion in 2005	Changes
Primary industries	6.2	-13	2.7	-16	6.4	-15
Industry, mining, oil and gas, power and water supply	9.0	-14	17.2	0	14.3	-13
Building and construction	7.0	2	6.6	7	7.2	6
Distributive trades, hotels and restaurants, transport and communication	24.0	-3	15.6	-1	20.9	5
Provision of services in the business and financial sector, property administration	7.1	12	9.9	4	12.5	21
Public administration and other services	45.5	5	46.8	5	36.8	5
Undisclosed	0.2		1.2		1.6	
Total	100		100		100	
N	217 023		227 258		239 842	

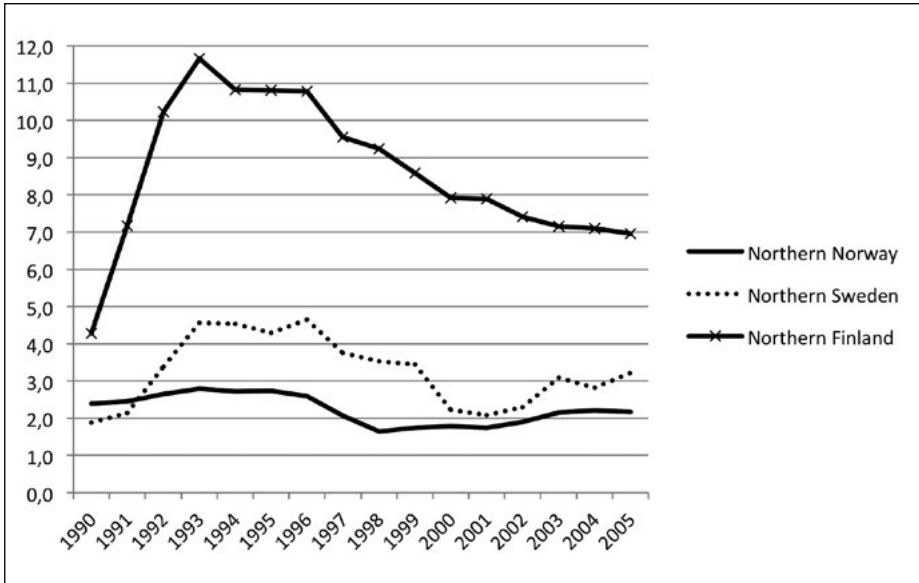
Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

The same conclusion transpires when we look at the changes in the employment pattern relative to 2000. The similarities are most prominent. In all the areas, employment in the administrative and service sectors has risen by 5 per cent. All three areas have experienced a 13-15 per cent reduction in jobs in the primary industries. There are 13-14 per cent fewer jobs in industry in northern Norway and northern Finland, whereas the figure for northern Sweden has remained unchanged. Northern Sweden and northern Finland have experienced a 6-7 per cent growth in employment in the building and construction sector, whereas the growth in northern Norway is only 2 per cent. The distributive trade, hotel and restaurant, transport and communication sectors in northern Norway and northern Sweden have seen a slight drop in employment, whereas northern Finland has had a 5 per cent rise. Finally, northern Finland has had a strong growth (21 per cent) in jobs providing services related to business, finance and property administration, whereas the growth here in northern Sweden and northern Norway has been more moderate (7-10 per cent). Hence, there are great similarities between the three areas as regards both the business structure and changes therein from 2000 to 2005.

Labour market

In 2005, there were considerable differences in the general level of unemployment between the northern areas of these three Scandinavian countries. More than 45 000 were unemployed in northern Finland, whereas the figures for northern Sweden and northern Norway were 16 400 and 10 000, respectively. Figure 5 compares the proportion of unemployed persons with the total number of inhabitants. Northern Finland stands out with particularly high unemployment. The figure also shows that unemployment was substantially higher in northern Sweden than in northern Norway throughout the period from 1991 to 2005. The extremely high unemployment in Finland in the early-1990s can be explained by two factors; Finnish industry was hit hard by the economic downturn and the breakdown of the Soviet Union in 1991. About a fifth of the value of its exports was attached to the former

Figure 5 Proportions of unemployed inhabitants in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland in 1990-2005.



Source: Net-based databases at the statistics agencies in Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Soviet Union and these exports ceased almost completely for the first few years after the collapse. Unemployment in Finland dropped gradually towards 2005, but was still four times higher than in Norway. The same general pattern is apparent in northern Norway and northern Sweden. Unemployment rose until 1993-94, significantly more in Sweden (4.7 per cent) than in Norway (2.8 per cent). It then dropped in Sweden until 2001, before rising again until 2005, when it amounted to just over 3 per cent of the population. In Norway, unemployment dropped until 1998 and then rose slightly until 2005 when it amounted to just over 2 per cent of the population. These average figures conceal regional variations within the northern Scandinavian region. In northern Finland, unemployment in 2005 was far higher in northern and eastern parts and a few industrial places than the average for the region. The same applied in Sweden, where unemployment was high in the municipalities bordering onto Norway, and in many municipalities in the county of

Norrbotten. In northern Norway, unemployment was highest in Finnmark and northern Troms, but the difference was far less than in northern Sweden and northern Finland.

*THE YOUNG ADULT POPULATION IN THE
NORTHERN SCANDINAVIAN REGION IN 2000⁹*

*Similarities and differences between the
stable residents in the three countries*

When we compare the group of young adults who lived in the northern Scandinavian region in 2000 age 18-25 year and had not moved by 2005, the majority of background variables show many similarities from one country to another. The proportion of women in the group was virtually unchanged (45-46 per cent). The family conditions were reasonably similar in northern Norway and northern Finland; the proportion co-habiting in northern Norway was 55 per cent and in northern Finland 44 per cent, whereas it was only 27 per cent in northern Sweden. This probably reflects different traditions for co-habitation. The level of education among those who continued to live in the north also showed little difference between northern Norway and northern Finland; about 24 per cent of those in northern Finland had education beyond upper secondary school, compared with 28 per cent in Norway. More of the group concerned had a higher level of education in northern Sweden (34 per cent), probably because far more live in large towns where the jobs that are available require more education.

There is also little difference in the level of employment between northern Norway (77 per cent) and northern Sweden (74 per cent), whereas it was considerably lower (66 per cent) in northern Finland. Being unemployed does not only mean a loss of income, but also a loss of expertise and the ability to work if the situation is lasting. We have measured unemployment as the total number of months a person has been registered as unemployed or on ordinary labour

9) All the figures in this section derive from Pedersen & Moilanen (2011a).

market measures during the five-year period of 2000-2005. This variable will hereafter be called the *unemployed period*. This period varied markedly from one country to another. The stably resident young adults in northern Norway were, on average, unemployed for 9 months during the five-year period. The figures for northern Finland and northern Sweden were considerably higher, 11.6 months and as many as 15.7 months, respectively. This explains some of the differences between the countries in the proportion of those employed. To learn the trend in incomes, we have chosen to use the cumulative income, i.e. the registered gross income per year totalled for all the years in the five-year period of 2000-2005. In northern Norway, the cumulative income for the group concerned was 123 000 Euro, as opposed to 77 000 Euro in northern Sweden and 69 000 Euro in northern Finland, respectively, revealing considerable differences between the countries. The much higher cumulative income in northern Norway is partly explained by the income level being 20-30 per cent higher and partly by the average unemployed period being significantly lower. The higher average income in Sweden than in Finland, even though young adults there had, on average, a significantly longer unemployed period, is explained by the higher level of employment, the amount of compensation for unemployment being 20 per cent higher in Sweden than in Finland, and the higher earnings of the young adults in Sweden because they had a higher level of education than their compatriots in northern Finland.

Relocating as selection processes

Earlier in this chapter, we have seen that all three countries in the northern Scandinavian region have periodically experienced significant net outflows. As migration is a highly selective process, it is interesting to find out whether the selection processes are identical in all three countries and where they perhaps diverge. We will therefore compare the stably resident population with the long-distance relocators who were living in the southern Scandinavian region in 2005, since this is the group in which the selection is at its maximum. The similarities and differences in the selection pattern can be summed up as follows:

1. The proportion of women among long-distance relocators was 6-8 per cent higher than among stable residents, which is in keeping with numerous studies of migration.
2. Even though the proportion of co-habitors with children varies from one country to another, there are about twice as many in all the countries among stable residents than long-distance migrants. It is well known from the literature concerning migration that single persons have a higher migration rate than families.
3. Long-distance migrants in all the countries were significantly better educated than stable residents, this being particularly marked in northern Sweden. This is also in line with numerous studies, which show that a tendency to move rises with a higher level of education.
4. The accumulated period without employment or on labour market measures was noticeably less for long-distance relocators in all three countries, particularly northern Sweden, which is in keeping with earlier observations.
5. Long-distance migrants from the northern Scandinavian region show the same preferences for residence. They settle in the large labour market cores, particularly where there are also universities and university colleges. They therefore contribute very strongly to the centralisation of the population in the large labour market cores in central and southern parts of Scandinavia. This is also in keeping with earlier migration research.

As regards level of employment, we found no distinct selection pattern between stable residents and long-distance migrants. Long-distance migrants from northern Norway had a 3 per cent higher level of employment than stable residents. Those in northern Sweden had either the same level of employment as stable

residents or a slightly lower one, partly depending on their migration history. In northern Finland, long-distance migrants who had moved only once had a somewhat higher level of employment, whereas those who had moved several times had a significantly lower level of employment. As regards accumulated income in 2000-2005, long-distance migrants from northern Norway had a higher income than stable residents, some of them significantly higher. This was not the case for the same groups from northern Sweden and northern Finland, where the income level among long-distance migrants was considerably lower. Both situations seem to be connected with differences in the labour market for young people in the various countries. This is examined more closely in Chapter 3. However, it must be added that reliable conclusions regarding selection cannot be drawn from bivariate distributions. A more detailed analysis of the selection processes is given in Chapter 3.

SUMMARY

Aspects of geography, demography and business structure

The parts of the three countries constituting the northern Scandinavian region have many features in common, including geography, climate and not least long distances to relatively large service centres. Common developmental trends have been traced back to 1990. Northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland have had the same population development. Changes in the demographic growth factors display the same main pattern. The excess of births has dropped in all the countries and net outflow has been very high at times, and has varied in approximately the same way in the three countries in pace with economic downturns and upturns. Strong centralisation of the population has taken place to a few cities and smaller built-up places and a significant portion of the young adult population has moved to urban centres in southern Scandinavia. The business structure in northern Norway, northern Sweden and northern Finland has strong mutual similarities, as too have the changes,

which took place in it in 2000-2005. The proportion unemployed, however, has been higher in northern Sweden and significantly so in northern Finland after 1991, than in northern Norway. The northern Scandinavian region can also be characterised as a peripheral area across three of the world's wealthiest nations. The economic systems and labour markets in the three areas are regulated in approximately the same way.

Institutional aspects

The primary political aims in all three countries have been to create equal conditions for growing up, irrespective of social class, gender and ethnicity. Both the education and the social welfare systems are basically alike, and the proportion of the gross national product spent on education, child care, care of the aged and other social services is high. International studies have dubbed these similarities the *Nordic model* or the *Scandinavian welfare regime*. This regime has produced strong institutional similarities, but also differences. Further education is organised in approximately the same way in all three countries; theoretical and vocational subjects are integrated within the same educational organisation where different systems of courses enable those who take vocational training to acquire admission certification within the university and university college system. Differences nevertheless exist. In Norway, most vocational subjects have some element of apprenticeship schemes. The model mainly comprises two-year training in school and two-year training in a firm or an institution. Finland has some apprenticeships, whereas all vocational education in Sweden takes place in schools. Vocational education that is heavy on theory and lacks apprenticeships is regarded as one of the main reasons why Sweden has a large number of dropouts and a lower through flow in its vocational education than Norway. Even so, the proportion beginning at university or university college is approximately the same. The school system in the three countries also produces broadly the same results. In all three countries, socio-economic background factors strongly influence both the achievements and the choice of education made by the pupils. To avoid too great a degree

of long-term exclusion of young people from working life, all three countries have developed special labour market measures directed at young, unemployed persons who are in difficult situations, but the schemes differ somewhat. By degrees, Norway has developed a differentiated set of measures aimed at this group. The Swedish measures are characterised as lacking generosity and being too heavily biased towards theoretical education. There is also a clear distinction in Sweden between labour market training and the ordinary educational system, unlike in Norway and to some extent Finland. Finland has recently increased its effort directed at clients who are in difficult situations, and now has a more differentiated set of employment and educational measures than was the case in the 1990s.

Characteristics of the young adult population

The portion of the young adult population, which had not moved out of the region between 2000 and 2005 mainly had the same characteristics regarding gender, level of education and proportion in employment, irrespective of the country. The level of education was, however, somewhat higher in northern Sweden than in northern Norway and northern Finland, and the proportion employed was somewhat lower in northern Finland than in northern Norway. Those in northern Sweden, nevertheless, had a far higher average unemployed period than young adults from northern Norway and northern Finland. Young adults from northern Norway had a far higher cumulative gross income over the five-year period than was the case in northern Sweden and northern Finland. This is obviously connected with the unemployed period being significantly longer in northern Sweden and northern Finland. Our comparison between stable residents in the northern Scandinavian region and long-distance migrants who lived in southern Scandinavia in 2005 showed that the selection pattern in long-distance relocation was very similar with regard to the variables, gender, family situation, education, unemployed period and residence preference. There was no clear pattern in the selection regarding the level of unemployment. As regards the income level, the selection was the opposite in

northern Norway to what it was in northern Sweden and northern Finland, which clearly has to do with the great differences in the unemployed period between the countries in the northern Scandinavian region.

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– CHAPTER 3 –

THE NORTH SCANDINAVIAN PATTERN
OF MIGRATION AMONG THE YOUNG
ADULT POPULATION 2000–2005

Paul Pedersen and Mikko Moilanen

INTRODUCTION

Compared to just twenty years ago, the young adult population of today has been much more strongly affected by on going megatrends associated with the concept of globalization. These processes are multi-dimensional. Immigration, various forms of tourism as well as media of different sorts, including virtual social medias, mean that young people increasingly come into contact with new cultural elements and areas of the world (Urry, 2000; Castells, 1998). Another relevant feature is the movement towards what is described as “a learning society characterised by acceleration of both knowledge creation and knowledge destruction” (Blossfeld, 2003:303). Increasingly, these trends are characteristic of both the educational market, the labour market and the general flow of information, a development that results in increased diversity and complexity and above all in *greater uncertainty*, which in turn complicates the choices young adults are expected to make with regard to, among other things, education, work and place of residence (Beck, 1994; Blossfeld, 2001; Mills & Blossfeld, 2001).

The aim of this chapter is to describe both the intensity and complexity of the pattern of migration by the young adult population within north Scandinavia and the selection processes that long-distance migration involves. The chapter consists of six sections. In the first section we consider how changes

in structural conditions can affect the rational decision making processes of young people when it comes to education, work and a place of residence. The second section deals with the relationship between structurally oriented approaches versus approaches focusing more on the individual level. The third section describes and evaluates the validity of our data material, as well as give a brief outline of key methodological decisions. Section four analyses the intensity of the migration patterns and describes the diverse range in the young adult population's concerns with regard to various types of migration in the five year period of 2000-2005. Section five provides an analysis of the selection mechanisms involved in long-distance migration, and in the final section we discuss our findings in light of previous research.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Consequences of increased insecurity associated with decision making

The extent of migrations into and out of an area over time may be considered the result of accumulated individual decisions to move. A central point in migration research is that the structural conditions surrounding the decision making processes of young people, have become increasingly blurred and unpredictable (Beck, 1992; Blossfeld & Prein, 1998; Mills & Blossfeld, 2001). There is also increased uncertainty as to how much information is needed in order to make a decision. In order to reduce the complexities related to decision making processes, various forms of self-commitment take place (Elster, 1979). Actors tend to limit their own future options, that is, commit themselves to follow a certain path. This is achieved by seeking support from local traditions, norms and experiences from one's social group and from social institutions with which one is familiar.¹ This is an effective way of reducing

1) This is often called role model effects in economically oriented literature. An individual starts his/her own business because someone one admires has done the same successfully or because many of one's acquaintances have moved and done well at the new place.

uncertainty both in relation to oneself and to significant others. Thus, local traditions and experiences are still significant in decision making processes, or as expresses by Karen Olwig: “*One can argue that it is not despite of, but rather because we live in a world that has become so interwoven, that place has become so significant*” (Olwig 2003:59). More recent research also emphasise the fact that national institutions with which the young adult population is in regular contact, are not easily affected by global trends. This is the case both within education, adult training and institutions that administer labour market measures as well as various social insurance and welfare programs. These institutions are repositories of knowledge and attitudes which they promote to their clients, and as such they work as filters that impact the young adult population when general information is interpreted and given meaning (Blossfeld, 2003; Blossfeld&Mayer, 1988; Lundvall, 2003).

Actor and structure models

In the context of migration studies, researchers have generally distinguished between changes at the structural and the individual level, although this distinction is far from absolute. Over the last twenty years, so called structuration theories seeking to transcend the distinction between structure and actor, have been widely adopted. This school of thought is usually traced back to Giddens (1984). The core of the theory holds that structure and actor are two sides of the same coin. Actors create structures through their actions. However, their actions are to varying degrees limited by the norms, rules and institutional structures of society. In other words, the actors can to a certain degree create their own conditions of action where the freedom of action is contingent upon both the effort of the actors and the context in which they find themselves. There is, however, no straightforward connection between structural changes and individual or family-based choices, which is essentially what migration involves. Structural changes are always subject to interpretations at the level of the actor. Meaning and significance are conceptual constructs (Berger & Luckman, 1976; Clock, 1997; Giddens, 1984, 1991;

Gullestad, 1997). Several factors still have a bearing on the interpretation of changes and their possible consequences in the actual context of migration. An important structuring condition is the phase of life in which the individual finds him/herself (Frønes *m.fl.*, 1997; Hansen, 1997; Sørlic, 1995). As a rule, families with children will have other preferences with regard to place of residence than young adults. An individual's access to individual and collective resources is another important structuration factor (Heggen *m.fl.*, 2001; SSB, 1972). A third factor provided by the local conditions at the individual's place of residence connects the individual to various local subcultures with their built-in mechanisms to steer the individual toward desirable positions (Cohen, 1985; Fosso, 1997; Heggen *m.fl.*, 1999; Høydahl, 1998; Villa, 1999; Wiborg, 2003).

In other words, our conceptions are formed in a locality and in interaction with social changes at the regional, national and sometimes the global level. This interaction generates a complex set of causal factors, something that actor oriented migration studies demonstrate with abundant clarity (Grimrud, 1999; 2000; Malmberg *m.fl.*, 2002; Orderud & Onsager, 1998; Pedersen, 2001; SSB, 1977). Insofar as our analysis covers only a five year period, structural changes will not be relevant to our group to any appreciable degree except from two variables: economic cycles and generation cycles. In addition, the socioeconomic structures that characterised Norwegian society at the beginning of our period of analysis will, of course, affect the pattern of migration depending on the actor's preferences, his/her life and at the time. We will return to this question in section six which will consider our empirical findings in light of earlier research in corresponding areas.

DATA AND METHOD

Our data include all individuals who were between 18 and 25 years of age and living in northern Norway and northern Sweden in October 2000. For right-to-privacy reasons, we were only able to collect a random 50 per cent

sample of the young adult population in northern Finland. The total number of individuals in this set of data came to about 128 000. This panel was followed up and registered according to a number of background variables every year for the following five years up until the autumn of 2005. Then the data sets for the various years were linked together at the individual level and through various sorting procedures transformed from time series data to longitudinal data.² The longitudinal data enable us to follow every single individual's migration career year by year in the period being investigated. We have chosen to use economic regions as our base units. In other words, one move means one move from one economic region to another. The data set consists of various types of registered data related to education, family circumstances, change in labour market status and residence, as well as father's and mother's education and income. The linkage of the various registers was done by the central statistics bureaus in each country. When a panel is followed up over a five year period, there will be a certain decrease in the size of the panel, partly because of death and partly due to migration abroad. This type of decrease constituted 2.8 per cent of the population of Norway, with the equivalent numbers being 2.7 and 1.1 for Sweden and Finland respectively. In addition, there is always a certain decrease in individual variables. This was especially the case with three variables: labour market status and father's education and father's income. This combined with decrease in some other variables led to a total decrease of 14 per cent, 10 per cent and 3 per cent in Norway, Sweden and Finland respectively for the data included in the regression analysis.³

Most of the variables included in our analysis are considered very reliable, but registration errors do occur. There is also some uncertainty as to how precisely variables like income and labour market status are registered. We know that the official number of unemployed includes some individuals who are employed and that people sometimes are paid under the table. Compari-

2) The six sets of data involved 750 000 individual registrations during the five year period.

3) Insofar as we use regression analysis, the variable showing the greatest decrease will determine the number of individuals included in the analysis of all other variables as well.

son is a central methodological tool. Thus we can determine both the degree of selection and which variables appear particularly selective by comparing the various types of migration careers with that portion of the young adult population that did not move within the five year period. These comparisons are not done relative to data on the time of migration, but in relation to how the various types of careers were distributed among our background variables in the autumn of 2005. Comparisons are made relative to five main types of variables deemed to be important in migration literature: (1) demographic and familial circumstances (age, gender and family situation); (2) education (education in progress, level of education and father's education); (3) labour market status (employed, unemployed disability and income); (4) residence (in densely populated location, place of residence by size or region and place of residence at age 15).

MIGRATION INTENSITY AND TYPICAL MIGRATION CAREERS IN NORTH SCANDINAVIA

The young adult population living in the north Scandinavian area in 2000 ranged in age from 18-25 at the beginning of our study; thus, by 2005 they were between 23 and 30 years old. Many of them had not yet completed their education or were also combining work and education. These age cohorts had reached a stage of their lives where most of them had established their own households as singles or cohabitants.

Categorising the young adult population living in north Scandinavia in 2000 according to their migration behaviour in the five year period of 2000-2005, we arrive at seven distinct career types:

Table 1. Migration careers of the young adult population of the north Scandinavian area 2000-2005

	Norway	Sweden	Finland	North Scandinavia
<i>Stable residents (not migrants)</i>	66.0	59.8	57.8	61.4
<i>Short distance migrants=migrants who only have moved within north Norway, north Sweden and north Finland</i>				
Stable internal out-migrants	8.9	9.0	14.1	10.3
Internal round about migrants	1.6	2.3	2.8	2.2
Internal return migrants	2.1	2.5	2.9	2.5
<i>Long distance migrants=migrants who relocated to the south Scandinavian area</i>				
Stable external long distance migrants to south Scandinavia	15.6	18.5	14.4	16.4
External round about migrants in south Scandinavia	3.0	4.0	3.8	3.6
External return migrants from south Scandinavia to north Scandinavia	2.9	3.9	4.2	3.6
N	43611	49877	34606	128094

Considering the north Scandinavian area as a whole, cf. Table 1, we find that the largest part of the young adult population (61 per cent) in 2005 had not moved out of the economic region where they lived in 2000. We have called this group *stable residents*. Migrants made up 39 per cent of the panel with 15 per cent being *short distance migrants*, that is, within the whole five year period they had only moved within north Norway, north Sweden and north Finland. 24 per cent were *long distance migrants*. They had moved out of the north Scandinavian area with most of them living in the south Scandinavian area in 2005. Looking more closely at the short distance or internal migrants, we can identify three different types of migrant careers. Two thirds of them can be categorised as *stable internal out-migrants*. These individuals had moved

only once and only to another economic region within the north Scandinavian area. This career type constituted 10 per cent of the panel. One third of the internal migrants had moved at least twice, giving us two career types: *internal round about migrants* and *internal return migrants*. The *internal round about migrants* had moved at least two times within the north Scandinavian area, but never back to the original area of residence of 2000. The internal return migrants had also moved at least twice, distinguishing themselves from the round about migrants by living in the same area of residence in 2005 as in 2000. These two groups were roughly the same size, making up 2.2 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively of the whole population of the panel.

Taking a closer look at the one fourth that constituted long-distance migrants or external migrants we may categorise them in three career types: *stable external long-distance migrants*, *external round about migrants* and *external return migrants*. The stable external long distance migrants had only undergone one move—from north Scandinavia to the economic region in south Scandinavia where they lived in 2005. The external round about migrants had moved at least twice—once out of the north Scandinavian area and in addition moved at least once within the south Scandinavian area. The last career type, *external return migrants*, had also moved at least twice—out of the north Scandinavian area and back to the north Scandinavian area where they were living in 2005. The *stable external long-distance migrants* constitute clearly the largest group of migrants, making up 16.4 per cent of the panel. The *external round about migrants* and the *external return migrants* numbered groups of equal size, each making up 3.6 per cent of the panel.

Our main findings can be summarised as follows: the excess of 61 per cent of the young population living in the north Scandinavian area in 2000 did not migrate out of the economic region up to the autumn of 2005, constituting the group we have labelled “stable residents.” An additional 15 per cent made up the group of short distance migrants, that is, of individuals living in other economic regions within the north Scandinavian region over the course of the five year period. Approximately 24 per cent migrated out of the northern Scandinavian area. However, almost 4 per cent of the latter group moved back to the north Scandinavian area within the same five year period. This means that

altogether 80 per cent of the young adult population living in the north Scandinavian area in 2000 was still living there in the autumn of 2005.

This career pattern is mainly the same in all three countries, but some differences are nonetheless worth noting. In Norway, the portion of stable residents in the north Scandinavian area is 6 per cent higher than in Sweden, a difference due to the fact that Sweden has a somewhat higher share of stable long-distance migrants to the south Scandinavian areas and a little larger portion of short distance migrants within the north Scandinavian area. The out-migration to the south Scandinavian areas is nearly the same in Norway and Finland. The circumstance that the stable residents in Finland is 8 per cent points lower than in Norway reflects the fact that Finland, unlike Norway and Sweden, has a higher portion of internal stable out-migrants and a little higher percentage of internal round about migrants within the north Scandinavian area.

SELECTION WITH LONG DISTANCE MIGRATION

Demographic and familiar variables

Our regression analysis shows that both north Norwegian and north Swedish women had a significantly greater chance of being a long-distance migrant living in south Scandinavia compared to the stable resident male young adults. The chances of being a stable long-distance migrant or round about migrant in the south were respectively 23 per cent or 24 per cent greater for young adult women in Norway compared to stable resident men. The corresponding numbers for Sweden were 26 per cent and 28 per cent. The tendency was the same in the Finnish material but the differences were not significant. Closer analysis of the Norwegian and Swedish material that also includes age, show a *curvilinear correlation between age and out-migration* both among women and men. The out-migration increased both among women and men up to the age of 27-28 years. After that point there was a considerable return migration among women and men but the return migration was significantly greater among female migrants. The chances of being a return migrant to the north Scandinavian areas were 36 per cent,

23 per cent and 21 per cent larger for women in Norway, Sweden and Finland respectively as compared to men. Since the return migration by women to the north Scandinavian area was so much greater than that of men, the percentage of women living in the north Scandinavian area in 2005 was actually marginally higher than that of men at the age of 30 (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011a). Due to the focus on out-migration among young women in these areas, many will probably find this result surprising.

Table 2. Multinomial logistic regression. Percent chance of being a stable long-distance migrant, round-about migrant and stable return migrant in the period 2000-2005 measured against the stable resident young population in north.

	Norway		Sweden		Finland	
	Relative risk ratio	P> z	Relative risk ratio	P> z	Relative risk ratio	P> z
STABLE LONG-DISTANCE MIGRANTS						
Female	1,23	0,000	1,26	0,000	1,03	0,391
Cohabitant with children	0,29	0,000	0,45	0,000	0,63	0,000
Education below or up to secondary level	0,37	0,000	0,27	0,000	0,65	0,000
Father with tertiary education	1,19	0,000	1,40	0,000	0,97	0,585
Employed	0,83	0,000	1,10	0,010	1,84	0,000
Enrolled in program of education	0,65	0,000	0,92	0,013	1,72	0,000
Vocationally disabled	0,67	0,000	0,25	0,000	0,34	0,000
Total time registered in NAV 2000-2005	1,01	0,000	0,99	0,000	0,99	0,000
Cumulative income 2000-2005	1,02	0,000	0,98	0,000	0,94	0,000
Living in densely populated areas	2,06	0,000	1,40	0,000	2,37	0,000
Living in a region with 20.000-75.000 inhabitants	0,16	0,000	4,00	0,000	0,20	0,000
Living in a region with under 20.000 inhabitants	0,07	0,000	0,09	0,000	0,18	0,000

(continued on next page)

ROUND-ABOUT MIGRANTS IN SOUTH NORWAY						
Female	1,24	0,000	1,28	0,000	1,12	0,093
Cohabitant with children	0,35	0,000	0,44	0,000	0,57	0,000
Education below or up to secondary level	0,32	0,000	0,16	0,000	0,52	0,000
Father with tertiary education	1,16	0,040	1,53	0,000	1,16	0,108
Employed	0,74	0,000	1,32	0,000	1,73	0,000
Enrolled in program of education	0,60	0,000	0,82	0,002	1,53	0,001
Vocationally disabled	0,67	0,032	0,31	0,000	0,15	0,001
Total time registered in NAV 2000-2005	1,01	0,000	1,00	0,305	1,00	0,083
Cumulative income 2000-2005	1,05	0,000	0,97	0,000	0,93	0,000
Living in densely populated areas	2,29	0,000	1,70	0,000	1,47	0,002
Living in a region with 20.000-75.000 inhabitants	0,28	0,000	4,88	0,000	0,37	0,000
Living in a region with under 20.000 inhabitants	0,13	0,000	0,17	0,000	0,36	0,000
RETURN MIGRANTS TO NORTHERN NORWAY						
Female	1,36	0,000	1,23	0,000	1,21	0,001
Cohabitant with children	0,56	0,000	0,56	0,000	0,79	0,000
Education below or up to secondary level	0,85	0,000	0,44	0,000	0,80	0,001
Father with tertiary education	1,34	0,000	1,42	0,000	1,27	0,005
Employed	0,78	0,001	0,87	0,021	0,76	0,000
Enrolled in program of education	0,85	0,028	1,50	0,000	1,15	0,109
Vocationally disabled	0,62	0,005	0,19	0,000	0,27	0,000
Total time registered in NAV 2000-2005	1,01	0,000	1,01	0,000	0,99	0,000
Cumulative income 2000-2005	1,03	0,000	0,95	0,000	0,96	0,000
Living in densely populated areas	1,73	0,000	1,42	0,000	1,03	0,002
Living in a region with 20.000-75.000 inhabitants	0,98	0,711	1,51	0,001	1,30	0,000
Living in a region with under 20.000 inhabitants	1,29	0,001	1,05	0,505	1,42	0,007
Log-likelihood	23316,9		32308,4		20067,2	
N	37869		42988		27010	

LR ch^2 (39) = 10097.46 Prob > ch^2 = 0.0000 Pseudo R² = 0.2263

The interpretation is based on the following basic codes: Age=number of years, Woman=1 or 0, cohabitant with children=1 or 0, Education below or up to secondary level=1 or 0, Employed=1 or 0, Enrolled in program of education=1 or 0, Total time registered with NAV number of months 2000-2005. Income=cumulative gross income 2000-2005. Living in Densely population areas=1 or 0. Living in a region with over 15 000 inhabitants at the age of 15. Living in central and somewhat central municipalities=1 or 0.

