

Challenges and Opportunities in the High North. Russia's Relations with the Outside World

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- Security interests
- Energy interests
- Polar and climate research
- History of relations, law
- Russia's geopolitical role in the Arctic
- Russia's role in international institutions and organizations
- The indigenous population
- Russia's relations with Europe
- Russia's relations with the USA
- Asia's interests in the High North
- New Eurasian Union
- Economic and commercial interests and new shipping routes in the Arctic

Themes relevant for research under *Challenges and Opportunities in The High North. Russia's Relations with the Outside World*:

1. Of key interest to the programme is cross-border cooperation in the High North between Russia and Norway. Of particular interest is Russian policy-thinking and policy behaviour in regard to its role within, and handling of, multi-lateral European institutions and policy-regimes that it belongs to (e.g. BEAR, CBSS, Arctic Council, OSCE, Council of Europe), and of its partnerships with the EU (the Northern Dimension) and NATO. Equally relevant are studies that analyse the significance of international institutions and external relationships to Russia as political arenas, rallying ground for allies, sources of threats or internal distractions.
 - a. Legal and administrative structures and practical cooperation in different sectors. This includes the analysis of different types of cooperative structures and practices within them; comparisons between different sectors and structures and practices that Russia has with other countries, as well as studies concerned

- with the development and relevance of Russia's cross-border cooperation at different levels of governance.
- b. Effects of cooperation of regions, and mutual learning processes. These include empirical studies concerned with organizational and professional learning gained through cooperation, the challenges actors are faced with in practical daily encounters, and the reasons for both successes and failures. Regional analyses may focus on the economic, social, cultural and political effects that cross-border cooperation has on Russian and Norwegian actors and institutions.
 - c. The meaning of regional cooperation for wider European-Russian relations. Studies may evaluate the meaning of cooperation in the High North for general European-Russian political and economic relations. Particularly relevant are studies that examine whether possible success stories of cooperation in this region have affected European or Russian decision or policy making.
 - d. Russia's relations with larger European countries such as Germany, and lessons for Norway.
2. Hard and soft security in the High North, and security cooperation with Russia. Of particular interest are studies that deal with the complex military, environmental, human and/or socio-economic security challenges, and the gap between perceptions, rhetoric and realities in the High North.
 3. Russian-Norwegian relations in the Barents Sea. The history of relations between Norway and Soviet Union/Russia (40 years tug-of-war on the Barents Sea), the development of the fishing regime in the Barents Sea, as well as the continuing military importance of the High North after the Cold War are among the relevant research topics.
 4. The role of energy, fisheries, raw materials and resources as well as the Northern Sea Route in the politics and economics of the High North. This wide thematic scope can also include studies concerned with regimes for the conservation and preservation of biological diversity; as well as national and international regulatory regimes for shipping, fisheries activities, oil-spill preparedness, and also energy and raw material extracting industries in the High North.

5. The interests of Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea and India) in the High North. The strategic interests of the various actors and the interaction between key actors in the Arctic, including the US and Russia, and Asian countries have implications for Norway's energy policy, foreign policy and security interests, and constitute particularly relevant research areas. With energy being paramount for Asia's economic growth, countries from the region are increasingly interested in the Arctic's potential as a new energy province, an interest which is reflected in Asian investment in polar and climate research in the Arctic as well as the Antarctic.
6. Economic and commercial interests. The retreat of the Arctic sea ice means that a greater proportion of the most northerly sea areas will be accessible for a longer part of the year than has previously been the case. The emergence of the Arctic Ocean as a global route for maritime transport between Asia and Europe will affect the geo-political, geo-economic, environmental conditions and social situation in the High North, thus representing an important area of research.
7. The impact of developments in the High North on the indigenous population. Relevant topics include impact studies that analyse how rights and livelihoods are affected by any new developments and facilities established in connection with offshore and land-based activities, studies dealing with legal issues related to rights to land and grazing areas, or with the development of local communities in the Arctic and the living conditions of the region's indigenous peoples.
8. Russia's role in Eurasia may have an indirect effect on international policy elsewhere. This perspective pertains to a broader perspective than the High North and is concerned with Russia as a state actor. Relevant research questions are:
 - a. How does Russia understand itself as a Eurasian power and how is this image changing?
 - b. What is shaping Russian policy vis-à-vis Central Asia, the South Caucasus, Europe and China?
 - c. What is Norway's position between the EU and Russia as two geopolitical actors, and what does it mean for Norwegian foreign policy-making?
 - d. What relevance does the New Eurasian Union have?

9. Russia's accession to the WTO and its possible impact on Russian businesses and legal culture.
10. The development of Russia's trade diplomacy with regard to Norway, and as exemplified by the customs union between Russian, Kazakhstan and Belarus, and attempts to bring in Central Asian states and the Ukraine.
11. The economic dynamics in the relationship between Russia and the EU, and between Russia and China (e.g. in the fields of energy and raw resource extraction).