



ANNE TUHKUNEN

Between Location and a Sense of Place

Observations Regarding Young People's Migration Alacrity  
in Northern Europe



ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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*Anne Tuhkunen*



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# Abstract

This doctoral thesis explores the migration alacrity of young people in peripheral areas. The main objective of the study is to investigate, firstly, how high migration alacrity is among young people in the Barents Region, and secondly, what factors affect young people's migration alacrity. I then consider *how* these factors affect migration alacrity.

The context of the study is the Barents region, which includes 13 counties in northern parts of four different countries: Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia. The Barents Region is characterised by its northern and peripheral location. This study is based on empirical data that was collected among young people living in different living environments within this region, in response to both structured and open-ended questions. The data was collected by means of a school survey conducted among students (N=1627) in four different levels of education: comprehensive schools, upper secondary schools, vocational institutes and universities. The age of the respondents varied between 14 and 30 years old.

The theoretical frame of reference for this research is built on themes that are closely connected to important factors in the investigation of the migration plans of young people living in remote and peripheral areas. The central theoretical themes in this research are: life politics, individualism, future orientations, place attachment and basic factors affecting on migration.

My research questions and data analysis are based on three components of place: location, locale and sense of place (Agnew 1993). Location here refers to those factors of certain places which affect the people living there on an external level. These factors may be, e.g., division of labour, possibilities for work and education, local systems of material production and distribution networks. Locale, in turn, refers to "the settings in which social relations are constituted". For the individual, locale means the setting for personal social relations and both formal and institutional relations and activities, i.e. "face to face" society. Sense of place, in turn, is the internal component of place, referring to place attachment and local everyday practises which bind people to their living environment. In the Barents Region this may mean both representation and experiences of north-erness: peripherality, harsh climate, traditionally and locally guided culture, but also a chain of generations and emotional and meaningful experiences connected to certain places.

The results imply that migration alacrity is a dominant feature among young people involved in this study. The majority of the respondents, 74 %, have migration plans. On the country level, the strongest desire to migrate can be found among Finnish and Swedish respondents. In Finland 81 % of all respondents plan to move out of their region; in Sweden, 82 %. Russia and Norway join at a lower level; about 67 % of those surveyed from each of these countries have mi-

gration plans. On the county level, the highest migration alacrity, over 80 %, was found among respondents from Lapland, Murmansk County and Norrbotten. The lowest migration willingness can be found among respondents from Republic of Karelia. Migration readiness is highest, about 82 %, among those respondents who live in villages or in municipal centres. The lowest migration alacrity was found in big cities; with only 59 % of respondents there have plans for migration.

It can be argued on the basis of the results of this study that the fundamental idea behind and reasons for migration alacrity are the correspondence between individual wishes and the three essential components of place: location, locale and sense of place. Results suggest that location and local opportunity structure play an important part in the origin of a mental attitude concerning relations between remote and urban areas, in which urban areas are seen as being in a stronger position compared to peripheral areas. This has an impact on young people's relation to their home places, and their comprehension of local opportunity structure and their possibilities to make successful use of personal life politics. Thus respondents' tendencies to migrate are tied to their beliefs concerning their home district and what their home district is (not) able to offer them. Migration alacrity of survey respondents is thus partly a consequence of their belief that their home district has no future. One aspect of this is a belief among these young people that somewhere else than in their home localities there is a "diversity of open possibilities" which they do not see for themselves in their home locales; even though, at least to some extent, those possibilities might really be there. The issue of providing ample possibilities has to do with the most important issues in the lives of the respondents: education, employment and career prospects.

Locale, the social environment of the living place, was present in this study in the form of respondents' relatives, friends and romantic partners. In this way locale was anchored to considerations of geographical distances and personal future orientation. Closeness to relatives and friends appeared to be important for young people involved in this study not only psychologically, but also geographically; long distances between oneself and important persons were not seen as a preferable situation. As part of outward migration, young people are escaping from the area together with their relationships and their social capital. It will be harder to maintain relationships and local social networks in the situation in which some relatives, and perhaps most peers, have moved away or are planning migration. Thus young people involved in this study have less possibilities, or will, to seize on the idea of integrating themselves into the locale. High migration alacrity also means that social capital is becoming even more exposed to erosion due to future depopulation.

Furthermore, migration alacrity is a consequence of respondents evaluating their home territory in terms a "cost/benefit" – analysis. This is based on the sense of place – experiences and knowledge the person has of his/her own living environment, together with information that has been gathered regarding places further away. During the evaluation process, the person is comparing his/her own contemporary living environment and place of residence with other places and areas, either on a realistic level or an imaginary level. Relation to the place is constructed during this process on the basis of place experience and features of the living environment, as well as on knowledge of the history and the future

prospects of one's own living place and knowledge or imaginary ideas of other places.

Migration alacrity can also be seen as a spatial implication of individualism. Migration is based on an individual point of view; a desired and sometimes even inevitable developmental process. In an individualistic society an individual, unique life plan is highly valued. It seems that migration has become part of an individual life plan, which is aiming towards the good life. Individual belief in the profitability of migration is crystallised at the intersection of personal performance structure (Groß 2005) and local opportunity structure. A high personal performance structure may increase belief in this profitability and thus increase migration alacrity. On the other hand, a will to build a higher personal performance structure may be a driving force of migration alacrity.

To summarise, respondents' migration alacrity is a consequence of an individual valuation process, and a consequence of unbalance between the local reality and a somewhat imaginary outside world.

**Key words:** migration, young people, the Barents Region, location, locale, sense of place, life politics, individualism, future orientation, place attachment

# Tiivistelmä

## **Sijainnillisuuden ja paikkatunteen välissä Havaintoja nuorten muuttoinnokkuudesta Euroopan pohjoisosissa**

Tämä väitöskirja keskittyy tutkimaan nuorten muuttoinnokkuutta (migration alacrity) syrjäisillä alueilla. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää kuinka korkea muuttoinnokkuus on Barentsin alueella asuvien tutkimukseen vastanneiden nuorten keskuudessa. Toisena keskeisenä tavoitteena on tutkia mitkä tekijät, ja kuinka, vaikuttavat näiden nuorten muuttoinnokkuuteen.

Tutkimusalueena on Barentsin alue, joka koostuu yhteensä 13 hallinnollisesta alueesta Suomen, Ruotsin, Norjan ja Venäjän pohjoisosissa. Barentsin aluetta ja täten myös tutkimuksen kontekstia luonnehtivat pohjoinen ja periferinen sijainti.

Tutkimus perustuu empiiriseen kyselyaineistoon (N=1627). Kyselyyn vastanneet nuoret olivat tutkimusajankohtana 14–30-vuotiaita ja asuivat Barentsin alueella. Kysely koostui strukturoiduista ja avoimista kysymyksistä. Avoimiin kysymyksiin nuoret saivat vastata omin sanoin. Aineiston keruu toteutettiin koulukyselynä neljällä eri koulutustasolla: peruskoulussa, lukiossa, ammatillisissa oppilaitoksissa sekä yliopistossa.

Tämän tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys perustuu niihin teemoihin, jotka ovat tärkeitä tutkittaessa nuorten muuttosuunnitelmia perifeerisillä alueilla. Keskeiset teoreettiset teemat ovat: elämänpolitiikka, individualismi, tulevaisuusorientaatio, paikkakiinnittyneisyys ja muuttoon vaikuttavat perustekijät.

Tutkimuskysymys ja aineiston analyysi pohjautuvat kolmeen paikan komponenttiin; sijainnillisuuteen (location), paikallisuuteen (locale) ja paikkatunteeseen (sense of place) (Agnew 1993). Sijainnillisuus viittaa niihin ulkoisiin tekijöihin, jotka vaikuttavat tietyissä paikoissa asuviin ihmisiin. Tällaisia tekijöitä voivat olla esimerkiksi alueellinen työnjako, työ- ja opiskelumahdollisuudet sekä paikalliset raaka-aineiden tuotanto- ja jakeluverkostot. Paikallisuus puolestaan viittaa niihin mahdollisuuksiin, joiden perusteella sosiaaliset suhteet muodostuvat. Yksilölle paikallisuus merkitsee mahdollisuuksia erilaisiin henkilökohtaisiin sosiaalisiin, niin epämuodollisiin kuin institutionaalisiin, suhteisiin. Toisin sanoen paikallisuus merkitsee paikallisten asukkaiden keskinäistä vuorovaikutusta. Paikkatunne viittaa yksilön sisäiseen tuntemukseen paikasta, tarkoittaen paikkakiinnittyneisyyttä ja paikallisia jokapäiväisiä käytäntöjä, jotka sitovat ihmiset asuinympäristönsä. Barentsin alueella tämä merkitsee pohjoisuuden tulkintaa ja kokemista: perifeerisyyttä, ankaraa ilmastoa, traditionaalista ja paikallisesti väritynyttä

kulttuurista, mutta myös sukupolvien ketjua sekä tiettyihin paikkoihin kiinnittyviä tunteita herättäviä ja tärkeitä kokemuksia.

Tulokset osoittavat, että muuttoinnostus on vallitseva piirre tutkimukseen osallistuneiden nuorten keskuudessa. Valtaosalla vastaajista, 74 %, on muuttosuunnitelmia. Eri maita vertailtaessa, tulee ilmi, että muuttoinnostus on korkein suomalaisten ja ruotsalaisten vastaajien keskuudessa. Suomessa 81 % ja Ruotsissa 82 % kaikista vastaajista on suunnitellut muuttavansa pois alueelta. Venäjä ja Norja muodostavat toisen ryhmän, noin 67 % näiden maiden kaikista vastaajista suunnitteli muuttoa. Läänien tasolla korkein muuttoinnostus, yli 80 %, löytyi Suomesta Lapin läänistä, Venäjältä Murmanskin oblastista sekä Ruotsista Norrbottenin läänissä asuvien vastaajien keskuudesta. Alhaisin muuttoinnostus puolestaan löytyi Venäjältä, Karjalan tasavallassa tutkimukseen osallistuneiden nuorten keskuudesta. Muuttoinnostus on korkein, noin 82 %, sellaisten vastaajien keskuudessa, jotka asuvat kylissä tai kuntakeskuksissa. Kaikista alhaisin muuttoinnostus, 59 %, löytyi suurissa kaupungeissa asuvien vastaajien keskuudesta.

Tutkimuksen tulosten perusteella voidaan väittää, että keskeiset syyt tutkimukseen osallistuneiden nuorten muuttoinnostuksen takana liittyvät yksilön toiveiden ja kolmen keskeisen paikan komponentin, sijainnillisuuden, paikallisuuden ja paikkatunteen, yhteensopimattomuuteen. Tulokset osoittavat, että sijainnillisuus ja paikallinen mahdollisuusrakenne (opportunity structure) ovat tärkeä osa vastaajien henkisen asenteen muodostumisessa syrjä- ja kaupunkiseutujen suhteesta.

Kaupunkiseudut ovat yleensä nähty voimakkaammassa asemassa kuin periferiset alueet. Tämä vaikuttaa tutkimukseen vastanneiden nuorten kotipaikkasuhteeseen, heidän käsityksiinsä paikallisesta mahdollisuusrakenteesta ja henkilökohtaisista mahdollisuuksistaan menestykselliseen tulevaisuuteen sekä elämänpolitiikan käyttöön. Tämän vuoksi vastaajien muuttoinnostus on osittain seurausta heidän näkemyksestään, jonka mukaan heidän kotiseudullaan ei ole tulevaisuutta. Tutkimuksen nuoret tuntuvan myös ajattelevan, että avointen mahdollisuuksien kenttä on jossain muualla kuin heidän kotiseudullaan, vaikka tosiasiallisesti heidän kotipaikkansa voisi tarjotakin heille erilaisia mahdollisuuksia edes jossain määrin. Ajatus ja vaatimus monien mahdollisuuksien tarjonnasta tulevat esille tutkimukseen osallistuneiden nuorten elämän tärkeimpien asioiden, kuten koulutus työllistyminen ja uranäkymät, kohdalla.

Paikallisuus, asuinpaikan sosiaalinen ulottuvuus on läsnä tässä tutkimuksessa vastaajien sukulaisten, ystävien ja seurustelukumppanien kautta. Tällä tavoin paikallisuus ankkuroituu vastaajien pohdiskeluihin maantieteellisistä etäisyyksistä ja henkilökohtaisesta tulevaisuuden orientaatiosta. Läheisyys sukulaisten ja ystävien kanssa osoittautui sekä henkisesti että maantieteellisesti tärkeäksi tutkimukseen osallistuneille nuorille. Pitkät välimatkat läheisten ihmisten kanssa nähtiin epämiellyttävänä tilanteena.

Vastaajien muuton kynnystä madaltaa se, että jotkut sukulaiset ja ehkä suurin osa ikätovereista on muuttanut pois tai suunnittelevat muuttoa. Vastaajien on myös vaikeampi ylläpitää suhteita ja paikallisia sosiaalisia verkostoja silloin, kun ikätoverit ja läheiset ihmiset muuttavat tai suunnittelevat muuttoa. Tutkimukseen vastanneilla nuorilla on vähemmän mahdollisuuksia, tai tahtoa, tarttua

mahdollisuuksiin integroitua paikalliseen sosiaaliseen verkostoon silloin, kun muutto on kovin vallitseva ilmiö omassa sosiaalisessa piirissä.

Muuttoinnostus on myös seurausta tutkimukseen vastanneiden nuorten tekemästä kotiseutunsa piirteisiin ja ominaisuuksiin liittyvästä kustannus-hyötyanalyysistä (“cost/benefit” – analysis). Tämä perustuu paikkatunteeseen, eli niihin kokemuksiin ja tietoihin, joita yksilöllä on omasta asuinympäristöstään, mutta toisaalta myös siihen tietoon jota hänellä on liittyen muihin, kauempanakin sijaitseviin, paikkoihin. Tämän arviointiprosessin aikana yksilö vertailee omaa asuinympäristöään ja asuinpaikkaansa muihin paikkoihin ja alueisiin, joko realistisesti tai mielikuvituksen tasolla. Yksilön suhde paikkaan muodostuu tämän prosessin aikana perustuen paikkakokemukseen, asuinympäristön piirteisiin, historialliseen tietoisuuteen ja tulevaisuudennäkymiin sekä faktatietoon tai mielikuvituksellisiin ajatuksiin muista paikoista.

Tutkimukseen osallistuneiden nuorten muuttoinnostus voidaan nähdä myös individualismin tilallisena ilmentymänä. Kunkin vastaajan muutto perustuu yksilön henkilökohtaiseen näkökulmaan, haluttuun ja joskus jopa väistämättömään kehitysprosessiin. Individualistisessa yhteiskunnassa uniikin elämänsuunnitelman arvostus on korkea. Näyttää siltä, että muutosta on tullut osa tutkimukseen vastanneiden nuorten yksilöllistä elämänsuunnitelmaa, joka tähtää hyvään elämään. Yksilöllinen usko ja näkemys muuton kannattavuuteen kiteytyvät henkilökohtaisen toimintarakenteen (performance structure) (Groß 2005) ja paikallisen mahdollisuusrakenteen leikkauspisteessä. Korkea henkilökohtainen toimintarakente voi lisätä uskoa muuton kannattavuuteen ja lisätä muuttoinnostusta. Toisaalta, vastaajien tahto parantaa omaa toimintarakennetta voi olla myös voima muuttoinnostuksen takana.

Lopuksi, tämän tutkimuksen nuorten keskuudessa muuttoinnostus on seurausta yksilön asuinympäristönsä kohdistamasta arviointiprosessista sekä epätasapainosta paikallisen todellisuuden ja jokseenkin kuvitteellisen ulkomaailman välillä.

**Avainsanat:** muutto, nuoret, Barentsin alue, sijainnillisuus, paikallisuus, paikkatunne, elämänpolitiikka, individualismi, tulevaisuusorientaatio, paikkakiinnittyneisyys

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# 1. Introduction

“Before any choice there is this ‘place’, where the foundations of earthly existence and human condition establish themselves. We can change locations, move, but this is still to look for a place; we need a base to set down our Being and to realize our possibilities, a here from which to discover the world, a there to which we can return.”

*(Relph 1989, 27; original quote Dardel 1952)*

Migration is a significant occurrence for both the migrant and the wider society. Migration intervenes in the expected norm of individual and cultural stability and balance with all that that implies (Moon 1995, 505). Due to its effects on society, migration from peripheral areas has been considered to be a problem in many quarters. The main concern has usually been the migration of young people and the depopulation of peripheral areas.

There is a long history of concern over migration and its consequences. Already in sixteenth century Elizabethan England, for example, geographical roots were highly valued and mobility was viewed with suspicion. This is because the state bureaucracy in many countries has been dependant on the idea that people should live, earn money and pay taxes in certain locations. This led to the situation in which a person without a fixed residence was a suspicious character and mobility itself was seen as a form of geographical deviance. This definition of mobility gives a positive value to roots, which has been a significant metaphor for place attachment in Western society. This perspective on migration sees mobility as disturbance and a basic form of disorder and chaos (Morley 2000, 33; see also Creswell 1996; Gustafson 2001b, 670). In the year 1688 it was even said that the biological need for one’s nurturing place (home) is so strong that if a person is forced to leave home they may fall sick and even die. The symptoms of home sickness were given the clinical name “nostalgia” (Tuan 1971, 189).

It was not that long ago that some geographers<sup>1</sup> still considered place attachment to be a basic and fundamental human need (Gustafson 2002, 25-26; 2001b, 669; see also Brown & Perkins 1992, 281; Rose 1995, 98). Place attachment was depicted, for example, in terms of security, warmth and roots; while mobility, on the other hand, was described in terms of uprootedness and loss. It is also worth

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., Relph 1976; Seamon 1979; Buttimer 1980

of mentioning that place attachment and locality were seen as the norm, while mobility and migration were regarded as a potential disturbance and deviation from a clear norm. Place attachment and mobility are not, however, mutually exclusive in the writings of these geographers. People's experiences of place and living environment may consist of both place attachment and mobility. In addition to that, though the combination of place attachment and mobility may vary between individuals, they can still be regarded as equally important, even complementary, aspects of human life: "One does not exclude the other" (Gustafson 2002, 26; 2001b, 679).

Who knows? The previous example of historical perspective on migration may still be the basis on which migration is reflected and discussed. Outward migration, especially from peripheral areas, is seen mostly in a negative light – as something that has negative connotation and should be prevented or at least reduced in places which are losing inhabitants. This negative connotation is quite justified from the point of view of the remote areas and peripheral places with high migration rates, because the place people leave behind may become depopulated and further marginalized socially and economically (Massey & Jess 1995b, 219).

On the other hand, from more attractive cities' and regions' point of view, migration has a positive effect. For this reason we must note that the societal and regional meanings of migration are different from the points of view of different places of departure and places of arrival. For potential places of arrival, migration plans or migration alacrity in other places have little effect, pro or con – other than in terms of image. The image factor, however, is very significant in terms of migration alacrity. Migration destinations may benefit from people migrating to their region. Migration alacrity elsewhere may thus be described in terms of competitiveness factors, or even forces of attraction (Äikäs 2004b). In terms of local image<sup>2</sup> the place in question may be seen as cool and trendy, or as dumb, boring and stagnant. Usually it is supposed that it is just the actual migration that brings either positive or negative consequences. However, the components and features of a place affect the place's image which exists in the hearts and minds of residents. Consequently, it can be argued, components of place are also significant in dealing with issues of migration alacrity.

In order to specify the approach to migration utilized in this study, the term of "*migration alacrity*"<sup>3</sup> is used to refer to eagerness to migrate (Soininen 2002). The concept of *migration alacrity* fits well in research that deals with migration and young people. It can also be seen as a more vivid concept than *migration plans*, which is the more traditional way of expressing nearly the same thing. Migration plans do not necessarily include eagerness to migrate, whereas *migration alacrity* as a concept has connotations of eagerness, as well as a future orientation and individualistic use of life politics. Young people who are eager to

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<sup>2</sup> In this study the term *imago* is used to refer to a deliberately constructed picture of a certain place. This picture, perhaps the result of long and costly deliberations, depicts the place in the way that certain local actors, the imago makers, want the place to be seen from outside. *Image* is understood here to be in part the result of imago construction; image is an individual representation of a place which possesses a certain imago (Äikäs 2004b, 6).

<sup>3</sup> According to Advanced Learner's English Dictionary (2003, 33) alacrity has a following meaning: "If you do something **with alacrity**, you do it quickly and eagerly. [FORMAL]"

migrate are usually expecting new experiences in the alternate location to provide them with both personal fulfilment and building materials with which to develop their identities. Embedded in the concept of migration alacrity, is also the voluntary nature of migration, which is a typical feature of young people's migration plans.

Voluntary migration<sup>4</sup> is usually planned and it includes positive (marriage, new job or job transfer, education, new experiences), negative (divorce) or normative (getting married, leaving home) status changes. Voluntary migration allows the individual to experience the transition from place to place gradually and to prepare for the changes that might occur in transition (Brown & Perkins 1992, 287-288). This concept also stresses that migrants are not always the passive victims of economic flows; sometimes migration is actively carrying out one's individual life plan (King 1995, 30). In this study, dealing with young people and their migration plans and future orientations, migration will typically be dealt with in terms of life stages and life cycle.

The main aim of this study is to focus on migration on the micro<sup>5</sup> level, i.e. to gain knowledge about young people's migration alacrity, and to focus on the migrant's personal decision making process rather than information about migration rates and consequences of migration (see Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 333; Moon 1995, 505-506). For this reason, issues dealing with actual migration or migration rates, or the significance of migration for different places, are not investigated or discussed here.

## 1.1. The negative connotation of outward migration and differences in local opportunity structures

The above mentioned negative connotation of outward migration may have its roots in the consequences of mass migration during the post-war years, when masses of workers migrated from peripheral areas into urban centres in order to take jobs in industry, both within their native countries and abroad (Massey & Jess 1995a, 22). At least from this point of view, in Finnish and Norwegian contexts migration has been seen as problematic for the places of departure because of its consequences: depopulation and withering of remote, or for some other reasons unwanted, areas. One fundamental feature of outward migration has been the migration of young people from remote rural areas to more central urban locations. There has even been discussion of young people having different migration patterns than those of older adults (Viinamäki 1999, Soininen 2002). Young people's migration has been the focus of discussion because it is a

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<sup>4</sup> Involuntary migration or relocation often follows natural disasters, such as hurricanes and earthquakes; or human actions, such as environmental contamination or urban development initiatives and renewal projects. Involuntary relocation is usually sudden and may involve injury or loss of life (Brown & Perkins 1992, 290).