The migration pattern is also influenced by the family situation. We have used the percentage of cohabitants with children in 2005 as an indicator of the family situation. Insofar as the acceptability of cohabitation has varied over time among the three countries, caution is in order when making comparisons between countries. However, comparisons between different migration careers within the individual countries are possible. Controlling for all background variables in the model, we find that the chances of being a stable long-distance migrant and round about migrant in Norway are reduced by respectively 29 per cent and 35 per cent among cohabitants with children compared to those having another civil status. For return migration the chances are reduced by an entire 56 per cent. In Sweden the chances of being a stable long-distance migrant and round about migrant are reduced by 44-45 per cent, while chances are reduced by 56 per cent of the return migrants. This variable exhibits the strongest effect in Finland where the chances of being a stable long-distance migrant are reduced by 63 per cent. The equivalent numbers are 57 per cent and 79 per cent respectively in the case of round about migrants and return migrants. In other words, cohabitation involving children has a strong inhibiting deterring effect on mobility.

Variables related to education

Ongoing education of young adults may stimulate mobility insofar as certain types of education may be available only at a few locations and young adults generally prefer to seek employment at or near places where educational institutions are located. The portion of young adults still receiving an education was

about 1/3 in Sweden as compared to 1/4 in Norway and 16 per cent in Finland (Pedersen and Moilanen, 2001b). However, the regression analysis shows that ongoing education has a statistically significant relationship to migratory status but that the relationship appears to have the opposite effect in north Norway and north Finland. In Norway, the chances of becoming a long distance migrant decrease significantly by 15-40 per cent depending ongoing education as opposed to some other labour market status. However, in Finland the chances of being a long-distance migrant increase significantly by respectively 72 per cent to stable long-distance migrants and 52 per cent for round about migrants. There was a similar tendency for return migrants but the difference was not statistically significant. In Sweden, the same relationship was significant only in the case of return migrants. As far as stable long-distance migrants and round about migrants are concerned, the trend line is the nearly same as in Norway, the difference was not significant. As we shall see, these differences between the countries may be due to a different practice in how the place of residence among students is registered.

As an indicator of level of education we are using the percentage of the groups who have received education below and up to completion of secondary education in 2005.⁴ Based on countless studies (Greenwood 1985; Stambøl, 1995, 1998; Stockdahl, 2002), the degree of higher education is the variable that most clearly distinguishes migrants from stable residents. This is also true in our material. Controlling for all other variables in the model, we find that selection associated with long distance migration according to education is significant in relation to *all types of migration careers in all countries*. Young adults in north Norway, who had a level of education at completed secondary level or less, had 63 per cent less chance of being a stable long-distance migrant and 68 per cent less chance of being a round about migrant. This also holds true for return migrants, but the chance is somewhat less (32 per cent). In Sweden, education selection confirms to the same pattern, and the migration is much stronger than in Norway. The chances of being stable long-distance migrants,

4) As pointed out in the previous article we have measurement problems due to the different practices of grouping educational statistics among the counties. It is especially the Swedish data that are divergent relative to the Norwegian and Finnish data.

round about migrants and return migrants were respectively 83, 84 and 56 per cent higher for those who were educated above the level of secondary education compared to those below that level in the population of stable residents. Selection according to education associated with long distance migration was significantly lower in Finland. Education beyond the secondary level increased the chances of being a stable long-distance migrant by 35 per cent. This was also the case with round about migrants and return migrants with respectively 48 and 20 per cent.

There is a strong correlation between individual's social class and level of education (Nordli & Wiborg, 2010; Aamondt, 1982). As indicator of social class, we use the percentage of fathers with higher education in 2000. Controlling for all variables in our model, we find that the chances of being a long-distance migrant irrespective of migration typology increase significantly in north Norway and north Sweden if fathers have higher education. The evidence for this is particularly strong in north Sweden where the chances of being a stable long-distance migrant and round about migrant increase by respectively 40 and 53 per cent. In north Finland, this correlation is only significant in the case of return migrants.

Variables related to the labour market

In the context of choosing a place of residence, having a job has a stabilizing influence on that decision (Moilanen, 2010; Pedersen, 2000; Stambøl, 1995). Taking a look at the level of employment, we see that this was somewhat higher in Norway (77 per cent) and Sweden (74 per cent) than in Finland (64 per cent) (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011b). The chances of being a long-distance migrant in Norway are reduced by 22-27 per cent if one is employed compared to not being employed seen in terms of long distance migrants relative to the population of stable residents. This is in line with our expectations. Somewhat surprisingly, this connection is the opposite in Finland where the chances of being a long-distance migrant increase significantly – by 73-84 per cent – if one is employed relative to another labour market status in the population of stable residents. All differences

were significant both in Norway and Finland. In Sweden the trends are somewhat different depending on migration career. Being employed was only of significant importance for round about migrants. The status of being employed increases the chances of being a round about migrant by 32 per cent. Below, there will be a discussion of what generates these differences.

Being unemployed means not only loss of income but also loss of competence and the capability for work if unemployment becomes long-lasting. We have measured unemployment in terms of the total number of months an individual has been registered as unemployed or benefitting from ordinary labour market measures during the five year period of 2000–2005, abbreviated to length of unemployment below. The length of unemployment varied significantly among the stable residents of the young population in the three countries. In north Norway the length of unemployment was on average 9 months over the course of the five year period. The equivalent number for north Finland and north Sweden were 11.6 months and as much as 15.7 months respectively. The length of unemployment was noticeably less for the stable long-distance migrants and round about migrants in all three countries and especially in Sweden. The exception was the return migrants whose length of unemployment was strongly comparable to our finding of what was the case with stable residents (Pedersen & Moilanen 2011 b). We find this expected effect also in Norway. Greater length of unemployment involves a significantly greater chance of being a long-distance migrant relative to other labour market statuses in the population of stable residents. An increase in the length of unemployment by one month gives a 1 per cent greater chance of being a long distance migrant. The picture is less clear in Sweden and Finland where the chances of being a long-distance migrant are reduced significantly by 1 per cent when the length of employment increases by 1 per cent. However, the length of unemployment has no influence on the chances of becoming a round about migrant either in Sweden or Finland. An increase in length of unemployment increases the chances of becoming a return migrant in Sweden but reduces the chances of the same in Finland by the same magnitude. These differences can be explained with reference to differences between the youth labour markets in the three countries.

An increasingly higher percentage of young people are classified as long-term ill or disabled. This is related to traffic accidents, mental health problems usually combined with being secondary school drop-outs, with long-term unemployment and drug abuse. The percentage of the disabled in the population of stable residents was 4.4 per cent in north Norway, 3.6 per cent in north Sweden and 2.6 per cent in north Finland (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011b). Receiving disability benefits is a clear mobility inhibiting factor. Controlling for all the variables in our model, we find a very strong selection associated with migration in the anticipated direction and in all types of migration categories. The selection is about equally strong in Finland and Sweden, where the chances of being a long distance migrant are reduced by 66-85 per cent if one is disabled relative to other labour market statuses in the population of stable residents. In Norway the tendency was the same but weaker (33 per cent) and only significant for stable long-distance migrants and round about migrants.

Income

In order to capture income developments we have chosen to use cumulative income, that is, the registered gross income per year summed up for all the years of the five year period. There were marked differences in the accumulative income of the three countries. In Norway the cumulative income of stable residents was 123 000 Euros compared to respectively 77 000 in Sweden and 69 000 Euros in Finland. In Norway, long-distance migrants irrespective of migration careers had a higher cumulative income than stable residents and this was particularly the case with round about migrants. In the latter group the cumulative income was as much as 27 thousand Euros higher than among stable residents, while the equivalent numbers among stable long-distance migrants and return migrants were respectively 12 and 7 thousand Euros. The income pattern was the reverse in Sweden and Finland where all long-distance migrants had a lower cumulative income than stable residents. This was especially the case with return migrants. In Sweden the cumulative income of return migrants was as much as 21 thousand Euros lower than that of stable residents. The equiva-

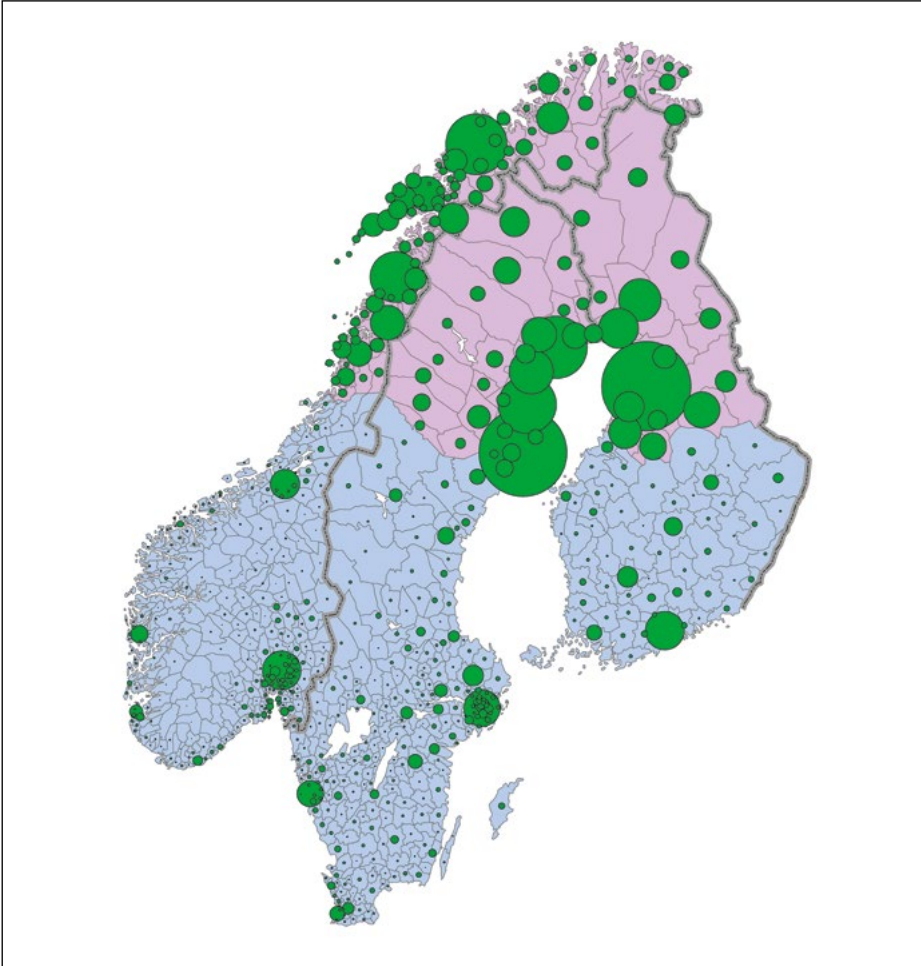
lent number for Finland was 13 thousand Euros. Among stable long distance migrants and round about migrants, the incomes were 6-10 thousand Euros lower than among stable residents (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011b).

The model shows that the variations follow the same overall pattern as the bivariate distribution. In Norway the chance of being a long-distance migrant increases if the income increases relative to that of stable residents, while the opposite is the case in Sweden and Finland; this is true for all types of migration careers. When the income in Norway increased with 1000 Euros, the chances of being a long-distance migrant increased with 2-5 per cent depending on migration career. In Sweden the chances of being a long-distance migrant were reduced by about the same level. The negative connection between migration and income level was most pronounced in Finland where the chances of being a long-distance migrant decreased by 4-7 per cent per 1000 Euros. The differences were significant for all career types. These differences are probably related to differences in the demand for labour, a topic that we will return to in the discussion section of this article.

*Long-distance migration and centralization
towards large labour market cores*

It is well known that the settlement pattern of the northern areas of the three countries is characterised by distinctive features. As much as 84 per cent of the population of north Sweden and north Finland lived in densely populated locations in 2005 compared to 69 per cent in Norway. Stable residents lived in highly populated economic regions, especially in Sweden, where 80 per cent of stable residents lived in economic regions with more than 75 000 inhabitants. This was also the case with 44 per cent in Finland but only 37 per cent in Norway. It may be assumed that these comparative percentages have a certain bearing on the migration pattern between the countries. A striking feature of figure 1 is how long-distance migration contributes to a strong concentration around central labour market cores in the middle and southern parts of Scandinavia.

Figure 1. Settlement pattern of the young adult population that lived in the north Scandinavian area in 2000, 2005



Closer analyses show that while respectively 36 per cent of stable residents living in Norway and 44 per cent in Finland lived in economic regions with over 75 000 inhabitants in 2005, around 84 per cent of stable long-distance migrants in both countries settled in this type of region. The same held true for 75-80 per cent of round about migrants. The tendency to settle in such regions was even more pronounced in Sweden where 89 per cent of long-distance migrants and 85 per cent of round about migrants settled in economic regions with more than

75 000 inhabitants, but the redistribution effect was much less than in Norway and Finland since 80 per cent of the stable residents already lived in such areas. However, the pattern is different among round about migrants. When individuals move back to the north Scandinavian area, they choose places of residence that conform closely to the settlement pattern we find among stable residents; this is true for all three countries (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011b). The areas of the most concentrated in-migration are clearly apparent from the map showing the settlement of the young adult population in 2005, cf. figure 1.

We find the greatest concentration of long-distance migrants in the capital areas of all three countries. In Norway, Oslo and both of the near sides of the Oslo fjord have received by far the greatest in-migration. The second largest in-migration core is in the Trondheim area, followed by the Bergen, Stavanger and Kristiansand areas. In Sweden, the clearly largest in-migration area is Stockholm and nearby urban areas, such as Uppsala. We find the next largest concentration in Gothenburg and Malmö. There are also some lesser concentrations in Middle Sweden surrounding the cities of Örnsjölsvik, Sundsvall and Östersund. In Finland, long-distance migrants have primarily settled in the Helsinki area, with some minor settlement in cities like Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä and Kuopio. We also find smaller concentrations of in-migrants in Vasa and Kokkola. Hardly any (1-5 per cent) of the stable long-distance migrants or round about migrants settled in economic regions with less than 20 000 inhabitants.

SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

A minority of the young adult population generates the streams of migration

Our analysis of the migration careers of young adults in the five year period of 2000–2005 shows that the streams of migration within the north Scandinavian area are generated by *a clear minority* of the young adult population: 39 per cent of the panel were migrants while all of 61 per cent did not move

out of the economic region where they were living in 2000 until the autumn of 2005. They constituted our category of *stable residents*. There were 15 per cent *short distance migrants* among the good third who were migrants, that is, they moved to destinations within the north Scandinavian area. A bare fourth (24 per cent) were long-distance migrants. Among these, 3.6 per cent moved back to north Scandinavia and two thirds then moved to the economic region where they were living in 2000. The final result was that about 80 per cent of young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 in 2000 were still living in the north Scandinavian areas in the autumn of 2005. The stabilizing effect of place on migration patterns is, after all, one of the best documented findings within social science research—both with reference to the general population (Paasi, 2001), all migrants generally (Alstad, 1981) and in regard to a highly educated labour force (Jensen, 1978; Moilanen, 2010; Pedersen, 2005; Pedersen & Pettersen, 1983; Torbo, 1971). Place of residence is also linked to a number of other variables related to our perceptions of a place, such as the natural environment, memories, kinship, family and friends—just to mention some core variables (Berg & Dahl, 2004; DaVanzo, 1981; Dahl & Sørensen, 2008; Entrikin 1991; Urry, 2000;). This is closely linked to local processes of interaction whereby actions in concrete social situations generate impressions, experiences and understandings that form the identity of the individual. In a very informative manner, Gry Paulgaard (Paulgaard, 2000, 2002) has demonstrated how the identity of young people living at the regional periphery is formed through the interaction of local tradition and external impulses. The evidence is that local institutions, local cultural and local traditions act as filters that transform and adapt general messages to the coin of the realm at the local level.

There is, however, one factor that modifies these findings. Individuals enrolled in education institutions have the opportunity to be registered as residents of their home municipality while actually living and studying at other locations in the country. This applies to individuals not married or without children. Thus, the percentage of stable residents is somewhat lower than indicated in our statistical data, leaving us in a position of not being able to make a reliable estimate of the deviation. However, it cannot involve great deviations insofar as

only 20 per cent of stable residents were enrolled in educational institutions in 2005 and all of the 54 per cent were cohabitants with children.

A common north Scandinavian pattern of migration

Another central conclusion of our analysis is that the migration pattern of the young adult population exhibits a great deal of commonality across the north Scandinavian area. This is the case in our comparison of migration intensity, migration careers and the migrants' choice of a place to live. The migration careers of long-distance migrants out of the north Scandinavian area are approximately the same not only in scope but also in form.⁵ The portion living outside the north Scandinavian area did not differ a great deal, reflected in the percentages of 20 per cent in Norway, 22 in Finland and 26 in Sweden. Furthermore, the career pattern is mainly the same in all three countries. To name a few features, 58-66 per cent did not move within the five years period, 15-19 per cent were stable long-distance migrants and 3-4 per cent moved back to the north Scandinavian area in 2005. In addition, the choice of the place of residence by long-distance migrants had a great deal in common. In all three countries, long-distance migrants settled in a few large and some medium-sized labour market cores.

We see these similarities as a reflection of the larger similarity of the north Scandinavian areas and the similarity of the whole area. They have similar geographic locations and relations to the central economic and political centres of gravity in the three countries. The north Scandinavian area may be characterised not only as peripheral regions on the periphery of Europe, but also as peripheral regions within their own country. Long distances are characteristic of these areas and economically they are characterised by their production of raw materials and by a large public sector. We have also shown that demographic developments, the migration pattern and structural changes in the economy after 1990 are remarkably similar in north Norway, north Swe-

5) The impression of a common north Scandinavian migration pattern is reinforced when we study how various migration careers vary along variables presumed to be important; there are, however, also some dissimilarities, cf. p. 24

den and north Finland, cf. Chapter 2. We have also documented that changes in business cycles influence migration intensity in the same way in all the three countries⁶. A moderate downturn in economic activity around 2001 reduced the net migration from the northern Scandinavian area considerably in the period 2001 to 2004 in all three countries. In the same way net migration increased after 2004 when the improvement in economic conditions became noticeable, see Chapter 2. Daily life takes on a quality of close affinity because the life of work to a large extent bears the stamp of a shared economic system and also because there is considerable similarity among countries with regard to the institutional system both within public administration, education, health and public service in general (Markussen, 2010; Olofsson & Panican, 2008). It has also been demonstrated that Scandinavians to a considerable degree hold a shared set of values (Malmberg, 2002), that these common values are widespread (Martinussen, 1999), and that these values only change gradually (Listhaug, 1998). It is our assumption that this framework of values generates the similarities in the migration pattern of the three countries.

Selection associated with long-distance migration

There are some factors that inhibit long-distance migration in all three countries. Cohabiting couples with children had considerably less chance of becoming long-distance migrants compared to those with other civil statuses. The same held true for individuals with a disability or long-lasting illness. This was the case in all countries, for all career types and especially for return migrants. Other factors increased the chances of becoming a long-distance migrant. Having higher education increased the chances considerably of becoming a stable long-distance migrant and a round about migrant, something that is in line with countless studies (Stambøl, 1995; Grimsrud, 1999, 2000). This effect is strongest in Sweden. The same also applies in the case of return migrants but to a lesser degree. Social class also has an impact in our material, as other studies also demonstrate (Rye & Blekesaune, 2003; Rye, 2006). Having parents with higher education has

⁶ Small birth generations in all three countries led to a level of unemployment fare beyond that of the recession in the beginning of the 1990ies.

the same effect. Because of the strong correlation between the educational level of parents and the educational level of children, these two variables measure to a great degree the same dimension (Støren, Helland & Grøgaard, 2007). Variation in migration intensity between long distance migrants and stable residents according to these variables shows up as expected and has been documented in a great many studies. Being a woman seemed to spur long-distance migration in all countries. However, closer analyses showed a curvilinear association between age, gender and long distance migration. Out-migration from the north Scandinavian area increased up to the age of 27-28 for both men and women but fell off as a result of increased return migration to the north Scandinavian area. This return migration was more pronounced among women than men in all three countries. Surprisingly enough, at the age of 30 the percentage of women living in north Norway and north Sweden (where age related data are available) is marginally higher than the percentage of men.

Some variables, however, showed up differently in the three countries. This necessitates a discussion of factors that can generate such differences. These are particularly three variables, closely linked to labour and education market conditions, that have a different impact primarily between Norway on the one hand, and Sweden and Finland on the other hand. A number of investigations have shown that unemployed individuals have approximately twice as high geographic mobility compared with those who are employed (Barth & Yin, 1997; Stambøl, 1995). The regression analysis showed that this variable showed up as expected in Norway; increased length of unemployment and length of labour market measures are associated with a significantly higher chance of being a long-distance migrant. In Sweden and Finland the chance of being a long-distance migrant are reduced with increased length of unemployment and labour market measures. The same pattern repeats itself with income as the variable. In Norway, the chances of being a long-distance migrant increase—as expected—if income increases relative to that of stable residents, while the opposite is the case in Sweden and Finland and with about the same magnitude. We finally find that the chances of being a long-distance migrant are reduced if one is employed relative to another labour market status. In Finland, this asso-

ciation is the opposite whereas in Sweden this is of little significance for the stable long-term migrants but it increases the mobility of round about migrants.

These differences can be explained with reference to differences in the labour and education market of the three countries. It is a typical feature of the labour market that the labour market participation of young adults are strongly affected by economic cycles (Pedersen, 2005). For a long stretch of the period of our study, Norway, Sweden and Finland were going through a mild recession which, however, showed signs of improvement in the labour market of young people in 2005. In a recession there is a sharp decline in the demand for labour, especially of young people—the labour market tightens, as the terminology is (Pedersen & Andersen, 1995). There are especially two factors that contribute to these developments. In a slump the mobility of the labour market drops sharply as a result of the fact that those who are employed are hanging onto their jobs. Thus fewer vacancies than normal will open up, weakening the demand for labour. The process of hiring new recruits slows to a halt, a process compounded by the fact that reducing the full complement of workers means that those with the least seniority (young people) will be the first to let go. Today this is well exemplified by the labour market situation in a number of European countries hit by a deep recession, in part as a result of the financial crisis. In some of these countries the average unemployment is at 15-20 per cent while youth unemployment is at the 30-40 per cent level.⁷ Thus there is talk of a lost generation. In other words—when the demand for labour declines sharply, the labour market stops functioning in a normal manner.

Throughout our whole period of study, the labour market worked much better for the young adult population in Norway than in Sweden, but also considerably better than that in Finland. The average cumulative length of employment and labour market measures for the 2000-2005 period was almost 1.4 years in Sweden, about a year in Finland and 9 months in Norway (Pedersen & Moilanen, 2011b). Thus the labour market has functioned mostly normally for the young adult population in Norway. This is a strong mobility spurning variable since work is a source of income, a basic precondition for our level of welfare

7) Spain, Portugal and Greece are telling examples.

and our self-image. The alluring prospect of good pay may stimulate long-distance migration. This is especially true if one is not entirely happy with one's present job, if one has lost a job or has been unable to land a satisfactory job after having completed one's education. The youth labour market being most open in Norway. Having a satisfactory job in or close to one's home area has led to greater permanence of residence while obstacles to getting a job have stimulated moving to locations where work has been available. Difficulties of getting a job, with the greater length of unemployment entailed, have thus coincided with increased long-distance migration. In Norway, these developments have been concurrent with higher pay compared to the wages achieved by stable residents. There may be two factors at work here. The level of pay in the large labour market cores in the south, where migrants largely have settled, is higher in the private sector than in the peripheral areas. This effect may also be due to the migrant getting a job where the individual in question received the full pay of what he or she was entitled to by qualifications.

In Sweden and Finland, the insufficient demand for the labour of younger people has produced mechanisms well known from more or less closed labour markets in Norway during the deep recession of the early 1990s (Pedersen and Andersen, 1995). The labour market becomes segmented and the growth of network recruiting increases. Even under normal labour market conditions, network recruiting is a significant channel of recruitment (Hansen, 1997), favouring resourceful individuals because of their broad network and short length of unemployment (Blossfeld & Mayer, 1988).⁸ Given the abundant supply of labour, there will be a stricter selection even to vacancies not normally filled through network recruitment. Being sceptical to individuals with a certain length of unemployment on their record, employers prefer recruiting people with a job at the time (Petrongolo & Pissarides, 2001; Heggen et al,

8) Blossfeld and Mayer (1988) distinguish between markets requiring a highly qualified workforce (primary markets) and labour markets not requiring extensive qualifications. There is also a distinction between the labour markets of large and small businesses. The qualified labour market of small businesses is characterised by skilled manual and craft work whereas the mechanisms of the primary labour market of large businesses are to a large extent formal qualifications but the market is also characterised by mechanisms associated with "the internal labour market" when mutual agreements and networks are predominant.

2003). In such situations employers can exercise their freedom of choice more broadly, thus preferring to hire those already employed or with a short length of unemployed behind them. This may explain why being employed increases the chances of being a long distance migrant in Finland and partly in Sweden but not in Norway.

If the recession persists there will be a growing pool of long-term unemployed who circulate through various labour market measures interspersed with periods of employment and odd jobs. This generates various blocking mechanisms which in part means that the search for work slackens and that one in various ways makes peace with the reality of managing without a regular job where one is living (Moilanen, 2010). The number of such cases growing rapidly during a long lasting recession, many will end up in the same situation. In such cases “unemployment cultures” will easily develop, fostering norms that make it easier to live on the outskirts of the labour market. The repertoire of norms in such cultures is well described both in Norwegian and Finish studies (Heggen et al 2003; Vehviläinen 1999; Julkunen & Salovvaara 2008). If this situation persists over years, youth groups will form, complicating any efforts of the local employment service to arrange work for them elsewhere. Long periods of unemployment and labour market measures will therefore coincide with low geographic mobility and a low degree of long-distance migration, as we have seen in Sweden and Finland.

The more closed labour market in Sweden and Finland can also help us understand why the degree of long-distance migration is reduced with higher income while the opposite is the case in Norway. In practice, migrations in all three countries also flow from people’s educational preferences and the opportunities for getting the education they want. More than a third of north Norwegian students attend universities and colleges outside their part of the country. To some degree this is also the case both in Finland and Sweden. Since unemployment also impact large cities, the unemployment of highly educated youth also increased in our period of study. Many of these young adults had problems finding jobs in the fields that were educated for. Thus they had to take what was available, biding their time for a relevant position to open up. That

meant that many settled temporarily for low-wage jobs and part-time jobs in industries like the travel, hotel and restaurant industry and retail trade.⁹ Failing to get a foothold in permanent jobs as a result of a weak labour market may therefore contribute to our understanding of why the connection between long-distance migration and income is the opposite in Sweden and Finland compared to what it is in Norway.

CONCLUSIONS

In this work we have followed the young adult population (18-25 years of age) living in the north Scandinavian area in 2000 annually up to the autumn of 2005 at the individual level. The aim was to examine the degree and pattern in the young adult population's geographic mobility and the selection processes that long-distance migrations especially involve. At this point, we will confine ourselves to emphasizing three main findings. Firstly, it turns out that it is a relatively small group of young adults (39 per cent) who generate the streams of migrations. 61 per cent of young adults had not moved out of the economic region where they resided in 2000 during the next five years. In other words, they had remained stable residents (of that economic region). As far as we have followed them, the majority of the young adult population has therefore worked out a satisfactory adaptation to the conditions of their proximate area. Secondly, the migration intensity, the career pattern and the geographic preferences of the migrants were very similar in all three countries. In other words, we are dealing with a common north Scandinavian migration pattern. When this happens, it must be due to similarities in the circumstances in which the young adult population have to make their choice. We have pointed out a number of these circumstances both relative to similar characteristics within the north Scandinavian area and the similarity of these areas in their relations to both the economic and political centres of gravity of the three countries.

9) Over the last fifteen years there has been considerable growth within these industries in the number of seasonal jobs and various kinds of part-time positions which to a large extent are filled by young adults often combining work with education and studies at universities and colleges.

Thirdly, we find a number of similarities in the selection patterns generated by long-distance migration in all three countries. These similarities reinforce the impression of a shared north Scandinavian migration pattern. However, we also find some different selection mechanisms primarily linked to labour market related variables. These differences in the selection patterns according to these variables line up with Norway on one side and Sweden and Finland on the other. The differences can be explained by the fact that the youth labour market has been far more open during our period of study in Norway than it has been in Finland and Sweden.

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– CHAPTER 4 –

JOB IS WHERE THE HEART IS? AN ANALYSIS OF GEOGRAPHICAL LABOUR MOBILITY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

Mikko Moilanen

INTRODUCTION

We form attachments to home, friends and surroundings, and these ties grow over time. This makes us reluctant to leave familiar places. Duration of stay in a place has been found to act as an obstacle to migration in many studies (see for example DaVanzo & Morrison, 1981; Detáng-Dessendre & Molho, 1999; Morrison & DaVanzo, 1986). Less is known about the effect of childhood residential experience on mobility, although individual feelings of place attachment are said to have their origins in childhood experiences (Chawla, 1992; Marcus, 1992) due to rich connections between living environment and psychological processes of human development in childhood. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how the attachment to a place impacts on young adults' choice of labour mobility mode: commuting or migration. As commuting is often an alternative to migration, place attachment is likely to affect this choice: individuals may choose commuting instead of migration because they do not want to move from an area where they have a lot of social and other ties.

Individuals' attachment to a place was early recognized by migration researchers as an important deterrent for migration, and researchers have developed many concepts for dealing with the issue. As early as in 1960, Maddox warned that the psychic costs of migration were probably quite significant, urging

economists and policy-makers to deal with the concept of non-money costs caused by leaving familiar surroundings, family, and friends (Maddox, 1960). Also, Sjaastad (1962) called attention to attachment to a place as a major component of migration. The satisfaction-dissatisfaction motive for migration led Wolpert to launch the behavioral concept of place utility: “a positive or negative quantity, expressing respectively the individual’s satisfaction or dissatisfaction with respect to that place” (Wolpert 1965). DaVanzo (1981) developed one more micro-economic approach to migration, namely, the concept of location-specific capital. This is a generic term denoting any or all the factors that “tie” a person to a particular place. The higher location-specific capital, the more attached a person is to a specific place.

In spite of the early recognition within migration research, there are no studies employing register data that specifically have focused on the effect of attachment to a place on mobility mode decisions. Even though it is intuitively sound to think that choosing commuting instead of migration as a mobility mode allows people to maintain their ties to a place, since they continue to live in the area where they have built these social ties, this aspect of labor mobility has largely been neglected in empirical geographical labour mobility research. Against this background, I frame two main hypotheses that I wish to test empirically in this study:

- i) individuals with high place attachment will be less likely to search for and accept jobs that require interregional mobility,
- ii) individuals with high place attachment will choose commuting as their mobility mode because this includes only a partial loss of social ties, and they can continue to live in the region of origin.

There are only a few papers that theoretically discuss the role of place attachment in the labour market mobility decisions and choice of mobility mode simultaneously (for example Anil, 2007; Deding & Filges, 2004; van Ommeren et al., 2000). The results of the theoretical model in van Ommeren et al.

(2000) show that the stronger place attachment is, the higher is the reservation wage (the minimum acceptable wage for accepting the regional job move) of the unemployed. This indicates that the unemployed with strong attachment to their current residential location (high current place utilities) are less willing to accept a job offer that induces a residential move. Although migration and commuting in many ways are interconnected, their simultaneous empirical modeling is rare. Past reviews have largely focused on one of the two (except Eliasson et al., 2003). A Sartori selection model with sample selection (Sartori, 2003) is applied in order to come to grips with potential problems with sample selection bias, as the mobile individuals are not necessarily a random sample of the job searcher population.

I will study the labour mobility behavior of young adults. This age group is highly mobile, and they account for a large proportion of the overall labour market related mobility. Thus, their actions to a large degree determine the efficiency of the mechanisms of exchange between regional labour markets. The choice of study area, northern Sweden, is sparsely populated and many areas have experienced a substantial depopulation in the last decades, and this trend has been even more articulated among young adults. At the regional level, and especially in rural areas, commuting can have a considerable effect on depopulation.

My main results give evidence that place attachment is an important determinant of geographical labour mobility of young adults in northern Sweden: living in the same municipality as a child significantly increases the likelihood of choosing commuting as the mobility mode. Residing in the region where they grew up also seems to reduce the likelihood of geographical labour mobility

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the determinants of labour mobility, while data and regionalization used in this study are presented in Section 3. Section 4 describes the econometric method. Section 5 is devoted to empirical results. Finally, in Section 6, I wrap up the conclusions.

THE DETERMINANTS OF LABOUR MOBILITY AND CHOICE OF MOBILITY MODE

As mentioned in the introduction, this study primarily focuses on how place attachment influences labour mobility mode decisions. Other factors influencing interregional job search behavior are more or less directly linked to various individual, household, and regional attributes. Therefore, the determinants of interregional job search behavior and the interrelated choice of mobility mode are classified into three broad groups: attachment to a place, individual and household characteristics, and regional characteristics. Based on empirical and theoretical evidence a number of hypotheses about how these characteristics are expected to affect both geographic labour mobility and choice of mobility mode are formulated in this section.

Attachment to a place

I argue that the individual's attachment to a region is an important determinant of geographical labour mobility and choice of mobility mode. People who are more attached to their locality have more to lose in leaving their present place of residence. This would make individuals less inclined to accept an out-of-region job (i.e. they are less likely to show interregional mobility) and less prone to changing their place of residence after accepting a regional job move (i.e. they are more willing to commute than migrate).

Evidence from earlier migration studies in Sweden shows that social networks and place attachment are important when migrating across municipality borders (Stjernström, 1998). Lundholm et al. (2004) conclude that family ties and friends are important determinants of staying in a region. Fischer and Malmberg (2001) state that duration of stay is one of the important explanations of geographical immobility. In this study, I look at one possible source of increased place attachment: the childhood residential experience.

In their childhood, children usually reside in the same location as their parents. This is a period of forced residency, a time during which people must take

their location as given. As parents are more reluctant to move when their children are small, many children have long residence durations in their childhood municipalities. It is thus clear that they develop strong social ties during the period. People can also be more attracted to their childhood areas because they can have made significant location-specific investments there (Krupka, 2009). For example, having learned to enjoy the local environment more fully, youths would be giving up more by leaving it. Further, individual feelings of place attachment are said to have their origins in childhood experiences (Chawla, 1992; Marcus, 1992). As young adult, the place(s) where one used to live as a child is not so distant in time, and this childhood experience will contribute positively to place attachment; I would expect that this aspect plays a significant role in their mobility behavior. In this study, information about young adults' municipality of residence at the age of 15 is used as a proxy for a location for their childhood residential experiences. Presumably, individuals who live in the same municipality as when they were 15 years old will have stronger ties and place attachment to the community.¹ It is thus expected that individuals with high place attachment will be less likely to search for and accept jobs that require interregional mobility and that they will choose commuting as their mobility mode.

Individual and household characteristics

Gender: Earlier findings from the literature on job-related migration and commuting point out that gender affects geographical labour mobility. Potentially, there can be important gender-related differences in preferences toward labour supply as well as household activities, such as child care. For example, mobility decisions of young women can reflect more closely family formation and dissolution (Detáng-Dessendre & Molho, 2000; Gordon & Molho, 1985). Women have also been shown to have shorter commuting distances and times than men (Blumen, 1994; Gordon et al., 1989; McLafferty & Preston, 1997;

¹) The main drawback of this strategy is that I cannot control for migration experiences that took place between age 15 and the age when the individuals were for the first time observed in the database.

Romani et al., 2003; Rouwendal, 1999; Turner & Niemeier, 1997; White, 1977). These findings can have a relation to differences in household responsibilities, as women's willingness to commute is found to decrease when having small children (Romani et al., 2003; Rouwendal, 1999).

Education: The analysis of the effects of educational attainment on migratory behavior is extensive. Numerous studies have found that more educated individuals tend to be more geographically mobile (Blau & Duncan, 1967; DaVanzo & Morrison, 1981; Greenwell & Bengtson, 1997; Mincer, 1978). Both search theory and human capital theory predict that individuals with higher educational attainment will be more likely to be mobile. I thus expect that the higher the education, the more mobility prone the individuals.

Unemployment duration and employment status: Eliasson et al. (2003) argues theoretically that the longer the duration of unemployment, the higher the search intensity, and the lower the reservation wages among the unemployed. This in turn would increase geographical labour mobility. The empirical answers to the question whether duration of individual unemployment affects the mobility decision are ambiguous: Lindgren & Westerlund (2003) and Tatsiramos (2008) find that the migration rate decreases with time in unemployment. Alternatively, Arntz (2005), McCall & McCall (1987), and Bailey (1994) find that migration is associated with relatively long spells of unemployment. What about duration of unemployment and the choice of mobility mode? There have not been any empirical studies addressing this issue, and its effect is unknown. Employed individuals are expected to show higher reservation wages and lower search intensities compared to the unemployed. This reasoning would thus speak for lower probability of geographical mobility for those who are employed.

Age: Almost without exceptions, the migration propensities have been found to be highest in the young age groups. I will expect that older individuals in the age group in this study (22-29 years) have got more secure and higher paid

jobs than the younger ones in the age group. Mobility is therefore likely to decrease the older the individual is because of the higher reservation wages. Some research results indicate that the propensity to commute would decrease with age (van Ommeren et al., 1997), while other results point out that middle-aged individuals commute more than young adults (Romani et al., 2003). Eliasson et al. (2003) reason that younger people are more likely to choose migration due to lower psychological costs in terms of place attachment, but do not find any significant effect of age in their empirical analysis. So, when it comes to the choice of mobility mode, the age effect is ambiguous.

Having family: Having children can be an obstacle to migration because change of school and friends is rarely desired (Green, 1997). Lower mobility among married people is also found in many empirical works (DaVanzo, 1981; Detáng-Dessendre & Molho, 2000; Ghatak et al., 1996; Mincer, 1978; Ritchey, 1976). Eliasson et al. (2003) find that when choosing their mobility mode, single people are more likely to be mobile and more likely to choose migration than their married counterparts. This empirical evidence thus suggests that cohabiting individuals with children are less geographically mobile than singles, and they are more prone to choose to commute after having accepted an interregional job offer.

Regional characteristics

Proximity to employment centers: In a regional setting, the spatial distribution of jobs available to workers in a location depends on the accessibility of the employment opportunities (van Ham et al., 2001). In this analysis, I distinguish between interregional and intraregional accessibility. Interregional accessibility means that regions that are closer to core regions have higher levels of accessibility compared to the more peripheral regions. Eliasson et al. (2003) state in their theoretical model that the closer the region is to large employment bases, the higher the arrival rate of job offers, the higher the escape rate from unemployment, and the higher the interregional labour mobility. The proxim-

ity to large employment centers is thus expected to have a positive effect on geographical labour mobility. Better accessibility to employment centers will also reduce the cost of commuting in absolute terms, and also in relation to the cost of migration (Eliasson et al., 2003). Hence, better interregional accessibility is expected to increase the probability of commuting.

Accessibility to local jobs: Higher intraregional accessibility in turn will, according to Eliasson et al. (2003), also increase the escape rate from unemployment, but not interregional mobility, as the direction of job search then tends to be allocated more towards local employment opportunities. This reasoning is also in line with spatial mismatch hypothesis (Kain, 1968), which states that geographical labour mobility is a means to overcome poor local job access. We therefore incorporate dummy variables for the most population-rich regions with many job openings, namely Umeå, Luleå and Skellefteå, in the model. Deducing from the two hypotheses above, we expect that young adults who live in these big municipalities would be less likely to accept jobs requiring interregional mobility.

Unemployment rate: The stylized fact from the empirical studies of geographical labour mobility is that the higher the unemployment rate, the harsher the competition for local jobs, and the more likely it is that labour mobility rises.

Rural housing market: A body of econometric evidence suggests that high housing prices in the destination areas discourage migration. The possibility of commuting is a way of overcoming these housing market impediments. A proxy for housing market differences is used by employing the variable that identifies whether the individual lives in the built-in or rural surroundings. Rental (and housing) costs tend to be lower in sparsely populated parts of municipalities. In the light of this line of argumentation, we expect that individuals residing in sparsely populated surroundings would be more likely to commute than migrate when accepting a job that demands geographical mobility.

DATA

The analysis is based on a longitudinal micro data base from Statistics Sweden. These registers have been matched with unemployment registers from the Swedish Public Employment Agency. The database includes yearly observations on every 18-25 year old individual who resided in northern Sweden (including Norrbotten and Västerbotten counties) in the year 2000. For this particular analysis, we use data on the individuals in 2004, when they were between 22 and 29 years, who were residing in northern Sweden. This results in a data set of 37,181 young adults, whereof 45 per cent are females. In this data set, 3,181 individuals (or 8 per cent of the population) searched and accepted a job requiring interregional job mobility in 2004/2005. Of these mobile workers, 1,478 were migrants and 1,631 commuters.

Definitions of variables are provided in Table 2. In all cases, the characteristics refer to the situation either at the end of 2004, except from the total duration of unemployment, which refers to the duration during 2004. Table 3 reports sample means for the whole sample, stayers, mobile individuals, commuters, and migrating individuals. Roughly, commuting seems to be slightly more important than migration as a labour mobility mode among both genders: 48 per cent migrated, while 52 per cent were commuting. This large magnitude of commuting suggests that it should be accounted for when studying labour mobility. Focusing first on the columns (3)-(6) in Table 3, we see that the share of young adults residing in their “childhood municipality” is 12 percentage points higher among the stayers than the mobile individuals. Having family also seems to be an obstacle for mobility: 20 per cent of stayers had a family, against 9 per cent share among the mobile ones. It is also evident that mobile individuals experience more unemployment than stayers prior to their job move, measured in terms of unemployment months. The weaker position on the labour market for mobile young adults is also indicated by the lower employment rates than for stayers. The employment ratios for mobile young adults is 50 per cent, compared to 71 per cent for stayers. Descriptives also reveal the stylized fact from the labour mobility literature; stayers have on average a lower educational level than those who are mobile.

Table 2. Definitions of the variables

Attachment to a place	
Living in the childhood municipality	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is living in the same municipality as in age 15
Individual and household characteristics	
Having a family and has children	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is married or cohabitated
Woman	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is a woman
Age	The individual's age in years
Education	
Compulsory schooling	Dummy variable=1 if the individual's highest education is compulsory schooling
High school	Dummy variable=1 if the individual's highest education is high school
Post-secondary, non-tertiary education	Dummy variable=1 if the individual's highest education is post-secondary education
University education	Dummy variable=1 if the individual's highest education is university education
Finished studies 2005	Dummy variable=1 if the individual studied in 2004 but not in 2005
Employed	Dummy variable=1 if the individual was employed ²
Months in unemployment	Number of months the individual was unemployed during 2004
Regional characteristics	
Interregional accessibility	Interregional accessibility to job openings ³
Umeå	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is residing in Umeå
Luleå	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is residing in Luleå
Skellefteå	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is residing in Skellefteå
Regional unemployment rate	Unemployment rate in the region
Living in rural surroundings	Dummy variable=1 if the individual is residing outside built-in-areas

Are there any differences between those who migrate and those who commute? The sample means for commuters and migrants are presented in the columns (4)-(5). We see that those who commute to a larger extent reside in their child-

2) Statistics Sweden uses International Labour Organization's definition of employment: The employed comprise all persons above 15 years who during a specified period in November were employed at least one hour.

3) Interregional accessibility to employment opportunities is measured as

$$ACCESSIBILITY_i = \sum_{j \neq i} E_j d_{ij}^\alpha$$

where E_j is the number of employed in region j , and d_{ij}^α is a distance decay function with the driving distance between the municipality of residence i and municipality j . I have (as in Eliasson et al. 2003) used value 2 for distance decay parameter α in order to be able to compare the results. The parameter estimates change only slightly, but hold their significance level, and signs are the same when using different values for α between 1.5 and 2.5.

hood municipality than those who migrate. These figures give preliminary support for my hypothesis that place attachment affects the choice of mobility mode. Being a parent also affects the choice between migration and commuting: young adults who commute have on average more often formed a family than their migrating counterparts. There are fewer persons with university education among commuters than among those who migrate. In accordance with the expectations, a significantly higher ratio of commuters than movers resides in rural surroundings. On average, migrants reside in more peripheral regions than commuters prior to job move. Summing up, these descriptive statistics point out that commuters and migrants differ in their characteristics.

Table 3. Sample means.

	Whole sample (1)	Mobility not observed (2)	Mobility observed (3)	Migration observed (4)	Commuting observed (5)
Attachment to a place					
Living in the childhood municipality	68%	69%	57%	49%	65%
Individual and household characteristics					
Having a family	19%	20%	9%	7%	11%
Woman	45%	45%	49%	53%	46%
Age	25.4	25.4	25.1	24.9	25.3
Education					
Compulsory schooling	11%	11%	5%	4%	6%
High school	53%	55%	35%	21%	47%
Post-secondary, non-tertiary education	9%	9%	10%	7%	12%
University education	27%	25%	51%	68%	35%
Finished studies in 2004	29%	27%	52%	63%	43%
Employed	69%	71%	50%	40%	58%
Months in unemployment	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.5
Regional characteristics					
Interregional accessibility	285.67	286.21	279.77	276.35	282.86
Umeå	37%	37%	37%	40%	34%
Luleå	29%	29%	30%	25%	35%
Skellefteå	14%	14%	8%	8%	8%
Municipal unemployment rate (%)	4.7	4.8	5.0	4.8	5.0
Living in rural surroundings	12%	8%	6%	2%	9%
N	37,181	34,072	3,109	1,478	1,631

Regionalization and geographical labour mobility

Here the concept of interregional labour mobility used in this study is defined. The definition of geographical labour mobility is based on a regional subdivision of Sweden called labour market areas. These are functional units that consist of integrated housing and working areas, where most people can find both a place to live and a working place. In 2005 there were 87 labour market areas in Sweden, of which 18 were situated in northern Sweden. Interregional migration and commuting, as well as observations of place of residence and workplace location, are defined by the regional system. When a person's region of residence differs from her working place region, she or he is defined as a commuter. The empirical analysis is based on a "search then move" strategy, where mobility occurs as the outcome of a search process once the individual has located an acceptable opportunity – i.e. labour market related mobility is perceived as the outcome of a successful job search process. In the model, all individuals are potential job searchers in all regions in 2004. It is further assumed that all the commuters are employed. This, together with the assumption of contracted mobility, means that interregional labour mobility can only be observed in 2005. I define interregional labour mobility in the same way as in Eliasson et al. (2003): The individuals' locational choices are not modeled explicitly, but the system is simplified to a set of two regions: the regions of residence and the aggregated unit of all other regions. For those who have work in 2004, the definition of interregional labour mobility is a change in the region of work place between 2004 and 2005. For these employed young adults, labour mobility can happen if they i) change both their region of residence and region of work place or ii) start commuting, but do not change their region of residence or iii) do not change their region of residence, but change their commuting destination from 2004. For those who are unemployed or out of labour force, interregional labour mobility happens if the individual has a job in 2005, and the working place is situated in another region than the region of residence in 2004. These individuals can either migrate or start commuting. To summarize, we have thus five categories of interregional labour mobility:

1. Employed: Change their region of residence and region of work place
2. Employed: Start commuting, but do not change their region of residence
3. Employed: Do not change their region of residence, but change their commuting destination (if being commuters in 2004)
4. Unemployed or out of labour force: Migrate
5. Unemployed or out of labour force: Start commuting.

ECONOMETRIC METHOD

The analysis in this study deals with two related processes in young adults' mobility decision making: i) The process of job search and job matching which may cause interregional labour mobility and ii) the choice of mobility mode – migration or commuting. The second choice is only detected for those individuals who search for and accept a job that involves interregional mobility. These mobile workers, however, are not a random sample of job searchers. This can create a potential problem with sample selection bias. In the econometric specifications, this bias has usually been handled by employing an extension of the standard Heckman procedure in a bivariate probit setting (Greene, 2003; Heckman, 1979; van de Ven & van Praag, 1981). However, identification in the Heckman model is based on the validity of covariate exclusion restriction.⁴ In the case of the choice

4) The Heckman selection models are estimable without the extra variable, but the results are then based upon distributional assumptions — typically the normality of the error terms - rather than variation in the explanatory variables, to distinguish the effects. Econometricians do not recommend using the Heckman-type estimators without an additional explanatory variable in the selection equation (Achen, 1986). Sartori (2003) shows by simulating that the Sartori estimator is better than the Heckman-type estimator when there are identical explanatory variables in both selection and outcome equations, even when the assumption of identical unobserved factors is inaccurate.

of mobility mode, such an exclusion restriction seems unlikely to exist, as the underlying processes determining whether someone is geographically mobile are similar to those determining the choice of mobility mode.

To take this into account and ensure the robustness of the results, I use an alternative approach proposed by Sartori (2003). This approach relaxes the requirement for the exclusion restriction; instead, it relies on a different assumption that error terms are identical in the selection and outcome equations. Sartori (2003) lists three conditions under which errors are likely to be similar: i) both phenomena are close together in time and space, ii) the researcher believes that the selection process and the process represented by the outcome generally have the same causes, and iii) processes that involve similar decisions are more likely to have similar error terms than unrelated phenomena. These criteria are likely to be true in my model because i) mobility and mobility mode decisions are assumed to take place simultaneously, ii) similar factors affect mobility and mobility mode decisions, and iii) the decision whether to search for and accept a job requiring interregional mobility and the choice of mobility mode are interrelated.

In this analysis, I thus use a maximum-likelihood estimator where selection and outcome have the same explanatory variables and identification is achieved by assuming that the error terms are identical in both the selection and outcome equations. Let Z_{1i} indicate the individuals' decision whether to search for and accept a job requiring interregional mobility, where Z_{1i} is 1 if interregional mobility is observed and 0 if not. Let then Z_{2i} indicate empirical observations of the individual's choice between commuting and migration, where $Z_{2i} = 0$ if commuting is detected and $Z_{2i} = 1$ if migration is observed, respectively. Z_{2i} is only observed if Z_{1i} is equal to unity (the individual has searched and accepted a job requiring mobility). The explanatory variables, X_i , are the same in both selection and outcome equation. The bivariate probit model with sample selection assumes that there exists an underlying relationship where the independent variables, represented by vector X_i , determine the latent variables U_{1i} and U_{2i} . Each of the equations contains a normally distributed mean zero error term ε_{1i} and ε_{2i} . Instead of observing the U 's, we observe two dichot-

omous variables Z_{1i} and Z_{2i} . Then we can write the general specification of the econometric model:

$$\begin{aligned}
 U_{1i} &= X_i \kappa' + \varepsilon_{1i} \\
 Z_{1i} &= 1 \text{ if } U_{1i} > 0, Z_{1i} = 0 \text{ otherwise} \\
 U_{2i} &= X_i \beta' + \varepsilon_{2i} \\
 Z_{2i} &= 1 \text{ if } U_{2i} > 0, Z_{2i} = 0 \text{ otherwise}
 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

κ and β are vectors of unknown parameters that will be estimated in our analysis. Sartori's (2003) identifying assumption assumes that the standard normally distributed disturbances ε_{1i} and ε_{2i} are identical. Individuals have in the model three possible outcomes, and the selection process is then defined by three random variables Y_{ij} :

- i) individual neither searches nor accepts a job requiring interregional mobility: $Y_{0i} = 1$ if $Z_{1i} = 0$ and 0 otherwise
- ii) individual searches and accepts a job requiring interregional mobility and commutes: $Y_{1i} = 1$ if $Z_{1i} = 1$ and $Z_{2i} = 0$, and 0 otherwise
- iii) individual searches and accepts a job requiring interregional mobility and migrates: $Y_{2i} = 1$ if $Z_{1i} = 1$ and $Z_{2i} = 1$, and 0 otherwise.

This produces the following unconditional probabilities for the three outcomes:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \Pr(Y_{0i} = 1) &= \Phi(-\kappa'X_i) \\
 \Pr(Y_{1i} = 1) &= \begin{cases} \Phi(-\beta'X_i) - \Phi(-\kappa'X_i) & \text{if } (\kappa' - \beta')X_i = 0 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \\
 \Pr(Y_{2i} = 1) &= \begin{cases} \Phi(\beta'X_i) & \text{if } (\kappa' - \beta')X_i > 0 \\ \Phi(\kappa'X_i) & \text{if } (\kappa' - \beta')X_i \leq 0 \end{cases}
 \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

Φ is the cumulative standard normal density function. The likelihood function

is then proportional to the product of the probabilities of the observations, P_{ji} , for each combination for each individual:

$$L^* \equiv \ln L = \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=0}^2 Y_{ji} \ln P_{ji} \quad (3)$$

Remember that migration is only observed if interregional mobility is observed. The first probit equation, so called selection equation, is completely observed, but we have only a selected (censored) sample for the second. The parameters in the selection equation and mobility mode equation are estimated jointly by maximizing log-likelihood. It is important to notice that in the outcome (i.e. mobility mode) equation, positive and significant estimate of a parameter indicates a positive effect on the probability of migration and negative effect on the probability of commuting.

ESTIMATION RESULTS

I present the maximum likelihood estimates of the parameters together with their t-statistics in Table 4. The same variables in the same form enter the selection equation and main equation. Beginning with individual characteristics, the results regarding the role of attachment to a place are consistent with the main hypotheses. Residing in childhood municipalities seems to have a significant negative effect on the likelihood of mobility: young adults who live in the same municipality as they did when they were 15 years of age, are less likely to be mobile than those who do not live in their “childhood” municipality.

The results also confirm the second main hypothesis: Stronger attachment to a place seems to make individuals more likely to choose commuting as their mobility mode, so that they do not have to change their familiar surroundings when accepting an out-of-region job. Individuals residing in their childhood municipalities are more prone to commuting than migrating.

The results also indicate that having family obligations affects labour mobility decisions: persons with children are significantly more prone to stay than

Table 4. The estimates of Sartori model with sample selection.

	Mobility observed	Migration observed
Living in the childhood municipality	-0.157 (-7.07)	-0.247 (-8.65)
Having a family	-0.329 (-10.64)	-0.341 (-8.03)
Age	-0.026 (-5.52)	-0.044 (-7.05)
Education		
Compulsory schooling (reference category)		
High school	0.306 (7.29)	0.232 (3.79)
Post-secondary, non-tertiary education	0.384 (7.39)	0.303 (4.12)
University education	0.806 (18.12)	0.964 (15.50)
Employed	-0.246 (-10.39)	-0.293 (-9.82)
Months in unemployment	0.025 (5.85)	0.017 (2.94)
Finished studies	0.241 (9.61)	0.202 (6.21)
Interregional accessibility	0.00679 (3.32)	0.0093 (3.02)
Umeå	-0.390 (-8.57)	-0.507 (-8.64)
Luleå	-0.263 (-6.98)	-0.422 (-8.52)
Skellefteå	-0.488 (-11.62)	-0.502 (-9.43)
Regional unemployment rate	0.072 (5.05)	0.087 (4.56)
Living in rural surroundings	-0.007 (-0.16)	-0.389 (-5.03)
Constant	-1.281 (-7.88)	-1.226 (-5.57)
Log L	-8017.446	-7350.089
N	3,109	1,478

Note: *t*-statistics of parameter estimates in parentheses.

their single counterparts. When it comes to the choice of mobility mode, having children and a partner increases, as expected, the probability of commuting among young adults in northern Sweden. As in many earlier labour mobility

research studies, we also find that higher education goes with a greater propensity of geographical mobility. The highly educated are also more prone to choosing migration as a mobility mode than the less educated. This result is in line with Eliasson et al. (2007). Those who have just finished their studies also have a higher probability to migrate than commute.

My results indicate that the longer one has been unemployed, the more inclined one is to migrate rather than to commute. The results also reveal that the longer young adults have been unemployed, the more likely they are to be geographically mobile. This important result also points out that those who experience long-term unemployment are more inclined to become geographically mobile. It seems that long-term unemployed intensify their job search and lower their reservation wage with prolonged duration of unemployment. This lends support to the assumption that leaving the region of residence for a distant job becomes relatively more likely with extended unemployment durations. It also indicates that an individual usually starts looking for work close to her/his residence, but increases her/his search intensity and stretches the search area after a period of unemployment. As search theory predicts, being employed lowers probability of mobility. Being employed also increases the likelihood of choosing commuting as a mobility mode. Taken together, these results indicate that young adults with a weaker position in the labour market show higher geographical mobility. The estimates also show that younger individuals in the age group are more mobile. When it comes to mobility mode, the results show that an increase in age makes persons more likely to choose commuting.

Concerning the regional attributes, the results show that proximity to employment centers decreases the probability of mobility among young adults. This result is opposite to the empirical results in Eliasson et al. (2003). Probability of migration unexpectedly increases with interregional accessibility. This does not lend support to the hypothesis that a greater availability of jobs in other areas increases the probability of commuting among young adults. The estimates also indicate that young adults living in big city regions with good intraregional job opportunities are more likely to choose commuting

than migration. This result emphasizes young adults' unwillingness to abandon regions with good accessibility to jobs.