<sup>5</sup> In contrast, a macro level approach in migration research emphasizes measurable characteristics of the socioeconomic and physical environments to explain migration (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 333). Such an approach is used here only in defining the context of the study.

more visible phenomenon than migration in other age groups. In general – for reasons linked to their phase of life; values oriented towards private priorities in life politics; and personal, material and spiritual well-being – young people tend to migrate more often than other age groups (Kytö 1998, 98; Sinisalo, Shvets & Rusanova 2000, 88). However, migration is not only connected to life phases, but also to young people's identity work and self-development. This makes the way in which young people in peripheral areas view their lives and their future an important question.

In contemporary society migration, and thus also mobility, is seen as a “resource” – more and more desirable. Those labelled as “locals”, who are in some way bound to their location, are coming to be treated as deviant from a general norm. There is, in fact, a contradiction between discourses of preventing migration on the one hand and the ideals the modern, mobile individual experiencing diversified phases of life on the other. Efforts are made to keep people, especially young people, in their home regions, even though the trend in the contemporary world is to be mobile. Travelling is seen as enriching, and the person who has travelled is regarded as experienced and sophisticated (Morley 2000, 228; Thomson & Taylor 2005). This is seen also in the classification of those who are mobile as “cosmopolitans”, and of those who are immobile as locals”<sup>6</sup> (Hannerz 1996, 102-106; Gustafson 2002, 26-27; 2001a, 5; 2001b, 668; Thomson & Taylor 2005).

Both mobility and local place attachment may have both negative and positive aspects and connotations (Gustafson 2002, 25). In this regard I believe that migration should not carry a stigma, but in many cases it should rather be seen as inevitable; something which has to be done in order to gain experiences and broaden one's world view. Thus the ultimate goal of migration could be associated with development – perhaps not so much the development of particular areas and the economic growth of places as such, but the development of individuals.

However, if we go along with the view that migration is a negative phenomenon in general – something to fight against – the operative question is not how to prevent migration, but how to make living environments compatible with young people's demands. The question is how to make a living environment pleasant and more open for mobile individuals with vast cultural capital; how to answer to the requests and meet the demands of those who are living in the midst of the effects and consequences of the interconnectedness of places and the diversification of access to sources of information. In order to do that, we have to first know what the main and – more importantly – decisive components behind migration and migration alacrity are.

Moreover, we need to know how broad the phenomenon of migration is, in that it seems to be a major issue in so many regions. Different counties, cities and municipalities are jealously possessive of their inhabitants. Great amounts of money are spent to imago building, living areas are developed to be more ecological and pleasant to live in and different age groups are taken on account when residential areas are planned. For example in Norway children are seen as

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<sup>6</sup> This classification was originally made by Merton (1968, 447-460). It has also been developed by Castells (1996).

“important participants in local planning processes” (Kjørholt 2002, 69). All this, and much more, is done to prevent migration. Ironically however, these actions may be increasing migration, since better and more attractive places are being created, luring migrants from other areas, usually from those with low image status. This is a reason for and a consequence of a situation where different areas have different qualifications, opportunity structures and capacities for action both to offer a pleasant living environment and to develop their imago (Aarsæther & Suopajarvi 2004, 26). This issue has been investigated by Kotler et al. (1993), who claim that images of different living environments can be typologised into categories such as “dying or chronically depressed places”, “places with healthy transformations” and “the favoured few”. The very names of these categories illustrate the variations in local opportunity structure and in possibilities for imago development in different places.

## 1.2. Motivation for this study and previous research in the field

In general level, this problematic of different local opportunity structures can be seen on the level of population development. For example, in recent decades there has been a strong trend in the Nordic parts of the Barents Region towards population being increasingly concentrated into larger communities. Especially those areas situated close to national borders have suffered depopulation (Wiberg 1994, 36). It is the question of the future of these places in the Barents Regions which are unfavourably located geographically, and which are many times at risk of withering away, which makes investigating migration and young people particularly important. The exodus of significant numbers of young people is having a major effect on local conditions in such places, particularly in terms of the age composition and opportunity structure. This out-migration of young people may also have longer term effects locally by creating a biased age structure, particularly in smaller municipalities and in the countryside (Waara 2002, 3); especially since young people are effectively taking with them the next, as yet unborn generation. The outward migration of young people also has an effect on the development of a physical, man-made environment, and an immaterial, social living environment. Outward migration in general creates unclear and uncertain future prospects for those young people which remain – especially when it is their peers which are leaving.

For this reason, migration is broad and complex phenomenon, and it should be dealt with in terms of local realities and features of actual living environments. Local possibilities and features not only offer a material arena for life; they also shape young people’s images of their living environment. These images are shaped by local features and by prevalent opinions regarding the status and image of the living environment (Tuhkunen 2002, 43). Furthermore, local images can be constructed entirely on the basis of myths which give the periphery a lower status than urban environments. This leads to the peripheral

living environment being labelled as traditional and poor, and urban areas as modern and desirable (Paulgaard, 2000).

This study is intended to open a broader understanding of young people's migration. It is significant to see that migration is not guided only by present openings in education and work<sup>7</sup>; but it is also guided by and structured according to local realities and possibilities (Viinamäki 1999, 112); and furthermore, according to personal experience of place. For example, over the recent decades young people in northern Karelia and Lapland have developed a certain culture of migration due to diminished educational and employment opportunities. It has also been reported that young people want to move to areas which have versatility in educational opportunities and labour markets. This tendency can be seen especially clearly in Lapland and northern Sweden (Viinamäki 1999, 114-115).

Instead of writing a normative developmental programme for regional planning or other political purposes here, in this doctoral thesis I am trying to depict the local realities and opinions of young people, which affect migration alacrity. This is an important question, since the individual is not a passive entity regulated by external factors. Individuals (even young people) should rather be seen as active subjects with various competences (France 2004); as actors who contribute to and directly promote social influences, which may even have global implications and consequences, regardless of how local the individual's context of action is (Giddens 1991, 2, 221).

In the light of previous studies, this rather strong regional aspect to migration alacrity and to young people's views of their home regions is important since the majority of studies dealing with young people and their notions of living environment stress more or less sociological perspectives. Some good examples of sociological perspectives in regional youth studies are Waara's (1996) dissertation about youth in the Tornedalica region and Paulgaard's (1999, 2002) studies of young people's living conditions and constructions of cultural identities in coastal communities; Wiborg's studies of local attachment (2001a) and rural students in higher education (2001c); Mäntykorpi's (1986) research concerning cultural identity and social and spatial transitions; and Soininen's (1998) study of young people's operational models in the country side. A sociological perspective can also be seen in reports by Paunikallio (1997, 2000, 2001), even when research settings are more local development oriented and the sociological theory basis is rather tentative. Ollila's (2004) study of how young Lapps envision their future belongs to the field of pedagogy, though it differs greatly from the focus of the pedagogical mainstream in youth studies. The mainstream orientation in pedagogy is seen, for instance, in Tervo's (1993) dissertation regarding future occupational expectations and attitudes towards education.

Also studies related to regional studies can be found among studies dealing with young people and their relation to their living environment. For example Jukarainen (2000) has studied young people's cross-border activities in Finnish-Swedish and Finnish-Russian borderlands. Kuusisto-Arponen (2003), in turn, has

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<sup>7</sup> In my research I take such factors as work and education for granted, because there are lot of information about those issues. I concentrate rather on migration alacrity and the significance of regional and local factors, and material and immaterial (social) living environments. My own view is that such regional factors have been neglected, both in migration and in youth studies.

in her dissertation investigated the problem of local territoriality as a social process and a culturally contextual phenomenon.

My own contribution to the discussions presented above is based on the theoretical framework and traditions of both sociology and regional studies. A multidisciplinary perspective is rather noticeable in this work, since investigating young people's migration alacrity means that the researcher has to be aware of debates concerning the everyday lives of young people. The multidisciplinary nature of youth studies is a great aid, offering numerous perspectives on being young in contemporary society.

However, one important viewpoint of this study is its connections to the youth studies, since especially youth studies have paid very little attention to peripheral regions. For example very few studies are being done concerning rural youth or young people in peripheral areas in Finland or the Barents Region. One notable exception here is the RYPE-project (Helve 2000) which was carried out in Finland, Sweden, Germany, Italy and Estonia, presenting and exploring rather broadly the situation of young people in European rural areas. Yet, in spite of that promising initiative, there is still a lack of comparative and coherent research material regarding these issues, though various reports and books can be found about young people in general. On the other hand regional studies, naturally, have paid attention to various regional phenomena and problems, but there is a lack of information about and focus on young people.

Additionally, general social sciences, such as sociology and anthropology, have not paid enough attention to regional differentiation – e.g. the heterogeneous nature of the Barents Euro Arctic Region. Researchers have concentrated mainly on national, international and local levels. The reason for that may be that the Barents Euro Arctic Region is not regarded as a “normal region”<sup>8</sup>, because of its administrative and heterogeneous nature. Also the border (as a set of national borders and as a cultural frontier) between the Nordic countries and Russia creates an unclear status for the Barents Region (Hønneland 1995, 34). Social scientists may have been looking for “real and easy regions”, thus concentrating rather on villages, suburbs and nation-states (Kerkelä 1998, 4-5). However, for political, developmental and in some respects administrative purposes, constructed areas such as the Barents Region have also been seen as “too easy” to use for research purposes. Gustafson (2002, 12), for example, claims that such areas “have often be used as taken-for-granted research settings”. In addition to this, Gustafson argues that such taken-for-granted research settings implicitly assume that areas with an administrative or political nature can be treated as stable, homogenous units and containers with a common cultural, political and social structure. In this study the heterogeneity of the Barents Region is considered to be an important factor which has an effect on young people's migration alacrity.

The goal of this study is to develop the discussion of young people and migration in the context of peripheral areas by combining what have hitherto been

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<sup>8</sup> Northern parts of Sweden, Norway and to some extent Finland may be regarded as a natural identity region, since Sweden and Norway have similar languages and they belong to same Western cultural sphere as Finland (Hønneland 1995, 34).



bits of incoherent information, and elevating the discussion by adding to it a new perspective: personal relation to the location and place experience.

### 1.3 The structure of this study

Main task of this study is to find out how high *migration alacrity* (Soininen 2002), i.e. eagerness to migrate, is in the Barents Region and *what are the factors that affect migration willingness*. When reading this research one must bear in mind that main task of the study is to investigate *migration alacrity*, not actual migration rates. The questionnaire used was designed to generate information about young people's thoughts regarding their migration plans and their future aspirations. The questionnaire included questions concerning young people's migration willingness and plans, life situations and attitudes towards their home district. Young people involved in this study were also asked how satisfied they are with their life in their home district.

This research is presented using the following structure: The research problem and the main task of the study are presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 digs into methodological matters and tackles questions relating to the research method and research setting used in the survey here. This includes discussions of the validity of the data and analytical focus of the study, as well as the usefulness of triangulation in enabling the researcher to utilise more than one type of data. The theoretical frame of reference for this study is depicted in Chapter 4. The theoretical and conceptual layers utilised here are *life politics*, *individualism*, *future orientations* and *place attachment*. Chapter 4 also investigates *basic factors affecting migration* and the analytical focus of the study. Chapter 5 depicts the Barents Euro Arctic Region and thus it sets the context of the study. The results of the study are then brought out in the Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 contains answers to my first research question: "How high is migration alacrity in the Barents Region?" The second research question: "What factors affect migration willingness, and how?" is answered in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 then draws some basic conclusions and discusses the individual's relation to the place. Finally, Chapter 9 functions as an epilogue, offering hints and directions for future research.

Finally, couple words on the presentation of this study. I have chosen to write in English, firstly due to the international nature of the research area and data. I felt that it is only fair to try to make my study as accessible as possible to all of my respondents, giving them a chance to read what I have found out, and what I have written and argued on the grounds of their individual ideas and opinions. I also cherish the hope that some of my respondents could somehow benefit from my research findings. For this purpose English seemed to be the best choice as a culturally neutral medium for distributing this information among those from the four different countries involved.

## 2. The research problem

The aim of this research is to gain new knowledge about young people's migration plans, based on their subjective points of view, in remote areas, especially in the Barents Region. This is done by analysing young people's opinions about and attitudes towards their home districts, which are generally regarded as being quite peripheral. In my analysis, emphasis will be on young people's migration plans and factors affecting them. In addition to this primary aim, I will also be looking at the meaning, atmosphere and image young people associate with their home district. These findings should deepen our understanding of young people's future orientations and their local roots. Thus the main theme of this research is dealing with young people's relations to their home district in light of the fact that young people's migration willingness is particularly high in this northern region.

The most important – and most often reported – reasons for young people to migrate are education, work, career prospects and gaining new experiences (see Waara 1996; Soininen 1998; 2002; Viinamäki 1999). However, migration is a complex phenomenon and for this reason it can be stated, that migration plans are not guided only by factors such as education and work. The question is much broader and it has to be dealt with in terms of local realities and possibilities by investigating young people's personal opinions about their everyday living environments.

Investigating local realities as a part of migration alacrity is important, because the places are each unique; having their own characteristics, local cultures and traditions (Massey 1995, 46). Furthermore, “not all places mean the same to everybody” (Gustafson 2001a, 11; see also Tuan 1971, 186). Every one of us has our own individual experiences<sup>9</sup> of certain places and everyone also lives in a certain place. In addition, migration as an experience is something which touches most of us. Nowadays those who are born, live their whole life and die in the same community, neighbourhood or place are clearly in the minority. In this way every one of us has played and will play a part in one of the major processes that reshapes our peripheral and urban areas (Massey & Jess 1995a, 7).

The main trends of migration are seen in statistics as numbers, objective facts and faceless flows of people. However, it is important to keep in mind that the

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<sup>9</sup> Geographical experience refers to a variety of experiences, feelings and acts connected to the relationship between individual and her/his (living) environment. Geographical experience also includes the idea of clear identification with a certain region. The central idea of geographical experience is that everyone has such experiences. According to Relph (1989, 20-22), geographical experiences require no special methods to be appreciated and understood: “they go directly from place to person and from person to place” and “regions are known already in experience,” and according to Tuan (1975, 152), “place is a centre of meaning constructed by experience.”

personal, subjective experiences of individual migrants are always place-specific, in regard to features of both the place of departure and place of arrival. The meaning of place for the individual migrant is important – sometimes even indelible (ibid. 27). The meaning of place and place attachment evolve within the special features and subjective experiences of the living environment. The sources of special features of places and individual experiences, in turn, can be linked to and analysed by looking at three essential components<sup>10</sup> that all places possess: *location*, *locale* and *sense of place* (Agnew 1993).

*Location*, in general sense, can be understood as a reference of geographical location. Geographical location is an important part of the depiction of certain places, since places are inevitably somewhere that is printed on a map. However, place should not be seen only in terms of geographic metaphors, because “place is space filled up by people, practises, objects and representations” (Gieryn 2000, 464, 465).

In this research *location* is first of all connected closely with the broader spatial context, peripherality and relatively restricted structural conditions and local opportunity structures. *Location* is thus seen in terms of relative geographical position, local opportunity structure and unique identifying features. For example, in the Barents Region *location* refers primarily to peripherality, which in turn indicates an image which contrasts with that of more central areas, such as national capitals, which are usually regarded as attractive regions. Secondly, *location* in this study refers to the spatial division of labour, local possibilities for work and education, local systems of material production and distribution, and also political control and decision making.

*Locale* refers in this study to “the settings in which social relations are constituted” (Agnew 1993, 263). In this study *locale* is understood as a local and unique sphere of action, which includes social interaction and relations in both informal and formal institutional settings for activities, i.e. “face to face” society. *Locale* thus refers here firstly to the social network gained in school, work and hobbies. This means possibilities for establishing and maintaining social relations with peers in education, work and leisure time. Secondly, *locale* refers to family relations within one’s childhood family and possibly also to romantic partners and one’s own future family. Thirdly, *locale* refers to the local atmosphere and experiences of being accepted and/or socially controlled by other people in the neighbourhood or in other social networks.

*Sense of place*, in turn, refers to the local “structure of feeling”, meaning, e.g., everyday practises and feelings which bind people to their living environment and a “social spatial definition of place from inside” (ibid. 263). In this research the focus of *sense of place* is on personal meaningful experiences connected to certain places. In the Barents Region sense of place may originate, firstly, from representations and experiences of northernness: peripherality, harsh climate, traditionally and locally guided culture in ways of acting and thinking. Secondly, *sense of place* may emerge from one’s ancestry and belonging to a

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<sup>10</sup> Häkli (1999, 141) has also identified three dimensions of space: the dimension of meaning, the dimension of social relations and structures and the dimension of physical environment. These components can be separated analytically, even though the components appear together in real life; there cannot be a place without any of these components. The same applies to Agnew’s components of place.

chain of generations living in the same area. These experiences and emotional connections to the place may mean, e.g., proud feelings or feelings of “being at home”. The viewpoint of *sense of place* thus emphasises the significance of place as a focus of personal feelings (Rose 1995, 88).

In some respect *sense of place* can be compared to the place attachment (see, e.g., Low & Altman 1992), because both sense of place and place attachment can be understood as individuals’ subjective perceptions of their living environments and feelings about those environments (Rose 1995, 88). Sense of place (as well as place attachment) always includes a subjective orientation to the place (Hummon 1992, 262). This subjective orientation includes orientations towards both the past and the future. Having an orientation towards and interpreting the past gives subjective meaning to the place, while future orientation defines the value of the place through individual life plans and open possibilities for use in life politics (Gieryn 2000, 465). Migration is thus closely related to individual variations in local sense of place and place attachment (Hummon 1992, 276), and also to carrying out individual projects and life plans.

These three components of place set the context for the core idea of the research problem in this study. It can be argued that the reasons behind migration are crystallised in the intersection of personal future goals, existing local features and subjective ways of orientating to the place through these three above-mentioned components of place: *location*, *locale* and *sense of place*. Guided by this idea, my main research questions can be posed as follows:

1. How high is migration alacrity among young people in the Barents Region?
2. What factors affect migration willingness, and how? Factors to be investigated here are derived from the idea of components of place:
  - A. *location*, including peripheral geographical location, but also material living environment, local existing realities and facilities for work and education,
  - B. *locale*, meaning settings for social activities in both informal and formal spheres of action, and
  - C. *sense of place*, referring to meanings and experiences of one’s living environment on the individual level, in relation to a personal feeling of being at home.

## 3. On methodology and data

### 3.1 Scientific realism

In this study social reality is understood in accordance with scientific realism: social reality, and human action within it, is based on both *objective facts* and *subjective meanings*. Social reality and human action have “particular causal powers or ways of acting and particular susceptibilities”; furthermore, structures are liable to generate events (Sayer 1992, 5). Human action and practices are the products not only of existing social conditions, but also of conscious and active attempts to influence those social conditions; and furthermore, the products of the subject’s necessity to act (using life politics) under existing realities and conditions (Raunio 1999, 106; Pohjola 2001, 195). In this regard it is important to remember Giddens’ (1984, 25) theory of *duality of structures*: “The structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize”. This means that existing social conditions are not just consequences of human action; individuals are also acting under preconditions of existing social conditions (Raunio 1999, 104, 106). In other words, people shape structure, but structure provides settings for people’s actions (Sewell, 2005).

The approach depicted above is suitable for this study, since the aim of this research is to provide and deepen knowledge of young people’s migration alacrity and the factors behind it. We are also dealing directly with future orientations, active life planning and subjective relations to one’s living environment – place attachment. For this reason, in this research the individual is regarded as an active subject with intentions (Mäkelä 1990, 43) and subjective opinions. Those subjective intentions, aims and opinions are motives for human action, understood in relation to realities of the social world (e.g., living conditions and local opportunity structures) and individual life (e.g., life politics and future prospects) (Raunio 1999, 73, 266). According to this, individual intentions are important to take into account while investigating those structural and societal possibilities and conditions in which individuals are acting and upon which individuals are projecting their meanings (c.f., Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 44-52). The subjective meanings of the place are negotiated in relation to all three components of place, *location*, *locale* and *sense of place* (Agnew 1993, 263), i.e. geographical location, economic processes, social relations and activities and personal meanings and dimensions of everyday life experience. In this way individual intentions are dependant on both local opportunity structures and subjective personal meanings and life plans.

This research setting requires both extensive (quantitative, objective) and intensive (qualitative, subjective) analysis (Sayer 1992, 241-251). By using triangulation between different types of data, the research issue can be investigated from different angles: on the one hand from a factual, objective perspective (standardised questions and existing literature and documentation) and on the other hand as the product of subjective meanings (open-ended questions). This is important, since social reality, as understood here, consists of both objective facts and subjective meanings (Suutari 2002, 60; Sayer 1992, 242; see also Berger & Luckmann 1994; Raunio 1999, 100, 104).

### 3.2 Survey and triangulation

Conducting a survey is one of the most important and extensively used data collection methods in the social sciences (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 245; Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 72). The term “survey”, however, is associated with extraordinarily wide range of methods. In general, survey means data collection with structured questionnaires or interviews (Raunio 1999, 194), but this can mean anything from Gallup polls and market research to surveys related to some developmental task in certain fields of interest, such as town or regional planning, education, financing, administration and health care. Surveys can also be connected to investigations financed by research institutes and official quarters. The subjects of surveys vary accordingly. Surveys may be concerned, for example, with demographic characteristics of a given group of people, their social environment and activities; or with the opinions and attitudes of certain groups of people (Moser & Kalton 1971, 1, 4-5).

The survey method is usually regarded, in a strict sense, as a method which produces merely quantitative data, utilising statistical methods and a positivistic outlook. However, a survey can be more than just one way to collect and code data; it can also be regarded as a more general strategy of empirical research. Surveys can be characterised in many ways, depending on what the main focus is for the research problem, analysis or theoretical framework (Raunio 1999, 195-198).

Due to the nature of main research questions, the survey conducted for this study was designed to provide both qualitative and quantitative data. There are consequently two types of questions in the survey: structured questions for the quantitative and open-ended questions for the qualitative (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 253-255; Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 197; Heikkilä 1999, 48-51).

The research setting, which combines data of different sorts, is called *between-method triangulation*, meaning a complementary use of more than one type of method or data (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 69; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 204; Macdonald & Tipton 1993, 199; Raunio 1999, 340-341). This is a practical choice for searching solutions for research questions that have different aims (Silverman 1997, 12; Raunio 1999, 341). Thus, in this research the content of the survey questionnaire followed the traditional classification of the nature of data as qualitative vs. quantitative. In this research these two data types

are not seen polar opposites<sup>11</sup> (cf. Silverman 1997, 14; Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 71; Raunio 1999, 337), but rather as complementary (Raunio 1999, 338, 343; Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 133; Suutari 2002, 61). A third data type, which has been utilised and used to offer supplementary information, in this study is descriptive literature and documents dealing with the Barents Region (see chapter 5).

According to Miles & Huberman (1994, 41) there are three reasons why combining quantitative and qualitative data is worthwhile in research. Firstly, combining qualitative and quantitative data “enables confirmation or corroboration of each other via triangulation”. Secondly, combining these data types helps to elaborate and develop analysis, and enables one to use richer details. Lastly, using data combinations may provide fresh insight and new lines of thinking through paying attention to surprises and/or paradoxes. In addition, triangulation, using and utilising different methods and/or data types, helps the researcher to tolerate possible inconsistencies in the data and in phenomena occurring therein. Combining different data types, in this case quantitative, qualitative data, literature and documents may also give more flexibility and sensitivity to the analysis (Vilkko 2005, 116).

Triangulation is based here on functional aspects in solving research questions (Suutari 2002, 59); i.e., the method is based on utilising the special features of all three afore-mentioned data types. These three angles and data types, descriptive literature and documents, quantitative and qualitative data, answer different sorts of questions (Sayer 1992, 242) and also, in some respect, represent the three different components of place: *location*, *locale* and *sense of place* (Agnew 1993, 263). The following picture illustrates the relations between the data types used and the different components of place.

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<sup>11</sup> Traditionally quantitative (qnt) data is contrasted with qualitative (qlt) data in terms of the following dialectics: (qnt/qlt respectively as) hard vs. soft, fixed vs. flexible, objective vs. subjective, survey vs. case study (Silverman 1997, 13). This traditional classification is in some respects erroneous, in that it is difficult to strictly separate quantitative and qualitative data. Töttö (2004, 12) takes this argument even further by claiming that there are no such things as quantitative and qualitative research methods; there are just different types of research questions. (Re: the relationship between quantitative and qualitative research, see, e.g., Töttö 1997; 2000; Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 1997, 131-135.)

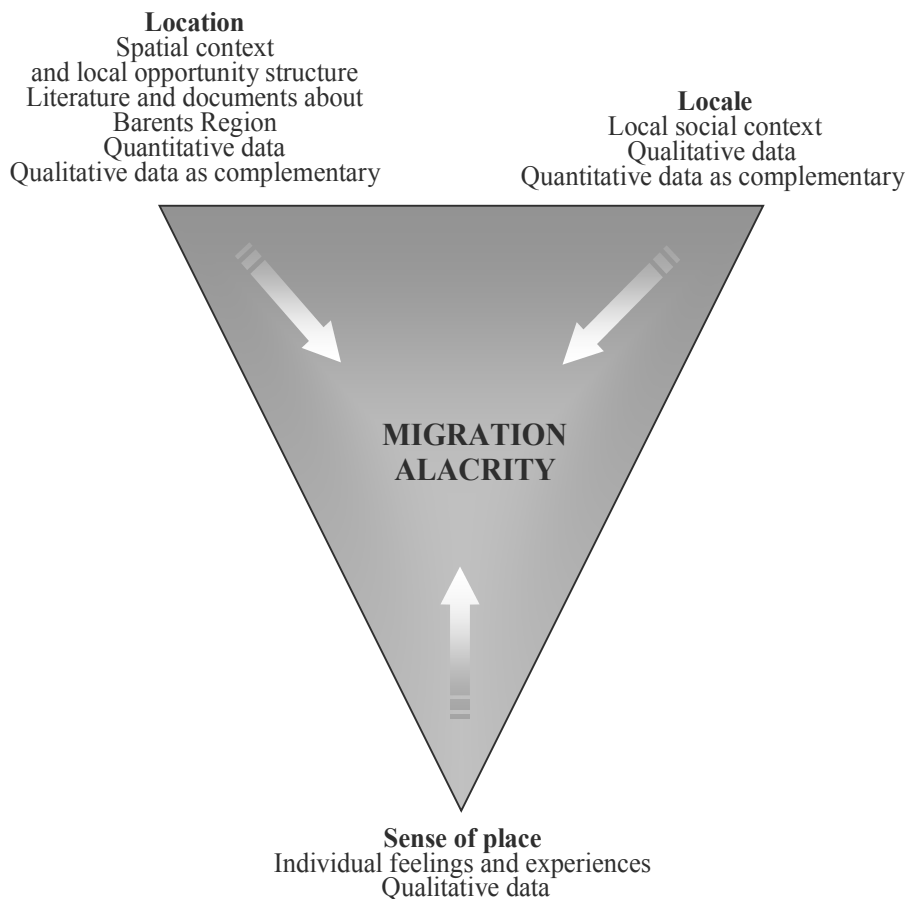


Figure 1: Relations between different data types and components of place

In this research primary data consists of both quantitative and qualitative data. Secondary data includes descriptive literature and documents dealing with the Barents Region. Literature and documents are used to create the context (see chapter 5) for the research questions and also to depict the spatial context and opportunity structure, *location*, of the research area. Quantitative data has been of use in identifying general trends in relation to *factual questions* (Suutari 2002, 58; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 251; Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 75). Quantitative data is used here to depict phenomena of migration alacrity by illustrating them in numerical form, in accordance with quantitative tradition (Heikkilä 1999, 15). For instance in answering my first research question, “*How high is migration alacrity among young people in the Barents Region?*” the factual nature of the question makes it plausible to primarily use quantitative data in numerical form based on responses to very structured questions in the survey. The first research question is not intended to depict migration willingness on a personal level, thus it is reasonable to offer the reader more generalised results and to “persuade” the reader through de-emphasising individual judgement via quantitative data (Miles & Huberman 1994, 41).

Conversely, with the use of qualitative data and means of intensive deepening (Suutari 2002, 58), the researcher is persuading reader through details and depic-



tions of young people's subjective feelings, experiences<sup>12</sup> and opinions. In this research the use of *intensive* data, provided by open-ended *questions about subjective experiences* (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 252), is aiming to deepen understanding on the research issue and on the reasons for certain behaviours and certain decisions (Heikkilä 1999, 16). Open-ended questions allow respondents to reflect on their *sense of place*, personal ideas, feelings, experiences and meanings (Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 79). A qualitative approach is thus suitable for addressing my second research question: "*What factors affect on migration willingness, and how?*", because answering this question requires the investigation of a broader range of the personal feelings and experiences of young people than was needed in relation to the first research question.

The second research question is also more theoretically informed than the first. Thus the analysis of the second question has different starting points and different focal points in the analysis. During my data analysis, and while I was formulating my conclusions, there was a fruitful interaction between these two questions and the different types of data used to address each. Background literature and documents, together with quantitative data, helped strengthen, validate, clarify, illustrate and interpret my qualitative findings; and vice versa (Miles & Huberman 1994, 41).

### 3.3 Validity of the data and research setting

As a method, surveying offered the possibility of gathering comparative data from different countries and effectively producing both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. The survey also enabled me to fulfil the requirement of producing the data needed to answer two research questions of quite different natures and aims. Due to the research setting and the possibilities offered by the survey as a method, this data has several strengths.

Firstly, the data is unique, primary and broad based, offering new information about young people in Europe's northern periphery. Owing to this, this research will provide a new aspect in literature about Barents Region itself. Literature written about Barents Region has concentrated mostly on political, military and economic aspects, or problems, and the first steps of cooperation in the area. This emphasis provides a rather narrow picture of life in the Barents Region. The relation between so-called "ordinary people" and the area itself has been largely forgotten<sup>13</sup>. Secondly, this data is of an informative nature: it represents opinions of a wide spectrum of age groups and it shows how young people's motives develop during the course of their lives. The data also presents the views of young people in different stages of their pre-adult life, from different educational back-

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<sup>12</sup> Subjective, because individual experiences are subjectively and personally lived through and therefore unique; no one else could produce same experience in same situation (Hilden-Paajanen 2005, 121).

<sup>13</sup> There are, however, rising interest and discussions about non-political issues and debates in the Barents Region. For example, in 2004 there was a study about women and violence in the Barents Region published (Saarinen & Carey-Bélanger 2004).

grounds and from all social classes. Thirdly, this data set also provides a tool for regional comparisons. Finally, the information produced here is very much situational and tied to its context, since it has been produced in a certain place and time, and from a certain specific perspective (Vilkko 2005, 117; Jukarainen 2000, 35). While some might see this as a weakness, it could also be seen as an additional source of value: this data offers unique and valuable knowledge about a particular set of young people and their personal notions of their peripheral living environments.

It can be acknowledged that a survey was the only rational and practical way to collect this comparative and extensive data. The survey method was thus chosen as a means of collecting data because of the research setting and practical questions. The original idea for carrying out the survey and collecting the data from the Barents Region came from the Finnish Ministry of Education (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 1999) in the beginning of the Finnish presidency of Barents Council, in the beginning of 1999. The research about the Barents Region “as a social, cultural and economic space for young people to live in” was one part of promoting cooperation in the field of youth policy in the Barents Region. Thus, according to the original idea and interests of the study, a survey was self-evidently set as a research method.

The survey also seemed to be the only “time saving” method available, that allow data collection from a geographically vast research area in no longer than nine months, which was all the time given (and financed) for conducting this survey, processing the data received and presenting the preliminary results. The given time limit forced me to make compromises and to follow the principle of “it is impossible to maximise everything which is desirable” (Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 9, 11-12, 74; see also Raunio 1999, 34). These “given” preconditions – the time limit and research area – set certain conditions in the research planning, such as discretionary data, comparative research settings and also practical arrangements, for example avoiding postal surveys and favouring school surveys.

The restricted schedule thus created some weaknesses in the data. Firstly, the questionnaire was designed, translated and printed in a very short period of time. Especially designing and translating questionnaires under such a tight schedule may have caused certain deviations in the data. A lack of preparation time increases the possibility of unclear questions, and thus confusions in answering and, in the worst case, deviations in the analysis and conclusions. However, the risk of deviation and misinterpretations has been minimised by taking these factors into consideration in the analysis and concluding as carefully as possible. Secondly, because of the limited time, it was impossible to gather theoretically representative data by using any randomised or stratified sampling methods (cf., e.g. Heikkilä 1999, 34-45; Moser & Kalton 1971, 53-210; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 178-201). Another reason for potentially unrepresentative data was the difficulty of getting reliable information of the sort needed for such sampling methods: e.g., lists of the young people’s names, years of birth, and addresses from the research area, including the region each respondent came from in the four different participating countries. For these reasons samplings are discretionary – provided by consulting fellow youth researchers in the Barents Region. However, non-probability samples may also be used in survey research

if a sampling population cannot be precisely defined, or if information needed in the sampling frame, such as list of names and ages of the research population, is not available (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 184; on sampling frame: Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 37; Arber 1993, 80-83; Raunio 1999, 195).

This discretionary aspect of the data also means that the data may not be entirely representative, because unemployed young people and those outside of educational institutions are not represented here. This is also a consequence of both issues of research economy and practical arrangements: it was economical and practical to go there where young people are spending most of their time, i.e. schools. Thus the target group of the study was defined as students and pupils. In the surveys that are utilising schools as a source of respondents there is a risk of “elite bias”, which means, that the researcher is receiving data only from high-status respondents (Miles & Huberman 1994, 41).

### 3.4 Chain of representations

The heterogeneous nature of the Barents Region as a research area raises questions regarding the comparative research setting, such as possible problems with variations in meanings between different languages and cultures. This question has to be considered carefully in such research, which involves respondents representing several different languages, heterogeneous living environments and cultural heritages (Cartmel 2003; Puuronen 2000, 252). In this research, the challenges of multilingual and -cultural research settings were confronted already in the very beginning. The survey questionnaire had to be designed in a way that it would be as suitable as possible for the purpose of collecting data from a heterogeneous research area. It was necessary to write the first draft versions of the questionnaire already in English, because only a few of the research partners who helped with practical and cultural issues were Finnish-speaking. The final version of questionnaire was translated by three different professional translators. Even though the translators were professional, the comparative research setting always includes some doubt about the use of coherent and suitable concepts in every language and culture (Cartmel 2003, 92). In addition, even though there were discussions between the researcher and each translator about the meaning of the questions and concepts, some divergences in the questions may have occurred because of translation. Thus the respondents in each country may have understood the questions a bit differently and answered on the grounds of slightly different points of view; certainly upon different cultural heritage.

The possible deviations and/or variations in the data which evolved during the translation questionnaires and the answering the questions are only part of

consequences of the representation<sup>14</sup> chain. The whole representation chain consists of different actor levels within different phases of the survey; all the way from the beginning of the research process – setting the research question, defining research population (see Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 179; Moser & Kalton 1971, 53-54) and designing the questionnaire – to the moment when you, the reader, have read the last page of this thesis.

The original idea of the representation chain was inspired by Eco’s (1990, 1992) claim that text has always had many different meanings, including at least the following two: 1) *intentio auctoris*, the author’s meaning and 2) *intentio lectoris*, meaning constructed by the reader. Many of the difficulties associated with comparative research are especially derived from the ‘problem of meaning’, i.e. the equivalence in meaning in different languages, and the issues of interpretation and representations. It can be argued that all the actors involved in the research process, such as translators and respondents – with their different possible societal and cultural backgrounds – have their own meanings and representations of research issues, as their role may be (Cartmel 2003, 97-98; on equivalence in meaning: Eco 2001, 9-20). The chain of representation is thus marking those articulation points in which the angle and producer of representation has changed, and which are thus the most probable sources of fallacy in respect to the researcher’s original meaning, *intentio auctoris*, in this research. One must acknowledge that every stage of the research process, especially in survey research, is a potential source of inaccuracy (Moser & Kalton 1971, 45). The idea of the representation chain is illustrated as follows:

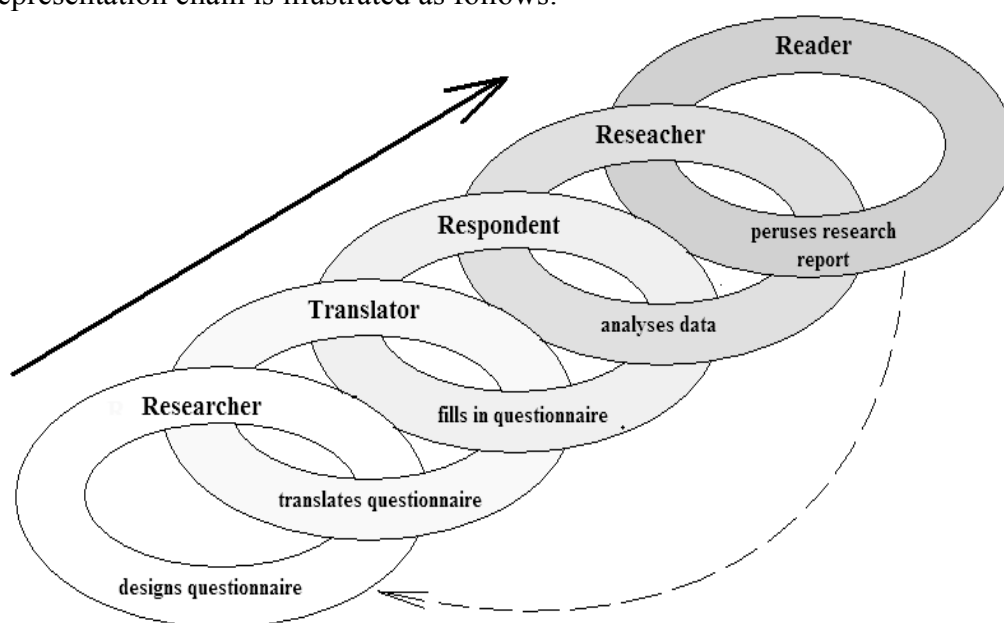


Figure 2: The chain of representations

<sup>14</sup> Representation here refers to subjective and individual reflections, ideas and interpretations of the surrounding social life and world. Representations are thus personal, and as Duncan & Ley (1993, 4) have stated, “our representations of the world cannot be other than ‘partial truths’. The researcher’s representation, *intentio auctoris*, is also only a partial truth; “not an absolute concept” (Kuusisto-Arponen 2003) or representation of issues in question.

The first link in the representation chain is the *researcher*, who sets research questions, defines the sample population and designs<sup>15</sup> the questionnaire<sup>16</sup>. Within this process the researcher is investing the questionnaire with her own representations of the research issue and setting. These representations are formed on the grounds of an understanding of the preliminary theoretical frame and research context. Second link consist of *translators*, who are translating the questionnaire<sup>17</sup>. In the translation process translators are using their personal understanding and knowledge of the research questions and concepts used, but also contextual information received from the researcher. Their representations are actualised on a conceptual and linguistic level.

The third level – and link in the chain – of representations is the *respondent*, who fills in the questionnaire and produces again a new representation of the research questions on the basis of his/her personal and local perspective and situation. The important thing here is that the respondent is able understand the words and the meanings of terms used in the questions, and to form an idea and representation (which is as similar as possible to the researcher's original representation, i.e. *intentio auctoris*) of issue under investigation; and he/she is also able to formulate another, individual, representation in answer to the question, which will in turn be intelligible to the researcher (Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 77).

The fourth level, and again another type of representation, is formed by *researcher* during the data analysis. All previous representations are cumulated during the analysing process. This accumulation is inescapable, since representations that have existed in the minds of translators and respondents are embedded in the data, indistinguishable for the researcher. Thus it is impossible for the researcher to compare, reflect and separate her own representations from other peoples' previous representations. The researcher no longer has any means of correcting possible previous misunderstandings at this point. Nor is there much which can be done at this level in order to verify equivalence between the representations of other actors in the chain of representations, or to locate possible sources of misinterpretation.

On the last level of the chain of representations the *reader* introduces his/her own *intentio lectoris* – yet another fresh, personal viewpoint and context of understanding – to the written research. This last link in the chain differs from former links in that it does not process or affect the research process itself. The connection back to the first link exists only in the ideal situation where the reader is giving feedback to the researcher who has designed survey questionnaire and

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<sup>15</sup> Errors arising from the questionnaire itself are typically in relation to the length of the questionnaire; the order, structure and wording of questions; and the level of language used (for children or for specialist groups) (Moser & Kalton 1971, 390-391; Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, 81).

<sup>16</sup> In this case the original questionnaire was written in English. This phase of research may already have been a possible source of error, since English is not researcher/author's mother tongue. Some words and concept used in the questions may have had particular connotations or meanings which the researcher was not familiar with.

<sup>17</sup> In this research the original questionnaire was written in English and it was translated into languages used in the research area: Finnish (the researcher's own mother tongue) Swedish (the translator's mother tongue), Norwegian (not the translator's mother tongue) and Russian (the translator's mother tongue).

analysed the received data. If this ideal situation materialises and the reader reports about possible failures in the analysis or new, contradictory representations, it may result in the scientific principle of self-correction being carried out (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 21). This, of course, requires that researcher is willing to conduct further research and write new, more reflective texts about the research issue.

This idea of the chain of representation is an important point when thinking about the research process, the production of information and data analysis critically, and trying to find possible sources of distorted information in research which involves respondents from several different countries, and where there is more than one language being used in the research setting and the data. In this research there have been many articulation points in which the representations produced (by translators, respondents and readers) may have diverged from the *intentio auctoris* – the researcher's original, theoretically guided meaning, understanding and representation of the research problem and issue.

It is important to note that *intentio auctoris* in this case is the researcher's subjective notion of the research issue and the world around us. As such, representations corresponding to *intentio auctoris* are still subjective and only 'partial truths' about the world (Duncan & Ley 1993, 4) constructed on the grounds of personal experiences and notions of place. In the case of social sciences, researchers' personal ways of thinking and theoretical perspectives are inevitably embedded in the formulation of research questions and questionnaire wording. *Intentio auctoris* is partly situational and contemporary, because it is dependant on the author's discipline and knowledge of contemporary scientific debates – even trends – and dominant theoretical concepts. We must also remember that aspects of the problem of meaning such as these are virtually impossible to avoid or to eliminate completely in this kind of comparative research setting.

The chain of representation shows us the articulation points in data collection. It is fair to assert that in this research the chain of representation is not producing fundamentally false information, since the topic of the questionnaire is fairly common and certainly familiar to all respondents: they all have personal opinions about their living environment, their personal future and possible migration plans. Translators as well, relatively speaking, share at least this much cultural context with both the researcher and respondents. In addition, translators are also familiar with local resources and their profession and educational background makes them aware of the problems of meaning in translation.

Besides the consequences of the chain of representations, survey research is criticised for a lack of personal contact with the respondents. It has been argued that the survey researchers often end up with false conclusions, especially in quantitative analysis, because of a lack of personal contact with respondents and because the structured response options for each question prepared in advance by the researcher may not fully cover the opinions of respondents. These aspects of data have to be carefully considered during the analysis, especially when the

research issue and context is unfamiliar to researcher<sup>18</sup> (Heikkilä 1999, 16). Also international comparative research in general is seen to have certain pitfalls. Standard problems in these comparative research settings are, e.g., language skills, difficulties in making reliable comparisons, difficulties in formulating identical and precision measures, and differences in data collection methods between countries where secondary data is used (Cartmel 2003, 86, 90). In this research, the usual difficulties associated with comparative research are taken into account by keeping sampling compatible in each country. Data here has been collected – i.e. the questionnaire designed and the most important decisions made – by only one researcher (the author).