We get the expected result that high unemployment rate in the municipality of origin increases the probability of mobility to other labour markets. People residing in high unemployment areas are more prone to migrating than commuting. The results also point out that the individuals residing in rural surroundings are more prone to commuting than migrating. This supports the hypothesis that persons from rural parts of municipalities may be less willing to abandon cheaper housing provided in those areas.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, I have examined how the individual's attachment to a place affects interregional job search behavior and choice of mobility mode among young adults in northern Sweden. The present study lends support to the assumption that attachment to a place is of importance to observed mobility behavior.

The empirical results confirm the hypotheses laid out in the introduction and support the theoretical results in the model of van Ommeren et al. (2000). My empirical results indicate that the individual's attachment to a region decreases geographical labour mobility. The probability of interregional labour mobility decreases significantly if the individual resides in the "childhood" municipality. The effect on the choice of mobility mode is also in accordance with the a priori expectations; individuals residing in their "childhood" municipalities are more inclined to commute than migrate than individuals living outside the municipalities where they grew up. The results can also indicate that individuals are prone to avoid the psychic costs of cutting their social ties by choosing to commute instead of migrating. The avoidance of these costs can contribute to social well-being and personal utility, but will not enter an accounting stream in national economics. Nevertheless, policy makers should take these effects of place attachment on labour mobility into account if desired population distribution is to be achieved.

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– CHAPTER 5 –

A WASTE AND A BURDEN?
YOUNG AND UNEMPLOYED IN THE
SWEDISH BARENTS REGION

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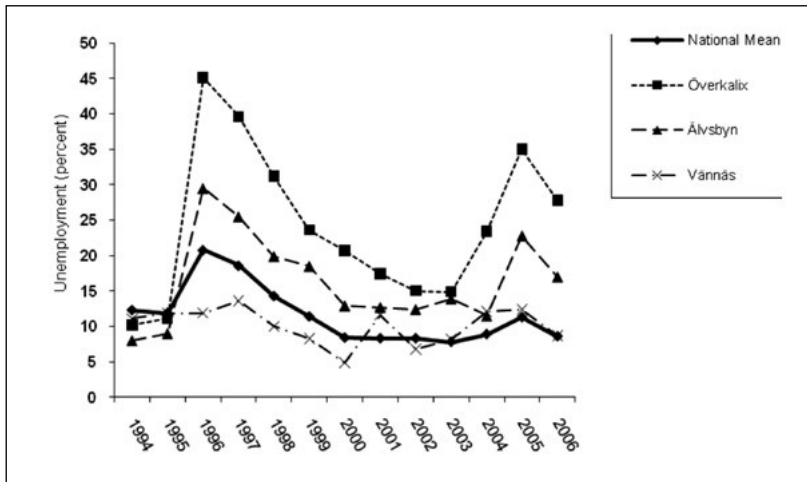
INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world economy, with a labour market demanding flexibility and higher education, some regions are more exposed to the perils of unemployment than others. However, few studies have described individual effects of unemployment in such exposed regions. Yet, this chapter aims at making such a contribution by illuminating how young adults experience unemployment, and how they cope with their situation in three exposed municipalities in the north of Sweden: Vännäs, Älvsbyn and Överkalix. These municipalities – in the geographical periphery of Sweden – are all situated in the Barents region.

In general, young people have weaker positions on the labour market than other groups, and are, therefore, more deeply affected by fluctuations in the economic situation (cf. Hagquist, 1997; Hammarström & Janlert, 2002; Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2007: 125). Still, young people in the Barents region are especially exposed, because they live in the geographical periphery, where the labour market is even more sensitive to fluctuations than elsewhere. In addition, infrastructure is limited and migration is widespread, especially among the young population. One of the municipalities chosen for this study, Överkalix, has for example experienced a decline in the population by 28 per cent during the last twenty years (Kommunfakta, 2006). Furthermore, the three municipalities in this study – Överkalix, Älvsbyn and Vännäs – all have high unemploy-

ment rates among youths compared to the national average. Figure 1 shows the proportion of unemployed youths between the age of 18 to 24 in the three municipalities compared to a national mean.

Figure 1. Proportion of young unemployed (age 18-24) (governmental interventions included) 1994 – 2006 in Överkalix, Älvsbyn and Vännäs, compared to the National mean (per cent).



Source: *Kommunfakta*, 2006. Note: In 2007, the percentage of unemployed people between 18 and 24 was 10.1 per cent in Överkalix, 8.7 per cent in Älvsbyn, and 4.8 per cent in Vännäs (Swedish Public Employment Service, 2007).

Both Överkalix and Älvsbyn are rural areas in Barents, and their unemployment figures clearly exceed the national mean. Vännäs, however, can be said to belong to the more urbanized regions around the city Umeå, and here the proportion of unemployed adults is very small (1.8 per cent 2008, Swedish Public Employment Service, 2007). Yet, unemployment among youths is substantially higher (5.1 per cent 2008, *ibid*). Figure 1 shows that young people, especially in Överkalix and Älvsbyn, were struck hard by the economic crises of the 1990s (cf. Hagquist, 1997; Starrin et al., 2002: 11). It is likely that youths in these regions are also exposed to the current economic crisis.

Scholars have shown that unemployment has psychological consequences for individuals (Härenstam et al., 1999; Gullberg & Börjesson, 1999; Rantakeisu et al., 1996). Exclusion from the labour market is usually accompanied by exclusion from other spheres of society as well. The economic hardships resulting from unemployment, and the so-called ‘shameful effects’, have negative social consequences, and often result in deteriorating individual health (Hammarström, 1986: 21; Starrin et al., 2002: 11). To be excluded from the labour market implies a demanding and insecure existence. This is even more obvious in an exposed region like Barents, where a great number of young people periodically are forced to deal with insecurity and uncertainty resulting from unemployment. Still, it is unclear how unemployment affects young people in the long run.

This study analyses the way in which unemployed youths in the Barents region, a geographical periphery in Sweden, acknowledge their living conditions outside of the labour market. Young people with limited education and weak, or non-existent, relations with the labour market have to make some hard choices, and balance between different strategies: Move or stay? Act or retreat? The aim of this chapter is to analyse and understand how young people in the Swedish Barents region, under contingencies of restricted personal resources and opportunities, develop different coping strategies to deal with unemployment. Still, although respondents from three relatively different municipalities in the region are included in the study, the aim is not to explore a potential relationship between geographical areas and coping strategies. Instead, the aim is to develop an understanding of how unemployed youths in general can handle their situation as being unemployed in a geographical periphery.

In the following, I first discuss material, methods and analytical perspectives. Four coping strategies are introduced, inspired by Pierre Bourdieu’s theoretical framework, and I also discuss concepts related to the theories of Anthony Giddens. Second, I present my analysis of the interviews from the lenses of the four coping strategies. Third, the conclusions are summed up, and the wider implications of the study are discussed.

METHOD AND MATERIAL

The three municipalities selected for the study – Vännäs, Älvsbyn, and Övertorneå – are situated in the Swedish Barents region. A primary reason for choosing these cases is that they all suffer, and have suffered, from high levels of unemployment among the young population. Nevertheless, the sample is by no means representative in a statistical sense. Instead, in order to fulfil the aim – to create a better understanding of the situation for young unemployed people in the Swedish Barents region – 15 in-depth interviews have been carried out. A criterion for selecting interviewees was that the respondents were registered as unemployed at the local employment office (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). The first contacts with the respondents, living in these municipalities, were made possible with help from these offices. The empirical material is based on semi-structured interviews, lasting between one, and one and a half hours. Some interviews took place at the local employment office, while others took place at the homes of the respondents. At the time of the interviews, the respondents were all between 20 and 24 years of age: eight male and seven female. Thirteen respondents had completed upper secondary education, but none of them had higher education at the university-level. Moreover, the respondents had a rather loose connection to the labour market. Within the group, working experience was restricted to part time employments, mainly within the health and service sectors, whereas some of the respondents had no experience whatsoever. Hence, a common characteristic of the majority of the respondents is that they have completed upper secondary education, but have limited access to, and experiences from, the labour market. As a result, it could be argued that they all experience a life situation that is insecure and risky.

The interviews concerned attitudes towards education and work, and were also aimed at understanding how the respondents perceive and acknowledge their situation in relation to the labour market, along with leisure activities and other interests. In addition, questions concerning where the interviewees would like to live, what their economic situation looks like, along with their plans for the future, were included in the interviews.

ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES

It should be emphasised that an initial analysis was made already when I was in the process of collecting the data material; in this process it struck me as obvious that all interviewees experienced an insecure and risky life situation. Furthermore, all of them had seemingly limited personal resources – no formal education apart from upper secondary education, limited working experience, economic strains, strong geographical ties, etc. – on a labour market with high entry barriers. Yet, in spite of these similarities, they appeared to employ significantly different ways of coping with their situation. During the course of collecting the material, I asked myself why some of them are active and optimistic while others almost seem to surrender to their fates. Considering the similar conditions of the respondents, how could it be that some of them live a seemingly normal life within the local community, while others are completely excluded from society? In order to answer these questions the analysis proceeded, inspired by the theoretical approach of Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1993). Viewed from the lenses of Bourdieu's theories, the labour market in the Barents region could be seen as a field where individuals make more or less conscious efforts to position themselves, and ensure their long-term social existence (Bourdieu, 1990: 31).

In order to understand how individuals position themselves on different *fields*, Bourdieu has developed the concept of *capital*. Individual background, experience, and resources can be viewed as different types of capital. Others who ascribe value to this type of capital recognize individuals possessing it. Bourdieu (1991) discusses several different aspects of cultural capital, but the most important type in this particular study relates to education. Depending on the degree of what I choose to call *educational capital*, different options are accessible to the individual on the labour market. In this study, however, most respondents share the same level of education – i.e. upper secondary education – and, therefore, the concept *educational capital* also points to the strive for more education in order to gain additional access to the labour market. Still, since practically oriented skills are demanded in the region, the present

educational levels of most of the respondents should be sufficient in order to create some opportunities on the local labour market. Therefore, I use the term *educational capital* to relate to basic practically oriented upper secondary education as well.

Yet another important concept discussed by Bourdieu is *social capital*. Social capital – i.e. access to networks, friends, social contacts and so on – have proven to be of great importance to individuals trying to establish themselves on a local labour market (e.g. Heggen et al., 2003). This also turned out to be true in this study. In small communities – such as the municipalities in this study – central actors on the labour market are often acquainted. Depending on local recognition, along with the position and reputation of the family, access to networks in small communities can either limit or create opportunities. Social capital together with educational capital is, therefore, important when individuals try to position themselves on the labour market, which I intend to show in the following. The question that remains is what induces some individuals to act, while others instead are inclined to retreat.

In order to understand individual approaches on the labour market field, I once again relate to Bourdieu, and his notion of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990: 53). The habitus of each individual – i.e. cognitive roadmaps, and patterns of thinking and acting – depends on what he or she believes to be capable of. Habitus, in other words, is as a package of individual experiences and dispositions, emanating from the social and cultural background of the individual (Broady, 1991: 25). Hence, habitus forms how we perceive our surroundings, how we reason, and act, as well as the choices we make in a particular situation: in this case habitus affects how young people act on a highly restricted, or even closed, labour market. Habitus is also an unconscious ‘structure’ shaping thought and action among individuals, in this case the respondent’s way of dealing with unemployment.

When studying how individuals cope with exposed situations, like the unemployed youths in this study, it could also be useful to assess processes of individual meaning making. Anthony Giddens (1991) talks about a contemporary predicament where traditions loose ground and individuals are forced to make

active lifestyle choices. The choices are made through reflexive processes, and they are related to efforts to form a life trajectory that is felt to be meaningful (Giddens, 1991). These kinds of processes are related to coping with 'structural interruptions', such as a personal situation of being unemployed. There has to be a meaning and one cannot cope without a sense of meaning; that is what reflexivity and 'meaning-making' among other things is about.

The concept 'coping' in this chapter primarily relates to the discussion drawing on Bourdieu, as presented above, and is employed in order to understand different embedded strategies to manage unemployment, and, specifically, the respondents' *experiences* of being unemployed. *Coping* is normally defined as 'the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural effort to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984: 141). Thus, coping has to do with responses to a discrepancy between contextual demands or conditions and the resources to act available to an individual. In this study, coping specifically concerns reactions to an insecure and risky situation, resulting from unemployment, combined with limited structural and personal resources. Coping, thus, concerns individual strategies, conscious or unconscious, to restrain and handle stressful life situations (Ahmadi, 2008: 82). Moreover, in the context of this study, coping relates to educational and social capital and individual habitus, along with individual meaning-making.

Four ideal-typical coping strategies (displayed in figure 2) have been developed, drawing on the theoretical concepts and perspectives discussed above, as well as the results from my interviews. These 'ideal types' encapsulates the relationship between social and educational capital, on the one hand, and action-propensity on the other. I will give a few examples. Respondents claiming to have access to social networks and contacts with previous employers, while also claiming to be active and independent 'job-searchers' are categorised as having social and educational capital. These respondents also show a propensity to act on their own, and, therefore, their strategy to cope with unemployment is called *action*. Other interviewees express lacking propensities to act on the labour market. In spite of having social and educational capital, these

respondents convey that they are attempting to adapt to other spheres of society than the labour market. Therefore, their strategy to cope with unemployment is categorised as that of *adaptation*. A third category, labelled *expectancy*, concerns respondents who seem to lack capital, and working experience, but still tries to approach potential employers actively. Finally, when respondents neither have working experience nor contacts with society at large – lacking capital as well as a propensity to act on the labour market – they are categorised under the label *passivity*.

Figure 2. Four strategies to cope with unemployment in relation to available capital and propensity to act.

		Action-Propensity	
		High	Low
Available resources/capital	More	The strategy of Action	The strategy of Adaption
	Less	The strategy of Expectancy	The strategy of Passivity

The four ‘coping strategies’ are obviously ideal typical constructs. They are aimed at illuminating important features of how young people can think, and the choices they can make, depending on their backgrounds, experiences, perceptions, and expectations. Needless to say, the categories represent simplifications of reality and they do not have the pretension of giving a comprehensive view of real-life strategies to cope with unemployment. Instead, they indicate focal differences in ways of coping with an uncertain situation. In the following, I will present my analysis of the interviews, thereby illustrating the four ‘coping strategies’ in practice.

COPING STRATEGIES

The strategy of action

Following the discussion above and the categories displayed in figure 2, the interviewees employing what I refer to as *the strategy of action* come from families with pronounced capital forms. They have social networks which they make use of when they contact potential employers. Most of these youths have completed theoretically oriented upper secondary education, and they are considering further studies, even when this implies moving. During the interviews, a positive view of the future could often be sensed. These individuals, moreover, appear to be active in searching for information, in order to get a position on the labour market.

Even though the labour market in each of the municipalities in this study is severely restricted, none of the respondents categorised as belonging to the strategy of action passively accept their status as unemployed. Instead, they are constantly looking for new opportunities, and they make use of their comparatively extensive networks of contacts, inquiring as to whether local employers are in need of labour, even short term positions and temporary help. Additionally, these respondents have either been raised by parents with academic backgrounds and degrees or by parents that are self-employed entrepreneurs. Their parents, moreover, often hold central positions within the local community or in the geographical surroundings. Furthermore, as already mentioned, the respondents tend to have studied theoretical programs in upper secondary school, and at present they often have active plans to proceed with university studies, if their situation so requires. Consequently, these respondents aim at expanding their *educational capital*, which is something that generally is believed to open up a wider range of opportunities on the labour market; in the typical middle class home, where most of the respondents in this category were raised, education is normally perceived as a road towards future career opportunities (Jönsson et al., 1993: 89-97).

The respondents categorised as employing the strategy of action are well

aware that there is no demand for their theoretical education on the local labour market. Yet instead of looking for permanent employment locally, one respondent believes that her perspective has to be widened, and she expresses hopes in a future as a self-employed entrepreneur. In fact, this particular respondent has plans to pursue such an alternative because she is eager to remain in the local community. On the other hand, another respondent plans to move to the south where she believes that the labour market is significantly better than in the Barents region. This respondent says she became aware of this when she spent a year at a boarding school in the capital of Stockholm, where she worked part-time, during evenings and weekends, within the service sector.

Yet, at present (at least at the time for the interviews) all respondents categorised as utilising the strategy of action consider their personal situation to be relatively constrained, with limited employment opportunities. Because of her status as unemployed, the first respondent referred to above, has no economic means to start her own business, and the other one only has restricted means – i.e. money – which delays or even thwarts her plans to move south. Accordingly, these respondents are left with the only option of actively seeking information about temporary employments in the local community. Still, since they have significant amounts of social capital, they do have opportunities. Because of their backgrounds, and their networks, they are well known in the local community. In the interviews they also stress that they, themselves, have a self-evident task to actively look up local employers, which they are familiar with, in pursuit of potential positions, albeit only on a temporary basis. This means that they, as a result of their social capital and habitus, frequently visit potential local employers in order to attain a position on the labour market. When asking one of the respondents if the employment office helps her getting at job, she responds in the following way:

Help? From the employment office? I don't know. I haven't had that much...Honestly – I don't accept help from the employment office. I just don't. Instead, I look for a job on my own. It is much better. You know, I went there saying: Hey, I am unemployed, I want a job.

You know, I have lived in this municipality since I was 14 years old, so they (the employers) already know who I am.

This story illustrates how individual habitus structures courses of action as well as rules of conduct in certain situations. Similarly, the other respondent sees no other way out than to act, and attempt to take personal charge over her exposed situation. Along these lines, she has a hard time understanding why ‘others’ rely on governmental, and municipal, employment agencies (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) in the pursuit of a job. Even so, the youths employing the strategy of action also express the constant insecurity that follows from being unemployed. One of them expresses this in the following way:

Will I manage this month, will I survive? There is a constant feeling of worry. /.../ This is the first time that I realized that, okey: I am not going to study, and I don't have a job, so I panicked, and started calling local businesses.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus can help us understand statements like this one. The stories told by the respondents categorised as belonging to the strategy of action illuminates the significance of *social capital* when looking for a job on a small, local, labour market. Even if this constant pursuit is considered demanding, the habitus of the respondents deems it absolutely necessary. The relentless pursuit, and the eagerness to always “step in” to fill potential sick leaves, sometimes leads to employment opportunities. This attitude characterises the respondents employing the strategy of action, which means that they have a closer relationship with the labour market than other youths in this study; their positive experiences from the past, and their possession of social and educational capital creates flexible, and probably better, opportunities. Most other youths in the study seem to lack the ‘know how’, of these respondents. The youths who utilise the strategy of action have reflexive abilities, and a flexible outlook, combined with a habitus that is beneficial when trying to gain access to the labour market. In the cases of these particular respondents, these indi-

vidual attributes creates a self-evident and natural – whether conscious or unconscious – strive to advance themselves, and to find strategies to counteract unemployment and find a position in society. These characteristics, however, make the respondents employing the strategy of action unique to this study.

The strategy of adaptation

The individuals in the study employing what I refer to as *the strategy of adaptation* also seem to possess social and educational capital in Bourdieu's terms. School presented no significant problem to them, but – contrary to the individuals employing the strategy of action – neither moving away nor proceeding with studies at the university are considered viable options. Instead, they have strong ties to the local community, which means that they are adapting to the situation, and biding their time, because unemployment seems to be the only option for the time being.

'Good things comes to those who wait' is a statement that could be said to encapsulate how these respondents approach unemployment and insecurity. Instead of actively seeking job opportunities, they are developing social strategies to live a life that is as normal as possible, in times where structural conditions do not seem to allow work for everyone. Yet, the respondents are aware of the fact that the local labour market is closed, and will remain so until the economic situation improves, or the current workforce retires. Through their social networks – they have a great deal of social capital – they are aware of the poor conditions plaguing local industries, and they are constantly prepared to apply for jobs, in case positions open up locally. Most of these respondents have working class backgrounds, and they tend to live with their parents. Their economic situation allows nothing more. Moreover, the respondents belonging to the category 'adaptation' normally have vocationally oriented educations which should be demanded among the local industries. One of the respondents is a carpenter. He claims to have looked for supplementary training from the local employment agency (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), which potentially could improve his chances on the local labour market. However, the training that

is offered takes several years, and, therefore, this respondent has chosen not to invest further in his educational capital. This rather passive, or congested, approach towards the labour market, resulting in short-term plans, is characteristic of young people from the working class (Bjurström, 1997: 334). Instead of actively planning for the future, the local employment office as well as the educational system in general are often criticized, and blamed, for failing to supply specific occupational training.

The respondents employing the strategy of adaptation have strong ties to the local community, and these ties constrain how they think and act. The carpenter referred to above has his roots in the community, but has only spent of few years of his adult life there. Previously he lived in the south of Sweden, and had a job as a carpenter for a major construction company. The local community, however, seem to matter more than finding a job in the rest of the country. He illustrates this attitude by saying:

I have had a couple of job offers in the south again, but I am not moving. They (unemployment office) are not happy, but they cannot force me to move. I like it here. So jobs just have to turn up here.

This line of reasoning illustrates that the local community appears to matter more than actual job opportunities to working class people in rural areas (Svensson, 2006). It seems like the respondent quoted above feels that he is a part of the community, and that his self-biography is created through it. The community is also ascribed meaning, by spending time there.

Another respondent belonging to the category of adaptation is comfortable in what some would label the periphery of Sweden, even though it clearly is the centre to him. Proximity to the familiar seems to overshadow all other alternatives. His educational capital, which is exclusively based on vocational training, was acquired in a larger city because it was not supplied locally. After having completed this education, however, he chose to move back to his parents. In the interview he disputes the widespread idea that one would have to move to another area or a larger city in order to get a job. Instead, his identity is firmly

attached to his home village, and his hopes for the future are restricted to finding a job there. This respondent has previously had casual jobs and temporary positions within hunting and tourism during the summer. Also, some trainee jobs, supplied by the municipality, have provided him with work experience.

A characteristic feature of young people employing *the strategy of adaptation*, however, is that they experience long periods of unemployment, especially when the employment office run out of trainee jobs. These young people tend to have an enduring belief that the local community eventually will offer some opportunities. In the process of waiting for temporary closed structures to open, they attempt to normalise the situation, focusing on how to retain their position in other spheres of the local community, apart from the labour market. Their social capital is maintained by engagement in the hunting, and club activities, as well as socialising with friends and acquaintances in the local community. The young man in the example above tells the following story about his daily life:

I usually get up around eight thirty. I make breakfast, and stuff like that. Then I call some friend who has a job to check if I can go there, and have some coffee and maybe help out a bit. Then I go down to the Youth club, and chat with the people that work there and meet some people. After that I go by my dad's job and have a cup of coffee.

Following this statement, the respondent clearly does not lack social capital. It also seems like he is active in contacting potential employers because he is indirectly helping out at different work places in the municipality, steered – as it seems – by his habitus. Nonetheless, he does not have any considerable hopes that his activities in different spheres in the local community will lead to a job. Instead his various engagements seem to be routines, developed in order to maintain social networks, normalise his life situation, and reduce monotony that comes from being unemployed. The strategy of adaptation, characteristic of individuals like this young man, can be said to imply a rather weak reflexive ability concerning individual contributions to changing the situation. Instead,

the possible solutions that are brought to the fore in the interviews are associated with society, and structural conditions beyond the reach of the respondents themselves. Adopting this strategy does not imply that they surrender to a situation of marginalisation or even alienation, but rather that they adapt to it. They have no significant demands on their life situation. Coping with unemployment means to normalise the situation, to try to a life as normal as possible without making too much fuzz about it.

The strategy of expectancy

The interviewees whom I have categorised as employing *the strategy of expectancy*, all come from working class backgrounds, but contrary to the strategies presented above they have severely limited social capital in the shape of networks in the local community. Even their educational capital is limited, in the sense that the education they do have is not demanded on the local labour market, and studies at the university seem to be out of the question for the time being. In spite of being distant from the labour market, with negative experiences from encounters with employers, they keep on looking for jobs. This relentless drive is so strong that it almost seems irrational to an outside observer.

None of the respondents categorised as belonging to the strategy of expectancy has any significant experiences from the labour market, but they still tend to express a sense of hopefulness. Like the two previous strategies, these individuals are basically aware that the labour market is saturated, but it seems like a hard thing to accept. Instead they are constantly looking for alternatives, and potential openings, that seem more or less rational. As with the preceding strategy, their educational capital is not in demand on the local labour market, and therefore their educational capital is limited. One respondent has an aesthetic education from upper secondary school. She grew up in a small village close to the municipality, and she moved there some years ago hoping to get a job within retailing or care. In spite of spending several years in unemployment, she actively looks for work wherever possible, with all imaginable employers.

Another respondent, a young man, also grew up in a small village but has chosen to move to the municipality. He decided to do so because he believed that the municipality could offer a specific vocational training in upper secondary school. He grew up in a single parent home, with his mother. His mother, however, moved south as soon as he entered into upper secondary education.

Common for the respondents employing the strategy of expectancy is that they often have moved to the municipality from other areas, and, as a consequence, their social capital at their new place of residence is limited. In some cases they are in relationships, but their partners also tend to be unemployed, thus restricting their social capital even more. The only social network they have in the local community consists of their families and acquaintances of their boyfriend or girlfriend. Contrary to the interviewees analysed under the two preceding categories, they have no relations with local employers, and their efforts to contact them have so far been fruitless. In addition, due to their long-term unemployment their economic resources have become severely restricted. One of the respondents is supported by well-fare checks, while another receives money for food and rent from his mother; the reason is that he claims that he does not want to be a burden to society. Yet, the distance to the labour market seems to increase even further as time goes by. After several years of unemployment, one of the respondents sums up her experiences:

One should always try to sound positive and make the impression that everything is OK. But, it might not be that good. I mean, not always at least. Shouldn't the social welfare office start wondering why I have not gotten a job thus far. You start summing up in your brain. Have I looked enough, or is there something wrong with me?

Judging from this story, social background mixed with negative experiences from the past, as well as negative notifications from employers, start leaving psychological imprints. At the same time, however, a constant reflexive process concerning self-image, possible courses of action, and possible solutions characterises the respondents categorised as employing the strategy of expect-

tancy. Therefore, each new job mediated by the employment office sparks hopeful expectations, and, subsequently, new sources of disappointments. Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness are indeed present. Hence, in their reflexive process their sense of self is questioned, and it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain an identity and high self-esteem. Sometimes the drive to maintain a positive self-image is so pronounced that it seems irrational. One illustration of this is a male respondent who, despite his lack of working experience, believes that an executive post at a multinational corporation is a viable option for him. Hence, in the relentless strive to establish a position on the labour market, some expectations become unrealistic. Furthermore, in an attempt to retain what can be described as a comprehensive biography, this respondent talks about an alleged job within child care:

Respondent: I have a temporary position at the moment. I step in every now and then, at day care centres and kindergartens and so on. That is the only job I have at the moment, and it is not that often, but anyway...

Linda: Approximately how often?

Respondent: Well, when was it? Last week it was two days. I signed up in September last year. And I have been there at least five or six days since then. Since September last year, that is not a lot.

At a closer look, the 'job' is a handful of working situations within a period of six months. By a similar token, another respondent claims to have a job in child-care, but a closer look reveals that she cannot even remember the last time she worked there. To me it is obvious that these respondents have a great need for self-explanations; they wanted to tell their story. In other words, through reflexive action, they wanted to make a painful situation appear better than it actually was. It is quite clear that societal structures, beyond their control, have forced their life trajectories into paths which they had not expected. Furthermore, the lack of social and educational capital undoubtedly plays a role in their dilemmas. However, at this point they have to make sense out of their

situations. That is what ‘meaning-making’ is all about. Sometimes meaning-making can include maintaining simple everyday routines, as illustrated by one of the respondents:

Even if I don't have a job, I get up early in the morning and I go to bed early in the evening. I have routines. You have to! Even if I don't have anything to get up to. Well, except for my dog.

A common characteristic of the interviewees whom I have categorized as belonging to *the strategy of expectancy*, is an outspoken concern about being a burden to society. For this reason, all imaginable, as well as unimaginable, options are welcome. Hence, contrary to the strategy of adaptation, these youngsters express a desire to move wherever work is offered. However, barriers related to lack of social and educational capital, along with a structuring habitus, which does not help them, seem to hold these individuals back.

The strategy of passivity

Like the previous strategy, all respondents whom I have categorised as employing *the strategy of passivity* come from working class families, and they all have limited social and educational capital. Within this category some interviewees also dropped out of upper secondary education, which implies that they lack educational capital altogether. In addition, none of them have any direct experience from the labour market. They are seemingly passive, and when it comes to looking for a job they rely on, and sometimes blame failures on, the local employment office. All in all, these youths seem marginalised in all spheres of society

The respondents employing a strategy of passivity seem to have adopted a very inactive attitude, and they almost seem to have surrendered to their fates as being unemployed. None of the interviewees seem particularly keen on doing something about their personal situation. Instead, their approach can be summarized in the following words: “what happens, happens.” Thus,

none of these respondents express clear ambitions to position themselves on the labour market, and, as a result, this responsibility falls exclusively on the employment office.

Moreover, all of these respondents grew up in families with working class backgrounds. In addition, and contrary to the categories analysed under the headings above, most had problems finishing upper secondary education and some of them even dropped out ahead of time. According to the respondents, school took too much energy. Hence, they lack educational capital, which usually means that most doors are closed on the labour market. This is unless they somehow manage to catch up with their interrupted upper secondary education. In one of the interviews, one respondent talks about how he was offered a job at a car shop, provided that he finished upper secondary education. Along similar lines, some of the respondents claim that they have discussed vocational training programs at the educational office which could prepare them for jobs that are in demand on the local labour market. Yet, moving away is not an option to any of them. One respondent clearly expresses this reluctance when we discussed alternatives outside of the local labour market:

Why should I move? Should I move just to flip hamburgers? Then, I want guarantees that I get a job, and not move just to take random chances. It feels dull to move to some job, you really don't want to have. A job you might as well get here. Then it doesn't matter anyway.