The nature of a comparative research setting usually requires the utilisation of extensive and comparative data. This in turn means that data can be regarded as superficial but broadly based (Heikkilä 1999, 15). The superficiality critique is usually posed because the researcher is not getting very deep into the lives of respondents using a survey method, especially if only structured questionnaires are used. A survey investigates all respondents according to the same pattern, thus potentially overlooking the subjective features and experiences in different life situations. This may also be the case with surveys used to collect data in youth studies, and survey research targeting young people has been criticised for this reason. It is said that standardised survey questionnaires are not suitable for studies dealing with young people, because it is difficult to focus on societal processes and chances that are relevant and important for young people through a survey. Also using a survey method to study behaviour (especially among young people) is not recommended because the reasons for certain behaviours are difficult or fully impossible to remember<sup>19</sup>, analyse and depict afterward (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 206). It is also said that surveys give a more conventional picture of young people than is seen in real life, because unconventional young persons are not answering the questions and/or young people answer in the way they think researcher wants them to answer (Puuronen 1997, 195).

In order to avoid these problems, research should also look for a broader picture of existing social and living conditions than what structured questions can provide (Raunio 1999, 197). In this research this is done by using triangulation – utilising both quantitative and qualitative data together with existing literature and documentation about the research issue. In addition to this, the researcher has used the understanding of young people's worlds which she picked up during her earlier research projects (Soininen 1998; 1999) and through participation in various national and international seminars and conferences dealing with youth studies. Academic background knowledge is used here to complement a personal ability to read the surrounding environment and cultural signals of contemporary society.

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<sup>18</sup> The danger of ending up with fundamentally false conclusions for this reason in this study is marginal, since author became familiar with issues relating to this research topic already while writing her master's thesis about young people living in the peripheries of eastern Finland (Soininen 1998).

<sup>19</sup> Memory errors are one type of response error that can arise among respondents. Other such errors are, e.g., a lack of knowledge, misunderstanding, overstating or cheating (Moser & Kalton 1971, 387-388).

### 3.5 Data: pupils and students as respondents

The primary data for this study comes from a survey (Hirsjärvi et al. 1997, 184) conducted in different schools and universities in the Barents Region in November and December of 1999.<sup>20</sup> In Finland data was collected in Lapland; in Sweden, in Norrbotten; in Russia, in the Republic of Karelia and the counties of Archangelsk and Murmansk; and in Norway, in Nordland and Troms. The target group of this study was defined as pupils and students in the Barents Region. For this reason the survey was carried out in four different levels of education: comprehensive schools, vocational institutes, upper secondary schools and universities.

The total amount of questionnaires in the start was 2100. For Finland, Norway and Sweden 500 questionnaires were sent to each country, with 600 questionnaires being sent to Russia due to its having a higher population than the other countries involved in the survey. Questionnaires were delivered to schools by local research partners. Respondents all had the possibility of answering questions in their own mother tongue. For various reasons, 452 questionnaires came back blank. For example, some students refused to fill in questionnaires, or there was a poor flow of information among teachers in some schools. All together 21 questionnaires were rejected, because they were filled in improperly or because it could be assumed that information was given jokingly or in an intentionally absurd manner. There were also three respondents who were too old for the research purpose, i.e., over 30 years old.

Following table shows the amounts of the questionnaires in the beginning of the data collection and the total amount of acceptable questionnaires returned from each country.

Table 1: Amounts of accepted and rejected questionnaires

Questionnaires	Completed	Rejected	Lost	Total
<b>Finland</b>	373	11	116	500
<b>Norway</b>	284	7	209	500
<b>Sweden</b>	383	3	114	500
<b>Russia</b>	587	0	13	600
<b>Total</b>	1 627	21	452	<b>2 100</b>

Age of the respondents varied between 14 and 30 years old. The majority of the respondents, 78 %, were 15-20-year-olds in the year 2000, when the data was preliminary analysed. This being the dominant age group in the survey, the most common educational background among respondents, 41 %, was to still be studying in comprehensive school. We must then bear in mind that the opinions

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<sup>20</sup> Most parts of this chapter, depicting the survey data, have been published earlier in the author's internet publication (Soininen 2002).



of pupils in comprehensive schools are the primary determinant in the survey results. Respondents in vocational training were the smallest group in the survey.

The respondents were 46 % male; 54 % female. Again, for obvious reasons, the most common marital status among respondents was single: 84 % defined themselves as such, with another 11 % choosing the options of “engaged” or “cohabiting.” Only 1 % of the respondents were married. The remaining 4 % did not want to state their marital status. Very few respondents of this age group classified themselves as divorced or widowed. Just 2 % of all informants had children of their own. 76 % of the respondents still lived with their parents at the point of research. Russian respondents showed a tendency to keep living with their parents for longer than those from other countries.

Looking at the data set as whole, respondents parents’ educational backgrounds were in general much as would be expected. All different levels of educational are quite equally represented among both the fathers and mothers of respondents. Respondents’ mothers, however, tended to be a slightly more educated than their fathers. About 24 % of respondents’ mothers had university degrees, whereas for fathers the figure was about 20 %. Fundamental differences can be seen when comparing parents’ educational background in different countries. First of all, both the mothers and fathers of Russian respondents had university degrees more often than respondents’ parents in other countries. 37 % of Russian respondents’ mothers had university degrees, compared with 24 % for the survey as a whole. Likewise among the fathers, of Russian respondents’ 32 % had graduated from a university, compared with 20 % for the survey as a whole. Secondly, the mothers and fathers of Finnish and Norwegian respondents have very similar educational backgrounds to each other. Respondents’ mothers and fathers in Norway and Finland were characterised by the fact that they had very few university degrees; vocational training being the dominant form of education among them. There were also a rather high percentage of Finnish and Norwegian mothers whose education has gone no further than elementary/comprehensive school. In Finland this percentage was 21; in Norway, 20. These are rather high numbers when compared to overall figures for mothers in the data; all together about 13 % of respondents’ mothers have only elementary or comprehensive school diplomas.

The educational background of respondents’ parents’ raises expectations of an even higher number of highly educated young people in the Barents Region, since young people today are educating themselves more than in previous generations. Average educational attainment is continually increasing and today’s young people tend to be considerably more educated than their parents (Järvinen 2001, 60-62). It can also be assumed that since respondents and their parents belong to different generations, they have different local opportunity structures, different demands for their occupations and working life and different collective experiences of education its necessity. In addition to this, different generations have their own possibilities, ideas and representations in relation to their living environments and local resources. The significant difference between the generation of our respondents and that of their parents is the socio-spatial history and social change which has increased mobility between regions (Riikonen 1995, 92- 93).

It can also be anticipated that because of a rather high educational background, migration alacrity among respondents will be rather high, because “it has generally been found that those who spend a longer time in education are more migratory than those who spend fewer years in school” (White & Woods 1980, 15). It has also been reported that children of lower social status are more likely to remain in their home region and those whose families belong to a higher social class have more opportunities to choose their future place of residence. For this reason, the rather high educational background of respondents’ parents may also indicate that these respondents are able to choose their future place of residence, and possibly their future educational institutions, amongst cities which are located far from their childhood place of residence (Kytö 1998, 94).

Respondents’ living environments reflect the heterogeneity of the research area and venues: 54 % live in urban environments;<sup>21</sup> 20 %, in municipal centres; and 26 %, in the villages or scattered settlement areas. Living environments also vary among respondents from different countries: in Finland the vast majority of our respondents (74 %) live in municipal centres and in scattered settlement areas, with only 26 % in what can be called urban areas; whereas in Russia the vast majority of our respondents live in urban environments (75 %) and villages (17 %) with only a small minority of living in municipality centres or scattered settlement areas. Norwegian and Swedish respondents were rather equally divided between rural and urban settings. In Norway 55 % of respondents live in urban milieu and 45 % in municipalities or remote area. In Sweden 44 % of respondents come from cities and 56 % from municipality centres, remote areas or villages. The vast majority of the respondents (88 %) were born in the Barents Region. The rest have moved to the area with their parents or, for example, in order to study in a university located in the region.

The influence of respondents’ living environments on the answers and the data is two-fold. First, nearly half of the respondents live in smaller places: municipal centres, villages or in scattered settlement areas. This would lead us to expect particularly strong migration alacrity. Secondly, the data reflects a significant amount of regional heterogeneity; i.e., variations in living environments. The data encompasses both centres and peripheries within the research area, which in turn implies various reasons and motives for young people’s migration alacrity.

The questionnaire has provided both quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data was collected using open-ended questions. Respondents had the opportunity to answer in their own words, in their own language. Open-ended questions generated various styles of answers. It is worth of mentioning that respondents from different countries had clearly different styles of answering and dealing with the issues asked about. *Russian* respondents tended to write the most, giving extensive responses to more questions and longer answers than those from other countries. They also speculated more about possible alternatives

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<sup>21</sup> This portion can be regarded quite sufficient, since the settlement pattern in the Barents Region is to a great extent urban in nature (Wiberg 1994, 35). However, the urban residence is more common in northwest Russia than in other areas of the Barents Region. In northwest Russia people live mostly in large or middle-sized towns, whereas the general pattern in other parts of the Barents Region is that the population lives in different types of settlements spread over an extensive area.

than other respondents. Characteristically in their answers, the place where they lived at the moment of research was compared to the other cities in their home country. Often these comparisons were with bigger places than their current home town. *Norwegian* respondents answered in a rather cursory style, discussing only one aspect of the issue, if anything. They emphasised the meaning of nature and the personal freedom that nature offers in the answers to many questions. In general, in the Norwegian context nature is a central cultural symbol and factor in the construction of national identity (Wiborg 2001a). *Finnish* respondents were quite diplomatic and answered only what they were asked, using short answers. These respondents were quite unanimous in their opinions. *Swedish* respondents had expressed themselves briefly and strongly. They used strong verbs, such as hate, more often than respondents from other countries.

In reading this research one should keep in mind, that the survey data is a sample (see, e.g., Suutari 2002, 54; Raunio 1999, 194) of the opinions of young people living in the Barents region. The opinions and attitudes reflected in this research are only those of the research population – of young people living in the given places in the research area. This data is strongly situational, and it does not enable us to make valid generalisations, but it does give us quite a good standpoint from which to view the main trends in these young people's attitudes.

## 4. Theoretical and conceptual layers: from life politics to migration alacrity

The theoretical frame of reference for this research has its starting point in the basic theoretical outlines of previous migration research; yet it also brings out themes which are closely connected to factors that have been picked up on in previous works in the field, but sometimes left without profound discussion. Thus the important theoretical themes in relation to the investigation of young people's migration plans in remote and peripheral areas are *life politics* (Giddens 1991), *individualism* (Giddens 1991), *future orientation* (Trommsdorf 1986), and *place attachment* (Low & Altman 1992). In this research these are seen as the *basic factors affecting on migration* (Lee 1969; Kytö 1998; Halfacree & Boyle 1993) and increasing migration alacrity (Soinin 2002). These four themes form the main theoretical framework for this study. These themes form a whole set of relations ranging from general ideas of striving for an ideal life down to planning particular concrete actions. Each part of the theoretical framework has a particular function in analysing this continuum.

The three components of place, *location*, *locale* and *sense of place* (Agnew 1993), are related to the theoretical and conceptual layers in the sense that *location* and *locale* set the major framework for a person's life politics, which is the starting point for the theoretical and conceptual approach in this research. Furthermore, *location* and *locale*, or factors included therein, generate personal feelings and experiences for individuals in interplay with issues related to the presented theoretical layers. Those experiences and feelings are the basis for a personal *sense of place* and ultimately the basis for migration alacrity.

The theoretical themes mentioned above refer to the *social dimension* of migration alacrity, while the three components of place (Agnew 1993) refer to the *spatial dimension* of the phenomena of migration alacrity. This setting is derived from Soja's *socio-spatial dialectics*, according to which social and spatial processes are interactive (Häkli 1999, 113; cit. Soja 1989). In this research, place attachment can be seen as a point where social and spatial processes intersect.

The following illustration shows the theoretical and conceptual layers of this study and their relation to the three components of place. Each layer covers an important aspect of migration alacrity. The theoretical discussion moves layer by layer towards central factors of migration alacrity, starting from life politics in general and moving towards the concrete relationship between individuals and place. In the following chapters each layer, its significance and its relations to other layers will be discussed.

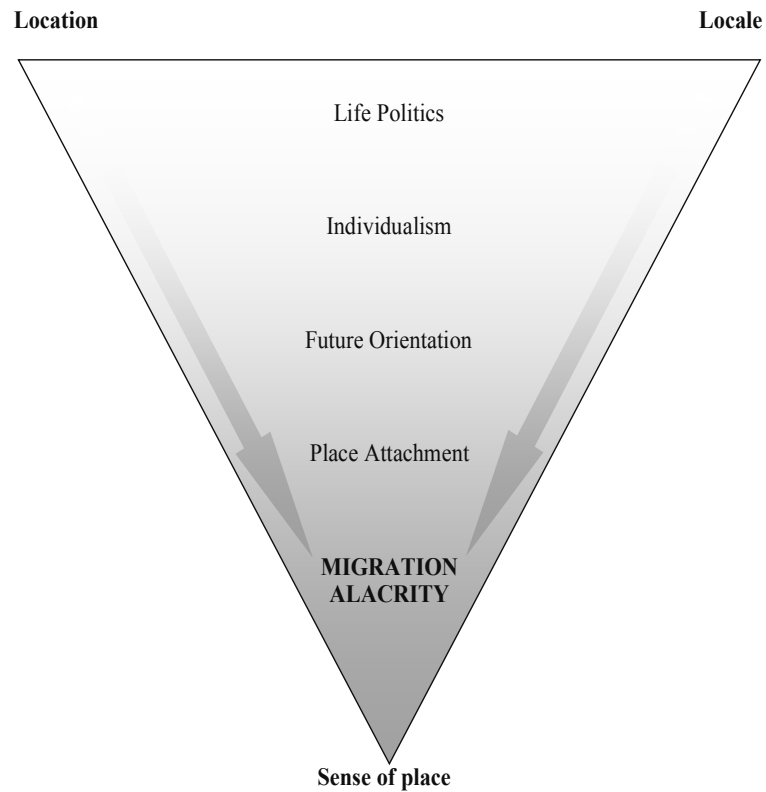


Figure 3: Theoretical framework of this study

## 4.1 Basic theoretical outlines of migration research

Traditional migration theory depicts push-and-pull mechanisms of migration (see Kytö 1998, 34-40). Lee, for example, presents four factors that enter into the decision to migrate (Lee 1969, 285-288). Lee's theory is based on the fact that in every area there are various factors which either hold or lure people to the area, or repel people from the area. He specifies these as:

- “1. Factors associated with the area of origin.
2. Factors associated with the area of destination.
3. Intervening obstacles.
4. Personal factors.”

Lee's theory is largely based on the notion that reasons for migration arise significantly from both the places/areas of origin and those of destination. Lee concentrates mostly on physical obstacles or such hindrances that are outside of the personal sphere of action, such as distance as a physical and economic obstacle and laws. He does mention personal factors, but his ideas are grounded merely on a personal turn of mind, rather than regarding the person as an active individual. These are the points in which Lee's theory is not fully applicable in

the contemporary world, since migration theory should consist both of structural context and personal meanings and behavioural response (Kytö 1998, 33).

Other social scientists, e.g. Bogue (1969), have also formulated push-and-pull mechanisms of migration. Bogue's model stresses that the individual is rooted to and identified with the region in which he/she has lived for a long period of time; and moving to the new and unfamiliar place is mentally distressing. Bogue's model consists of more dimensional thinking than Lee's model presented above. Bogue's pushing factors are concentrated on features of location on the regional level, such as unemployment, poor possibilities for education and racial, political or religious discrimination. Pulling factors in his mechanism, in turn, reflect entirely on personal wishes and future orientations; such as better opportunities for work, career, self-development and social activities for example with relatives living in the place of destination (Kytö 1989, 66; cit. Bogue 1969; 1977.) Bogue's pulling factors thus pay some attention to the person planning to migrate, reflecting different aspects of reasons and consequences of the possible change of living environment; but his model is still rather strongly influenced by an "institutional framework" (Moon 1995, 507).

Moon recognises the problems that using an "institutional framework" have caused in migration studies, and argues that "a problem for migration research has been that people are assumed to make their migratory decisions as a reaction to the economic and social structure of the region". He thus recommends "moorings" as a fruitful way to conceptualise migratory decision-making. By "moorings" he means those social expressions which allow the individual to develop physical, psychological and emotional well-being and to bind oneself to a particular place (Moon 1995, 514). Moon seems to have forgotten the interaction between different aspects of place and the potential migrant's individual(istic) aims, life politics and future orientation.

While Bogue's and Moon's theories include some promising elements, they do not fully correspond with the viewpoint of this study. The existing view, or paradigm, which is closest to my own is that which says migration should be conceptualised on the basis of three main issues: "the multiple currents and practical consciousness of the potential migrant", "complexity and multiplicity of reasons for migration" and lastly "a culturally and individually constructed discourse of migration" (Halfacree & Boyle 1993).

*The multiple currents and practical consciousness of the potential migrant* in this paradigm refer to the conceptualisation of migration as an action in time. This action happens in a certain time and place, with some relation to individual's past and predicated future, as a part of a biography, not as a separate or random act and phenomenon (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 337). *Multiple currents* hint that migration alacrity includes local opportunities, personal life politics and history, and also both local and personal future prospects. *Practical consciousness of the potential migrant*, in turn, suggests that personal experiences, together with variations in the local living environment and opportunity structure, also have an effect on migration. It should also be remembered that variations in personal feelings of sense of place add a certain unpredictable element to migration research (Kytö 1989, 6).

*Complexity and multiplicity of reasons for migration*, in turn, is promoting the idea that we should not look for just one or two "institutional frameworks" or

“self-evident reasons” for migration, such as economic or employment issues. Instead we should expect to find several reasons – some well known and clearly formulated; others more obscure and undefined. Understanding the multiplicity and complexity of reasons for migration guides the researcher towards seeing migration as a *culturally and individually constructed discourse* which reveals the individual’s personality, values, attachments and world view, together with the person’s relation to the living place and migration alacrity. This and different local discourses, e.g. in relation to the future and young people, connect migration to the everyday experience of the individual within local milieus and society. Understanding migration as a culturally and individually constructed discourse connects geographical movement to social mobility, personal freedom, open possibilities and individualism; or, on the other hand, to immobility, residential attachment, working-class habitus and perhaps a restricted opportunity structure (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 339, 341, 342).

All these equip us to look at Lee’s (1969) push-and-pull mechanisms in a new way. It is possible to find up-to-date counterparts for his push and pull factors. His factors associated with the area of origin and destination can be regarded as a two sides of opportunity structure. Features connected to the area of origin can be regarded as a *local opportunity structure* and features associated with area of destination can be regarded as an *open opportunity structure*, towards which young people are possibly aiming. Open opportunity structure refers to the future which will be constructed individually by means of personal life politics in some favourable living environment. Intervening obstacles in Lee’s model can be seen in a contemporary society as a *random element*, which may be due to changes both in the personal sphere and goals, and in the present living place. Personal factors in Lee’s model take on a broader meaning when they are seen as a *personal performance structure*. Personal performance structure refers to personal issues which may increase, or in some cases decrease, migration alacrity – e.g. money, motivation, values, personal wishes and cultural heritage, to name just a few such issues.

This evidently leads to the conclusion that migration can be seen, from an individual viewpoint, as a gate opener; to the idea that different (geographical) locales offer different opportunity structures and thus very different options and levels of possible well-being. It is important to see that differences between places are more important than mechanisms which are traditionally regarded as the central reasons for migration (White & Woods 1980, 7). On the individual level this is significant point, because migration often includes individual gains and it can also be a matter of personal preference. For example a young person who is feeling deprived or dissatisfied with her living situation may see migration as a means to improve her social or economic well-being (Hummon 1992, 272; Kultalahti 1990, 106-107).

A good example of this kind of thinking, which also fits into the approach of this study well, is the classification made by Viinamäki (1999, 118). She claims, in her dissertation about the formation of young adults’ lives, that there are three different orientations which structure young people’s decisions concerning mi-

gration. These are: *an individualistic orientation, a family-centred orientation, and a compromise-based orientation*<sup>22</sup>.

*An individualistic orientation* stresses the importance of individual aims in decision making. This means that the young person emphasises personal aspirations concerning education and work when making decisions about migration. Such young people set their individual future orientation (educational and employment objectives) as their primary motives and do not pay so much attention to other factors in their life situations when thinking about moving.

A young person who makes migration plans according to a *family-centred orientation* puts factors involving family relations, home and living environment ahead of educational and career aspirations. This indicates the importance of place attachment and *locale* in the process of planning migration. *Locale* is important in this orientation for being “the settings in which social relations are constituted” (Agnew 1993, 263). Social relations may play a major role in migration plans, because one may choose to move away from local educational and working opportunities, or to stay in the home region, only because that is more suitable or convenient for one’s spouse or for other family members. Relations to relatives or friends may also have such an impact on a person’s migration plans.

If a young person follows a *compromise-based orientation*, he makes decisions based on a combination of motives coming from both of the patterns described above. For this sort of young person, the living situation and local opportunity structure right at the moment of decision making is crucial (Viinamäki 1999, 118).

It is worth noting that all three of the motivations for migration outlined by Viinamäki can be found among the respondents in this study, but migration alacrity is still more a complex phenomenon than that. In outlining these patterns Viinamäki concentrates only on the impact of factors related to one’s career orientation and one’s family-based socialisation pattern on young people’s migration tendencies. Thus her orientation patterns do not give a holistic picture of young people’s migration culture. In a previous study I have argued that it is also necessary to take into account local realities and young people’s opinions about their home districts and living environments (Soininen 2002). In doing so, I found a fourth motivational orientation for migration: *a negative future prospect-centred orientation*. When a person is following this orientation, he/she tends to have pessimistic attitudes towards almost all aspects of their home district. The core idea of this orientation is that migration is partly a consequence of belief that person’s home district has no future. Moreover, an embedded factor in this orientation is the individual’s own future orientation and it’s relation to the local opportunity structure and future. The individual is reflecting on his/her own personal future aspirations together with the future of the home district. A key factor which affects the decision making and migration plans here is the gap between young people’s notions of their own and the home region’s future prospects:

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<sup>22</sup> Translations of these migration orientation types are made by author. The Finnish counterparts are: Individualistinen opiskelu- ja työssäkäyntiorientaatio (individualistic orientation), familistinen opiskelu- ja työssäkäyntiorientaatio (family-centred orientation), kompromissiorientaatio (compromise-based orientation).



their own future is seen as positive, but the future of residential area is seen in a negative light (Soininen 2002; cf. Kaivola & Rikkinen 2003, 134).

We should also remember that though migration alacrity is strongly influenced by certain general factors mentioned above – such as education, work, personal goals, future prospects and the image one has of one's home district – reasons for migration are still personal, and thus variable. Migration should be understood as a broader phenomenon of which education and work are but one aspect. Every individual young person has his or her own special combination of factors which cause that person either to migrate or to stay.

The main point in this study – and the seminal idea here in relation to the basic pattern of migration research – is to stressing that migration is a holistic phenomenon, which has a background in both individual aspects, feelings and motives, and regional and societal factors as well. Migration is thus a complex phenomenon, which cannot be explained exhaustively in terms of traditional push-and-pull mechanisms (White & Woods 1980, 7; Kumpulainen 1993, 59).

The investigation of migration can be developed, firstly, by focussing on the individual as an active agent with a life plan and personal motives; and secondly, by regarding migration as a measure that can be used, and is used, in life planning. Thirdly, in order to elaborate migration research it is reasonable to emphasise its situatedness within everyday life, as well as its connections to individual representations of place and different components of place. Fourthly, it is vital to note that because of the vagueness of human action, migration includes a “random element” – people tend to act irrationally or unconsciously and plans tend to have open and uncertain outcomes (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 334, 337-338).

In addition, when the intent of research is to offer a deeper level of information, it is necessary to take individual life choices into account, together with the fact that all of us give different meanings to space and place.<sup>23</sup> One's living environment and home district have special and unique subjective meanings in one's life. One's residential area or home district possesses meanings from the past, and at the same time it represents the context of one's future (Jukarainen 2000, 36-38); or in some cases the home district may even represent the lack of a future. For this reason it is vital to pay attention to young people's attitudes towards their home district and residential area. In this sense, the concept of “community satisfaction” can be useful. A term used by Hummon (1992, 254-255), “community satisfaction” refers to how people “evaluate the place in which they reside”. Spatial-social context and ecological factors have an important impact on community satisfaction. For example, the size and type of living place have an impact on community satisfaction, in the way that inhabitants of small and more rural places express significantly higher levels of satisfaction than inhabitants of larger, urban places.

Furthermore, it has to be noticed in the elaboration of migration research that places also possess different images. Images hold a central position in contemporary society, in the emergence, construction and interpretations of social phe-

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<sup>23</sup> The concepts of space and place refer to different aspects of spatial phenomena. Space is usually used in abstract and general terms, whereas place can be seen as the individual relations and personal meanings given to one's everyday environment. Personal experiences give implications to a place. Place may also refer to certain locations where, for example, something meaningful has happened or where certain phenomena occur (Jukarainen 2000, 37).

nomena. Images are not, however, very concrete; but rather immaterial, comparable with beliefs, for example (Äikäs 2004a, 33). In many cases the images of certain places are connected to certain lifestyles. In turn, lifestyles are strongly attached to specific locales or specific actions (Giddens 1991, 83). This is important, since these images foster experiences and ideas that affect one's choice of place to live. These images also guide life politics and the ways in which individuals set their personal future orientations, draw their conclusions and make their decisions as to where they will live. For example, urbanism can be easily connected to a "youthful lifestyle" as a desirable way of life. This, in turn, may lead to migration plans if one's present living environment is seen more as a place suitable for the sort of "settled life" that might possibly lie somewhere far in the future (Kugelberg 2000, 40).

## 4.2 Life politics

The uppermost layer of the triangle, the concept of life politics<sup>24</sup>, is here the starting point of our journey towards understanding migration alacrity. This upper layer is also the most general level of theoretical thinking in this research. It sets the frame and the base to help to understand individual action and decision making, both in everyday life situations and in decisions dealing with more fundamental issues of life planning, such as plans that are to be actualised in the future. A fundamental feature in life politics – and arguably in migration alacrity as well – is trying to obtain happiness and well being (Roos 1998, 23, 30) and the ideal life (Tuhkunen 2002). For example, Giddens (1991, 5, 80-85, 214, 215, 243; 1994, 14-15) has defined life politics as making decisions concerning self, identity, self-reflection, well being and lifestyle; "the politics of self-actualisation" and life decisions. For Giddens (1991, 73, 75-80) life politics is not just a case of easy decision making; he sees life politics as genuine negotiation and reflexive thinking between different possibilities or options, with a possibility of risk. Decision making is an uneasy situation in which the person is "confronting a diversity of open possibilities" that have become available as a consequence of post-modernity and mediation (Giddens 1991, 73, 85). Giddens also stresses the significance of person's private – and good – life (Roos 1998, 21; Hoikkala 1998, 157). More broadly, according to Giddens (1994, 91), life politics con-

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<sup>24</sup> Sometimes life politics is drawn as parallel, or very close, to the concept of *life management* (see, e.g., Kasurinen 1999, 18). In this research this analogy is not drawn. In this research individual is seen as an active agent, who makes decisions concerning one's own life from one's own starting points and on the grounds of one's own wishes. For example a poor economic situation, unemployment or insufficient housing conditions are not seen here as a lack of life management, but rather as a part of human life and the local opportunity structure. Young people involved in this study are not seen as excluded persons with potentially poor life management skills; they are rather seen as active individuals with competence to choose on the grounds of their life situation and living environment. Considering young people as rational human beings and as both an active and influential group in our society is what Wennhall (1993) is proposing for youth researchers.

cerns many aspects on social life, such as ecological concerns, work and economic activity.

As we can see on the grounds of the above, life politics is not a static field, but rather a changing and demanding part of personal life. Different quarters and authorities in our society are demanding that a person has to guide his own life actively and autonomously (Hoikkala 1998, 161). As Giddens (1991, 5) puts it, “individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options.” This is done by giving high value to those who are actively seeking better and faster ways to develop themselves and their personal lives. At the same time lifestyle choice is labelled as an increasingly important part of daily activities and the process of constituting of self-identity. The person is also supposed to know how to arrange his/her own everyday life and make best of it. Choice becomes a fundamental component of everyday life – individuals have no other choice than to choose (Giddens 1991, 5, 80-81).

Fundamentally, the goal of life politics is happiness, which in turn has implications for the ideal life (cf. Heiskala 1998, 120). More broadly happiness, and the ideal life, can be defined as “a good and successful life”, which implies that the ideal life is usually defined by features of social class, such as wealth and profession. It can be argued that these days, in a post-modern society, the ideal or good life can be deduced from personal abilities and possibilities to plan one’s own life-course, choose one’s own values and act on an individual basis (Tuhkunen 2002, 48). The right to make decisions must also be given to each person as an individual (Hoikkala 1998, 154). Thus the individual is supposed to be free, creative and able to realise his/her personal wishes (Rubin 1998, 71). He/she must be able to find individual solutions, and only right solutions; wrong solutions lead to failure (Heggen 2000, 57).

As a result of this general mentality of independence, young people are “required” by the society to create their own life independently, based on their own wishes, feelings and competence.<sup>25</sup> This can be seen, for example, as young people’s individualistic world view. In this sense, plans for migration and young people’s opinions about their home district can be regarded as important factors when we are dealing with their future perspectives and intentions to have an independent life. It can be assumed that young people are not moving out of their home districts just because things are in a bad way, but rather because they want a place where they are able to create the networks and scenery which are required by their identity. At the same time, the young person is redeeming the primary expectation set by society: achieving adult status (Tuhkunen 2002, 48).

Moving away from home has always been a sign of an independent, adult life. Also in the contemporary world, moving away from home and mobility in itself is seen as a desirable mode of action. By moving away from one’s parental home, a person is able to create a life of his/her own, and one important part of this process is choosing a living place. It is thus a decision for the young person to make independently, bearing in mind the key concept of the present formula-

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<sup>25</sup> The normative force of this demand is clearly seen in Kugelberg’s (2000, 42-43) findings regarding young people in Sweden. Kugelberg discovered that young people rely only on their own activity, effort, ambitions and personal contacts in their life plans – for example in getting a job.

tion of life politics and the ideal life – the individual choice of a competent, modern and mobile person. The person has to choose a proper, suitable place in line with his/her own needs. Thus, nowadays such decisions are more and more based on individual wishes rather than one's geographical background (Tuhkunen 2002, 48). In addition to this, it is believed that a rich and powerful person is one who has become mobile and in some respects independent of specific places. Geographical location becomes insignificant to him because of global flows and increasing interconnectedness. Activities that are spatially structured become more bound up with the reflexive project of self; living place becomes primarily a matter of choice in terms of the person's life plans. One can still argue that place matters, but in other ways than before (Gustafson 2002, 13, 14; Giddens 1991, 147). For example, geographical place and location may represent a potential *mental* basis and material for a person's identity work<sup>26</sup> (Wiborg 2001a).

However, sometimes certain geographical places, such as those at the periphery, are not seen as meeting the requirements of the "right decision". Even if the person himself thinks that there are enough components for a good life in the area, he may be confronted with the social pressure of his view being labelled as simple or brainless (Kugelberg 2000, 42).

Life politics can be seen as a dynamic but almost hidden force in everyday life, especially in situations in which one has to make decisions regarding one's own actions and the future. "Hidden" refers to unconscious action. Life politics is partly an unconscious process, since subconscious feelings may have a preventive effect and subconscious ideas may direct one's thoughts (Hoikkala 1998, 161). This means that the person does not actively think that he is using measures of life politics when trying to achieve something new or to improve his/her life circumstances. When a person is, e.g., choosing a place to live, he/she is not necessarily aware of thinking about all aspects of the process of negotiation between existing options. Starting points of the decision making may be, and usually are, of course, rationally based, but all the rest may be affected by subconscious thoughts. Thus the term life politics is seen here merely as a theoretical concept for analysing and making human action visible, not as a measuring stick which unequivocally shows "the amount" of life politics. On the contrary, "the application of life politics" is impossible to measure, so it is left for researcher – and eventually for reader – to assess the significance of life politics in choosing a place to live.

Personal wishes and choices, together with a consciousness of having limited time, affect one's relation to place in a situation where the central factor of life politics is looking for the best possible way to increase one's well-being. The situation gets complicated, if at the same time the present living environment is sending negative signals in regard to personal wishes and decisions. This also has to do with the urge to gain new experiences and individualisation. This urge is a part of a tendency to think that life is unique; that every person has his/her own piece of life, self, senses and thoughts which are experienced as unique.

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<sup>26</sup> Castells (1996) uses the term "the space of places" to refer to a situation where local identities rely on history and collective experiences, whereas his term "the space of flows" refers to an ahistorical society dominated by extensive networks and information flows.

Therefore the person is trying to trace new possibilities to fulfil these unique features. Experiences become very important; also development of self and having a period of freedom before settling down and realising ones dreams become significant (Hoikkala 1998, 153; Kugelberg 2000, 41).

As a final point in the investigation of the concept of life politics, we must conclude that the person's relation to place is changing in the face of challenges from life politics and the demands for individualistic decision making. A personal sense of place is changing in relation to the demands of the surrounding society. Place experience from childhood differs from the place experience of the teenager and young adult. It really may be true that the blessed and peaceful playground of childhood is turning out to be an unwanted environment with no future prospects. If it is so, what is happening along the way? These are the questions and focus points that this study will be confronting within life politics in theoretical sense when the data is analysed.

### 4.3 Individualism

The second theoretical layer of this study focuses on individualism. The individualistic life orientation, which values personal freedom, has been said to be the core value of Nordic culture (Kjørholt 2002, 68). Individualisation is also regarded as a central concept in the description of post-industrial society. The concept of life politics, discussed above, has in a way generated individualism by pin-pointing the person's own choices and autonomy (Vilkko 2005, 38). Thus life politics throws the responsibility for choosing on individual's own shoulders. Individuals see themselves (and they are seen from outside) as a shapers of their own life and living conditions (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 5); i.e. individual lives are ever increasingly seen as personal creations, rather than as the products of guidance one receives in social practices, as they once were (Vilkko 2005, 38). This sphere of individual autonomy is coming to include more and more areas of life, at the same time making these areas objects of choices and responsibility.

For this reason, one of the central ideas of individualism is to see the person as carrying out an "autonomous life program" within a pluralistic living environment without the influence of traditional orientations. Following the idea of individualism further, the person is also seen as facing an open-ended horizon of possibilities and choices. In the process of individualisation, the person is seen as a subject freed from traditional determinations and attachments. This means that all regulations or engagements that can be derived from traditional and/or collective determinations need to be rejected (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 5; see also Beck 1993). Or it may mean that the pace of changes in society has become so rapid that traditions become irrelevant (Heggen 2000, 57).

Individualism, which emphasises the person's independence from other people, is seen as a characteristic feature of Finnish society in particular (Hietanen et al. 1998, 4). Arguably, this feature can also be tied to other Nordic countries and to Western European culture in general. In individualistic cultures, dependence is

regarded as negative – one should stand on one's own two feet. This, in turn, is seen to underline the value of setting one's own aims ahead of the goals of the bigger group. Independence and even negligence towards others are associated with individualism (ibid. 4, 6, 7). For Giddens (1994, 13) however, individualism and the autonomy linked with it do not mean egoism, but individualism rather implies reciprocity and interdependence.

According to Hietanen et al., individualism, as the opposite of collectivism,<sup>27</sup> can be defined as follows: First and most importantly, person defines him-/herself as separate from the group, or the importance of the group is slight. Secondly, personal goals are seen as more important than the goals of the group. Thirdly, the person is not very attached to immediate groups such as family or classmates, and responsibility is not taken for these groups. Fourthly, dependence on others has to do with matters of utilitarian concern and social interaction. Fifthly, individuals are competing with each other. Lastly, hedonism is a general feature of the individual (Hietanen, et al. 1998, 5-6). Individualistic persons have an emphasis on pleasant life, competitiveness, pleasure and social appreciation. Individually oriented persons also want to act alone, without considering the opinions of others such as workmates or family members. It is also said, that individualists may be regarded as more social persons than those with a more collectivist orientation, because individualists may belong to numerous social groups linked with education, work and/or leisure activities. However, in these cases the quality of social relations may be weak (ibid. 6).

In theory, individualistic persons are regarded as independent in action and thought. We should ask, however, just how genuinely independent those thoughts actually are. It can be argued that even if strong individualistic feelings are unique to a certain person, those feelings are still embedded in a surrounding environment and cultural milieu (Low 1992, 165). Even individualistic persons tend to communicate with people who are in some respect important to them (e.g. parents and friends) and naturally many experiences and pieces of information are exchanged. We can also assume that individualistic persons are making decisions on the terms of other. For example, young people may rely on their parents when confronting problems or making decisions which may have profound effects on their future. Or individual choices may be integrated within family values (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 16). This conflict between the discourse of independence and possible dependant action may be a consequence of cultural signals which guide people to act and communicate their actions within a context of independence (Hietanen et al. 1998, 6-7, 9), while young people may still feel insecure and uncertain about their decision making. As a guide in personal decision making, the individual must rely on personal experience. Access to vast amounts of information, together with experience, offers various possibilities of finding new ways (and places) to live – new life politics. Naturally, these possibilities have to be noticed and utilised autonomously by the

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<sup>27</sup> In contrast to individualistic person, the collectivist person can be described as having, e.g., the following values: the consequences of one's actions for other people are significant, materialistic and non-materialistic benefits are to be shared, social relations are valued and the person has a feeling that he/she has an affect on other people's lives (Hietanen, Keskinen & Sato 1998, 5).

person him-/herself. Thus in many cases life becomes a planned project (Kugelberg 2000, 39).

Utilising the possibilities which occur also requires competence at planning the future. It seems that an important factor in life plans and identity building is the “ideal model of young adult life”, which is constructed by developing oneself, finding out what sort of education and career is the most interesting, gaining new experiences and competences in different areas of life, and finally, having fun with friends and enjoying one’s freedom before settling down and having children (Kugelberg 2000, 40, 48; see also Oinonen 2001). However, even though the focus of identity work may be on the ideal model of young adult life, geographical place may still represent a potential basis and material for carrying out this identity work (Wiborg 2001a) and building social capital (Sinkkonen-Tolppi 2005). Sometimes certain geographical areas are not seen as not having sufficient resources for an ideal and satisfactory life. Furthermore, migration is seen as a way of building identity and being capable; part of the image of a modern individual is to be mobile (Wiborg 2001b). Migrating may sometimes be more important as an end unto itself than as a means of reaching the places in question; being mobile reflects something about what kind of person one is. In this sense mobility tells about people, not about places (Jonsson 2003, 29). Building an identity based on “right decisions” and a principle of being mobile, requires both competence in life politics and a strong individual orientation towards the future.

#### 4.4 Future orientation

Young people’s motives, interests and goals concerning the future have been investigated by many researchers. Young people’s future orientations have traditionally been studied by asking young people about their wishes, fears, expectations and images (Lewin 1948; 1965; Green & Wheatley 1992; Nurmi 1989; Nurmi et al. 1992; Poole & Cooney 1987; Seginer & Schlesinger 1998; Trommsdorff et al. 1979; Rubin 1998; 2000; Shvets & Ilyina 2002; Sinisalo 1999; Kasurinen 1999; 2000a; 2000b). The origin of the concept of future orientation is in psychological research. Future orientation has been conceptualised in various ways. For example, according to Lewin (1948; 1965), future orientation is one aspect of time perspective, which includes expectations, goals, hopes and fears that are projected into the immediate or distant future. Trommsdorff (1986, 122), on the other hand, has defined future orientation as a complex cognitive-motivational phenomenon, which refers to “anticipation and evaluation of the future self in interaction with one’s environment”. Puttonen (1985, 3, 23, 45) in turn has defined future orientation as a constantly changing, more or less conscious entity of personal images about the future. This definition concentrates on images and excludes action as part of future orientation.

The theoretical concept of future orientation which is used in this study is part of Nurmi’s (1989; 1991) model of personal future orientation. Nurmi’s whole model of personal future orientation is constructed of three components:

schemata, social context and *future orientation* (Kasurinen 1999, 2). In this study I will focus on the third part of this model. The other two parts of the model, although they are in close interaction with future orientation, will not be given any major consideration here.<sup>28</sup>

Future orientation is here understood as cognitive-motivational construct, which is divided into three processes. The first process is *motivation*, which refers to individual interests and goals concerning future life. These goals are based on comparisons between general motives, values and the knowledge one has about anticipated life-span development. Second process is *planning*, which refers to life politics, i.e. how people intend to realise their goals in the future. The basis for planning is the expected context – and content – of future activities. The third process is *evaluation*, in which the person is rating his/her opportunities and chances to realise the goals set and plans made according to his/her present view of his/her competence and skills (Nurmi 1989, 14; 1991, 2; Kasurinen 1999, 2, 11). Furthermore, in the process of evaluation, the individual is also estimating his/her own performance structure, which includes personal features in relation to the local opportunity structure offered by one's living place.

This model of future orientation can be reflected through the concept of individualism, since it shows how people as individuals act and make their decisions on the basis of the present moment, though the directions of their decisions and action are not realised until well into the future (Vilkko 2005).

Since visions are constructed on the personal level, on the basis of (justified or in some cases unjustified) beliefs and opinions (Päivärinta 1994, 13), visions of the future are personal and private. Thus future orientation consists of personality traits, hopes, fear, goals and features of society and the person's living environment. Local conditions, i.e. opportunity structures, also have a great influence on the future aspirations of young people. In addition, the role of mass media should not be underestimated, since mass media is an integral part of the everyday life of young people. Media and the entertainment industry have a significant impact on young people's way of thinking – their values and attitudes (Kasurinen 1999, 5; Shvets & Ilyina 2002, 40; Trommsdorff 1986, 132).

Thus the way young people orient themselves in contemporary society has an effect on their way of planning their life and decision making (Kasurinen 1999, 7). Strategic life planning becomes important in a world with various lifestyle and choice options. Life planning is a means of preparing for the future and for actions required for self-actualisation. Life planning reflects a specific way of organising time and interpreting the past (Giddens 1991, 85). Life planning can be located at the intersection of future orientations, life politics and individual-

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<sup>28</sup> *Schemata* in Nurmi's model (Nurmi 1991, 2; Kasurinen 1999, 2) consist of anticipated life-span development, self-concept and contextual knowledge. This part of Nurmi's model is not taken up in this study, because focussing on it would lead towards a more psychological view of future orientation. *Social context* affects individual ideas and plans, and on the societal level it also dictates age-specific standards of life span (Kasurinen 1999, 2, 4). In this study local conditions and opportunity structure in the Barents Region are seen as contextual factors affecting future orientation, but these are not treated so specifically according to Nurmi's theoretical model.



ism<sup>29</sup>. Owing to this, it can be argued that life plans operate on a very individual level; and on the individual level future orientation is often limited to a narrow area and short time perspective. Future orientation is also said to usually consider merely the person's self, family, education and/or work. Very seldom do people take into consideration such distant ideas as, for instance, global questions or problems, unless those matters are brought up on purpose, e.g., in research questionnaires or interviews (Mannermaa 1993, 40; Kasurinen 1999, 7, 8). It is also worth noting that the primary interests and future orientations of young people usually deal with major developmental tasks and transitions, e.g. from school to work<sup>30</sup> (Kasurinen 1999, 7, 17). In this way young people's future orientations reflect age-related requirements set by society (Nurmi et al. 1992, 25). The close link between interests and transitions may mean that the individual starts to actively plan for the future only when experiencing the transition phase, i.e. when the individual is obligated to make decisions and to think seriously of the future (Kasurinen 1999, 8-9).