The resentment towards moving away is obvious. Without any educational capital, however, the quoted respondent is not competitive on the labour market in a larger community. Moving would thus constitute a risk, which the respondent seems unwilling to take. Moreover, all of these respondents lack working experience. In spite of this, after demands from the employment office, one of the respondents claims he has taken part in a project for unemployed adolescents, which lasted for one year. Still, similar to the previous example, she describes the difficulties in finding a position on the labour market, along with her own seemingly passive role in this quest:

It is not that easy to get a job, I think, at least not in small place like this. I am not that up to date right now...Now, I know something is going on in the local shops. Anyway, that woman from the employment office called the other day, wondering if I would be interested in working there. But I did not have time to ask about specific details... Apart from this I don't know. I guess health care needs people, but I really don't know much more.

This passive approach could at first glance seem irrational. Knowing, however, that the job offered by the employment office is a trainee position, which will not lead to an actual job, the quoted respondent assumes – and probably rightfully so – that there is no real demand for her on the labour market. All efforts she makes have so far been in vain, because she lacks educational capital. This fact might reinforce her passivity, which, in turn, may explain why she even stops looking for information about jobs. When asked, the respondent maintains that it is pointless to keep on looking for something that she will never find anyway. However, the indifference regarding job searching is combined with her strong emphasis on the fact that she is not a liability to the unemployment benefits since her partner supports her. In fact, relations to her own family and to the family of her partner, represent the only networks she has access to. She describes her social situation in the following words:

I don't hang out that much with friends. Most of them have moved, and our family has been rather locked-in since dad passed away. I guess I mostly spend time with my sister...

Following this story, it is fair to say that the social capital of the quoted respondent is limited at best. This is also the case with the other respondents employing the strategy of passivity. When asked, another, male, respondent basically tells the same story. His social capital is limited to his own family. Hence, both of these two respondents are almost in a position of “social isolation” (cf. Heggen et al., 2003: 22), disconnected from society at large. In the interview,

the young man goes on and explains that the only occasions when he contacts the rest of society is when he makes his compulsory visits at the employment office, and when he buys groceries. The rest of the time is spent at his partner's family farm, which is situated a couple of miles outside of the regional centre. This respondent also expresses that it is important to him not to be viewed as a burden to society, and, therefore, he doesn't demand unemployment benefits. He describes his relation to the rest of society in the following way: *It feels like I am at the lowest level, and that I am a burden to others...*

In relation to the background, experiences, and attitudes to the labour market among people categorised as belonging to the strategy of passivity, support from society is probably necessary if these youths ever will have the opportunity of getting a job. This is especially true in the Barents region.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study sketches a picture of how 15 unemployed youths, with limited educational capital and working experience, cope with, and undergo, their situation in a geographic periphery in Sweden. It is more or less commonplace to view unemployed people as *one* category of individuals, marginalised or excluded from conditions and possibilities in main society (e.g. Raaum et al., 2009). However, after analysing 15 interviews it seems clear that different individuals can develop quite different strategies to cope with their life situation, its difficulties and opportunities, due to their backgrounds, experiences and individual ways of acknowledging their situation.

In this chapter, different categories of individuals are presented as varying *coping strategies*, in which propensity for action is related to social and educational *capital* in Bourdieu's terms: (i) *The strategy of action* refers to unemployed individuals possessing *capital* that is valued by the local labour market, and a *habitus* guiding them to act in an appropriate way, which is likely to give results. (ii) *The strategy of adaptation* also refers to young people in possession of educational and social capital. Contrary to the first strategy, however,

these individuals do not acknowledge their own role in finding employment. They do not seem to spend much time to circumvent the excluding structures of society, but instead focuses their energy on maintaining their positions in other important spheres of society. (iii) *The strategy of expectancy* refers to individuals whose social capital is severely restricted. Yet, their reflexive abilities induce them to take action, with the hope of attaining a future position on the labour market. However, repeated failures and recurring disappointments eventually leave psychological marks, and hopelessness seems to replace hope. (iv) *The strategy of passivity* is the last strategy, which refers to individuals that combine a lack of educational and social capital with apathy. These people, more or less consciously, isolate themselves from most spheres of society.

Basic education, which is something that most of the respondents in this study have, is normally seen as a way forward on the labour market. Yet, the study shows that not even the 'right' education is enough. It also takes the 'right' person with the 'right' social capital in order for local employers to open up their eyes to them, ascribe them value, and open doors to them (cf. Heggen et al., 2003). The study illustrates that young people from middle class families, with a theoretical *educational capital*, have better opportunities on the labour market than young people with working class backgrounds, with vocational educations that the labour market should be demanding. More research on the potential 'gate keepers', and the possible excluding role of employers is, therefore, required.

This chapter also paints a picture of how 15 youths in the Barents region experience insecurity in an environment with limited opportunities, and where the structural interruptions in individual life-trajectories have to be dealt with. For those who possess educational and social capital that are valuable to the situation, an embedded propensity to act (*habitus*) tend to guide their life forms in a positive direction, at least in some spheres of society (strategy i and ii). It is much more difficult to develop an acceptable life trajectory, or to maintain a comprehensive personal life, for those individuals who find themselves in a more negative process of social exclusion (strategies iii and iv). In these cases coping concerns reflexive processes, in Giddens terms, in which a meaningful existence is created in spite of a severely marginalised situation. Individuals

attempt to manage an uncertain situation. Most of the respondents were very open about their own situations and tried to cope with their lives in a meaningful way. The stories told varied from rather desperate strategies for finding opportunities on the labour market to almost complete isolation from society.

Coping with life situations and life chances is basically about balancing restrictions and opportunities, which are formed through individuals' backgrounds, experiences, skills, and 'thought systems'. The available educational and social capital, and habitus, steers individuals. In an exposed situation, individuals, in spite of structural breaks, attempt to build an identity and enduring life forms that are meaningful, personally and contextually. Evident is also that they want to be "understood" and met by positive understanding. Their situation is not just focused on getting a job. Unemployment in geographically peripheral areas often implies that life is put on hold, and that hope is constantly weighed against despair. It is a constant chase: either you win or you lose. And, important to acknowledge, nobody wants to *be* a waste and a burden, nobody wants to be *seen* as a waste and a burden, and nobody wants to *feel* as a waste and a burden.

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– CHAPTER 6 –

JOB TRAINING AS AN ACTIVATION
STRATEGY: YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS
ON WORK, UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOB
TRAINING IN NORTHERN FINLAND

Pentti Luoma

INTRODUCTION

The transition of young people from school to work has changed dramatically in most Western countries since the 1970s. This can partly be seen as a consequence of changes in the structure of economies and labour markets due to the introduction of new technologies, the disappearance of manual jobs, more flexible working arrangements and higher unemployment rates. In many countries, this issue has been tackled by new arrangements helping young people to participate in education and training (Schoon & Silbereisen, 2009: 3-4). In some countries, unemployment policies have been changed in order to encourage the unemployed to work instead of living off unemployment benefits and other social allowances.

In this regard, there have been two major changes in the youth employment policies in Finland since the 1990s. The first of these was implemented at the beginning of the decade. Since the subsidy reform in 1996-97, the right to basic unemployment allowance¹ for those under 25 years of age has been allowed only for those who have graduated from a vocational school, have applied for that kind of education or are participating in some kind of

¹) The basic unemployment allowance was about 23 euro a day paid for 5 days a week (Bargain et al., 2007: 4). The earnings-related component raises this, but is not often applied to young people because they have usually had too short periods of employment.

activation programme arranged by the employment authorities (Aho, 2005: 2), with some additional restrictions for those still living at home. Some job trainees may be granted an elevated allowance. It is also possible to receive a basic employment benefit when taking part in certain kinds of employment or an employment education programme after having received unemployment benefit before applying for education (*ibid.* 3-4).

The next reform, the youth guarantee, was implemented by the Ministry of Labour² at the beginning of 2005. One of its aims was to ease the entry of young people (under 25 years of age) to education, the labour market or employment activities. The intentions were to prevent their exclusion from education and employment and to develop their skills and qualifications in order to prepare them for entry into the labour market. Together with the employment office, every young person who had been unemployed for at least three months would set up a plan for educational and employment activities relevant for him or her in the near future. The employment offices would work together with other authorities, such as youth services and the school system, to draw up these plans.

After three months of unemployment, the unemployed lose their unemployment benefits if they refuse an offer of a job or training opportunity (Bargain et al., 2007: 16). In 2005-2006, 50 per cent of young people did not receive unemployment benefits any longer after three months of unemployment (Hämäläinen et al., 2009: 22, 62). They either went to school or work, or were taking part in other activities arranged by the employment authorities.

An evaluation of the youth guarantee made by Pitkänen et al. (2007) emphasised its success as regards drawing up plans for individual young people and developing youth services and support. For example, the services given by the employment offices have increased and diversified (*ibid.*). In practice, these

2) The Ministry of Labour was merged with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy in the organisational change in the beginning of 2008.

services – financed by the Government – include job training³ in firms, youth workshops and social services. Other employment activities include supplementary vocational training and helping the unemployed to actively search for a job. The activation policies in Finland are presented and evaluated from the economic and organisational point of view by OECD (Duell et al., 2009).

The findings in this chapter are based on interviews of young people aged 20-24 in job training in northern Finland.¹ Most of them have a diploma from a vocational school and thus a basic trade, and they are trying to find their way to permanent work. They all have experience of work, unemployment and job training. We asked how they experienced job training as part of the activation employment policy, which is intended to increase the motivation of the unemployed for work. We therefore also asked how they viewed going to work compared to being unemployed. These issues have been typical in studies of the effects of unemployment (Cole, 2007).

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

In the flexible capitalism of the 21st century, job career planning is more difficult than before since careers have become more unstable than a couple of decades ago (Vormbusch, 2009: 282-284). This has an effect on the motives and strategies in career “politics” or planning. Vormbusch (2009: 287) differentiates between three basic types of career planning: a) situational and adaptive, b) reactive or “crisis management” style and c) strategic career planning. The strategic action in planning a career has become difficult in flexible capitalism.

3) The English dictionaries recurrently suggest the term on-the-job training instead of job training. Duell and others (2009) also use terms like “practical training” and “work-life training”, but McRae (1987: 46) writes about the British “Job Training Scheme”. This scheme consists of “workplace training”, which would be the term to be used instead of “job training”. I will, however, stick to the latter. Job training is financed by the Government and by firms like in the usual on-the-job training. Job training is arranged for young unemployed people either so that they can get information about various jobs or to prepare them for their future job. The situation of job trainees is also different. They are usually paid only the basic unemployment allowance, whereas on-the-job trainees get more wages even in the training period and are also more likely to be hired as wage workers after that.

Moving straight from education to a relatively permanent job is much more difficult than in the “golden age of capitalism” from the Second World War until the 1980s (see Julkunen, 2008: 13-15).

Bradley & Devadason (2008: 120) emphasise that the transitional period from school to work has also become more prolonged, precarious and complex. Young people have to learn to live with a more insecure and constantly changing labour market. This means continual moves between various jobs, unemployment and training. The transitions to the labour market have also become increasingly differentiated and individualised (Jones, 2009: 101). The routes into and the moves within the labour market are so complex that everyone will have a different route to go (Bradley & Devadason, 2008: 120).

Bradley & Devadason (2008) interviewed 78 young people aged from 20 to 34 in Great Britain asking them about their labour market pathways or careers. They found four main types of labour market careers (ibid.: 123-124, 127): shifters, stickers, settlers and switchers. Shifters had made many moves between employment statuses. They moved rapidly between jobs, unemployment, domestic labour, training and travel. Stickers found their career very soon after graduation. Settlers had an even more settled and planned career than stickers; they usually had a traditional university degree and chose their career consciously. These careers were traditional such as engineers, teachers, doctors and lawyers. The fourth group was switchers, who started as stickers but made a conscious and even radical change in their later careers.

Unemployment is often assumed to have harmful effects on attitudes towards working capacity, and may also cause isolation from other arenas of society. The experience of young unemployed persons can be seen as different from how adults experience unemployment, and some claim that young people are more vulnerable to the effects of unemployment than adults (Bates et al., 2009: 11-12). Aho (1981: 281), on the other hand, has noted that young people often escape unemployment with only a few “bruises”.

In Finland, there are no recent studies of youth unemployment based on qualitative data and interviews. One reason may be that it is quite hard to find interviewees among the young unemployed. Secondly, there has been a

discursive shift when it comes to studies of unemployment towards more general studies of social exclusion, which has become the “core concept” in social policy in the EU and elsewhere (Peace, 2001: 20). Furthermore, very few interview studies have been published in Finland concerning how young people feel about being objects of activation employment policies. An exception is Hellström (2004), who interviewed seven young people in a labour market training project for her master’s thesis. Viinamäki (1999) interviewed young adults by telephone in 1997 and these data were re-analysed by Viinamäki & Saari (2001). Päivärinta (1997) has studied the life stories of unemployed less than 26 years of age. The data are part of a larger corpus called *Työttömän tarina* (“The narrative of the unemployed”), which was also analysed by Kortteinen & Tuomikoski (1998), among others. Autio et al. (2003) reported the results of a study based on open-ended questions to young unemployed people aged 24 or less and interviews of employment office staff in south-eastern Finland.

Komonen (2007, 2008) studied the functions of youth workshops as part of the activation employment strategy in Finland. Her analysis is based on the official reports of three Government ministries and interviews of job trainers in youth workshops. The functions of these workshops include educating young people on labour markets and paid work to help them over into adulthood. Youth workshops also have some pedagogical functions such as learning practical skills, preparing for the labour market and labour market demands like work ethics and punctuality (Komonen, 2008: 169-172). Komonen emphasises that how such workshops function with regard to education has recently become more significant. They can be seen as open learning environments to enhance active participation, but this does not hide the fact that these environments are controlled, yet less strictly than the open labour market (*ibid.*: 172-173).

Besen-Cassino (2008: 359-361) emphasises the importance of subject-oriented studies of youth unemployment because young people should be seen as subjects, not objects. It is also important to know how the young think about their labour market situation and how they take their decisions to work or not. Subject-oriented studies can help to gain a fuller understanding of the meaning of work and unemployment to young people and shed light on inner differ-

ences between jobs. It is also important to study youth unemployment because the empirical results have often been contradictory, depending on the contexts of the studies (Winefield, 1997: 239-240). Giving a voice to marginal groups has been mentioned as one of the general aims of qualitative studies (Morse & Richards, 2002: 27-29). Thus, it is important to listen to young people, who seldom speak for themselves publicly or express their views to a larger audience.

OULU AND PUDASJÄRVI AS PLACES OF RESIDENCE

This chapter addresses the views of young people in two places in northern Ostrobothnia, northern Finland. The data were collected by interview at the beginning of 2008 in the city of Oulu and in Pudasjärvi, a semi-rural small town about 85 kilometres north-east of Oulu.

Oulu and Pudasjärvi were selected for the study because they are different in character and were easily accessible for data collection. Oulu, with its 137 000 inhabitants, is the largest city in northern Finland. It can be regarded as the administrative, economic and cultural capital of the area. Pudasjärvi, on the other hand, has only about 9000 inhabitants. Despite having the administrative status of a town, it consists of a wide rural area with small villages surrounding a more urban centre. It can be regarded as a peripheral area with high rates of unemployment and outward migration, and 14 per cent of its economically active population was still working in agriculture and forestry in 2005.

Oulu, with its growing ICT sector, is often seen as the economic engine of northern Finland. However, as shown by, for example, Kauppinen & Viitanen (2008: 7), the unemployment rate among young people was higher (18 per cent) in Oulu than in the other eight major cities in Finland. According to Kerkelä & Kurkinen (2000), the higher general unemployment rate in the Oulu region is a result of the young age structure, the rapid growth in the labour force, increased commuting to work from the surrounding area and new jobs inducing rapid immigration. Moreover, there are now fewer jobs in the more traditional sectors of industry because production is now concentrated in southern Finland

(*ibid.*: 176-178). During the recent recession, repatriation and job losses have also occurred in the thriving ICT sector.

The young age structure in the Oulu region is in part due to Oulu being an educational centre with the University of Oulu, the University of Applied Sciences and various vocational schools. The large number of students increases the labour supply, especially in summer. A large proportion of the students, moreover, want to work in Oulu after graduation. In addition, young people living in northern rural areas often move to Oulu. They are often poorly educated and, due to the high educational level of the young people already living in Oulu, the less educated are worse off in the local labour market (Kauppinen & Viitanen, 2008).

Work opportunities are very limited in Pudasjärvi, and many young people move to Oulu, Rovaniemi and southern cities in search of a job.

THE DATA

The first attempt to recruit interviewees for this study was made by informing the officials in the local employment offices about the interviews. Announcements were placed on notice boards in the offices and the officials informed the young unemployed about the interviews. A meeting for these young unemployed was held in Oulu, where the interviewer informed them about the interviews, but only two respondents were enrolled. Two interviewees were also recruited in this way in Pudasjärvi. The other four interviewees were selected from the youth workshops in Oulu with the assistance of workshop instructors. Such contacts with workshops were used to recruit the rest of the interviewees in Pudasjärvi, too.

Fourteen young people, eight women and six men, were interviewed, and ten of these were job trainees in youth workshops.⁴ Eight of the interviewees were from Pudasjärvi and six from Oulu. The interviewees were from 20 to 24 years of age, and thus not old enough to have been unemployed for very long.

4) These data were collected by MEd Anu Alanko, who worked as a researcher on “The Youth in Barents – Work and Welfare” project funded by the Research Council of Norway at the beginning of 2008.

Respondents with severe social, physical or psychological problems were not interviewed. Thus, the data covers what we may call “ordinary” young people experiencing problems with finding a paid job.

Eight of the interviewees had a diploma from a vocational school, and thus already had a formal qualification. Four of the interviewees had temporarily dropped out of a vocational school, but were planning to get their diploma in the future. One interviewee had just left upper secondary school and was seeking vocational training. Only one of the interviewees had just completed comprehensive school and had no exact plans where to obtain vocational training. Details of the interviewees are in Appendix 1.

The interview guide was structured around certain themes, but the interviewees were allowed to speak freely on issues they saw as important regarding work, unemployment and job training.

WORK

According to Furnham (1994: 207-209), work has several socialising functions in the lives of young people; it structures time, provides experiences of autonomy as well as mastery and a sense of purpose, is a source of personal status and identity and finally is an important undertaking. On the other hand, unemployment is often seen as representing the opposite and being detrimental to the lives of all people.

The interviews show that work is still an important element in the lives of young people in northern Finland. Some of the interviewees had started working when they were very young, and in Pudasjärvi, as well as in other rural areas in northern Finland, there are still more traditional ways to earn money, so that even young, unskilled persons can earn money. Some interviewees, mostly women, had been picking berries (especially valuable cloudberries) to earn some extra money, although this is not as popular as among older people.

The young people interviewed expressed a desire to work, but due to few

jobs it seemed very hard for them to find work. At the same time, the youngsters were not willing to accept just any kind of job. One of the interviewees from Oulu had had a variety of jobs such as in shopping centres and selling magazines by phone, which is typical part-time work offered to young people nowadays, but that was a job he did not like. He said:

To be frank, I could not bear listening to fucked-up people raving mad, The second day in the morning I decided to quit. ... The pay would have been quite juicy though.

All kinds of jobs are not accepted by the young, and the content of the work is important, as also shown by Myllyniemi (2007: 39-40). The interviewees were dreaming about autonomous jobs, and many of them spoke about wanting to establish a firm of their own (like a restaurant or an ICT firm). Some also expressed interests in creative arts like painting or acting.

As noted earlier, job opportunities are not good for young people in Oulu. Besides, many youngsters move to Oulu to study so it is hard for those born in Oulu to find the kind of work they desire. Oulu is regarded as a national centre in information and communication technologies, but there is also tough competition there when it comes to jobs in the ICT sector, which is currently also hit by the recession.

In general, young people seem to be interested in finding a proper job and they look confidently to the future even if they cannot always see what they will do in the near future. They have plenty of plans for work and life in general. They dream about having “a normal life”; a family and a house of their own. One interviewee said in this regard that even if he won a lot of money in a lottery he would still go to work and live a normal life.

The results of this study show that even if work is still valued (Danielsbacka & Tanskanen, 2009: 53), young people are more selective when it comes to what kind of jobs they are willing to accept. Autio et al. (2003: 71) likewise noted that the officials in an employment office were more sceptical than the young unemployed themselves about their willingness to find a job or go to school. At

the same time, our findings contradict stereotype accounts of the young unemployed, which describe them “as work-shy dole scroungers” (McRae, 1987: 144). Hellström’s (2004: 78) self-reflections, moreover, show how easy it would be to be deluged by the extensive *doxa* of the neoliberal activation policy about socially excluded and disinterested youngsters. This stereotypical thinking can thus be seen lurking behind the recent activation schemes.

When they were seeking a job, the interviewees relied mostly on informal sources. The employment offices were usually considered just a necessity for unemployment allowances, finding a place in a workshop or on a training course and consulting the career psychologist. The office was not generally visited to find a job, even though its web pages were frequently browsed. Some of the interviewees had experience in using their personal connections to find a job, when a friend or a relative had been working in a firm. Social capital or horizontal relations to friends and relatives are important in finding a job. These connections are always unequally distributed. They are affected by the status of the young person and her/his family in the community. One interviewee also remarked that there are some (e.g. religious) clusters for hiring workers inside a closed circle. It has also been noted elsewhere that the social networks in rural areas tend to be small, dense and homogenous, not weak and wide as preferred by Mark Granovetter when referring to “the strength of weak ties” (Lindsay et al., 2005: 55-56; Summanen, 2008).

UNEMPLOYMENT

In their study about unemployment during the recession of the 1990s in Finland, Kortteinen & Tuomikoski (1998) found many negative effects of unemployment. Losing one’s job caused negative feelings like humiliation and shame, which sometimes even caused mental and physical illnesses. Prolonged unemployment periods also meant significant economic loss and even poverty. On the other hand, new findings (Jaana Lähteenmaa; cited in YLE Uutiset, 2009) show that young people in Finland are no longer ashamed of being unemployed as

the older generations used to be, like during the recession in the 1990s (Kortteinen & Tuomikoski, 1998).

Some of the interviewees in our study reported that when they were unemployed they had felt bored, slept a lot and even felt depressed. The daily structure of time use was radically changed, as also noted in earlier studies of unemployment (Jahoda et al., 1971; Furnham, 1994). Those who had hobbies or something meaningful to do did not feel so bad, however. A young man described his situation as unemployed in the following way: *You never have too much money, or it wouldn't hurt to have more. And at times the idleness tended to make me feel bored.* Thus, the financial strain was a problem for many. Those who received benefits related to previous earnings could, however, more easily continue living as usual.

The everyday lives of the job trainees in our study did not differ much from the lives of those going to work. Young people in job training earn the basic labour market allowances and sometimes also receive income support. Your net income in job training is actually lower than when you are unemployed. A young male job trainee says:

... when I was unemployed I managed better financially. ... Social services pay your rent and some bills and you yourself pay some. ... Now that I pay my bills, I will be left with about 100 euro after that. ... When I was unemployed, I got 250-300 euro.

One interviewee mentioned that his friend had even abandoned job training because he was better off financially as unemployed. This is one reason why job training is not highly valued among the young, even though doing something is preferred to “doing nothing”. Besides they are socialised in working life and learn new skills when in job training even though their income is lower than on an apprenticeship contract.

The bureaucracy of the employment authorities was also a cause for concern for the interviewees who were in job training. They found it very problematic to take casual work or go to job training after or during the unemploy-

ment period. It took a lot of paperwork to convince the employment authorities about the new situation, which could cause them to lose both housing and social maintenance allowances.

As unemployed, the interviewees were forced to live modestly and develop a life style based on the low income and thus a low level of consumption. According to the interviewees, they were managing, even though it was difficult occasionally. Many of them said they were happy as long as they were able to meet their basic needs. This is an outlook that perhaps could be appreciated also by those living in the treadmill of increasing incomes according to their ever-growing needs of consumption, as described by Schor (1998). Without enough money, it is, however, hard to live like other young people.

One interviewee, a young man, said that he was actually better off financially as unemployed: *Far too many just spend their money on booze. ... Then they are crying as they can't afford to buy a thing.* Earlier youth unemployment studies have also shown that the unemployed have a lower alcohol consumption than young people who are employed, which is explained by stricter self-control due to insufficient money (Jyrkämä, 1981).

Lack of income would also cause some of the interviewees to be rather creative when it came to finding money. The young man cited above was also proud of the high reselling value of his video games. As an enthusiastic player, he had bought lots of video games and saw that their value rose many times after some years if they were in a good state:

*And if a game is a little old, it has a massive value among collectors.
So a new game that costs 60 euro now might cost something like 600
euro in thirty years.*

Another young man had found a "job" during his unemployment period playing Internet games for money. Some thrive, for example, by playing net poker, which to some extent is based on skills used when playing the stock market. In the age of the Internet, these games are easily accessible. Net poker and other money games are tempting to young unemployed people with a minimal

income, as they offer promises of enrichment. However, they are not without risk. Working in the informal sector is another option for the unemployed to earn extra money. One unemployed interviewee said that he made computers for his relatives and friends, who would then get cheaper, well-equipped computers compared to those bought in a shop. As Levitas (1996: 5) noted, the discourse of social exclusion devalues voluntary and other unpaid work and obscures other inequalities in society.

Young couples and those still living at home were better off financially than those living alone. A young unemployed man living with his fiancé proudly mentioned:

Well, first I thought that was fine, I can sleep for a month on end without doing a thing, while money kept pouring in through the windows and sewers as I lived with my fiancé, so that alone meant 700 euro per month from the social services, plus another 300 euro from the housing allowance, so a thousand euro every month from there plus compensation for all the bills and medications and stuff, ... But when it had continued for a few months, I was lying in bed and thought that I'd like to do something. And sure, if you have a job you make more money.

Young unemployed people in Finland often receive financial and other kinds of support from their parents. However, this help is experienced by some of the unemployed as problematic. One young woman described getting money from her parents: *When I get a job, I'll pay some of it back to my parents. I'm ashamed to live on my parents' support.* The unemployed situation also seems to cause this young woman stress. The feeling of stress, however, is incomprehensible to her mother when they talk about it. Stress is a more modern feeling; the mother has been working as a housewife in the countryside. She may have had her own worries, but she can't describe those as stress. They seem to speak a different language here.

During the interviews, it became clear that the young unemployed are in a

vulnerable situation and comments by others may make them feel bad. A young man talked about the impacts of negative comments in the following way:

They wonder whether you are some loser or social bum when you are unemployed. ... I have told my friends many times when they come to visit me and the first thing they ask is whether I am unemployed or not.

Even if his friend's comments about his unemployment were not meant to be discouraging, he said: *I'm not unemployed just for fun. I've got somewhat depressed now ...* . Thus, even a friendly question about unemployment may do harm to a young unemployed person's identity.

A female interviewee reflected upon whether comments about unemployment may hurt older people more. According to her, the young unemployed would view their unemployment period as being of a more temporary nature, and this outlook can certainly be seen as a resource for the young unemployed to maintain their way of life without work. Another young woman had talked a lot with her grandmother about being young earlier. She had gained strength from these conversations as she said: *My grandma is always appalled at how bad things have gone.* This grandma seems to understand the recent situation when comparing it with the even more difficult times she had lived through.

Relatives, friends and also earlier workmates can also contribute to soften the experience of being unemployed: *Well, my previous workmates have pitied me a little, wondering what will happen to me when unemployed, wishing me the best.* It is interesting to note that these kinds of supportive comments seem to be recorded only by women. Men seem to be defensive against experienced insults. Unemployed young men also seem to be treated more harshly. When asked about how his friends and relatives commented on his unemployment, a man answered: *Well certainly they said things like you're a fucking lazy shit, go to work.*

The attitudes towards negative comments about unemployment by the media

seemed to be twofold. Generally, it is noted that not all unemployed young people are lazy. On the other hand, it is emphasised that this depends on each individual person, and one should not make too broad generalisations based on few cases. A typical comment that “laziness” is a personal issue was made by a young woman:

Well, to some extent it depends upon the person; if you are a person who spends all your money on alcohol and sleeps all day, I think that's laziness.

A young male interviewee in Pudasjärvi made a similar remark:

Some are certainly without a job because they're lazy ... for some it's simply about not having a job.

The Finnish youth barometer for 2007 showed that 80 per cent of young people and less than or about 60 per cent of unemployed young people in Finland were ready to emigrate to find a job (Myllyniemi, 2007: 34-35). The situation for the young on the labour market is somewhat different in Oulu and Pudasjärvi. For those living in communities like Pudasjärvi, it seems that the only option is to move out of the area to find a more or less permanent job, and this is something that the young have realised. According to Corbett's (2007: 253) study of rural areas in Nova Scotia, the young have learnt to leave. On the other hand, young unemployed people in Oulu were not usually going to move.

JOB TRAINING

For many of the interviewees, job training had been an essential part of their working career. They had been shifting between school, training and courses to work and back again. One young woman had just passed the matriculation examination. She was planning to fill in an application form to study business

administration in Oulu and viewed on-the-job training as a more eligible option than just going to job training after vocational school.