However, it can be argued that the individualisation of today stresses a more reflective way of acting than the previous form of age-related requirements, which could be called, "to act when obligated". Today the fact may be that the individual is expected to act and make decisions individually on the grounds of personal goals, without obligation. The traditions of contemporary society have been reshaped, providing more room and opportunities, but also demands, for individual decision making. Choosing an occupational career, for example, is one of the most important phases in young people's lives and in contemporary society. That process of transition is supposed to be unique and individualised. Yet despite all the demands for individual action, we have the education system serving as an efficient factor to influence the course of young people's lives. In this way future orientation reflects the timetable, norms and unwritten laws that have been set by surrounding society (Kasurinen 1999, 10). Thus decision making and orientation to the future may not be as free of obligations and societal influence as is usually assumed, especially in the discourse of individualism. Future orientation and decision making are also influenced by other factors on the societal level, e.g. the spirit of the age or certain states of emergency (Nurmi, et al. 1992, 28). According to Giddens (1994, 57-95; cf. Vilkkö 2005, 38-39) all the solutions that may be regarded as individual are based in ever increasing respects on information and knowledge from social life and practices. It could thus be more appropriate to speak about "structured individualisation", where the process of life planning is supposed to be individualised, but on the other hand the process is dependant on social structures and local conditions. In other words, individualisation highlights the fragmentations of transitions, but reminds us of the structural constraints of our society (Kasurinen 1999, 17; Pollock 1997). Social constraints are always present in decision making.

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<sup>29</sup> In future orientation we can see features of individualisation and vanishing collectivism. For example the urge for self fulfilment and the understanding time as a perspective stretching towards the future can be seen as such features (Vilkkö 2005, 40).

<sup>30</sup> In second place, after aspirations dealing with educational and work in young people's future orientations, are their future family, marriage, leisure time and material issues. Girls are said to be more interested in family, whereas boys are more interested in material issues (Nurmi 1989, 21).

Besides social constraints, there are other factors that have impact on young people's decision making. On the personal level such factors can be common sense, semi-conscious rationalisation, values, advice and information from experts, pure impulse, the significance of personal goals, impressions of one's own competences, personal ability to cope with stress or failures (Trommsdorff 1986, 122; Kasurinen 1999, 33) and world views (Helve 1987).

According to previous studies (Rubin 1998, Kasurinen 1999, Soininen 2002) young people typically have a dichotomous understanding of the future. Young people see their own future in a very optimistic way, but at the same time they see the future of the surrounding society as dark and nearly hopeless, with problems on both local and global levels. This kind of notion of the future and orientation towards the future set high demands for forming place attachments in contemporary society.

## 4.5 Place attachment

The fourth theoretical layer in this study is place attachment, which combines various intersecting ideas, such as sense of place, place identity and rootedness (Low & Altman 1992, 3). It has been suggested that, theoretically, place attachment is an integrating concept, referring to the interrelated and inseparable relationship between people and place. Place attachment alludes to bonds between people and place based on cognition (in Agnew's terms *location*, knowledge, belief), on practices and action (in Agnew's terms *locale*) and on affection (in Agnew's terms *sense of place*; i.e. experiences feelings and emotions). Place attachment may also emphasise familial, economic, political or cosmological links to the land. Thus, place attachment involves an interaction of affection, emotions, knowledge and cultural beliefs – as well as behaviour and action – which are in reference to a particular place. Place attachment can be experienced by both individuals and social or cultural groups. The places to which people have formed their bonds may vary in spatial scale and they can also change over time. Time perspectives may affect place attachments, in that they are said to become stronger and deeper when based on a long duration of time (Gustafson 2002, 23-24; 2001b, 668; Low & Altman 1992, 4-5; Marcus 1992, 107; Low 1992, 165, 170; Hummon 1992, 257). Individual feelings of place attachment are traditionally said to have their origins in childhood<sup>31</sup> experiences (Chawla 1992; Marcus 1992; Riley 1992, 18, 24). However, place attachment may also be regarded as life course phenomena (Rubinstein & Parmelee 1992).

One important subsumption of place attachment is *rootedness* (Chawla 1992). According to the traditional vision, culture and locality have been understood as being rooted both in time and space – in the blood, birth and death, property and members in certain societies, as well as in organisations which have emerged, flourished and died in certain locations (Morley 2000, 9). Rootedness

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<sup>31</sup> This is due to rich connections between living environment and psychological processes of human development in childhood, when the child is approximately 6-12-years old (Marcus 1992, 92; Chawla 1992, 67).

may be taken for granted because it may be embedded in everyday life so strongly that individuals are not consciously able to identify with their home region, place of residence or community. Rootedness may thus be regarded as a feature that is unconsciously composed of biographical and local images, as well of community life (Hummon 1992, 265).

Roots indicate emotional bonds between the person and his/her physical environment, including notions of local community, such as shared culture and traditions. Roots also refer to the significance of “home” – the person’s residence, neighbourhood, home town or village, home region and, to some extent, home country. Good relations with local residents and being part of a local community (as a normal resident or as an actor in organisations or associations) give a sense of security. Altogether this means that roots give a highly specific meaning to place. Place is thus tightly bound to individual experiences, emotions and biographies, as well as to local social networks of knowledge and resources (Gustafson 2001b, 670, 672-673). Attachment to a place consists simultaneously of individual, social and cultural modes (Riley 1992, 13). All these aspects of place generate together, through personal experience, very individual meanings of place (Tuan 1975). This is also called a *sense of place* (Agnew 1993, 263).

*Sense of place* and attachment to a certain area or living environment take form in complex ways (Hummon 1992, 258), always through personal experiences. Places that are experienced personally are invested with meanings of identity, relations and personal history, and unwritten formulations of local everyday know-how (Morley 2000, 174). In this way place may also refer to certain locations, in which, e.g., something meaningful has happened or where certain phenomena occur (Marcus 1992, 87; Jukarainen 2000, 37). All in all, Gustafson summarises this by writing:

“meaningful places emerge in a social context and through social relations; they are geographically located and at the same time related to their social, economic, cultural etc. surroundings; and they give individuals a sense of place, a ‘subjective territorial identity’.”

(Gustafson 2001a, 6; following Agnew 1987)

Meaning of place, and thus place attachment, may have different expressions in personal behaviour. Gustafson (2001a, 7-8, 9, 10, 11) lists four different types of expressions. Firstly there is, “*distinctiveness*” or self-identification, which means that a person is using a particular place as a means of distinguish him/herself from others. The person may use the place of residence to describe who he is or to tell others and what kind of area he represents. This expression, in a wider sense, also includes stereotypes and explicit comparisons between ‘us’/‘them’ and ‘here’/‘there’ (see e.g. Kuusisto-Arponen 2003). It is also possible to relate this to the sort of individualism which stresses distinction from others, including local distinction from other people living in the same area and under the same opportunity structure. A second expression is “*continuity*”, which refers to the sense of continuity of self, which is provided by place. This is applicable if the person has lived in the same place (or the same type of place) for

long period<sup>32</sup> (see also Marcus 1992, 100). This is also related to the sense of rootedness discussed above. Thirdly we have “*self esteem*,” which indicates that the person feels proud of his/her living place. Lastly, there is the expression “*self-efficacy*”, which refers to the opportunity structure that qualities of the living environment facilitate in the person’s everyday life, offering various opportunities to take part in meaningful activities and experience something desirable. We are able to see different aspects of the individual meaning and importance of place in the light of this classification of expressions of place attachment in personal behaviour.

In addition to this, individual place attachment can also be viewed as a commitment to the neighbourhood, which includes subjective feelings of social involvement and contacts. This kind of attachment may develop through a “cost-benefit analysis” whereby the individual compares his/her own neighbourhood or place of residence with a set of other alternatives available. Following the results of the “cost-benefit analysis,” the individual is ready to trade off one place for another in order to get more benefits (Brown & Perkins 1992, 281, 283). During a personal “cost-benefit analysis” imaginary labels and price tags are put on places to show their value in the person’s individual life project.

“Cost-benefit analyses” show that place experience and place attachment could have quite a small role in the lives of people living in global and information-/image-centred societies. Many activities are carried out independently of place; many actions could even be regarded as a-spatial. Media also interpret and structure individual definitions of place (Riley 1992, 28). It has even been asserted that because of the existence of lap top computers and the Internet, place does not matter anymore (Laine & Kangas 2002, 26). More softly put, specific places become increasingly insignificant (Gustafson 2001a, 5; Giddens 1991, 147) since, with the help of technology, spatial constraints are replaced by personal choices (Brown & Perkins 1992, 287). Technology also makes the situation possible where contacts are made increasingly on the basis of a transfer mentality; anywhere can be a place from which (in many cases even international) relations are established – “networks are built on relations, not locations” (Yndigeñ 2003, 248, 249).

In this context we can speak of “the internationalisation of everyday life”, which enables people to visit faraway locations via media without leaving home (Morley 2000, 9; Moores 2005). This can also be called “situational geography”, in which media give access to performances that happen in other places and are not physically present (Giddens 1991, 84). The meaning and importance of places is thus determined by their relation and networks to the world and other places. Thus places – and also place attachments – should be investigated in terms of interconnectedness rather than as bounded entities (Gustafson 2002, 13).

It is also important to note that the place in which a person lives is more and more bound to self-actualisation and lifestyle, i.e. individualisation; choosing a place to live is ultimately a matter related primarily to the person’s individual life

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<sup>32</sup> In contemporary, mobile society, only few people stay all their lives in one dwelling. Increasingly continuity and memories are rooted in movable and storable things, rather than in buildings, such as one’s parents’ house (Marcus 1992, 100).

plans and future expectations (Giddens 1991, 147). This brings the discussion of place attachments back to life politics, self-actualisation and (voluntary) mobility<sup>33</sup>, because not everyone is able to follow a personal life plan or fulfil their future aspirations within their home region, no matter how attached they are to their home region or place of residence.

It is no wonder that the contemporary world is understood as a world of self-actualisation, mobility and movement. Mobility is increasingly regarded socially as positive sign of individual freedom; in contrast to locality and immobility increasingly being seen as connotations of failure and of being left behind; or even routine, boredom and narrow-mindedness (Morley 2000, 9, 12, 202; Gustafson 2001b, 673, 680; 2001c, 377). At the same time, traditional ideas of home and place of residence have been destabilised by new forms of communication technology and patterns of physical mobility and migration. These new ways of communicating and patterns of mobility transgress symbolic boundaries of the private sphere and of, e.g., the nation state. Transformation in communication and transportation has also caused a transformation in the sense of place and place attachment. Displacement and de-territorialisation are characteristics of our age (Morley 2000, 3; see also Gustafson 2001b, 669).

This is leading, according to Morley (2000, 10), to a situation in which there are no traditional territorial segments with distinctive exclusive cultures. On the contrary, even the most isolated areas are brought into the global cosmopolitan framework by long distance cultural flows of images and people with unstable identities and transpositions. Displacement and de-territorialisation are also setting new requirements for life politics. People have to plan and arrange their lives individually under new local or global conditions and constraints. Many times the aims and goals of life politics are challenged by both the new cosmopolitan framework and demand of individualisation, and variations and differentiations in lifestyles (Rubin 2000, 29). People are thus, even in periphery, linked to a broader geographical field; daily life is not completely local. It may be difficult to develop (strong) place attachments to a certain place in a situation in which geographical location and social life are challenged by technology and constant demands for individual decisions and mobility.

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<sup>33</sup> While the idea that contemporary life is strongly characterised by voluntary mobility is a significant notion, there are still people who remain in their original home regions voluntarily and those who are “kept in place” by different forms of oppressive structures. (Morley 2000, 13, 14, 150). Oppressive structures may, for instance, have evolved from the social structures of the living place. Thus the individual may feel uncomfortable in locales that are in some way not compatible with his/her own lifestyle or places where his/her lifestyle is questioned (Giddens 1991, 83). We must also remember, though, that oppressive structures (whatever their source) are not able to effectively prevent young people from planning migration. Rather the opposite, oppressive features in living environments encourage young people to think of migration as a means of finding a better life.

## 4.6 Analytical focus and guiding hypothesis

Migration is a complex and challenging field of research. There is no ultimate grand theory which can explain the phenomenon exhaustively (Kytö 1998), nor is there only one scientific way to identify the essential features of the phenomenon. There are some established foci in researching migration, however. Studies often concentrate on migration numbers, flows and directions, or on the migration rates of labourers. Statistical analyses of in- and out-migration flows between different cities, districts and countries are quite commonly made for administrative purposes. On the other hand, there are also studies which concentrate on both statistical analysis and on reasons for migration (see, e.g., Kytö 1998; Jurvansuu 2000; Rantala 2002), or studies which have a qualitative focus on migration together with other social phenomena, such as perceptions of life, ordinary daily life, education or working life (see, e.g., Viinamäki 1999; Kurikka 2000; Soininen 2002).

The complexity of studying migration lies in the fact that every individual has his/her own special combination of factors dealing with features of one's place of residence or personal life, which cause that person either to migrate or to stay. Migration and migration alacrity can be seen as a flow which is constructed of various streams of reasons (Kytö 1998, 67). One must agree with Arango (2000, 295), who has written that "the greatest difficulty in studying migration lies in its extreme diversity in terms of forms, types, processes, actors, motivations, socio-economic and cultural contexts." According to this, individual reasons for migration, and also migration alacrity, may vary because of changes in environment, individual needs and in the course of one's life. Variations may also be caused by, for instance, individualistic life politics and future goals. In addition, place attachment may cause different patterns in migration intentions. In a nut shell, reasons for migration differ from individual to individual, from age group to age group and from region to region.

However, it can be assumed that there are some people who are more open to migration plans and ideas for changing their living environment than the others; those who migrate are not just a random selection of the population (White & Woods 1980, 12). For example, young people are considered as the most mobile group in our society (Jonsson 2003, 3). On the other hand, it can be assumed that there are also some places which generate more migration plans in the minds of their inhabitants than others. Peripheral areas, such as the Barents Region, can be regarded as such. By concentrating only on this region and this age group (14-30-year-old young people) it is possible to gain deeper information about the phenomenon, than would be the case with a broader research setting.

It should be stressed that migration alacrity rates are not the most important focus of the analysis. The numeral data here rather serves to point out what the basic features are which characterize a person eager to migrate, and an area from which many plan to migrate. The most important part of this analysis is to find *those factors which create* eagerness to migrate on the level of personal experience. Individual representations and experiences of the living environments are the keys to understanding the origins of the migration alacrity. Representations

and beliefs connected to regional and local well-being have been said to increasingly guide people towards settling in certain places (Kytö 1998, 57).

Because of the complexity of the phenomena and the nature of the research questions, the data analysis is two-fold: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative analysis here concentrates only on describing migration alacrity as a phenomenon in the Barents Region by using numbers and answering the first research question: **“How high is migration alacrity among young people in different parts of the Barents Region?”** Straightforward proportions/frequency distribution and cross tabulations have been utilised in the analysis (Procter 1993, 241, 244). There is no possibility to use other, more sophisticated, statistical analysis, because variables are still nominal in scale<sup>34</sup> (Heikkilä 1999, 79; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1996, 159).

Quantitative analysis has also been used to support the qualitative analysis. This is done by looking first at the straightforward proportions/frequency distributions of the relevant questions to get an overview and starting point for qualitative analysis. The qualitative analysis was carried out in practice by reading through the open-ended questions and classifying answers by counting mentions of different issues arising in the data. A rough categorisation was made according to the theoretical framework before actually reading through the answers. However, that classification made by the researcher was moulded by new aspects and ideas found in the data itself (see Appendix 4).

The analyses are based on the premise that an individual migration plan can be divided into different parts, or components. These components have been defined above in terms of the three essential components of place, which following Agnew (1993, 263) are labelled as *location*, *locale* and *sense of place* (see chapter 2). Thus the decision to migrate is made on the grounds of different aspects of the living environment, ranging from direct perception of the living environment to experiences on a more personal level, i.e. place attachment. It can be argued that fundamentally migration plans are all about a question of balance between personal (many times individualistic) wishes and components of place, of which each component represents different sides of the place of residence and thus local everyday life.

Due to the different roles of each component of place, finding answers for the second research question, **“What factors affect willingness to migrate – and how?”** requires three different approaches in the analysis, in a way that each approach corresponds with one of Agnew's components of place.

Under each of those three approaches different factors will be investigated. In addition to that, the data will be examined through a theoretical frame of reference so that each theoretical layer is linked to certain relevant parts of the data. The relevancy of each answer is determined using analytical units (Mäkelä 1990, 57-59). Analytical units help to identify the respondent's references to issues dealing with either components of place or theoretical frame of reference. By using analytical units, it is possible to treat data which came in response to structured questions and that from open-ended questions as complementary. This means that those parts of answers to structured questions which relate to the

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<sup>34</sup> According to Töttö (2004, 10-11) data which is on nominal scale can be classified as qualitative rather than quantitative from a purely statistical point of view.

same analytical units as answers to certain open-ended questions will be taken together and used in a complementary manner in the analysis.

Typical analytical units are words which, in their context, clearly relate to the components of place and theoretical layers mentioned above. For example, such words and contexts which relate to how young people see their future possibilities, arrange their life politics, set individual(istic) goals and regard local possibilities in working life and education will be regarded as analytical units in relation to *location*. Young people's opinions about political participation and decision making will also be investigated as part of the same unit.

*Locale*, the social component of place, will be traced on the basis of analytical units constructed from answers which deal with social interaction, in both formal and informal situations. Analysis related to locale also includes relationships with family members, other relatives and possible romantic partners. This approach also aims to investigate respondents' experiences of social acceptance or control. These analytical units are connected typically with place attachment.

Analytical units of *sense of place* focus on respondents' experiences and feelings regarding their place of residence, mostly in terms of place attachment. Those feelings may be reflected in subjective views in relation to, e.g., meaningful events, proud feelings and chains of generations.

Finally, before moving on to the actual analysis and the empirical part of this study, it would be reasonable to state some basic starting hypotheses. These were arrived at by combining the local, peripheral context of Barents Region with the theoretical points presented in the previous chapters. While the guiding hypothesis of a study may give ideas suggestive of the results (Alasuutari 1996, 376-377), theory itself does not (or should not) predict the actual results; it only suggests a particular framework within which the details of the data can be assessed. Therefore it is useful to outline those factors which, prior to the empirical investigation, were hypothetically seen as having a potential influence on migration plans. The following hypotheses have been developed both by following the results of previous studies and considering the theoretical concepts described in this chapter. On these bases, the main claims that analysis will investigate are:

1. Young people's migration plans are not constructed solely on the basis of education and work.
2. Local features of living environment and opportunity structure affect young people's attitudes that are manifested in migration plans.
3. Migration alacrity reflects young people's future orientations, because there is unbalance between individual wishes and local realities.



# 5. Context of the research: The Barents Euro Arctic Region – The northern periphery of Europe

## 5.1 The Kirkenes Declaration: birth of the Barents Euro Arctic Region (BEAR)

The Barents Euro Arctic Region, or simply the Barents Region<sup>35</sup>, became formally recognised as such on the basis of a Norwegian initiative, in Kirkenes on January 11, 1993. The initiative was taken by the foreign minister of Norway at that time, Thorvald Stoltenberg. The proposal to form BEAR was presented for the first time in October 1992 in Rovaniemi (Jonson 1994, 167). According to the Norwegian initiative, the main idea of the Barents Region was to have a region and arena of international and cross-border co-operation to decrease tension in the north (Heininen 1998, 205). By its formal agreement, the Barents Region also had the task of creating more favourable conditions for sustainable development in the north (Dellenbrant & Olsson 1994a, 11). The official founding document for the Barents Region is known as the Kirkenes Declaration (1993). The declaration outlines seven main areas of co-operation<sup>36</sup> within this region: the environment, economic development, science and technology, regional infrastructure, indigenous peoples, cultural relations and tourism (see e.g. Holst 1994, 11; Tunander 1994, 35).

The Barents Region has a two-layered administrative structure<sup>37</sup> (Engstad 1994, 22; Wiberg 1994, 38; Stokke & Tunander 1994, 1-2; The Barents Euro-Arctic Region 2005b).

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<sup>35</sup> The area is named after the Dutch explorer Wilhelm Barents, who aimed to find a northern sea route to Asia in the 16th century (Waara 2002, 9).

<sup>36</sup> Co-operation is concentrated only on the land areas of the Barents Region, because Norway and Russia have a territorial disagreement about the border line between the countries (Jonson 1994, 172-173).

<sup>37</sup> The first layer, known as the *Regional Council*, concentrates on concrete work in the area: communication between county authorities and making their wishes known to governmental authorities. The second layer is called the *Council of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region* or the *Barents Council*. This layer concentrates on the political side of cooperation by serving a forum for discussing issues that involve, e.g., investments (Engstad 1994, 22).

## 5.2 Member counties of the Barents Region

The Barents Region altogether includes 13 counties in four different countries: Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia. The total area of the Barents Region is 1,755,800 km<sup>2</sup> with a population just over 6 million inhabitants. The average population density is thus quite low: only 3.4 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, but this varies considerably between different parts of the region. At its highest, in urban areas, population density reaches 8.0 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (Oulu), and then in remote areas in Nenets for example, population density can be as low as 0.3 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (Barents Info 2005a).

According to the Kirkenes Declaration, the original members of the Barents Region were “the county of Lapland in Finland, the counties of Finnmark, Troms and Nordland in Norway, the counties of Murmansk and Archangel in Russia, and the county of Norrbotten in Sweden” (see also e.g. Engstad 1994, 20). The Declaration also states that, “the Region might be extended to include other counties in the future.” This statement was not forgotten, since many new territories have become members of the Barents co-operation since the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration.

The following table consists of information about member counties and population in each county (Barents Euro-Arctic Region 2002-2003). Counties involved in this research are printed *italics*. The map which follows presents the geographical location of the Barents Region and each of its member counties.

Table 2: Counties of the Barents Region, year in which the territory officially became part of BEAR and population of each territory:

<b>Country</b> County [member since]	<b>Population in County</b>	<b>Total population in member territories</b>
<b>Finland</b> <i>Lapland [1993]</i> <i>Province of Oulu [1998]</i> <i>Kainuu region [1998]</i>	<i>194 352</i> <i>371 931</i> <i>91 081</i>	<i>657 364</i>
<b>Norway</b> <i>Finnmark [1993]</i> <i>Troms [1993]</i> <i>Nordland [1993]</i>	<i>74 061</i> <i>150 200</i> <i>238 547</i>	<i>462 808</i>
<b>Sweden</b> <i>Norrbotten [1993]</i> <i>Västerbotten [1998]</i>	<i>260 473</i> <i>257 803</i>	<i>518 276</i>
<b>Russia</b> <i>Murmansk Oblast [1993]</i> <i>Arkhangelsk Oblast [1993]</i> <i>Nenets Okrug [1996]</i> <i>Republic of Karelia [1993]</i> <i>Komi Republic [2002]</i>	<i>1 018 000</i> <i>1 478 000</i> <i>46 600</i> <i>716 000</i> <i>1 115 000</i>	<i>4 373 600</i>
<b>Total Population of the Barents Region</b>		<b>6 012 048</b>
<b>Total Population in the research area</b>		<b>4 129 633</b>



## 5.3 Peripheral location and other features of the Barents Region

The image of peripherality<sup>38</sup> may be regarded as the most common stigma shared by the Barents Region. No wonder, since the peripherality of the Barents Region is a somewhat self-evident. The Barents Region is geographically situated a long way from national centres and capital regions, which usually are located in the southern parts of the respective countries. Remote geographical location also means distance from power (Granberg 1998b, 241; Dahlström et al. 1995, 5). Thus, a location far from political decision making, on national and international (for example EU) levels, is also an existing fact in the Barents Region.

This connotation of periphery is also in the air when investigating regional policy. Northern provinces have always been important targets of national regional policy in Finland, Sweden and Norway (Kerkelä 1998, 10). In addition, the European north and regional policy have also been an important issue in the EU. Therefore, EU membership has had an influence on regional and agricultural policy in the Northern provinces (Kerkelä 1998, 10). Thus state interventions (state-owned companies, governmental investments and regional tax subsidies, for example) and EU development programmes have been decisive in the development of the Barents Region. These governmental measures have caused an economic situation, in which private entrepreneurs and initiatives could advance with networks of political power (Granberg 1998b, 242, 243; see also Suopajarvi 1998).

However, the EU's influence and progress in remote northern areas has not been as positive as had been expected. For instance in Finland regional politics have not succeeded in reducing out-migration from peripheral areas; it has in fact been increasing (Lappalainen 2000, 26). Also agriculture as a livelihood has confronted several difficulties (Rannikko 2000). In addition, industries have gone through rapid structural changes in which smaller units have merged with bigger ones, and big companies have merged with each other, especially in the Finnish wood industry (Lappalainen 2000, 19, 26). It can also be said that the role of government in regional development has weakened; partly because regional and provincial policy have become little more than a series of programmes and projects (Rannikko 2000).

The location of the Barents Region is interesting not only because of its peripherality, but also because it is "located inside the industrial countries". This location creates a co-operation area between Nordic welfare states and post-Soviet Russia (Granberg 1998b, 241). The remote location of the Barents Region has also caused a phenomenon where the northern part of the continent has even seemed to be "missing" (Kazantseva & Westin 1994, 106). Or from a Central European point of view the Barents Region has been seen as an "Arctic cul-de-

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<sup>38</sup> Periphery is explained in *Advanced Learners English Dictionary* (2003, 1067) in a following ways. "1. If something is on the periphery of an area, place or thing, it is on the edge of it. [FORMAL]... 2. The periphery of a subject or area of interest is the part of it that is not considered to be as important or basic as the main part."

sac” (Dahlström et al. 1995, 6). This remote geographical location and phenomenon of being “a missing area”, sets the Barents Region on the fringes of a mental map as well. One can imagine that, for example, from a Western European viewpoint, the Barents Region may be seen as the distant end of the earth<sup>39</sup> (Lehtinen 1997, 80; 2003, 37). In contrast to that, north is not just one of the cardinal points of the compass, but also mental category which helps people to orientate in physical space, and as well in a connection to our inner world<sup>40</sup> (Lehtinen 1997, 82).

Northernness and at the same time a peripheral living area may thus be seen by locals as an enriching mental impetus. On the other hand, the Barents Region may be seen as a boring periphery with no special future prospects and opportunities for successful life politics and future orientations. One example of this is the way that young people tend to describe the geographical location in terms of its jobs being few and far between, thus regarding their living environment as an area with weak or non-existent preconditions for living. These ideas are not unreasonable, since peripherality usually correlates with a narrow economy. Granberg (1998b) considers a narrow economy to be one of the most common features of the Barents region.<sup>41</sup> He also argues that the Barents Region is characterised by imported capital, labour and know-how.

These two features have had a crucial impact on the development of this northern region. As a result of the limited possibilities for a livelihood based on land and nature, and also a lack of capital and know-how, a situation is arising in which only part of the labour force settles down in the region, with the rest migrating south. At the same time capital streams (mainly state-owned capital) keep flowing towards the North (ibid. 239-241). For these reasons, the northern regions’ one-sided economic structures will always be in comparison with more urban, agglomerated areas, characterised by high technology networks (Kerkelä 1998, 12). It can be assumed that being aware of the unevenness in status and images between peripheral and urban areas, and consequences of one-sided economic structure on working opportunities in the periphery, and confronting these factors in everyday life, has an effect on young people’s future orientation; espe-

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<sup>39</sup> This viewpoint is also shared with some researchers. For example Waara (2002) uses this metaphor in the title of his introductory article in the Barents Region theme issue of *Nordic journal of youth research*, Young. This is also a good example of producing stereotypes and categorisations of certain areas. By their own action and via the information they share and publish, researchers as well are producing categorisations of geographical locations, both in the field of media and the political field, as well as in the minds of ordinary people.

<sup>40</sup> The cultural magazine *N66* (see, e.g., N66, 2000; N66, 2001), which is published in the Barents Region, tries to emphasise this connection to the inner world by opening a fairly all-round view and multilingual window to the Barents Region. The magazine offers, e.g., information, descriptions and photo galleries of the cultural spirit and events in the Barents Region (see also Lehtinen 2003).

<sup>41</sup> The local economy of the region began to expand, however, in 1980s, as the tourism industry started to take advantage of the unique scenic landscapes and pristine nature of the region. In particular, winter sports were adopted as national sports in Scandinavia, with time off from schools in the mid-winter to make it possible for people to travel north to ski (Granberg 1998b, 239). This, in turn, has increased the number of entrepreneurial opportunities available to young people. As these tourists need food, shelter, transportation and memorabilia from their trip, the local service sector of the region has also expanded in terms of restaurant, pubs and hotels (ibid., 245).

cially in a situation where education, work and career are highly valued in our society. This may be what is giving the North its negative image as a place to live.

Peripheral location and traditional perception of the centre/periphery dichotomy may have consequences also for the people living in the area. It has been said, e.g., that living in the periphery entails risks of social exclusion and marginalization among young people by erecting barriers to young people's choices in education (Yndigejn 2003, 238; Urwin & Rokkan 1983).

The centre/periphery dichotomy is not the only categorisation which is obvious in the region. The region has also been characterised by a division between East and West (Heikkinen 1997, 39; Dellenbrant & Olsson 1994b, 239). And then we have that division which is most familiar in the discussion of peripheries: North vs. South.<sup>42</sup> That contrast is mainly linked to the geographical shapes of countries in the Barents Region. This is a clear regional polarisation within the Nordic countries and in Russia as well (Kerkelä 1998, 9). Suopajärvi goes as far as to say that the South is seen as a real threat to local life in the North. "The others" from the South were seen as be eager to decide the future of Lapland and the northern region. These conflicts were mainly connected to the use of nature resources (Suopajärvi 1998, 98). People in the area may also be afraid that natural resources will be depleted by multi-national corporations (Engstad 1994, 20). This fear may not be entirely unfounded, the region having had a reputation as a supplier of natural resources and raw materials (Kazantseva & Westin 1994, 105). In addition, the historical development of the Barents Region can be called "export oriented" and "resource-based development with strong state-centrism", as its economic development has been full of projects based on the exploitation of natural resources and raw materials and exports to the world market (Granberg 1998b, 243).

It is, however, noteworthy that centre/periphery dichotomy can be found also within the Barents Region, not just in relation to other areas. Barents Region has its own centres and peripheries. Every member country has its own economic regions and cultural centres in the north, which are characterised by highly urbanised cultures and multiple possibilities for education, work and leisure; and then there are less developed regions with restricted local opportunity structures and limited possibilities to earn a livelihood in the area. This internal centre/periphery conflict creates rather distinctive differences and great heterogeneity between different areas, and thus between local opportunity structures within the Barents Region.

Peripherality, a narrow economic base, a long tradition of commuting to other regions looking for work and strong centre/periphery conflicts (both in relation to other, more central areas and within the region itself) have deep roots in the Barents Region, especially in the peripheries of the region itself. Peripherality, a narrow economic base and a traditional division of labour are existing local restrictions on young people's future orientation. Those can be also re-

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<sup>42</sup> The North/South dichotomy has its roots also in the discussion of local identity in the northern areas. In these discussions local identity is often described commonly as "Northern". This is in clear opposition to the "southern" identity (Keskitalo 2002, 287; Pehkonen 2000, 91). According to Hønneland (1998, 87) such a "northern" identity based on trans-national "Barents Rhetoric" has never existed.

garded as visible factors and components that have a great significance in young people's migration. Even though these factors may not be recognised in everyday life, they still exist on a subconscious level, and perhaps through regional traditions that have developed on the basis of certain opportunity structures, including social structures, social bonds, diminished opportunities for livelihood and other important arenas in life. From my point of view these features can be seen as the starting points for choosing one's living environment, possible negative future prospects and migration.

## 5.4 Challenges within the region: mutual trust and borders

A desire to influence the development of these northern areas by political means was behind the first steps taken in developing this new territorial entity. Establishing the Barents Region was a meaningful act in terms of historical and future perspectives, involving various actors and interest groups from the northernmost areas of member countries in specific fields of co-operation<sup>43</sup> for the Barents Region. Establishing and naming an area in this way involves the use of power; in this case creating a new political notion of a regional entity can be seen as an effort to wipe out past problems and to orientate together towards a new and brighter future (See Tuan 1991, 688). Naming a region or political construct can also be interpreted as creating images and imago building, and also trying to attract certain interest groups (Äikäs 2004a, 32, 55). In the case of the Barents Region, the new name meant new, positive publicity, possibly creating new representations of a successful and co-operative North (see, e.g., Äikäs 2000, 233). In this context, northernness and co-operation were displayed as regional assets. This can be seen as an effort to create a northern imago, by means of which inhabitants might gather ingredients for their own identity projects, and which, on a totally different note, might improve the competitiveness of the region (cf. Äikäs 2004a; 2004b).

A positive imago was needed as the basis for successful co-operation and also to make northern areas more attractive, and to increase inhabitants' attachment to their living environments within the region. The Barents Region was established in a situation where, on the Nordic side, the welfare state was in crisis because of privatisation pressure on the public sector. On the Russian side of border societal transition had started, causing problems in both economic<sup>44</sup> and social fields (Granberg 1998b, 246).

The situation, status and image of northern regions changed in the 1990s compared to the Cold War era. Northern regions were described as regions of co-

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<sup>43</sup> The primary areas of co-operation are the environment, economic development, science and technology, regional infrastructure, indigenous peoples, cultural relations and tourism (see, e.g., Holst 1994, 11; Tunander 1994, 35).

<sup>44</sup> According to Shvets & Ilyina (2002, 28), Russians remember the 1990s as a tough crisis period with massive inflation and unpaid salaries.

operation instead of regions of conflict (Keskitalo 2002, 51). The regional focus shifted from security and military aspects towards new interests, such as the new geopolitical situation, natural resources and the relationship between man and nature. The Barents Region was both in transition and in a new position for international co-operation; both within the region and regarding all the rest of Europe. The Barents Region, with its two councils, created a new model for international co-operation systems. That is a good example of multi- and bi-lateral co-operation between counties with peripheral locations and a combination of different living environments (Heininen 1998, 202-203). This development can be regarded as the starting point for the northern imago, which offered regional human interests instead of cold and military orientated local approach.

Despite the special social situation in the area, there were lots of optimistic future perspectives in the air when the Barents Region was established: hopes of far-reaching co-operation in the extraction of raw materials and also in both industry and trade, and hopes that the co-operation would enable us to build a bridge between eastern and western parts of Europe, and at the same time to create more unified and congruent Europe<sup>45</sup> (Jonson 1994, 164, Engstad 1994, 24). This hope was somewhat justified, since the Cold War had had a great impact on the Barents Region's immediate past: in the early 1980s "the region around northeast Norway and northwest Russia earned a reputation as the coldest corner of the Cold War" (Granberg 1998b, 231). There existed nearly no connection between northwest Russia and its cross-border regions in Scandinavia during the whole decade. However, promoting and naming a new, co-operative northern region created a new imago, which gave the area publicity and a new consciousness of northern identity. This promotion of a northern, and especially Barentsian, imago has been visible in cultural activities, such as arctic research programmes and art projects. Those cultural activities have been promoting a Barentsian imago, but at the same time those activities have succeed in promoting the diversity of local cultures and heterogeneity of the Barents region as a living environment (Lehtinen 1997).

However, optimistic future perspectives on co-operation have not been without their associated doubts in an area dominated by such heterogeneity in terms of local history, culture, economic situations and local opportunities in the centres and peripheries of the region. There have been many discussions of complications – or challenges – in the area. These challenges have mostly been linked with the heterogeneity of the different areas within the Barents Region. For example, the Barents co-operation is afraid to be based too much on Russian regional interests and Russian national security concerns. That may even be seen as an obstacle to real, deep international co-operation (Jonson 1994, 164, 173). Beyond this, Dellenbrant & Olsson (1994b, 240) have stated that one serious hindrance to positive development in the Barents Region is economic and social problems in the Russian portion; to say nothing of the gap in living standards between Russia and the Nordic countries. The gap in living standards and wages

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<sup>45</sup> The Barents Region has been a very sensitive area in recent history following the lines of the cold war between the USA and the Soviet Union (Tunander 1994). The Barents Region's position as an ice-free harbour together with passage to the sea gives the area great military significance (Jonson 1994, 177). With this in mind, the Barents Declaration does not include any form of military co-operation (Baev 1994, 177).



are also seen as an incentive for organized crime and illegal activities or other avoidance of laws and regulations in the area. This has to do with borders: borders between the Nordic countries and Russia are seen as problematic because of the increased potential for smuggling alcohol and drugs. In addition, there may be problems with various forms of illegal trade and prostitution (Engstad 1994, 25). Perhaps, for the reasons stated above, from the EU's point of view<sup>46</sup> there is a risk of borders becoming too transparent.

Evidently, there is a clear dilemma in the matter of borders. The Barents co-operation aims to ease mobility in the area, and it is important that the border is sufficiently open to enable exchange relations, but at the same time there are fears of borders being too easy to cross for those with criminal intent (Wiberg 1994, 28). If criminal activities which are clearly connected to the transparency of these borders were to be uncovered, it would certainly damage and call into question the rather positive northern image of this northern region. This problem with borders, together with the lack of mutual trust depicted here, is not fruitful soil for co-operation. It is hard to set up co-operation based on mutual trust, because of administrative borders after an era of non-existent relations in which there was an extremely biased attitude. This is probably just a problem of administrative and political matters. These highly political questions about borders, and for example, transparency do not have much influence on everyday life in the Barents Region – unless these political questions have an effect on local image, young people's identity formation, and what is more important, on young people's life politics and their interests in mobility.

## 5.5 Impossible shared identity and various local identities

The Barents Region is a great research venue when it comes to focussing on regional differences and living conditions. The region can be described as “a group of loosely connected regions” rather than “one single culturally homogeneous and economically integrated region” (Granberg 1998b, 260). There are some problems, however, when the heterogeneity of the region is brought into discussions of shared identity, which is the distinctive feature of region-building and promoting a regional imago and goals of co-operation. Discussions of the creation of a common, shared identity in the Barents Region “may be viewed as an instrument for encouraging functional economic co-operation” (Hønneland 1995, 30, 32). Thus one cannot be very convinced that the identity work of young people in the Barents Region could be very much dependant on theoretically and deeply politically oriented geo-politics. It is hard to believe that – in a

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<sup>46</sup> For the EU, the position of the Barents Region, located on the periphery of the European Union and having a direct border with the big eastern neighbour, is significant. The region offers great opportunities to develop closer connections between EU and the Russian Federation (Stokke & Tunander 1994, 3; Summa 1997, 65). The EU has adopted, not just the role of a contributor of security and close connections, but also the role of supporter, facilitator and promoter of co-operation (Summa 1997, 65-66).

situation in which regions are said to be like public representations that “take place” in definitions of policy – these matters have much affect on routines of daily life. These statements mean that regions – in this case the Barents Region – may be seen as a political and economic construct that has quite a loose connection to the daily life of local people or regional consciousness (Paasi 1998, 170).

Jukarainen (2000), in her dissertation about young people’s trans-border activities, claims that forming regional identity is a political act in itself and which has a close link to territorial identity. This may be the case in the situation where identity formation draws its inspiration from local action and *locale*, local social networks – not from high-level definitions of policy – because forming a subjective territorial identity *the sense of place* requires personally meaningful experiences and events (Gustafson 2001a, 6). But, shared identity seems to be more like a discourse which aims to support the political constructs and aims of decision makers (Hønneland 1995). The (imagined) development of shared identity is important for the public image and political coherence of the Barents Region, and it that way it supports political and economic aims, but in terms of the attitudes of ordinary inhabitants and young people living in the region, shared identity is a complete utopia.

When it comes to building a shared identity, I believe that, first of all, there are great difficulties in doing so in an area which has political origins and borders set by so many different interest groups. These borders also represent certain threats to political interest groups. This is especially applicable in an area which has strong geo-political connotations and is constantly divided up by politicians, researchers, media and other actors because of national borders, cultural differences, languages and economic situations.

Secondly, the difference of Russia is brought up in many contexts. This seems to be a trend in research articles and in statements by national and international level politicians when stating the aims of regional politics. North-western Russian differs greatly from the Nordic countries in language, religion, standard and way of living, political traditions and historical aspects (Wiberg 1994, 38). The difference with Russia is especially clear in talking about the northern dimension when the discussion of this dimension is related to tensions in international relations, preventing environmental hazards or problems with illegal activities such as smuggling. These kinds of statements tend to label those from certain areas of north as “the others”, as e.g. Hønneland (1995, 33) points out. That is not fruitful soil for shared identity development.

Thirdly, I believe that shared identity is like “internal insight” that is developed among locals within cultural heritages and around shared local actions. Those actions may be innovated by locals themselves, or in co-operation with different actors, such as third sector associations. Cultural and political actors are also needed in this process – not in a “master” position, but in the role of information source and opener of new possibilities for grass-roots local actors. This is an important point because of the cultural and economic heterogeneity mentioned above. The possible barriers caused by this heterogeneity can be torn down with adequate information and experiences gained in collective activities and projects.

Due to its pronounced heterogeneity, the identity of the Barents Region as such is not necessarily the primary frame of reference for its habitants (Hansen

1994, 63; Castberg et al. 1994, 75; Hønneland 1995, 40). The heterogeneity of the area does not imply elements of identity (Dahlström et al. 1995, 6), in spite of people living in the region having experiences in common. Such factors as long distances to national centres and harsh climate have been stressed by politicians as “pulling-together-forces” and a common frame of reference for the inhabitants in the area (Hønneland 1995, 31, 33). Granberg (1998b, 260) also suggests elements and symbols such as reindeer, long winter nights, the moon, the aurora borealis and Sámi mythology as grounds for common identity. The population of the area is thus assumed to hold a common world view and understanding on the grounds of these common experiences. But while those symbols may be useful in brochures and advertisements aimed at tourists, I doubt that they hold much substance for local young people in their everyday lives.

The amount of impact these common cultural factors – or artificial concepts based on political agreement – have had remains an open question. These factors do not automatically indicate a shared identity or joint actions among people living in the Barents Region (Granberg 1998a, xvi; Heikkinen 1997, 41; Hønneland 1995, 33). Regional identity is generally based on a majority of the population sharing the same cultural features, such as language, religion and history (Dahlström et al. 1995, 6; Tani 1996, 103). These shared cultural experiences constitute “identity regions”, which refer to the area where inhabitants have a specific, common experience of *us* concerning those inside the region, and *them* for those outside the region (Hønneland 1995, 30; see also Kuusisto-Arponen 2003). Clearly it would be false to argue, for instance, that inhabitants in the Nordic parts of the Barents Region would feel a strong sense of community with inhabitants of north-western Russia, or vice versa. The fact that the eastern and southern parts of the Barents Region were separated from the rest during Soviet times also deserves special consideration (Heikkinen 1997, 41). Additionally, regions formed through political decision have typically been administrative formations, and the identification people have with such regions in comparison with local units and places tends to be minor (Kerkelä 1998, 5).

There are, however, considerations to the contrary. First of all there is the indigenous Saami population in northern parts of Scandinavia and Finland, which shares similar cultural features with inhabitants of the Kola region of Russia. Secondly, many decades of secularisation have seemingly reduced the importance of religious differences in the Barents Region. And thirdly, Russian political (and probably economic) ideology is in the process of becoming more westernised. It has also been said that cultural differences have been seen as an exotic spice stimulating fresh regional interaction here (Castberg et al. 1994, 76). However, traditional differences here, as is the case everywhere “where two worlds meet,” can also be seen as a source of conflict and communication problems (Hansen 1994, 69). On the other hand, communication problems as a hindrance to co-operation and mutual understanding maybe reduced as soon as language skills and knowledge about the neighbour’s way of life become easier to access (Hønneland 1995, 41). However, doubts as to the existence and/or development of a shared regional identity cannot be allayed by any such factors.

Shared identity in the Barents Region is merely an ideal characteristic of the ultimate political aim. This political goal is based on urging a maximal amount of inhabitants, from all counties and states located in the region, to include

Northerners in their identification of belonging to a group with particular northern interests, prospects and threats (Hønneland 1995, 33). However, more important than artificial political aims in identity formation are shared experiences gained in local collective activities and projects. This view stresses significance of local networks, which offer a basis for socialisation and in that way contribute to a sense of place (Bæck 2004, 100). This is also a significant point in terms of the theoretical framework of this research. If there are not any local collective activities which offer young people social frameworks as places of attachment, their *sense of place* may not develop into solid local social capital (Sinkkonen-Tolppi 2005) to be utilised in their future orientations and life politics; i.e. their networks and relationships will be connected and orientated outside of the home region.