However, the interviewees also pointed out that taking part in job training would not necessarily be a good way to get a permanent job. Some of the interviewees in job training had years of experience of shifting between education and job training. A young man from Pudasjärvi said:

An employer won't easily hire you if there is no need for permanent staff ... to take a trainee as the employment office pays maintenance costs and the basic unemployment allowance

As job training involves practically no labour costs for the employers, nor any obligation to hire a trainee after the trainee period, employers often use trainees as temporary or extra manpower. Another young man from Pudasjärvi criticised the youth guarantee. He had been suggested jobs far from where he lived. In practice, they had been out of the question, not only because of the distances but also due to the travel cost.

As profitable as job training is for the employers, it is unprofitable for the trainee who receives only the basic unemployment allowance and not a decent wage. At the same time, the employment office can improve the unemployment statistics, because a trainee is not officially regarded as unemployed. The young man cited earlier said:

When the work is over and the training period is over then it is over for good. The employer won't start paying a wage. So they take in a trainee as a free employee.

This “misuse” of job training is a much discussed topic in Finland, because the firms can make good use of job trainees, which is not the intention of the new activation employment policies.

The same young man also described the bureaucratic practices when shifting statuses and positions in the labour market.

Well, of course, some hire a real employee and pay the salary during the summer months ... But if they pay the salary for a few months, it will take almost a month to get the paper work finished ... So it really doesn't pay to fill in all those papers just for a few months And when you work for a few months, you need to make new statements to the employment office and KELA⁵ about your unemployment status and sign on as a job applicant again, even though you were one not long ago ... Now when the job training finishes, and the employment benefit doesn't continue, obviously I am a job applicant again, though I have been unemployed for four years now. I think it is ridiculous that I have to start as a new job applicant even though I have actually been one all the time ... So if you work somewhere for a while and then apply for the basic unemployment allowance again, you file the application as a new job applicant.

This man also had problems getting his unemployment allowances in time due to the bureaucratic procedures.

The training periods as well as the part- and short-time periods at work are experienced by the job trainees as very stressful. One job trainee concluded very bluntly: *I sometimes think that I am not good enough for anything but job training.* With the constant shifts and all the bureaucracy involved, the trainees do not get a feeling of mastery and the trainee periods do not serve to give them more confidence in themselves. The only real option seems to be to find a more permanent job elsewhere.

CONCLUSIONS

Local authorities in Finland arranged vocational courses and workshops for unemployed young people already at the beginning of the 1930s. The purpose of these courses was not vocational training or gaining work experience. They

5) KELA is the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, the "provider of social security benefits", including unemployment benefits, "to all residents in Finland".

were offered to keep young people from doing harmful things to society and ruining their lives financially and morally. This was based on a stereotypical view of young people as undisciplined (Kärkkäinen, 1993: 19), which in many ways seems to be the perspective even today. The young people interviewed are looking for a job and not giving up hope for a better life, which is also noted in McRae's (1987: 144) study.

The unstable situation in the labour market makes it hard for young people to plan their careers and future lives. Their typical period of entry into the unstable labour market is characterised by "situational adaptation" and shifting between short periods of work, unemployment and job training. Among our interviewees, there were some possible "switchers" in the labour market. They had artistic or other ambitions and were not content with an alternative career as a wage worker. When "shifting", they were forced to have strict self-control and bureaucratic reporting on their labour market status on a daily basis.

In general, these young people still expect a better future, they value working for a wage and are not happy being unemployed. They see a permanent work situation as the means to a better income and a better future in general. Traditionally, in the northern areas, work has been viewed as a duty, and unemployment is not seen as a desirable state since it means the lack of doing something meaningful. The interviewees are devoted to their place of birth and would not like to move away. Many of them plan to return to their place of birth after completing an education or working somewhere else for a while.

In discussions about social exclusion, unemployed young people are often portrayed as lazy, in danger of committing crimes and spending their time boozing. The young people interviewed here, however, seem to control their lives very strictly in relation to boozing and consumption in general. Short-term unemployment thus does not immediately lead the young people to social exclusion from an ordinary way of life as is sometimes, even benevolently, thought. But, of course, prolonged unemployment may cause exclusion from the labour market and also the social problems mentioned above.

The problem faced by the young people in our study is that there are not enough attainable jobs that would enable them to live like others. Adaptation

to increasing unemployment, prolonged waiting for jobs and planning to move seem to be their fate. The most urgent policy issue is that of job creation. This is a great challenge in this era of globalisation and less government intervention.

The youth guarantee and job training as essential parts of activation employment policies seem to have been socially beneficial to the young. However, their criticism of job training is well-founded. Since the pedagogical aim of activation measures like job training in youth workshops is to socialise young people to wage-earning employment there should also be a remunerative advantage in job training compared with being unemployed. One may therefore ask whether it would be more beneficial to the Government to subsidise firms to create jobs for young people instead of focusing only on job training in youth workshops.

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APPENDIX 1. Personal details about the interviewees

Gender	Age	Place of residence	Current life situation	Education
Woman	22	Pudasjärvi	At work (employed after the first contact)	Vocational school
Man	20	Oulu	In job training	Suspended vocational school
Woman	20	Oulu	Unemployed	Suspended vocational school
Woman	23	Oulu	In job training	Comprehensive school
Woman	22	Pudasjärvi	In job training	Suspended vocational school
Woman	23	Pudasjärvi	Unemployed	Vocational school
Woman	20	Oulu	In job training	Vocational school
Man	21	Pudasjärvi	In reform school	Vocational school
Woman	20	Pudasjärvi	Unemployed (going to job training)	Upper secondary school
Man	24	Oulu	In job training	Vocational school
Man	20	Oulu	In job training	Vocational school
Man	20	Pudasjärvi	In job training	Suspended vocational school
Man	22	Pudasjärvi	In job training	Vocational school
Woman	23	Pudasjärvi	In job training	Vocational school

– CHAPTER 7 –

COPING WITH UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN KARELIA

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Unemployment is a major problem among young people in Russia (Agranovich et al. 2006; La Cava & Michael 2006, Shvets & Ilyina 2002), representing serious social and economic problems at an individual and at a societal level. Unemployment rates are especially high in the northernmost parts of Russia, and in some rural areas in the Republic of Karelia the unemployment rate (the unofficial numbers) among young people is as high as 40-50 per cent. Russian society has undergone significant changes during the last decades and is still characterized as an instable society by researchers (for example Chuprov & Zubok 2002). As pointed out by Chuprov & Zubok (2002), integration into the structures of society, such as the labour market, can be especially challenging for young people growing up in a society experiencing instability, as the Russian society. According to them it is a myth that young people in Russia have been successfully integrated into the new market economy. As they see it, this myth is among other things contradicted by the social exclusion imposed on young people through widespread unemployment.

How do young people in the more remote areas of Russia experience being unemployed? In this chapter, we investigate this question through the analyses of qualitative interviews with unemployed young people in two regions in the Republic of Karelia; the town of Petrozavodsk and the settlement of Kalevala. The aim of the interviews was to gain insight into how young people feel when they are faced with unemployment, how the status as unemployed influences their outlook on themselves, on their current situation and on their future prospects – how they cope with their situation as unemployed.

THE STUDY

As in many other countries, unemployment rates in Russia and within the Republic of Karelia vary significantly from region to region as labour markets and job opportunities vary from place to place. We have chosen to conduct empirical studies in two parts of the Republic of Karelia; the town of Petrozavodsk and the settlement of Kalevala, which are the areas within the republic with the lowest and the highest unemployment rates, respectively. Even though Petrozavodsk and Kalevala in this sense represent two opposites within the republic, the problem of youth unemployment is pressing and critical in both areas.

Petrozavodsk is the capital of the Republic of Karelia with a population of 271 000 and is the industrial, cultural and scientific center in the north-west of Russia. The industrial sector of Petrozavodsk is predominated by construction, metal industry and wood-processing. The city is also the educational centre of the Republic and holds 16 higher educational institutions, among them the Karelian Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which is the largest scientific establishment of Petrozavodsk. Petrozavodsk has a rich cultural life and is the home of 4 theaters, the philharmonic society and several museums and exhibition halls. Infrastructure is well developed compared to other areas in the Republic of Karelia, and as already mentioned the level of unemployment is one of the lowest in the Republic.

Kalevala is a small town located in a remote region in the northern part of the Republic and has a population of 5278 (in the year 2009¹). The economy of the region is based on timber cutting and timber processing, which in recent years has experienced serious downturns. There are also agricultural enterprises and farms in the region. Infrastructure is poorly developed, and very bad road conditions makes travelling to and from Kalevala difficult and time-consuming. Due to the economic downturns among the industries in this region, the unemployment level has been rising during the last 5 years, and is currently among the highest in the Republic. Official numbers state that the unemployment rate among the economically active part of the population is a little over 10 per

1) http://www.gks.ru/scripts/db_inet2/passport/table.aspx?opt=866090002009

cent. However, since many of the unemployed do not register as unemployed, unemployment statistics in Russia are unreliable and in reality the number of unemployed youth is much higher than official statistics suggest (Chruprov & Zubok 2002). The corresponding official number for Petrozavodsk was 0.8 per cent, while the Republic average was 2.5 per cent.

The informants

Qualitative interviews were carried out among unemployed young people in the age of 18-29 residing in Petrozavodsk and Kalevala. The interviews were carried out during the winter of 2007-2008. In Russia, the majority of young unemployed will refrain from registering at an employment agency. Therefore, unemployment status at the employment agency was not used as a criterion for sampling interviewees. The informants were recruited through a combination of strategies. Some were found through contact with the local employment agencies, and these persons were registered as unemployed. Others were recruited through a form of snowball sampling, where friends, acquaintances and relatives of persons interviewed and in some cases also of the interviewers were asked to join the study. During the interviews, the interviewees were asked questions concerning their social and economic situation, consumer practices, inclusion into social networks, leisure and other activities, experiences of job searching and views on their present life situations as well as views of their future lives. The interviews lasted between 1-3 hours, and some of the interviewees were interviewed twice in order to clarify details.

23 interviews were carried out, transcribed and analyzed; 17 in Petrozavodsk and 6 in Kalevala. The informants were between 18 to 29 years of age, and included 13 women and 10 men. The educational level of the informants was rather high. Five of them had completed higher education (out of these there were 4 women) and the majority had completed upper secondary education. Only three of the informants had not completed upper secondary education. Thus, the educational level among our respondents is higher than a random sampling procedure among unemployed young people in this age group

would generate. Our sample of interviewees therefore represents a relatively resourceful group of unemployed young people in terms of educational capital. However, as we shall see later, the problems faced by these young adults, who do have educational capital and in theory should stand a better chance on the labour market even in economic downturns, still face serious challenges as unemployed job seekers in this region. Thus, for these young adults, educational capital has not served as a barrier against unemployment.

Among the informants, 5 of the women and 3 of the men were married, while the rest referred to themselves as singles. 4 of the interviewed women have children.

All the informants interviewed in Kalevala had grown up in the settlement and had continued to live there as young adults. When it comes to the informants in Petrozavodsk, on the other hand, 10 of the 17 persons interviewed had grown up in Petrozavodsk. The others had moved to Petrozavodsk for different reasons; in order to enter educational institutions (and had stayed there after graduating - or failed to graduate, as the case was for 2 of the informants), in search for job opportunities, because their parents moved there or in order to follow their spouse or partner who found work there. The majority of those moving to Petrozavodsk, had roots in Karelia in the sense that their parents were born and grew up in the region.

More than half of the informants (14 people) lived together with their parents or close relatives (grandmothers, brothers, and sisters). In Russia, sharing a household with parents and grandparents is a common practice, even among those who have their own families. None of the single respondents in this study expressed a desire to move out of their parents' house. Most of them considered it self-evident that they should be able to continue to live with their parents, and that their parents should continue to take care of them and partially support them. In recent years, however, this has started to change, as the welfare level of the population is increasing and also due to the introduction of special mortgages offered to young families. For unemployed young adults buying a place of their own is, nevertheless, not realistic.

The housing standards varied significantly between Kalevala and Petroza-

vodsk. In Kalevala all the informants lived in apartments without or with few modern facilities (no central heating, no water supply or no hot water supply). The housing standard was considerably better in Petrozavodsk, where almost all lived in apartments with modern facilities.

All of the informants, except one, a 21-year old girl from Petrozavodsk, had prior work experience from steady or temporary employment in full time or part time work. Many had had their first work experiences as teenagers working during holidays or after school. In Kalevala this could be farm work or work in the forest, and in Petrozavodsk this could be waitressing in a café or as a shop assistant. In general, the male interviewees had started their working activities at an earlier stage than the female interviewees. The working experiences of the interviewees were mainly from unskilled labour activities. During the summer, some of them would engage in berry and mushroom picking or fishing, both in Kalevala and in Petrozavodsk. Also, some of them mentioned that they would engage in seasonal work in Finland on a regular basis, something that was possible due to the geographical closeness. Only a few of the informants who had formal educational qualifications, either at the level of upper secondary or higher education, had been engaged in work according to their qualifications, and if so, only for short periods of time.

The length of the unemployment period varied significantly between the young informants, from 8 weeks up until 8 years of unemployment.

BECOMING UNEMPLOYED

The informants gave a number of different reasons for being in the situation as unemployed. Some of these reasons were related to circumstances that the respondents themselves had little or no control over, such as staff reductions, that the business they worked in closed down, military service obligations, that the position they had in the first place was a temporary one or that they had to move in order to follow their spouse or partner who found work elsewhere. The more subjective reasons were related to the preferences and choices of the

individual him- or herself. These had to do with different issues connected to working conditions. One such issue has to do with wages. Some of the informants were not satisfied with the level of payment, or in their opinion there was a discrepancy between the work they put in and the salary they received, and some also complained about irregular or consistently late wage payments. Other aspects of the working conditions were also mentioned; the working conditions were not good enough, the work was too heavy, the work was monotonous, the working schedules were inconvenient. Other reasons for leaving among our informants were instable working conditions, frequent demands of over-time, poor personal relations with the management or with work mates, marriage, child-birth and maternity leave. Even though many of the young people had not been laid off and thus *forced* to leave their previous employment, working conditions would in many cases be so bad that it in reality left them no choice but to leave. Chuprov & Zubok (2002) point out that in Russia during the course of the reform in the nineties young people was the least protected part of the labour force and suffered from all forms of social discrimination. According to them, this has changed little after the reforms, and young people are largely dependent on employers and shareholders whose activity is not restrained by Russia's undeveloped social system and they are often severely taken advantage of as cheap labour with few legal rights. Many of the interviewees had been engaged in work within the black economy, and some of them mentioned that they quit mainly because of the lack of the "social guarantees package". The younger persons seemed to be more willing to engage in this kind of work than their older counterparts, who seemed to be more conscious of and appreciative of the social guarantees that followed a "normal" job. The older persons would therefore more often turn down offers of black labour.

JOB SEARCHING

Most of the informants were actively searching for work and their job search strategies varied. The most common strategy was related to the use of social

networks of relatives, friends and acquaintances, both in Petrozavodsk and in Kalevala. Newspaper ads were also an important source of information about possible vacancies.

The employment agencies did not play a central role in the search for work. As already mentioned, far from all unemployed people in Russia will register at the employment agency. For some individuals this can be explained by a lack of knowledge about what the employment agency can do for them and what kind of formal rights registering as unemployed entails, for example in terms of financial support. However, among our informants there seemed to be a widespread skepticism towards the employment agencies and whether they could actually be of any help when it comes to finding proper work. Many of the informants did not at all consider registering at the employment agency as a way of searching for a job, since they were sure that the vacancies proposed there were not relevant for them. And to some extent at least, they were correct in their assumptions, because in practice vacancies proposed at the employment agencies are related to hard physical labour and unqualified work with minimum wage. Such vacancies do not appear attractive for young people who do have some form of educational qualifications, which was the case for most of our informants. For female jobseekers with higher education the vacancies offered at the employment agencies seemed even more irrelevant.

Very few of our informants from Petrozavodsk had registered at the employment agency, while almost all of the young unemployed from Kalevala had registered. This difference between the young unemployed from the two regions is probably mainly due to the difference in educational background between the two samples. At the same time, this may also be due to labour market differences between the two regions. In Kalevala, the unemployment rates are very high and the opportunities at the labour market are very limited. The young unemployed therefore have to explore all possibilities for work. In the capital of the Republic, on the other hand, work opportunities are better and more diverse. It seems therefore, that the young unemployed in Petrozavodsk, are in a position where they do not have to accept just any kind of work. Many of them have the possibility to find temporary part-times jobs that can tie them

over, and these aspects together with a better financial situation in general among the residents of Petrozavodsk, put the young unemployed in this city in a less stressful situation than their Kalevala counterparts.

Even though the majority of our informants were active job seekers, there were 2-3 of them who were not actively searching for work. One of them said that he had lost the hope of finding a job, and he simply attended the employment agency just to show up there and that was all. A woman stated that she had been unemployed for so long that she no longer thought she had the ability to hold a steady job. *"I have gotten used to being unemployed.... And my relatives accept this situation and they have stopped asking questions."* Many of the young interviewed viewed the fierce competition at the labour market as the biggest obstacle for getting a job. Some of them also mentioned a lack of demand for their competence and they also viewed their own lack of work experience and necessary professional knowledge and skills (for example computer skills or knowledge of foreign languages) as important hindrances for securing employment.

MOVING AWAY IN ORDER TO GET A JOB

There is considerable out-migration from the remote areas in north-west Russia, especially of young people. Moving to other parts of the country is seen by many as a good strategy for finding work, and sometimes the only way of finding work. However, not all of the young unemployed are willing or able to move away from their place of residence. One of the informants in Kalevala emphasized that he is reluctant to move because he had lived his whole life at his home place. He appreciated the closeness to relatives and friends and also the familiarity of everything that surrounded him. Another informant said that she could not move, even if she had wanted to, because of family obligations. Yet another one had already tried life in a bigger city and did not want to try it again because of negative experiences. Moving away from the current place of residence seemed more of an option for the younger unemployed than for

the older ones, many of whom already had family obligations. Many of the younger unemployed, especially in Kalevala, were in fact planning to move away in the near future.

Several of the informants in Petrozavodsk already had migration experiences where they had left their home places in search of “a better life” – and this had in fact brought them to Petrozavodsk from the more rural areas within the Republic of Karelia. They explained their decision to move by the lack of opportunities for young people in rural Karelia.

The potential migrators in Kalevala were mainly oriented towards moving to Petrozavodsk, while their Petrozavodsk counterparts were oriented towards the capitals of St. Petersburg or Moscow, or even saw the possibility for moving to another country, such as Finland or the U.S. All of these potential migrators were convinced that the larger cities would be able to offer them more opportunities in terms of work, but also in terms of experiences. Some of them had friends, relatives or other acquaintances who had already moved. They did not, however, necessarily want to leave their home place for good. Some of them talked about moving for a limited time period in order to earn some extra money, gain new experiences and see other cities and cultures. The migration plans were, however, for many of them filled with a lot of ‘ifs’, and packing up and moving away did not appear as an easy decision to make, especially for practical and financial reasons. Even though some of them knew young people who had already moved, they did not have the kind of social networks that could represent a resource in a new and unfamiliar environment. Finding housing and finding work etc. were viewed as potential obstacles, and for many, their migration plans were limited by economic constraints connected to the move itself and to getting established at a new place.

ECONOMY AND CONSUMPTION

For all the young unemployed persons interviewed the economic situation was significantly affected by their status as unemployed. Those who registered at

the employment agencies would receive unemployment benefit. The benefit is in itself very small and it is virtually impossible to survive on just this if one lives by oneself. To what degree the economic situation was affected by being unemployed, was highly dependent on whether and to what degree their parents were able to support them or not. Those who lived with their parents did not see their own economic situation as particularly stressful or problematic. Those who lived by themselves, on the other hand, experienced their economic situation as much more difficult. They described a situation where they had to economize on food and other necessities and they did not have the opportunity to purchase things that they had done previously.

Financial support from parents thus appeared to be the most important source of income for the young unemployed. Only a few informants expressed any reluctance when it comes to receiving support from their parents. Those living at home viewed it as quite natural and as a matter of course that their parents would support them financially, pay their bills and help them in other ways. Some of the informants did not even regard this as extra support. For women the wage of a husband or financial support from a boyfriend was an important source of income. Men did not talk about financial support from their partner or wife in the same way, which is probably due to the traditional breadwinner position of men in Russian society.

The majority of the informants would have the opportunity to earn some additional money from time to time. Some of them managed to get work for the summer season, usually in the black economy, and then they would live off this money during the rest of the year. This could be work within the tourist industry, construction work or temporary work in Finland, for example strawberry or other berry picking. Some would also engage locally in fishing, berry picking or mushroom picking.

The economic situation for the young unemployed in Kalevala seemed to be more difficult than for those in Petrozavodsk. This may seem odd, considering that living expenses are considerably lower in Kalevala. However, the economic situation among the general population in Kalevala is worse than in Petrozavodsk, and many of the young unemployed in Kalevala had parents

who were themselves unemployed and thus less able to contribute as much to their unemployed children's economy. Also, the opportunities for temporary work were better in Petrozavodsk.

EVERYDAY LIFE

For the young unemployed persons we interviewed everyday life seemed rather monotonous. One day would not be very different from the next day and weekends would not be very different from week days. A typical day in the lives of the young unemployed, both in Kalevala and in Petrozavodsk, would start rather late, with them sleeping in. A lot of time would then be spent on solitary activities, such as watching television, playing video or computer games or surfing the internet (for those who had access to a computer and internet). A 21-year old girl from Petrozavodsk said: "*The TV set is switched on for the whole day,... You always have your attention distracted; you just sit down and watch it. I know, what is on different channels, I know all the TV-series. I didn't use to watch this much TV*". It was obvious that this kind of solitary life was not something that they enjoyed, and many of them would also spend time with friends who were in the same situation as unemployed.

Most of the persons we interviewed used their time rather passively. They did not work actively towards preparing for work or trying to better their chances on the labour market, for example through taking courses etc. Only very few of the young persons interviewed led a more active life style, for example doing sports from time to time. Because of the economic situation, preference was given to those types of activities that did not require money, and in this way the financial situation would limit what the young unemployed were able to take part in of recreational activities. Some talked about how they had to give up hobbies that would cost money once they became unemployed. As a consequence, the economic limitations associated with unemployment would also serve to restrict their social lives. Young people in Petrozavodsk have a broader range of opportunities available to them than young people in Kalevala in

terms of activities. A lot of these activities would entail expenditure, and in this sense the young unemployed from Petrozavodsk will experience stronger limitations when it comes to being able to make use of the range of different activities available to them.

SOCIAL WELLBEING AND FUTURE PLANS

Most of the young unemployed interviewed expressed some kind of negative emotions related to being unemployed. They viewed work as an important and self-evident part of a person's life and they expected work to be a part of their adult lives as well. Not being able to get work generated a feeling of helplessness. They had in a sense lost control over their own lives since they were not able to find a steady job. It was clear from the interviews that the status as unemployed had an effect on the way the young would look at themselves. Some would talk about how they no longer saw themselves as important; as unemployed they felt worthless, in their own eyes as well as in the eyes of others. They felt humiliated by the situation they found themselves in and they felt helpless and not able to see what they could do in order to change their situation.

Also, many of the informants described feelings of melancholy, sadness, boredom, fatigue and apathy. For those who experienced severe economic limitations, this represented a considerable element of stress in their lives, and they were burdened by feelings of instability and worries about their future. One of the young unemployed, a 24-year old boy from Petrozavodsk, expressed it in the following way: *"How it is like to be unemployed? Well, there is the feeling of uncertainty; there is no confidence in tomorrow. And about the money: today I have some, tomorrow I have none. There is no work - and where to get money, well, that is not clear. And in general it is boring not to work. One must be occupied with something."*

A feeling of shame was also present in the experiences of many of the young. Many of them blamed themselves for the situation they were in and some described themselves as failures. They were very aware of the reactions from

people who surrounded them, and some of them said that they found both negative reactions and reactions of pity or sympathy as equally unpleasant. One male informant described how he tried to simply overlook and ignore the reactions from the surroundings, whether they were positive or negative. Some of the informants did, however, also have the perspective that their own situation as unemployed was a result of structural mechanisms and objective circumstances beyond their control. One unemployed 23-year old woman in Petrozavodsk stated: *“I think everybody at one point in time will face the problem of unemployment and should look at it objectively. It can happen to anyone in this unstable world. I am not ashamed that I haven’t found a job yet. Many of my course-mates are either jobless or work not according to their specialty.”* This woman had completed an education and was able to see that even though she had done the right thing by doing this, the labour market did not have room for her at the moment. She found some consolidation in the fact that she knew many others in the same situation. She could therefore in a way, cut herself some slack and accept that her situation was a result of circumstances that she could not control. She did, however, believe that this was only temporary and that she would eventually succeed in finding a job.

When it comes to outlook on the future, this woman was quite representative for many of the young unemployed. Even though lack of work was perceived as a vital failure in their lives, they still believed that sooner or later things would change for the better. A 21-year old female informant from Petrozavodsk expressed it in the following way: *“I believe that everything will be OK with me. I will definitely find a job, and a nice one, which will inspire me with pleasure and satisfaction and where I will be able to care for people, which is what I want to do”*. The dreams and hopes for the future seemed rather realistic for most of the young, who usually dreamt of a ‘normal’ job and a ‘normal’ life. Persons who had experienced long and perhaps even returning periods of unemployment had, however, a more difficult time when it comes to maintaining a positive outlook on the future and their hopes for success when it comes to finding a suitable job decreased.

CONCLUSIONS

Unemployment is a serious problem for the youth population of Russia, and especially for young people in the more remote areas of the Federation. The findings from our study show that there is every reason to take this problem very seriously, as it affects young peoples' lives in a number of ways. Having a steady job is still an important value for young people, as findings in our study, as well as findings from other studies among youth in Russia and other parts of Europe demonstrate (for example Karlsen 2001; Chuprov & Zubok 2002).

In Russia, the employment agencies do not play an important part for the young unemployed, as also pointed out by Chuprov & Zubok (2002). The employment agencies do not have a very central role, either as a part of a job search strategy, as a place for support, financially or in other ways, or as a resource center in order to prepare the young better for the demands of the labour market. Most of the young unemployed in our study feel that they themselves have to take charge in order to find work, and they do not see employment agencies as an important support in this regard. This implies that being unemployed and trying to find work, is conceived by the young as a situation that has to be handled by the individual itself. The problem and the attempts to overcome the problems are privatised and are conceived of as individual problems, as described by for example Beck & Beck-Gernsheim (2002).

Also, there is a mismatch between the educational capital of the young unemployed and the jobs offered at the employment agencies, which points to a general mismatch between young people's competence and the labour markets they relate to. The majority of the young unemployed in our study has completed at least secondary education. As our study demonstrates, this kind of educational capital is by no means a protection against unemployment in the Russian society. As pointed out by Chuprov & Zubok (2002), a high number of the unemployed young people in Russia are graduates from various educational establishments, and even the most qualified sections of youth face high levels of unemployment in contemporary Russian society. According to La Cava & Michael (2006), it is a general picture in Russia that an increased educational

level among the young does little to change the unemployment picture, and neither secondary nor tertiary education is giving them the skills and experience needed for the contemporary job market. According to them, poor quality within the educational system is also a problem faced by young people in Russia. Secondary school students in particular complain of poor skills, inappropriate teaching methods, and unprofessional behavior, and interregional and rural-urban disparities in school completion rates and attainment levels are high (*ibid.*).

The findings from our study show that migration is regarded as a feasible strategy for finding a job among many of the young unemployed. Other studies within the Russian Federation have shown the same (La Cava & Micheal 2006). Our study shows that relocation is regarded as a relevant strategy among both rural and urban youth. The areas they consider are, however, somewhat different. While youth located in rural areas focus on moving to one of the closest urban centers within the same region, youth located in city-areas orient themselves towards bigger cities in more central areas of Russia or even moving abroad. This kind of stepwise relocation towards more urban areas has also been demonstrated by other researchers (for example Bæck 2004).

Relocation does, however, demand resources from the young; in terms of money, social networks or other forms of capital. This means that far from all the young unemployed are able to put their plans into action, due to restricted resources. As shown in our study, unemployment can be a problem that faces more than one generation within the same family, especially in rural areas where the unemployment rates are high. Since the young unemployed to a large extent are dependent on parental support in order to survive financially, young people who have unemployed parents will find themselves in a much more difficult position when it comes to accessing resources that can serve to give them a new future through relocation.

The heavy dependency on parental support that we have demonstrated through our study also contributes to the individualization and privatisation of the unemployment problem, as mentioned above. Local and state authorities do only to a small degree take responsibility for the economic situation

of the unemployed, which communicates that this is a problem that the individual must solve itself. Young unemployed from families where other family members are also unemployed, have a double disadvantage compared to unemployed youth who have parents who are working. They will receive less financial support from their parents, and in addition the social network structures that are so important in order to find work in Russia are probably weaker since the parents themselves are placed on the outside of the labour market.

Our study has shown that in general young unemployed people struggle with their status as unemployed and with the consequences this has for the way they are able to live out their lives. Many of them have problems facing their everyday life situations as unemployed, which are often characterized by passivity, loneliness and monothony. Low self esteem, depressive thoughts and feelings of shame are also expressed by many of the young unemployed in our study, as also found elsewhere in this volume (Bæck, 2012, Chapter 8).

At the same time, the young unemployed do express hopes and belief in the future. Our findings suggest, however, that the positive outlooks are threatened as a consequence of longer and recurring periods of unemployment. According to Chuprov & Zubok (2002), long-term youth unemployment is becoming more and more common in Russia, especially among rural youth. They state: "Recent graduates, unable to find jobs and use their knowledge in the labour market, are extremely vulnerable to marginalization, alienation from society, and social exclusion" (2002: 174). Assisting and helping the young unemployed as early as possible in their unemployment careers are therefore of crucial importance in order to prevent the development of more severe consequences often associated with long-term unemployment.

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– CHAPTER 8 –

UNEMPLOYMENT, SELF-ESTEEM AND THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN LATENT FUNCTIONS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Unn-Doris Karlsen Bæck

Does unemployment impact the self-esteem of young adults? The focus in this chapter is the link between personal welfare and labour market relations. Does joblessness negatively influence how young adults think and feel about themselves? Which factors determine to what extent joblessness influences self-esteem? The chapter presents empirical analyses of survey material from the northern parts of Sweden and Finland. This region is today characterised by major structural changes linked with the local economy and the labour market. Unemployment is high and the nature of the labour market is conducive to considerable migration of young people both within the region and especially out of it. Great distances, a harsh climate, an industrial structure where the exploitation of natural resources is still important and a peripheral position relative to their respective nation's national centres are also traits that to some point distinguish this particular region from the rest of Sweden and Finland.

Losing one's job represents a serious crisis for many individuals, and job loss may have implications on many levels of life. According to Audhoe et al. (2010) unemployment is a growing social problem with serious financial consequences for the impacted individuals. Even though the unemployment protection system is relatively generous in the Nordic countries, unemployment still implies serious loss of income. A number of studies show that unemployment poses a threat to one's psychological well-being and that unemployed persons have poorer mental health than the employed (e.g. Claussen, 1999; Iversen & Sabroe, 1988; Lindström, 2005). According to Lindström (2005), a substantial

proportion of individuals experiencing job loss will experience mental distress. As pointed out by Audhoo et al. (2010), this may increase the distance to the labour market and begin a cycle that leads to an increase in health problems and consequently a longer unemployment period. Unemployment may also have a negative effect on how one views oneself, one's self worth etc. The latter has to do with the concept of self-esteem, and previous studies have shown that unemployment is often experienced as a psychological strain which has a negative effect on a person's self-esteem (Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir, 2003; Waters & Moore, 2002b).

The concept of self-esteem can be defined as "the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself or herself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval towards oneself" (Rosenberg, 1965: 5). On the one side, self-esteem can serve as a buffer when it comes to experiencing traumas or problems, and as pointed out by Dutton & Brown (1997), individuals with high self-esteem experience less emotional distress in response to failure than individuals with low self-esteem. On the other hand, self-esteem may be *affected* by negative experiences of trauma, loss or failure. Job loss or unemployment may represent such a negative experience.

The sample studied here, are persons in the age group 25-29, an age group that in some ways can be hard to define within the youth/adult categories. Waters & Moore (2002a) point out that several studies have shown that youth and adult samples have different reactions to, and experiences during, unemployment. Even though the limits for what we call youth these days are expanding both downwards and upwards, many persons in the age group we are studying are moving towards what we would call an adult life. For most of them their time within the educational system is over, and they relate instead more and more to the labour market. Some have family obligations with children and a steady partner. The young people in our study can therefore be considered young adults. Social images of what it is like to be a person in this age group (young adult) may influence how they understand their own situation relative to that of others of the same age (reference group) and how they experience unemployment. For younger age groups unsteady employment and/or

unsteady connections to the educational system may be regarded as part of being young, and it is conceived of as less important to hold a steady job than for older age groups. Being unemployed may therefore be considered less of a problem for the younger age groups, as is shown by for example Broomhall & Winefield (1990). Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir (2003) find in their study among unemployed 18-24 year olds that psychological distress increased with age, and they suggest that the social pressures associated with unemployment become more serious with age.

In what way can job loss affect self-esteem? Job loss or unemployment may have an effect on self-esteem *if* work and employment are considered important elements in people's lives. A number of studies show that for most people work is an important element (Almås, 1997; Baethge et al., 1988; Hammer, 2003; Karlsen, 2001b; Tuhkunen, 2002). However, at the same time there are other theorists who claim that work has lost its significance in peoples' lives and its identity forming power. Due to radical technological and social changes and changes within the productive sphere, including increasing and continuing unemployment, several social scientists have claimed that the role of work in the lives of individuals has changed (Bell, 1978; Casey, 1995; Lasch, 1991; Offe, 1985; Ziehe, 1993). Casey (1995) asks whether it is still possible to conceive of work as a fundamental basis for social organisation and a primary constituent of self-formation, as she claims that the post-industrial condition has led to the dissolution of both traditional and modern bindings related to social solidarity and a metamorphosis of the character of the modern self. As shown elsewhere (Karlsen 2001a, 2001b), other theorists have also pointed to changes in the normative foundation of society, changes in individuals' needs, motivation structures and modes of conduct, and the theorists therefore claim that the formation of identity is about to be liberated from the work role (e.g. Baethge et al., 1988; Beck, 1984). If this is the case and work is no longer as important to the individuals as it used to be, loss of job will not have a devastating effect on how individuals view themselves and their place in the world.

Traditionally, work represented primarily a means of surviving and acquiring basic resources for living. Today, work is also viewed as essential for processes

of self-development and self-realisation, perhaps more so than as a means of securing material welfare, as also claimed by a number of social scientists (e.g. Baethge et al., 1988; Bourdieu, 1990; Karlsen, 2001a, 2001b; Lasch, 1991; Ziehe, 1993). As stated elsewhere, whereas work used to be first and foremost a means of gaining material subsistence, it now has other functions, too, which have more to do with other dimensions in life (Karlsen, 2001b: 245). The values connected to work exceed the purely material and give meaning to individuals at a more personal level. Work is only one of several important arenas of the life of the modern person – which is *not* to say that work is no longer important. In a sense, the relationship between work and self-development and self-realisation may lead one to view work as even more significant in people's lives now than it used to be. One could therefore expect that loss of job could have an even more negative impact on self-esteem.

Also, job loss or unemployment can affect self-esteem if unemployment leads to a situation where the consequences of the change in labour market status serve to restrict the individual's possibilities to participate on arenas that are considered important by the individual itself. These can for example be financial constraints as a result of unemployment, and studies show that economic strain has a negative effect on the psychological wellbeing and causes psychological distress among unemployed (e.g. Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir, 2003). Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir (2003) found in their study that perceived material deprivation was the strongest predictor of psychological distress among young unemployed. Important arenas in modern day lives are among other things linked to participation in leisure activities and consumption, and some theorists even claim that the leisure arena has replaced work and production in processes connected with identity formation (e.g. Offe, 1985; Willis, 1990; Ziehe, 1993; Zukin, 1992). Being unemployed, with the financial strain this often implies, may lead to decisive social limitations towards these arenas, and in turn this may have an impact on unemployed persons' self-esteem.

Limitation of social life and social activities is a common consequence of job loss; more time is spent on solitary activities, such as watching television, surfing the internet etc. Even though surfing the internet can be a social activ-

ity as well, if it entails taking part in social medias for example, time spent in the actual presence of others, engaging in actual interaction with others and sharing experiences with others, will decrease. Jahoda (1982, 1997) makes a similar argument when he states that unemployment causes psychological distress because it deprives people of the latent functions that employment provides. He points to functions such as time structure, regular shared experiences, information about personal identity, a link with collective purpose and enforced activity (cited in Waters & Moore, 2002a). These changes that come as a consequence of being unemployed disturbs the structure of every day life and is not in accordance with prevalent images of what adult life should be like. Social images of how life should be and how one's own life as unemployed matches up to that 'standard', is also affected by how 'normal' it is to be unemployed at one's place of residence. In the geographical region where the empirical data has been collected, being young and unemployed can be seen as rather 'normal', at least compared to many other regions in these countries.

In order to shed light on the relationship between unemployment and self-esteem we ask whether unemployment negatively influences how people think and feel about themselves. The empirical analyses are based on a model aiming at testing relationships between different determinants and self-esteem.

DATA SETS, VARIABLES AND METHODS

Data sets

The analyses in this chapter are based on survey data collected among young people in the northern parts of Sweden and Finland. There are both employed and unemployed persons in the sample. The survey consisted of questions concerning the respondents' evaluations, attitudes, motives and experiences concerning work related issues and experiences of being unemployed for those who have such experiences. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The questions in the first part were overlapping for the two groups of respondents

and investigated their own situation and future prospects. The second part was directed only at those who had experiences with being unemployed, and here we included questions about how they experienced unemployment.

Telephone surveys were conducted during spring 2008. The sample was drawn from the national registers in Finland and Sweden. From these registers a random sample of persons in the age group 25-29 was drawn. In order to sample, we distinguished between two groups; one group consisting of individuals who had problematic relations to the labor market in the sense that they had experienced extensive periods of unemployment, and one group consisting of individuals who had unproblematic relations to the labor market in the sense that they had steady employment. 2928 persons were asked to complete the questionnaire over phone, and 2023 persons agreed to participate. This gives a response rate of 69 per cent. Finland had the highest response rate with 86 per cent, while Sweden had 57 per cent. This response rate can be considered satisfactory and we can be fairly certain that the results produced are not results of nonrandom errors.

Survey variables and measurements

Table 1 gives an overview over the variables used. The dependent variable in this study has to do with the question of self-esteem. Self-report is the most frequently used approach to measuring self-esteem (Gray-Little et al., 1997), and in this study self-esteem was measured by a moderated version of Rosenberg's self-esteem scale where 9 variables (statements) were included. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1965) is one of the most widely used measures of self-esteem. It is normally composed of five positively worded and five negatively worded statements, and although it was originally designed as a single-factor scale, the structure of the scale is continuously debated (Greenberger et al., 2003). RSES has been used in a variety of different ways; as a single scale, as a one-factor variable generated from factor analysis or as a two-factor variable generated from factor analysis. Some researchers have suggested that self-esteem is composed of two interdependent but distinct concepts, 'self

Table 1: Overview of the variables used, n=2023.

		SWEDEN, n= 1000				FINLAND, n=1023			
	Categories	Mean	SD	Min.	Max	Mean	SD	Min.	Max
Gender	male = 0, female = 1	0.49	0.50	0	1	0.50	0.50	0	1
Marital status	0=single, 1=married/cohabitant	0.58	0.494	0	1	0.66	0.474	0	1
Respondent's educational level	1=primary/lower secondary, 2=upper secondary, 3=university/college	2.43	0.794	1	4	2.34	0.760	1	4
Self-evaluated health	Self-reported health: I consider my health to be 1=very poor, 2=quite poor, 3=moderate, 4=good, 5=excellent	4.07	0.847	1	5	4.09	0.750	1	5
Labour market status	0=employed, 1= unemployed	0.37	0.482	0	1	0.37	0.484	0	1
Economic deprivation	Indicator constructed from several variables, scores ranging from 1-3, where 1 is the lowest degree of economic depression, and 3 is the highest degree of economic depression	1.43	0.459	1	3	1.32	0.399	1	3
Social network	How often do you spend time with friends/family/co-workers outside of work? 1 = never, 2 = less than once a month, 3 = once a month, 4= several times per month, 5= once a week, 6=several times a week, 7=every day	5.57	1.281	1	7	5.50	1.162	2	7
Unemployment rate	Unemployment rate adult population in the municipality where the respondent resides	4.04	0.815	3.31	7.77	11.56	2.241	8.19	18.82
Self-esteem	Variable constructed from 9 evaluative statements, after Rosenberg (1965)	24.54	4.508	9	32	25.19	5.312	0	32

competence' and 'self liking' (Tafarodi & Swann, 2001). Several other researchers have concluded that even though they have obtained a two-factor structure for the RSES with positive and negative items loading on different factors (Camines & Zeller, 1979), this structure was a function of a single theoretical dimension of self-esteem contaminated by a method artefact (Camines & Zeller, 1979; Marsh, 1996). Marsh (1996) argued such an artefact might occur because younger and less verbally able students would have greater difficulty responding appropriately to negatively worded items. In the analyses in this chapter the RSES has been employed as originally constructed, that is as a single factor scale. For the positively worded statements each response was given a score of 0 for strongly disagree, 1 for disagree, 2 for neither agree nor disagree, 3 for agree and 4 for agree strongly. For the negatively worded statements, the scale was reversed. Thus, the final score on the RSES scale could in theory range from 0 to 36, with 36 as the highest possible self-esteem score. The score on each statement has been added up and the sum score has been used in the further analyses.

8 independent variables have been investigated: gender, educational level, marital status, self-evaluated health, labour market status, economic deprivation, social network and unemployment rate at the municipality of residence.

RESULTS

Tables 2 and 3 give an overview over mean scores on educational level, self-evaluated health, social network, unemployment rate and RSES according to labour market status. For both samples an ANOVA analysis was carried out and revealed significant variations between unemployed and employed respondents on educational level, self-evaluated health, economic deprivation and RSES, and for the Finnish sample also for social network. The mean educational level among the unemployed respondents is significantly lower than among the employed respondents. Also, the employed respondents report better self-evaluated health, a lower degree of economic deprivation and have

higher RSES-scores. A Chi analysis with Fisher's Exact Test was carried out on the relationships between labour market status and gender and between labour market status and marital status, and revealed an association between gender and unemployment status (Swedish sample $\chi=14.565$, $p=.000$, Finnish sample $\chi=3.647$, $p=.033$) and between marital status and unemployment status (Swedish sample $\chi=10.925$, $p=.001$, Finnish sample $\chi=41.220$, $p=.000$). Among the unemployed there are 61 per cent men, while there is only a slight gender imbalance among the employed with 52 per cent women among the respondents. Among the employed 62 per cent of the respondents are married or living with a partner, while for the unemployed respondents 51 per cent are married or living with a partner. These results suggest, together with the ANOVA, that the two groups (unemployed and employed respondents) are not comparable in terms of demographic profile (educational level, gender, marital status). It is therefore necessary to take these into consideration as covariates in the subsequent analyses.

Tables 2 and 3 also show correlations between the different independent variables (and the dependent variable). For both the Swedish and the Finnish samples economic deprivation, educational level, marital status and health are correlated with RSES and with unemployment status. The effect of employment status on RSES can be modified by either of these independent variables. In the subsequent analyses, the interrelationships between different variables on RSES have therefore been explored. Country-wise variations have not been statistically tested.

By use of multiple regression analysis the aforementioned independent variables' effect on RSES has been investigated. Table 4 shows the significance of the variables and the explanatory power when all the independent variables are included in the equation. In the first step of the analysis, only the background factors were included (gender, educational level, marital status), which explained approximately 3 per cent of the variance for the Swedish sample and 4 per cent for the Finnish sample. Gender did not have an effect on RSES in any of the countries. Educational level had an effect on RSES only in Finland. In both countries marital status had an effect on RSES in the sense that respond-

ents who were married or lived with a partner had a higher RSES-score than single respondents.

In the next step, self-evaluated health was included, and the inclusion of this variable increased the explained variance for both countries; explained variance increased with 6 per cent for the Swedish sample and 10 per cent for the Finnish sample. The health variable is a strong significant predictor for RSES in both countries.

Status on the labour market was included as a factor in the third step and this increased the variance by 3 per cent in Sweden and 2 per cent in Finland.

In the final step, economic deprivation and social network were included in the analyses. The inclusion of these two variables increased the explained variance in both countries, with 4 per cent for Sweden and 6 per cent for Finland. Both of the variables were significant predictors for RSES in both countries. Interaction effects have been investigated, but have not been found appropriate to include because of lack of significant interactions.

If we look at the complete equations in table 4, the analyses show that for the Swedish sample labour market status has an independent significant effect on RSES when controlling for all the other variables, in the sense that unemployed persons have a lower RSES-score than employed persons. In addition, marital status, self-evaluated health, economic strain and social network have independent significant effects on RSES. Married persons have a higher RSES-score than single persons. Good health, good economic situation and an active social life, all these variables have a positive effect on RSES. We find no gender differences and no differences based on educational level. Also, whether one lives in a municipality with high or low unemployment level do not seem to have an effect on RSES.

For the Finnish sample we find the same pattern as for the Swedish sample. In addition, respondents' educational level also has an independent significant effect on RSES in the sense that the higher the educational level, the higher is the respondent's RSES-score.

Thus, in the analyses presented in table 4, we have isolated the effect of unemployment on RSES by controlling for a number of other variables, and it is safe to conclude that unemployment status has an independent, significant negative

effect on RSES. Furthermore, the results from these analyses demonstrate that there are a number of other variables that also have an effect on RSES, some of which are latent factors in the sense that they are associated with labour market status. Economic deprivation and social network can be considered latent factors. Being unemployed puts people in economically challenged positions. Economic deprivation has in itself an effect on self-esteem, and since loss of job will often bring with it economic deprivation, a decrease in self-esteem will come as a result.

Table 4 Self-esteem regressed on relevant independent variables, including employment status, Sweden (n=956) and Finland (n=1023)

	Sweden, n = 956	Finland, n = 1023
	β	β
(Constant)	22.057***	16.162***
Gender (0=man, 1=woman)	-.580	-.297
Educational level ¹	.060	.969***
Marital status (0=single)	1.744***	1.042**
Self-evaluated health ²	.983***	1.902***
Economic deprivation ³	-1.716***	-2.761***
Social network ⁴	.393**	.450***
Labour market status (1=unemployed, 0=employed)	-.934**	-.814*
Unemployment rate	-.421*	-.001
R ²	0.163	0.218
F	15.170***	30.497***

¹ 1=primary/lower secondary, 2=upper secondary, 3=university/college

² Self-reported health: I consider my health to be 1=very poor, 2=quite poor, 3=moderate, 4=good, 5=excellent

³ Indicator constructed from several variables, scores ranging from 1-3, where 1 is the lowest degree of economic strain, and 3 is the highest degree of economic strain.

⁴ Responses to the question How often do you spend time with friends/family/co-workers outside of work? 1 = never, 2 = less than once a month, 3 = once a month, 4 = several times per month, 5 = once a week, 6 = several times a week, 7 = every day

Significance levels: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

All coefficients are unstandardized.

When it comes to the importance of social network, the analyses show a positive relationship between social network and RSES. Loss of job changes the social life of affected individuals. Social interaction becomes more limited and more time is spent alone. In this study we have seen that for the Finnish sample unemployed persons spend less time with family and friends (outside of work) than employed persons do. We have also found that social network has an independent significant effect on RSES in the sense that a lower score on social network is associated with a lower score on RSES. For the Finnish sample we can therefore consider social network as a latent factor.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this chapter was to study if and how the status as unemployed has an effect on young adults' self-esteem. We have tested whether unemployment is associated with lower self-esteem and we have also explored the interrelationships between other relevant variables on self-esteem. The results show that unemployment is in fact associated with lower self-esteem, which is consistent with findings from among others Waters (2000). Irrespective of demographic variables such as educational level, gender, etc., unemployment has a negative effect on a person's self-esteem. Also, irrespective of variations in factors associated with being unemployed, such as financial strain and a more limited social life (which are factors associated with self-esteem), being unemployed has a negative impact on self-esteem. This indicates that the status as unemployed in itself has a negative effect on how people see themselves. A non-strenuous economic situation or extensive social networks will not make up for the decrease in self-esteem associated with unemployment among young adults. The results indicate that having the status as unemployed is in itself experienced as negative, which also shows that having a job still holds a value in itself. Having a job is an important part of lives among young adults in the Barents region.

However, as these results also indicate, some factors may help ease the burden of being unemployed. The analyses demonstrate that factors associated

with being unemployed, such as financial strain and a more limited social life, make up for a lot of the variation that we find between labour market status and self-esteem, and low self-esteem among unemployed persons is in part a consequence of lack of specific latent functions of unemployment, a logic presented by Jahoda (1982, 1997). Being unemployed negatively affects a person's self-esteem in part through a worsening of personal economy and social life – both of which are elements negatively associated with self-esteem.

The finding that unemployment is associated with a decrease in social life is supported by Waters & Moore's (2002a) study showing that unemployment is characterised by a marked drop in social leisure participation. Waters & Moore (2002a) also refer to Reitzes et al. (1995), who have looked at leisure activities in relation to aging, and they suggest that leisure activities can be classified along a social-solitary dimension. According to them, social activities provide stronger opportunities for role enhancement and self-development than solitary activities, and are therefore more strongly linked to well-being. Haworth & Ducker (1991) (also referred in Waters & Moore, 2002a) also suggest that active leisure activities may provide some social structure, and in Waters & Moore's (2002a) interpretation they thereby indirectly suggest that social activities through a sense of shared experiences can play an important role in reducing latent deprivation connected to being unemployed. Also, Winefield et al. (1992) investigated the effect of social versus solitary leisure activities in psychological health among unemployed school leavers, and they found that social activities were negatively related to depressive affect, negative mood and psychological distress while solitary activities were unrelated to these psychological indices. Adding to this, the analyses have also shown that being married or in a steady relationship, has a positive effect on self-esteem. For an unemployed person social support is an important factor for maintaining belief in oneself and a high self-esteem, and social support for example through marriage or a steady partner will have the potential to counteract negative effects of unemployment on self-esteem. This is supported by Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir (2003), who refer to a considerable amount of research that show that emotional support serve to counteract the effects of unemployment on psychological distress.

The results in our study also points out the negative effect of financial strain on self-esteem. The economic challenges brought about by unemployment makes it more difficult for young adults to live their lives as it is expected today, and taking part in the prevalent consumer life style is an important part of those expectations. This is supported by several researchers who emphasise financial resources as a precondition for participation in a number of areas that give young people a sense of identity (e.g. Bittman, 2002; Fornäs, 1995), and that the spheres of leisure and consumption are increasingly important for how people define themselves (Bauman, 1998, 2000; Furlong & Cartmel, 1997; Lasch, 1991; Marcuse, 1964; Seabrook, 1988; Willis, 1990). Exclusion from the work arena may therefore bring with it exclusion from other arenas that are important (Furlong & Cartmel, 2003). Waters & Moore (2002a) point out that economic deprivation during unemployment may cause a cessation in social leisure pursuits. Although not all social activities require expenditure, the opportunities for sharing such experiences may be reduced when money is limited; financial strain makes it more difficult to take part in activities or on the arenas where young adults would normally meet and be sociable. Also, economic success is in itself an important indicator of a successful life, and losing a considerable part of one's income may for that reason have a negative impact on self-esteem. How one is able to present oneself to others, for example through status markers, is important, and losing the opportunity to provide such status markers may have a negative effect on a person's self-esteem.

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, social theorists have questioned the importance of work in the lives of late modern individuals. Following this perspective, unemployment would not necessarily have a severe, negative effect on self-esteem. The findings presented here, however, indicate that work is still an important element in the lives of young adults. Even though we do not have the opportunity to draw any conclusions when it comes to changes over time concerning the importance of work in the lives of individuals, there is little evidence to suggest that work is no longer important as an identity-forming factor. To the contrary, recent developments indicate that modern persons now perhaps more than ever define themselves in relation to

how successful they are in their professional lives. Professional success seems to be an important part of self-esteem and for the way one evaluates oneself in relation to others. In addition, success in one's working life provides increased possibilities to partake in leisure activities and consumption, which are important elements of modern life style. As shown elsewhere (Bæck, 2004), these are important elements also for young adults living in the Barents region, and due to the situation on the labour markets in this region, young people in the Barents are more vulnerable to the kind of threats to personal self-esteem represented by unemployment.

Some reservations must be taken when it comes to the conclusions of this study. We have shown that unemployment is negatively associated with self-esteem. With our research design, we can not, however, claim that the process of loosing ones' job has in fact led to a decrease in self-esteem, that is, we can not claim causality. In fact, as pointed out by Paul & Moser (2009) the possibility of reversed causation must also be considered; it can be the case that individuals with low self-esteem can have an increased probability of loosing their job and have greater difficulties in finding a new job. The same reservations must be taken in relation to the self-evaluated health variable. The health factor proves important for RSES, and there is also a relationship between health and unemployment. It is likely that poor health makes persons more vulnerable to becoming unemployed. At the same time unemployment in itself may also lead to a worsening of one's health. However, as pointed out by Bjarnason & Sigurdardottir (2003) empirical research on unemployment and psychological distress suggest a relatively unidirectional causal effect in the sense that unemployment causes psychological distress, and they also point out that empirical studies have not found that pre-existing levels of psychological distress may cause individuals to become unemployed later. Based on this it is likely that the association we have found between unemployment and negative self-esteem in this study is in fact a causal effect of unemployment on self-esteem.

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– CHAPTER 9 –

GEOGRAPHY OF OPPORTUNITY.
APPROACHING ADULTHOOD AT
THE MARGINS OF THE NORTHERN
EUROPEAN PERIPHERY

Gry Paulgaard

... where an event takes place can make a considerable difference to how it takes place ... (Duncan 1989: 131)

A widespread assumption, in social theory as well as in more popular writings, is that the relation people have to their place of residence has never been more heavily contested than in contemporary societies. However, such statements have been challenged in recent years by scholars claiming that place has great significance for social outcome and human development (Briggs, 2003; Butler and Hamnett, 2007; Corbett, 2007; Massey, 2005; Warrington, 2005). Overall changes might be both large scale and ubiquitous, but they are experienced within deeply specific sociocultural relations and highly localised geospatial arrangements (Kelly, 2009). Where such changes take place can make a considerable difference to how they take place.

Global changes do not transform places equally. While some places are fuelled with progress and growth, others may change in quite the opposite direction. There is now growing awareness of how large-scale changes in the nature and organisation of work and economy, exploitable technology and patterns of natural resource use change the forms and rates of inequality both within and between nations (Briggs, 2003: 917). According to Bauman (2004), one of the consequences of “modernity’s global triumph” is that growing numbers of human beings are deprived of adequate ways of making a living, confronted

with the need to seek local solutions to globally produced problems. While much concern has been paid to global processes like dislocation and mobility, less attention has been given to examining how macro-level changes produce strains and solutions on personal and social levels in particular places.

It may be obvious that young people growing up in what can be termed “dwindling” or “shrinking” places face completely different kinds of challenges and costs than those growing up in places powered with progress and growth. However, it is not that obvious how overall changes are defined, experienced and enacted locally. Out-migration seems to be a solution for some, but not for all. How do young people living in places characterised by depopulation and deindustrialisation experience their opportunities? Why do they stay there? Both the materiality and the mentality of living and learning in vulnerable rural localities have to be taken into consideration to answer such questions.

This book is based on an extensive study of young people growing up in different places and different countries in the High North, at the rim of northern Europe, in “regional capitals” and smaller places in the national and regional periphery. The Barents region represents a periphery in relation to the respective national centres in Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway. There are also centres and peripheries within the region. In the light of large-scale quantitative analyses of rural depopulation, the aim of this chapter is to explore important aspects of the small-scale processes of social learning among young unemployed men living in specific rural communities. The overall aim is to demonstrate how a geographical approach combined with a theory of social learning (Wenger, 2008) will document how place matters in the study of social inequality in a changing world.

METHOD AND EMPIRICAL MATERIAL

The main empirical basis for the present chapter is interviews with young unemployed men living in various coastal communities in northern Norway. There are two reasons why this chapter mainly put the focus on unemployed young

men. One is that the Norwegian informants are men. This does not necessarily mean that there are no unemployed women in the places we studied, but the local employment agencies we contacted did not succeed to recruit female informants to this project. Another reason is that several studies have documented that the out-migration from rural areas have been higher among women than men (Corbett, 2007; Bæck, 2004; Thurkunen, 2002; Waara, 1996). The migration of young people in the Barents Region has been close linked to the opportunities for education and work. Until the end of last century, the local labour market in many coastal and rural places have been more open for men than for women (Heggen et al., 2003). As a result of a decreasing demand for manual workers due to technological and economic changes, it can be expected that young men living in rural areas are facing new challenges caused by the structural changes at the local labour market.

Interviews with other young people, in rural places in Russia, Finland and Sweden also constitute a basis for the discussions in this chapter. The interviews have been carried out by Master and PhD students in the respective countries. A sample of the interviews from Russia (14 interviews) and all the interviews from Finland (14) were translated into English. The interviews from Sweden (15) and Norway (10) were retained in the original languages, quotations used in this article are translated to English.

It is rather obvious that qualitative interviews carried out by different people in different cultural, social, geographical and national settings, translated into a foreign language, imply methodological problems and weaknesses. However, a comparative project like this Barents Youth project, based on research carried out by researchers from different countries, has to take into consideration such methodological challenges. The aim of the qualitative part of this project is to develop an understanding of young people's experience of living and learning in vulnerable places across the national borders in the Barents region. The focus of the study is not the representative measures in a statistical sense. The project is based on a wealth of interviews with young people from different places and different countries.

A criterion for selecting informants was that they were unemployed, and

contact with them was made through the local employment agencies and key persons working with unemployed youth. The Norwegian respondents were between 17 and 23 years old. The average age of the respondents from the other countries was between 20 and 24 years. The length of their unemployment varied according to their age; the youngest had been unemployed for a much shorter time than the oldest. The interviews were structured around questions about opportunities for education and work, family and friends, how they experienced the place they lived in, and their leisure activities.

Changes in small rural communities in the Barents region, at the margin of the northern European periphery, are reminiscent of many other places and regions in other parts of the world. This chapter will also refer to research focusing on the geography of opportunities among young people in other rural areas.

GLOBALISATION, IMAGINATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

As the title indicates, this chapter will put the focus on “geography of opportunity”, referring to the various ways in which geography and place influences individuals’ opportunities and life outcomes (Glaster and Kellin, 1995; Rosenbaum, 1995; Rosenbaum, Reynolds and Delucia, 2002; Briggs, 2003). The influence of place on the opportunities, experiences and choices of young people represents an underlying theme in the whole book. Studies of how places, micro-level contexts, influence human development and opportunity have been criticised for running the risk of excluding the dynamism of those contexts and the effects of globalisation on local places (Briggs, 2003). Part of this criticism can be attributed to a concept of globalisation that annihilates the meaning of place and geographical differences. At its extreme, globalisation evokes a vision of a universal process almost fuelled by the Laws of Nature in producing unfettered mobility within free, unbounded space. In a borderless and open world of opportunities, place will surely be of no influence on the outcomes of individuals. The opposite extreme might be a notion of place as an independent, bounded entity, influencing and even determining individual

behaviour and opportunities, almost isolated from the world outside and independent of social and cultural differences within the local contexts.

Both the barrierless and the bounded visions are said to function as images in which the world is made: "... imaginative geographies which legitimize their own production" (Massey, 2005: 84). These visions are deeply rooted in an evolutionary assumption that functions as a doxa for many of the discourses on the relation between local and global processes: "... the notion that we move from the local to the global as if to a higher stage of world history" (Friedman, 2006: 123). Place and locality have been linked to the past stability in "pre-modern societies", whereas the present situation, characterised by unfettered flow and mobility, annihilates the meaning of place.¹ This notion has had an important position in theories of modernity and globalisation. As a consequence, the 'convening of contemporaneous geographical differences into temporal sequence' transforms the increasing inequality between different geographical areas into a story of "catching up" (Massey, 2005: 82).

Geographical differences coded in terms of stages of advance and backwardness are particularly present in the hegemonic understandings of the rural–urban distinction as well as the centre–periphery distinction. According to Bourdieu (1999), this distinction functions as a principle of vision and division, as categories of perception and evaluation of mental structures, core contrasts in the definition of places, people and cultures. Construction of centre and periphery as asymmetrical counter-concepts have offered both positive and negative connotations, but the content of the dichotomies is the same, coding people in the periphery as less civilised, more out-dated and backward, more authentic, wilder and natural than people living in urban centres (Paulgaard, 2008; 2009). The rural–urban, centre–periphery distinction underlies many of the power relations that transform geographical, social and cultural differences into a story of "catching up". Within such a frame of reference, people in the periphery are thus not coeval others, not actually different people with their own trajectories, history and future, they are just behind; at a later stage in their development.

1) Giddens' often cited concept, "disembedding", refers to how social relations are lifted out of particular locales and rearranged across infinite spans of time and space. As a consequence, he claims that place has become phantasmagorical (Giddens 1990).

The geographer Doreen Massey (2005) claims that as long as differences between regions and places are read in terms of stages of advance and backwardness, alternative stories about the production of poverty and inequality can be erased from this view. She claims that the picture is much more geographically complex:

What is at issue is not just openness and closure or the ‘length’ of the connections through which we, or financial capital, or whatever ... go about our business. What are at issue are the constantly-being-produced new geometries of power, the shifting geographies of power relations (Massey, 2005: 85).

Globalisation, increasing international competition, concentration of capital and corporate power, is also about increased economic competition among places and regions. The global flows of consumer goods have easily reached the most remote spot “making Coca Cola, Levi’s and Madonna available also at the shores of the arctic sea”, but the goods and services produced there will not necessarily find their way in the opposite direction (Løfgren, 2000: 503). Some places benefit more than others in the global competition. Inevitably this will lead to a markedly more uneven pattern of development “with some places being the winners and some the losers” (Løfgren, 2000: 502; Massey, 2005). The divide between rural and urban areas has increased in many parts of the world, influencing the choices and living conditions for a majority of people.

A world that becomes more complexly interconnected influences the opportunity structures in both a material and a mental sense. Even though many places around the world have never been isolated spots without contact with the outside world, access to information, knowledge and virtual networks has increased dramatically through new technology and media. Appadurai (1996) has claimed that people in contemporary societies live in a world with global imaginary where the imaginations roam far over space and time: “Electronic mediation and mass migration mark the world of the present not as technically new forces but as ones that seem to impel (and sometimes compel) the work of imagination” (Appadurai, 1996: 4; Savage et al., 2005: 11).

The work of imagination might impel, and perhaps even compel, a vision that young people deal with infinite choices of opportunities and selections wherever they live. Scholars have claimed that even though a notion of infinite opportunities often only exists at the awareness level, an expectation gap is likely to arise between dreams and imaginations on the one hand and realities on the other (Ziehe, 1993; Karlsen, 2001). Lack of correspondence between what young people imagine and expect out of life and what they experience as being able to be received might create a feeling of loss, distress, dislocation and ambivalence (Bauman, 1991; Kelly, 2009).

Although, as the anthropologists Cohen (1982) and Appadurai (1996) (among others) insist, localities and places, as well as their inhabitants, are not to be seen as passive, static products, with the implication that all the dynamic of change comes from the outside. Even though communication systems, goods and information may be standardised and decontextualised, they may vary a lot when they are interpreted by actors in particular contexts (Paulgaard, 2002). Imaginations and visions of an infinite choice of opportunity do not necessarily function in the same direction for young people living in places where unemployment is high as in places where there are many openings in the labour market.

PLACE, PRACTICE AND LEARNING

Both the barrierless and the bounded visions of globalisation can be attributed to a notion of place as static entities within fixed borders. Today, most scholars in geography and other disciplines recognise that such a conception of place is based on “fictions that have perverted our understanding and description”² of places, cultures and identities for decades. This chapter is based on an approach that relates the understanding of place to practice (Bourdieu, 1994; Massey, 2005; Simonsen, 2008; Wenger, 2008). The Danish geographer Kirsten Simonsen (2008) describes how places can be seen as a specific articulation of

2) Barth (1994: 28) used this formulation to characterise how descriptions of culture and identity as stable, place-bounded entities are based on fictions that have perverted the understanding and description of the living reality in small communities.

social practices, of social relations and materiality as well as experiences, narratives and symbolic meanings. Even though practice is situated, takes place in specific places, this does not imply that places by definition are understood as bounded areas with fixed boundaries.

Practice does not only reflect local relations congruent with locality in a physical sense, some of the relations that constitute a place might be characterised by physical proximity at a local level, while others are based on far larger scales and connect the place to other places. Such a conceptualisation of place is highly dynamic, defining place as a specific conjunction of social practices and social relations which have been constructed over time, consolidated, decayed or renewed (Massey, 2005; Simonsen, 2008: 16). From such a perspective, it is also possible to understand how global processes and changes are present in local contexts (Massey, 2005; Wenger, 2008).

Practice also becomes a key concept in analyses of how place constitutes an important context for learning. According to Wenger's (2008) social theory of learning, practice must be understood as a learning process. In contrast to institutional teaching, social learning is not regarded as a separate activity, something one does when one does nothing else, or stops doing when one does something else. Social learning implies the converse, learning is considered to be an integral part of everyday life, taking place when one is busy doing other things. By placing learning in the context of social participation, the primary unit for analysis is neither the individual nor social institutions, neither pupils, nor schools nor classrooms, but practice. Wenger is particularly focusing on informal "communities of practice" that people form as they pursue shared enterprises over time.

Participation in different kinds of practices in different fields, among classmates in the schoolyard or in a work team, for instance, is seen as both actions and forms of belonging. According to Wenger, participation will not only shape what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret our practice and ourselves. The concept of participation "refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing

process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and construction of *identities* in relation to these communities” (Wenger, 2008: 4).

By placing the emphasis on the everyday involvement of people and the way they give meaning to their actions, practice is located both in time and place within specific historical, cultural and geographical conditions. In this respect, the social theory of learning corresponds with Bourdieu’s (1990) theory of practice and the concept of “habitus”, referring to how the dispositions of people are embodied and therefore territorially located. Social learning through different kinds of practices becomes a key feature in the constitution of habitus; a system of acquired dispositions functioning as classificatory and organising principles for action and evaluation (Bourdieu, 1994). As such, a place of residence can be regarded as essential for the constitution of habitus through the ability for social learning within different kinds of practice.

According to Savage et al. (2005), Bourdieu’s embodied theory of practice leads him to focus more on feelings of comfort in place rather than self-interest as the main mechanism for action. By placing Bourdieu’s concept of “capital” in a broader context, where there is an interplay with “habitus” and “field”, it is possible to examine how social learning helps to develop habitus that corresponds with or differs from the capital inhibited in particular fields. Several educational sociologists have shown how a mismatch between working-class habitus and cultural capital within the field of formal education influences the educational outcome of pupils (Bourdieu, 1984; Heggen et al., 2003; Bæck, 2004; Corbett, 2007). Success in school is thus explained by correspondence between habitus and the cultural capital in school, as for pupils with middle-class or upper-class backgrounds.

Lack of correspondence between habitus and capital within a particular field makes “people feel ill at ease and seek to move – socially and spatially – so that their discomfort is relieved” (Savage et al., 2005: 9). One example is the term “absence that is present” developed by the Norwegian educational sociologist Edmund Edvardsen (1998)³ to address the way pupils seek to move spatially while they are present in the classroom. This kind of “absence” rep-

3) The Norwegian term used is ‘fravær som er tilstede’.

resents a “mental escape” caused by the lack of correspondence between the habitus of pupils and the social practices, knowledge and value systems in the field of formal education.

Due to improved transportation and communication systems, mass media and social media, opportunities for mobility between different fields of practice and places have increased both mentally and physically. At the same time, research on youth in different rural areas in the world has documented how many young people are actually facing a more restricted set of opportunities and options, making them less mobile (Corbett, 2007; 2009; Theobald and Wood, 2010; Howley and Howley, 2010). Uncertain employment conditions, high urban living expenses and increasing demands for higher education as a key to labour markets and economic success influence the opportunities for both geographical and upward social mobility for large numbers of young people today (Butler and Hamnett, 2007; Corbett, 2007). The increasing divide between rural and urban areas, and participation in communities of practices within various fields, may produce quite different conditions for both learning and doing for people living in different kinds of places. While some people will face a world of opportunities, others may face a world of limitations.

TRANSFORMATIONS OF *LOCAL* OPPORTUNITIES

Rural places have been described as the last remnants of a world where economic activity was practically synonymous with physical activity – with hard manual labour (Corbett, 2007; Theobald, 2007). Several scholars have described how the local labour market in such places has offered young people an alternative to formal education for generations (Corbett, 2007; Edvardsen, 1992; Hoem, 1976). Recruitment for manual labour, often hard manual labour, has taken place within patterns of informal education. Social learning through participation in communities of practice, where adult roles offered an educational alternative to schools, has contributed to embodied knowledge and habitus corresponding with the field of manual work within a local opportunity structure.

In spite of a certain degree of specialisation and differentiation, which meant that women and men, boys and girls, children and young people did different jobs, they were integrated in communities of practice strongly rooted in natural resources and local conditions. Even though some of this research might be said to be based on a bounded and essentialist concept of place, covering up the diversity and differences within the local context, this world has existed for a great many young people, especially young men, for a very long time.

Another aspect of such places is the out-migration of young people who, for various reasons, wanted to choose further education and had the opportunity to do so. The labour market in coastal communities and many other rural communities has had a particular social class and gendered structure. Working-class boys in rural areas have been “learning to labour” as the “lads” in Willis’ (1977) classical study documenting how schools occupy a certain position within a structure of class domination. Growing up in places where formal higher education has been more designed for those who leave, the value of education has been much less obvious for those who were integrated in the local labour market at home. In such places, pro-educational discourses may be read “as an attempt to subvert the economic prospects of a young man and lure him into an uncertain future where his own cultural capital has limited value” (Corbett, 2005: 65). For woman and men who aspired to other jobs, the restricted labour market has created conditions for other careers in formal education as well as out-migration (Bæck, 2004; Corbett, 2007; 2009; Paulgaard, 2001; Pedersen and Moilanen, 2012).

In recent decades, changes in the labour market in many rural areas have had an important impact on the traditional way of living and learning. Many places in the northern periphery that are based on a single industry like fishing, mining or forestry have undergone profound economic transformations. Deindustrialisation and out-migration have caused depopulation and a dramatic decline of working possibilities. Without the incomes and profits derived from the primary industry, the demand for other small-scale supporting industries and trade declines. Consequently, still fewer jobs are available. The same could be the case in education, health care and infrastructure as national policies directly benefit some

places more than others. Population shrinkage leads to reductions in the public infrastructure and fewer jobs in the private sector (Pedersen and Olsen, 2003).

As shown in the other articles in this book, the situation in the labour market is similar in many places in the Barents Region. Hiltunen (Chapter 5) describes how the labour market in northern Sweden is especially sensitive to fluctuations compared to urban areas. The situation is the same in Russia and Finland, too (Luoma, Chapter 6; Miljukova et al., Chapter 7). In coastal areas in northern Norway, the decline in the traditional industries has had a deep-seated impact on the labour market.

Changes in the local labour market result from changes in a wider division of labour nationally and internationally. Depopulation and fewer job opportunities in rural areas can be understood as consequences of global processes like increased urbanity, deindustrialisation and depopulation. Such changes may constitute quite different worlds of opportunity for different generations of young people growing up at the same place. One of the young unemployed men we interviewed said: *I wish I had grown up when my parents were young; there was more people, more life and more work here then.* Even though young people grow up at the same place as their parents, the world of opportunities has undergone dramatic transformations.

While people in many other parts of the world are able to commute on a daily basis for education or work, this is not an alternative in many places in the Barents Region. One of the most striking differences between this region and other rural areas in the rest of Europe are the harsh climate and the relatively small population spread over vast territories and great distances (Løfgren, 2000; Waara, 2002). Whereas most rural inhabitants in Germany, for instance, are only a few hours' drive from several large cities, the majority of inhabitants in the Barents Region must depend upon a local centre. They may have to drive for one or more days to reach a large regional centre or town. The distance by road is often far greater than the standard of the road, a distance covered in half-an-hour on a high-speed motorway takes hours by car or bus here. Public transport is limited compared to more densely populated areas.

Having read a large number of interviews with young people growing up in

small rural places, in what is understood as a remote corner of the world, it seems as if they see two alternatives; stay at home and hope for a job or leave. As Pedersen and Moilanen show in Chapter 3, some young people choose to move to other places, bigger places in the region and out of the region, but still more are stable residents living in the area. In the following we shall concentrate on the geography of opportunity as experienced by young unemployed men living in places where major transformations have altered the opportunities of practice.

GEOGRAPHY OF RESTRICTED OPPORTUNITIES

Based on an extensive study of young people in a coastal community in Atlantic Canada, the educational sociologist Michael Corbett (2007) describes three ideas that play against one another, generating a fundamental tension for young people growing up in this rural area. The first is that home represents a place of security, beauty and conviviality, the second is that the place cannot sustain young people throughout their working life and the third is that education is necessary for young people today. These findings from Canada correspond with basic opinions the young unemployed men express in the interviews we have conducted in the Barents Youth project.

The majority of the young men in this study, in the whole region, give many positive expressions about their home place: *I will never move from here. I love this place*, one of them says. He likes the milieu, the people, the nature and the absence of stress, comparing his home town with bigger cities. He finds it easier to get to know people in his home place than in other places; people are more honest and one gets closer to them. The experience of safety and familiarity makes him feel comfortable, not wanting to leave his home place. Another young man says: *This is a nice place to live, until you stop playing in the streets – until you start to play grown up (...)*.

Positive expressions about their place of residence do not imply that they see the place as intrinsically benevolent. The decline of possibilities for work is substantial. A young man living in one of the small places on the coast of

Finnmark, the northernmost county in Norway, says: *The whole town is out of work.* Even though he is exaggerating, unemployment is rather high among both young people and adults. Some young people in this study have parents that are unemployed and more have parents that have been periodically unemployed. The experience of living in a place where the labour market seems to be closed is an ongoing theme among all our informants:

It is really hard to get a job, since there are no jobs here. There are jobs in the social services, day care and the municipal administration, but they are not vacant (...) I have applied for a lot of jobs, but haven't got any response. For most people, it can be very difficult to get a job. I want to move from here to get more opportunities. I do not want to be stuck here. There are so few opportunities here.

Since we have mainly interviewed unemployed young people in this project, it might not be surprising that our informants experience the local labour market as restricted and closed. This may be a common experience for unemployed young people anywhere. But the unemployment levels among the population in the places we have studied are much higher than the national average, especially the unemployment rate among young people. There seems to be a common understanding among young people growing up in these places that home is not a place that can sustain young people throughout their working life:

It's OK to be here, but it gets boring in the long run. (...) You do the same things every day. People get bored. There is very little to do here, few people, and you want to do something else. At least, that is what people say. Then there are also people who get jobs elsewhere. Those who move seem to feel comfortable where they are, not many of them return after a short period. Some say they miss this place, but there's not much to do here still. I don't think anyone will move back in the near future since there is nothing to do here.

Experiencing how people who move away get work and seem to feel comfortable supports the understanding of their home place as one lacking opportunities. Such an understanding is also confirmed by some of the parents: *My father says I should get away from here*, one of them says. When the interviewer asks if the father has any suggestion of what the son should do, he answers: *He (the father) wants me to go to school.*

As described earlier in this chapter, formal education has not necessarily been important historically for integration into the local labour market in these coastal areas. However, there seems to be strong agreement among the young men we have interviewed that education is important. For many of them, post-secondary education also entails out-migration:

I would like to move to a place where there are more possibilities for education. I should really get more education.

Although there seems to be overall agreement on the importance of education, all the boys from the coastal areas of Finnmark interviewed in this project have short education; none had completed post-secondary school. The emphasis on the importance of higher education as long as they themselves have not completed post-secondary education might seem somewhat inconsistent. Nevertheless, recognising the overall importance of education seems to be much easier than getting further education. Looking back at his experiences in post-secondary school, one of them describes his situation:

If I'd had the same way of thinking as I have now, I would have done better in school. I would have tried to be more interested in school-work to get better marks and stuff. When I was at school I did not realise the importance of education. Going to school was something to be finished with as soon as possible and get away.

I failed in two subjects in the exam, (...) so I could possibly have done much better. But when you move from home to live on your own (lodging away from home) you do not have parents who are

there to push you to get up in the morning and go to school every day, so often you just stay at home, sleeping late... , and it doesn't sound good saying it that way.

I should have done better. It is my fault, no-one else is to blame – you have to take responsibility for what you do. I did not put priority on school, I was simply unable to.

In sparsely populated areas spread across relatively large distances, further education often entails out-migration. Leaving home at the age of 15, 16 or 17 to take care of yourself and your schoolwork demands self-control and a high degree of motivation for school. The young man saying he “should have done better” realises that he did not engage⁴ well enough in schoolwork to succeed in school. He blames himself, but recognises that he could not do otherwise. The barriers for having success in school seem rather high, too high for him. This young man's experience is not an exception. Several young people growing up in small places lacking post-secondary education have told similar stories (Heggen et al., 2003).

The young men we have interviewed are unemployed and therefore not integrated in the local labour market. Many of them doubt that they ever will be if they continue to stay at home. According to Corbett's study of rural youth in a Canadian coastal community, out-migration is always fuelled by opportunity elsewhere (Corbett, 2005). For those who do not have the educational, social and economic capital to move, it may be difficult to make the transition to urban centres and other places:

I can't afford to travel around to look for jobs in other places. I've never had the money to travel around or move to other places. I don't have the money I need to move.

Uncertain employment conditions and high urban living expenses may compete with family and neighbourhood support, emotional, social and sometimes also

4) Wenger (1998, 2008) makes an important distinction between participation and engagement in order to clarify how communities of practice imply both action and connection.

financial requirements. Unemployment leads to economic dependency from other sources than work, such as social benefit.

It's boring to be out of work, too much free time. It's incredibly boring and not very lucrative to put it bluntly. You have fewer opportunities than those who have a job and earn money – you may know someone who has a job and they want to ask you to go out with them. I've nothing to do, because I can't afford anything. You have far fewer opportunities to have the same life as others because you do not have money. I am displeased with the way I have it now, that I don't have many opportunities. I must try to do better. I have to do something to improve my situation.

Lack of financial resources implies that unemployment also means fewer opportunities to take part in activities with young people who may have another economic situation. As such, the financial outcome of unemployment may not only reduce the opportunities to move to other places, but also exclude the unemployed from participation in communal activities in the local context. The limited possibilities for both out-migration and participation in the local context create a feeling of discomfort.

In a situation where opportunities for work entail both out-migration and further education, the choices of the young men are restricted. Even though many of our informants wanted to leave their home place, it was not that easy to do so. In rural areas, and also in other areas, home may represent safety, familiarity and often both social and other kinds of support from the family. The conflicts between experiences of familiarity and safety at home and lack of opportunities for work create tension and discomfort. The young men may see and desire what might be available to them, but for most of them, the opportunities turn out to be illusory and beyond reach.

LOCALISED SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SOCIAL LEARNING

It has been assumed that living in a neighbourhood with a high proportion of low-income and unemployed people leads to few useful social resources and limited opportunities in the labour market. Although the possibilities for work in such areas are restricted, it is not the income or employment status per se, but the possibility for social learning and social support within this relationship that is considered to define the opportunities (Pinkster, 2007). Research on young adults in neighbourhoods with high unemployment has demonstrated how locally concentrated family networks and other social networks can generate an important sense of inclusion and integration. Although the social networks can help to cope with the situation and open a route which might lead out of unemployment, it is also possible that this kind of support can work in the opposite direction to reinforce the marginal position. The social capital embedded in local networks might serve to limit the possibilities and close down the opportunities to escape the conditions of social exclusion (Butler and Hamnett, 2007; MacDonald et al., 2005; Pinkster, 2007). Integration in local social networks may therefore form a pitfall rather than a springboard for social mobility.

Corbett (2007) has developed the term localised capital, referring to social networks in local contexts, related cultural capital and economic capital of local manual work. He shows that many of the young people who remain in their home places seemed to exhibit significant entrepreneurial resilience to survive and prosper using family economic, social and cultural capital to maintain a lifestyle and make a living in a familiar place. A study I conducted with some colleagues in various coastal societies in Norway, about ten years ago, showed that social networks represented an important springboard into the local labour market for young people with short education, but not for all. Those who did not have the “right” social network, that is, people lacking a reputation as good, trustful workers, were considered less attractive as potential candidates in the local labour market (Heggen et al., 2003).

Social networks may constitute important communities for learning to

acquire the right competence and rules of conduct, localised capital that is important to pass on information and knowledge that offer access to potential jobs. The study of young, marginalised adults in Norway showed that social networks were not only important for social learning and integration at an individual level, but also at a social level to define the characteristics of individuals for potential employees. Those who had unemployed friends and unemployed parents did not have the same chances in the local labour market as others. Many of those who were unemployed, particularly those who had been unemployed for long periods, did not have the same reputation locally as those who had a job. In small places, where “everyone knows one another”, knowledge about your friends and relatives is better known and shared than in bigger places. Even though networks may be important everywhere, knowledge about people, their relatives and friends has a more “official” and shared character in small places than in bigger cities. Who you are as a person and as a potential employee may therefore to a greater extent be defined in relation to family and friends in small places than in bigger places where it is possible to have a more anonymous and individualised position.

It can be expected that the meaning of work and work ethics might be less important for defining a person’s qualities in places where unemployment seems to be rather normal, more or less a common way of life. Unemployment may therefore not have the same negative connotation as in places where the possibilities for work are much better. This is not quite the case according to our informants. Overall economic changes have restricted the opportunities for work, still unemployment is often interpreted according to individual characteristics:

Some of my friends say, “Now you must get a job, you can’t just sit at home and do nothing”, and stuff like that. I think they should not have said it, because I’m fully aware of it. It’s no use telling me such things, I’ve thought about those things more times than they ever can think. They probably think that I just don’t want to work; I just want to stay at home and sleep. But they are wrong.

As shown elsewhere in this book (Bæck, Chapter 8; Hiltunen, Chapter 5), work has held a key position in the life of both adults and youth in the Barents Region, as well as in other places. Studies of the labour market for young people have shown that those with a short education are most vulnerable to changes in the labour market (Arnell-Gustafsson, 1992). Even though the structural conditions for work are limited, unemployment seems to be considered as a lack of individual abilities rather than a result of a decreasing demand for manual workers.

Technological and economic changes have contributed to a shift from manual work to dependency on social benefit for many young men growing up in rural societies. Although many of these changes are created externally as a consequence of increased economic competition between places and regions, social learning in the local context seems to be embedded in practices that do not correspond with the actual opportunity structures. Even though the options and opportunities for work have dramatically decreased in many places, the rules of conduct concerning the importance of having a job do not seem to have changed in the same way.

The possibilities for practice have changed in many rural places in the Barents Region. According to the theory of social learning, practice becomes a key concept in analyses of how places are important contexts for learning. Even though practice connotes doing, this does not mean just doing in itself: “It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do” (Wenger, 2008: 47). Communities of practice in Wenger’s use of the term do not reflect a dichotomy between ideals and reality, between talking and doing, between what we know and what we do. Communities of practice constitute fields where ways of understanding and acting are developed, negotiated and shared. According to Wenger, communities of practice can be thought of as shared histories of learning.

Despite structural changes at the labour market, social learning gained by engaging in communities of practice in local contexts seems to pursue the traditional ideals of work in many of these places. An analysis of masculinity and work in rural Australia shows that local ideologies of masculinity have not been weakened even though the economic base that supports them has vanished

(Kenway and Kraack, 2004; Corbett, 2007). Structural and cultural changes do not necessarily “follow the same track”. Ways of acquiring unschooled forms of knowledge through social learning and embodied practice might not seem to be the proper qualification for integration in post-industrial “knowledge economies”, but this kind of social learning still takes place.

The feeling of discomfort, which many of the young men in this study express, can be attributed to a lack of correspondence between embodied dispositions for action and evaluation in contrast to their actual possibilities for action. As described earlier, such lack of correspondence between habitus and capital within a particular field makes people feel ill at ease and seek to move, so that their discomfort is relieved. Our young informants have grown up within communities of practice and “shared histories of learning”, preparing them for a labour marked with restricted opportunities. In many cases the possibilities for moving socially to relieve the discomfort are also limited. The unequal distribution of opportunities between different geographical areas, produces severe challenges at the individual level for many young people growing up in places that might be termed as “losers in the global competition” (Løfgren, 2000; Massey, 2005). In this respect, it is possible to understand how place of residence might restrict access to other fields of practice like education and work at individual, cultural and social levels.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL PROBLEMS?

I want to move from here soon to a bigger place where you do not end up being like the people here.

One of the reasons for social and cultural devaluation of rural people is said to reflect their economic marginality (Creed and Ching, 1997). Many of the people in the young man’s home place quoted above are unemployed, it might be understandable that he does not want to “end up” being unemployed before he is 25 years old. His use of the words “end up” may show

the hopelessness he sees when it comes to possibilities for work in his home place. Uneven development between centre and periphery, between urban and rural areas, contributes to an uneven structure of opportunities in the Barents region. In many respects, growing unemployment and depopulation have strengthened the economic marginality of many people living in this regional and national periphery.

This book is based on a study that clearly documents some of the limitations and challenges that exist when it comes to opportunities for young people growing up in the High North. This chapter has demonstrated the importance of a geographical focus on inequality to understand how place might be of significance in structuring the opportunities and choices for young people. The articles in this book show that many of the young people in small rural places are “learning to leave” (Corbett, 2007) their home place. Most of them, even if the home place represents a place of security, beauty and conviviality, acknowledged the negative aspects of their place of residence, which in many ways limit their opportunities. Rural places are now more than any other time in history described as “places of great loss – of people, natural resources and often, as a result, also visions of long-term viability” (Kelly, 2009: 2). Growing up in such places can create feelings of belonging, familiarity and comfort, but also experiences of ambivalence, loss and discomfort.

According to Bauman (2004), global modernity has given rise to growing numbers of human beings who are deprived of adequate means of survival, a population of redundant people. Bauman uses the horrible term, “human waste”, in a rhetorical sense. The production of superfluous populations of migrants, refugees and other redundant people – an inevitable outcome of the global spread of modernity – has, he says, given rise to growing numbers of human beings who are deprived of adequate means of survival. “They are now faced with the need to seek (in vain, it seems) *local* solutions to *globally* produced problems” (Bauman, 2004: 6).

A report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has shown that the number of young people struggling with depression has doubled in less than a generation (cited in Bauman, 2004). Analyses of questionnaires and interviews with different

cohorts suggest that the rise is linked to the fact that hundreds of thousands of young people find themselves excluded from rising levels of education and prosperity. Those with a degree were a third less likely to be depressed. In this case, education seems to become the minimal condition of hope for even a sporting chance of a dignified and secure life.

As shown in this chapter, formal higher education has for generations been more designed for those who leave their home place than those who have been integrated in the local labour market. Although the local labour market is highly restricted and the value of education seems to be much more obvious for those growing up in the coastal areas today, further education seems to be beyond the reach for many of the young unemployed men we have interviewed. Several of our informants regret they did not take further education; they blame themselves for being in a situation where they are unable to meet the growing demands for formal education.

As Linda Hiltunen shows (Chapter 5), unemployed people do not fit into a single category; various coping strategies are developed to handle the unemployed situation. Still, most messages that constitute success seem to be inextricably tied to leaving rural places and areas, even though leaving involves both costs and risks. On the other hand, staying in places with a high risk for being unemployed, having to cope with the feeling of being useless and superfluous, can in turn lead to loss of dignity and reduced self-confidence (Bæck, Chapter 8).

Decisions to live in or leave certain places are considered to function as a sorting process “at the heart of contemporary battles over social distinction” (Savage et al., 2005: 207). Uneven development contributes to an uneven opportunity structure for young people growing up in different places. The decline of traditional employment in many places over the past decade has left behind a population of young people in rural areas facing severe challenges in finding a future within restricted set of options and opportunities. As such, it is possible to claim that young people growing up in dwindling societies inherit severe challenges in finding local solutions to global problems.

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