The heterogeneity of the region and understanding identity as a process to be “done” leads us to variety of different local identities and place experiences. This means that local identity, which is formed through local activities and social networks, gives the person certain bonds to the place of residence – “home has a foothold in the consciousness” of young people. Local identity (and also sense of place) presupposes social interaction and participation. In addition, arenas of social integration must provide access to local values and specific – possibly historical – knowledge prevalent in the local culture. A reference group consisting only of peers does not entirely fulfil this demand (Bæck 2004, 101).

However, young people do not adjust only on the basis of possibilities which are locally available; they plan their lives and make their decisions individually. They may also look for ingredients for their local identity from outside of their usual living environment. Therefore, forming a local identity also requires access to alternative perspectives. Media and education can be regarded as important elements in this regard (ibid. 101). Young people’s mobility and migration alacrity may also be seen as elements of finding alternative perspectives and solutions for achieving individual goals.

Local possibilities for social interaction and access to alternative perspectives vary according to the local opportunity structures of the centres and peripheries of the Barents Region. The intensity and substance of local identities within the region also varies, since there are various place experiences. Furthermore, mobility has different meanings in different places, and young people within the same location may be engaged in mobility in diverse ways (Thomson & Taylor 2005, 338). It must be remembered that urbanisation and increasing migration are diminishing collective place experience, thus acting as an impediment to the formation of a shared identity (Tani 1996, 103). These features – migration and urbanisation – are both characteristic of the research area.

When investigating the Barents Region as a living environment and as an arena for everyday life, we must set aside political connotations and focus on young people themselves. Political agreements have set the borders, but the diverse local living possibilities and the people within the borders determine the substance and reality of everyday life there.

## 5.6 Research venues

The Barents Region can be regarded as unique in terms of its heterogeneity concerning environmental, economic and cultural issues. These research venues represent peripheries in their own countries, and e.g. in contrast to more central areas within the EU. All of the counties involved in this research are “crisis” areas in some ways, and they are all subject to regional policy measures in their own countries (Dellenbrandt & Olsson 1994a, 12; Engstad 1994, 20). One cannot, however, automatically assume that just because of its geographical situation, the Barents Region is less developed than regions in the south. The Barents Region is, after all, located inside industrial countries and there are several ongoing development projects in the area (Granberg 1998b, 240). The most visible and effective developmental programmes in the area have been EU funded Interreg, Tacis and “Objective 6” Programmes (Summa 1997, 66). However, Sweden, Norway and Finland all have funds and measures to develop their northern regions. The Russian situation is considerably different from that of the Nordic countries. Formerly socialist Russia has confronted major changes in economic structure and social policy, but in reality, without any doubt, it is a highly industrialised country (Granberg 1998b, 241-242). We must also note that its northern regions have been a part of the world economy because its natural resources and raw materials (Heininen 1998, 203-204). However, the arctic climate, sparse settlement, simple economic structures in many cases and long travel distances between inhabited areas have had a significant impact on the social and economic structures in these northern regions (Kerkelä 1998, 20).

The counties chosen for investigation in this study were presented in the beginning of this chapter.<sup>47</sup> Research data has naturally been collected from smaller units than counties. When research venues were chosen it was important to make sure that these venues would reflect this diversity of cultural and regional conditions in the Barents Region. Following table shows the settlement types of each of the research venues, with the population and number of respondents for each. Classification of research venues made, e.g., according to population statistics or settlement type offers a useful foundation for understanding differences between living environments. This classification was made on the

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<sup>47</sup> The research area for this study corresponds with the original administrative border for the Barents Region, set in Kirkenes in 1993, with one exception: the Autonomous Republic of Karelia. Though it was officially included as a member area of the Barents Region after the Kirkenes Declaration, the Autonomous Republic of Karelia is included in the study for good reason: it was part of the original proposal for Barents co-operation, in 1992, that the governors of the Republic of Karelia would sit on the council of the Barents Region with the governors from the other member counties (Jonson 1994, 167). The Republic of Karelia became an official part of the Barents Region in April 1993, only three months after the Kirkenes Declaration (Barents Euro-Arctic Region, 2005a). As I see it, the Republic of Karelia has been involved in the co-operation from the very beginning.

basis of information collected from internet pages for each research venue<sup>48</sup> (see Appendix 1).

Each of the research venues is unique and they all have their interesting peculiarities. The names of the places themselves are not mentioned in the analysis; just the settlement types formed by population statistics or names of the counties, so as to guarantee the anonymity of respondents who are from a place with only small amount of respondents.

Table 3: Research venues, with population and number of respondents

Settlement type	Research site (population) [number of respondents]
Village	Meliorativny (n/a) [36] Koashva (n/a) [25] Uyma (Uyemskiy) (89) [33] Pirttikoski (167) [56] Sinettä (608) [58]
Municipality	Ivalo (about 4 000) [115] Balsfjord (6 000) [111] Pajala (7900) [84] Sodankylä (9 922) [66] Alta (16 513) [8] Kalix (18 500) [100] Narvik (18 511) [25] Gällivare (20 037) [52]
Town	Rovaniemi (35 427) [78] Bodø (42 000) [17] Tromsø (60 812) [123] Luleå (72 593) [147] Apatity (73 500) [163] Petrozavodsk (280 000) [163] Arkhangelsk (380 800) [167]

<sup>48</sup> My quite extensive use of the Internet here is natural way of collecting information about regions which are geographically inaccessible to me as a researcher. The international scope of this research also set certain obstacles which are only possible to overcome by using the Internet. This is also the way young people in the peripheries explore the world these days. This may also be the way that young people get the information which forms the basis for their migration plans. There are, however, risks involved in using the Internet as a research tool. Problems may occur for example with www-pages with false information. I have tried to avoid this by only using pages which are maintained by reliable organisations.

## 6. High migration alacrity

Migration alacrity in this study refers to eagerness and also a tendency to migrate, and in that way to the portion of potential migrants in the research area. In this study migration alacrity is also seen as an indicator of how often people regard migration as a means in personal life politics and in that way as a measure to achieve personal goals and orient themselves to the future within their local opportunity structure (Rantala 2002, 144; See also Kultalahti 2001).

In this chapter the main focus is on finding the percentages of potential migrants and to answer to the research question, “how high is migration alacrity?” by cross-tabulating different variables in the data<sup>49</sup>. It is possible to speculate about other related issues, such as how the size of one’s living place affects migration alacrity, by cross-tabulating relevant variables<sup>50</sup> around the research question. Analyses have been further enriched by citing<sup>51</sup> from answers to relevant open-ended questions.

There are two main criteria for choosing these quotes. The quotation may represent a very common opinion among respondents, or, on the other hand, the quotation may represent a very personal and contradictory point of view among respondents (Soininen 1998, 22). The codes after the quotations<sup>52</sup>, e.g. (Fi,1447,IL,m,81), refer to the country from which the response came, the number of questionnaire, respondent’s place of residence/study, respondent’s sex, respondents year of birth (see Appendix 3 for a full explanation of code abbreviations).

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<sup>49</sup> Percentages presented in the text are *Valid Percentages*, which use the amount of the answers to the question as a basic value, not the total N (Heikkinen 1999, 143).

<sup>50</sup> Variables from the questionnaires (see Appendix 2) investigated in this quantitative analysis are: migration willingness (structured question, # 28), size of the living place at the point of research (structured question, # 9), living County at the point of research (structured question, # 8), living country at the point of research (basic coding), sex of the respondent (structured question, # 1), age of the respondent at the point of research (structured question, # 2), time span of migration plans (structured question, # 30), possible migration target (open-ended question, # 29), future living country (structured question, # 25).

<sup>51</sup> These quotes have been utilised to demonstrate and to support the analysis. On the basis of the quote the reader may have the possibility to form his/her own point of view regarding the research issue; on the grounds of quotations, reader have a possibility either to accept or reject the interpretation which is offered by a researcher (Suoranta 1995, 136). In this research, quotes represent concepts, explanations and interpretations which are characteristic among respondents (Alasuutari 1994, 242, 262).

<sup>52</sup> Quotes originally written in Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish have all been translated into English by the author and checked by a native English speaking translator. Those in Russian have been translated by Denis Savtchenko. As there is thus relatively little risk of the respondents’ intended meaning being misunderstood, the original language versions of these quotes have not been included here.

Those respondents who have migration plans (according to question # 28) were grouped together as “movers” and those who do not have such plans were accordingly grouped together as “abiders.”

## 6.1 Migration alacrity as dominant feature

Migration alacrity was targeted in the questionnaire with the question (# 28) “*Do you think that you will move out of your home district?*” The majority of the respondents, 74 %, answered “yes” to this question. Thus the data shows that migration alacrity<sup>53</sup> is a dominant feature among respondents living in the region. The same tendency can be seen everywhere. Many research reports have given the same message: young people are planning to move away from their home districts, especially in remote areas (see Waara 1996, Paunikallio 1997, Soininen 1998). Migration alacrity is high throughout the data, but there are some differences in migration readiness in different countries. The strongest desire to migrate can be found among Finnish and Swedish respondents. In Finland 81 % of all respondents plan to move out of their region; in Sweden, 82 %. Russia and Norway join at a lower level; about 67 % of those surveyed from each of these countries have migration plans.

Table 4: Migration plans of respondents in different countries

			Migration plans		Total
			Yes	No	
<b>Country</b>	Finland	N	297	68	365
		% within Country	81.4 %	18.6 %	100 %
	Russia	N	376	184	560
		% within Country	67.1 %	32.9 %	100 %
	Norway	N	180	86	266
		% within Country	67.7 %	32.3 %	100 %
Sweden	N	297	64	361	
	% within Country	82.3 %	17.7 %	100 %	
<b>Total</b>		N	1150	402	1552
		% of total	74.1 %	25.9 %	100 %

<sup>53</sup> Some parts of this chapter depicting the dominance of migration alacrity (6.1, 6.2 and 6.3), have been published previously in the author’s internet publication (Soininen 2002).



Differences in migration alacrity can also be found between the different counties which are involved in the research. The highest migration readiness was found among respondent from Lapland, Murmansk County and Norrbotten. Over 80 % of respondents living in these areas have migration plans. The lowest migration willingness can be found among respondents from the Republic of Karelia. Following table shows the differences in migration alacrity in different counties.

Table 5: Migration plans of respondents in different counties

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
<b>County of residence</b>	Lapland	N	297	68	365	
		% among county residents	81.4 %	18.6 %	100 %	
	Republic of Karelia	N	106	85	191	
		% among county residents	55.5 %	44.5 %	100 %	
	County of Archangelsk	N	110	69	179	
		% among county residents	61.5 %	38.5 %	100 %	
	County of Murmansk	N	155	28	183	
		% among county residents	84.7 %	15.3 %	100 %	
	Nordland	N	24	14	38	
		% among county residents	63.2 %	36.8 %	100 %	
	Troms	N	151	68	219	
		% among county residents	68.9 %	31.1 %	100 %	
	Norrbotten	N	291	61	352	
		% among county residents	82.7 %	17.3 %	100 %	
	Other*	N	6	4	10	
		% among county residents	60.0 %	40.0 %	100 %	
	<b>Total</b>		N	1140	397	1537
			% among all respondents	74.2 %	25.8 %	100 %

\* Includes respondents from Finnmark and Västerbotten

Migration alacrity was also investigated by cross-tabulating the size of respondents living place at the point of research (question # 9) and respondent's migration willingness (question # 28). Generally speaking, on the basis of that cross-tabulation, the data shows that the smaller the population of the respondents' living place, the greater their migration alacrity is. About 82 % of the respondents who live in villages or in municipality centres, 77 % of those who live in scattered settlement areas, and 75 % from small cities, 63 % from average sized cities and 59 % from big cities have plans for migration.

Table 6: Migration plans of respondents in different sized living places

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
Size of living place	Big city	N	30	21	51	
		% within size category	58.8 %	41.2 %	100 %	
	Average size city	N	239	140	379	
		% within size category	63.1 %	36.9 %	100 %	
	Small city	N	295	99	394	
		% within size category	74.9 %	25.1 %	100 %	
	Municipality centre	N	251	53	304	
		% within size category	82.6 %	17.4 %	100 %	
	Scattered settlement	N	172	51	223	
		% within size category	77.1 %	22.9 %	100 %	
	Village	N	155	33	188	
		% within size category	82.4 %	17.6 %	100 %	
	Total		N	1142	397	1539
			% among all respondents	74.2 %	25.8 %	100 %

The data shows that potential “movers” are the dominant group in all settlement types. The highest migration alacrity is among those respondents who live in smaller or more remote places, such as villages or municipality centres. The group of “movers” is smallest among those who live in big or average size cities. High migration willingness among young people living in smaller settlement types is not surprising; but it is noteworthy that even in those places where migration alacrity is lowest, in the big or average size cities, it is still around 60 %, whereas in the small cities, or places smaller than that, migration alacrity is clearly over 70 %. This is an interesting point, because usually the presumption is that those who already live in cities “have it all” and usually only those who live in rural environments are planning to migrate (see e.g. Waara 1996, 71). According to this data, however, it can be suggested that migration alacrity is not only a typical phenomenon for remote areas. Young people living in urban environments also have migration plans. Even a lively urban environment does not dispel young people’s urge to get away from their familiar environment to see new places and gain new experiences. It seems that young people often tend to regard their own living place as too small (Jukarainen & Tuhkunen 2004, 98).

This is an important finding, because this shows us that it is not necessarily the small size or rural status of the place which increases migration alacrity

among respondents. This also indicates that education and work are not necessarily the only crucial reasons for migration plans investigated here, because one could assume that there are various opportunities available for education and work in urban areas. It cannot be denied that for those respondents who are living in areas with restricted opportunities, such as villages and scattered settlement area, the lack of possibilities for education and work plays a bigger role in the origin of migration plans; but that is not normally the case in many urban areas, where versatility can be found both in the field of education and that of employment.

Finding that so-called urbanites also have migration plans might suggest an interpretation that urban areas in the Barents Region also suffer from restricted opportunity structures. This idea, however, is difficult to verify, since there is no material available to make comparisons with migration alacrity rates in, e.g., cities in southern parts of the countries involved in this study<sup>54</sup>. It can be assumed, that a peripheral – in this case also northern – location is automatically associated with a restricted opportunity structure in the minds of respondents, also in peripheral urban areas. In the same way, it can be surmised that the image of peripheral places is uncomplimentary according to general opinion. Moreover, there is an image of the place of residence which is not able to maintain a balance between local realities and individual life politics and wishes.

These ideas lead to more fundamental reasons for migration alacrity. It is necessary to pay attention to the requirements and demands what young people involved in this study set for an attractive living environment. Those demands, and consequently also the reasons for migration, can be found by investigating respondents' ideas about their living environment and their individual goals in life, but also by investigating their sense of place; then comparing these to the existing local realities and opportunity structures. However, before tracing those intersections it is interesting to see first who the most likely migrants are.

## 6.2 Two eager age groups and one eager sex

Age, together with education and work, is one of the factors which have the most pronounced effect on young people's migration alacrity (White & Woods 1980, 14; Waara 1996; Jurvansuu 2000; Kurikka 2000; 65-66). In this research there are two age groups which are very eager to move out from their home district – more than 80 % of the respondents in these groups having such plans. These groups consist of 18-19-year-old respondents and 24-25-year-olds. The following table shows the differences between age groups.

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<sup>54</sup> By verifying this idea, I mean looking at the migration alacrity rates among young people in southern areas. If migration rates would be lower, it could possibly mean that there is a more sufficient opportunity structure than in northern areas. Verifying is difficult also because neither is there material available on those cities located in the middle of Europe which were named by respondents as preferred migration targets.

Table 7: Respondents' years of birth and migration plans

			Migration plans		Total
			Yes	No	
<b>Year of birth</b>	1970-1971	N	11	10	21
		% within birth years	52.4 %	47.6 %	100 %
	1972-1973	N	18	6	24
		% within birth years	75.0 %	25.0 %	100 %
	1974-1975	N	36	6	42
		% within birth years	85.7 %	14.3 %	100 %
	1976-1977	N	47	13	60
		% within birth years	78.3 %	21.7 %	100 %
	1978-1979	N	108	53	161
		% within birth years	67.1 %	32.9 %	100 %
	1980-1981	N	241	51	292
		% within birth years	82.5 %	17.5 %	100 %
	1982-1983	N	359	143	502
		% within birth years	71.5 %	28.5 %	100 %
	1984-1985	N	296	109	405
		% within birth years	73.1 %	26.9 %	100 %
	1986	N	31	10	41
		% within year of birth	75.6 %	24.4 %	100 %
<b>Total</b>		N	1147	401	1548
		% among all respondents	74.1 %	25.9 %	100 %

(At the time of the survey these respondents were between 13 and 30 years old.)

Supposedly, at the point of research, these age groups were at the transition point of moving from their parental home to their first household of their own, and the transition from education to work, respectively. This shows roughly the extent to which education and work construct respondents' life politics, as well their aspirations towards independence<sup>55</sup>. The data also shows that female respondents are more eager to migrate than male respondents. About 78 % of female respondents had migration plans, compared with about 69 % for male respondents.

<sup>55</sup> According to Jurvansuu (2000, 30), the top four reasons for migration are: 1. education, 2. independent life, 3. work opportunities and 4. career opportunities.

## 6.3 When and to where might respondents migrate?

Young people involved in this study were asked when they might possibly carry out their migration plans. The data shows that 57 % of the respondents who have migration plans expect to migrate in 1-4 years.

Table 8: Time scale of migration plans for respondents in different countries

			Country				Total	
			Finland	Russia	Norway	Sweden		
<b>Possible moving out time</b>	In 1-2 years	N	91	78	69	101	339	
		% within Country	30.1 %	20.6 %	37.1 %	33.1 %	28.9 %	
	In 2-4 years	N	96	66	58	105	325	
		% within Country	31.8 %	17.5 %	31.2 %	34.4 %	27.8 %	
	In 4-6 years	N	69	90	33	53	245	
		% within Country	22.8 %	23.8 %	17.7 %	17.4 %	20.9 %	
	In 6-8 years	N	31	66	11	27	135	
		% within Country	10.3 %	17.5 %	5.9 %	8.9 %	11.5 %	
	After 8 years	N	15	75	7	19	116	
		% within Country	5.0 %	19.8 %	3.8 %	6.2 %	9.9 %	
	Do not know	N	0	3	3	0	6	
		% within Country	0.0 %	0.8 %	1.6 %	0.0 %	0.5 %	
	Total		N	302	378	181	305	1166
			% within Country	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

The exceptions to this trend were the young people from Lapland and Norrbotten, whose migration plans are spread more evenly across a 6 year time scale so that most of them would like to migrate in 2-4 years. Some other differences could also be found between regions: Young people from Troms hope to migrate already in 1-2 years. Respondents from the Republic of Karelia and Arkhangelsk and Murmansk counties plan to stay for the longest time in their home districts – some planning to migrate as late as 8 years from the point of research.

It is important to note here that the respondents' ages had a significant effect on these numbers presented here. Firstly, the majority of respondents were 16-17 years old at the time of the survey. Planning migration in their case in 1-4 years time is a consequence of their possibly entering into education. Secondly, the age of the respondents may have also affect the time-span issue of migration plans in that the Russian respondents were more concentrated into the youngest age groups than respondents from other countries. This partially explains why the

Russian respondents answered that they will possibly migrate as late as 8 years time from the point of research. This difference in the time span of possible migration plans may also be explained by the fact that Nordic and Russian cultures have slight differences in regard to moving away from one's parental home. It can be argued that young people living in the Russia move away from their parental home later than their peers in Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Preferred migration targets, i.e. places to which respondents would like to migrate, reflect their opinions about their living environment almost as much as the opinions they express directly. In this way preferred migration targets provide a framework for further analysis, in that when respondents mention their preferences, they are telling about their desires and wishes. Preferred migration targets, or reasons to choose one's living place, do not necessarily represent any factual or rational thinking; instead they are expressions of wishes, or sometimes they represent the respondent's dream world. A good example of this is the answer of one female respondent, regarding what might motivate her to stay in her home region. She says that she might stay if there were lots of wild horses and her village would be surrounded by mountains (Fi,1308,SP,f,86). It can be said that migration is usually based on the wish and presumption of better life. Wishes are an important part of the origin of respondents' migration alacrity also in cases in which migration plans of preferred migration targets are more rationally based. This is especially the case when the person is aiming to gain some improvements in his/her personal life, in the form of, e.g., better and more pleasant surroundings or higher social status or income.

Those respondents who had migration plans were asked what their preferred migration target is. Almost all of them took some kind of a view on the matter, but hardly any of them had clear opinion about the issue. Thus rather many respondents answered that they do not know where they would like to move to in the future. Some said that they have not decided yet. One good example of this is a respondent who answered, like many others in fact, "I don't know yet, maybe somewhere to the south" (Fi,1448,IL,m,81). This quote shows the dominant direction in which respondent were hoping to move, but at the same time it tells us that the respondents do not feel much of a need or pressure to make exact plans for the future or they believe they can choose their future place of residence more or less spontaneously. We can assume that some young people involved in this study will make decisions about their future living place after they have clearly decided what to do with their life and what their future occupation will be. After making these decisions they have some concrete reasons to choose their place of residence. For example, someone may want to be a lawyer, and for that she has to go to a certain university. This view is supported by one respondent's answer which said, "I have no particular plans. They'll take shape automatically on the grounds of educational possibilities" (No,1873,TL,f,82). This, in turn, can be interpreted as a desire to find a balance between individual orientations (in this case dealing with education) and existing realities of the living place. On the other hand, some of the respondents may not have any plans whatsoever in terms of educational aspirations, but, they plan to choose their living environment on the basis of those features which seem to be most suitable for their self-development and most complementary to their personal view of life.

Thus certain locations have certain qualities which seem to be more attractive than the others. The data shows that, first of all, an average size city is the most popular type of place to live among the respondents: about 35 % wanted to move to a medium size city. Big cities were chosen by 28 %. Villages in the country side or scattered settlements are not so tempting for young people; only 8 % of all respondents would like to live in a village or in the scattered settlement in the future. 16 % would like to remain in the same place where they lived at the point of the survey. The following table, number 9, illustrates what kinds of opinions respondents from different countries had regarding this issue.

Table 9: The type of future living places of respondents in different countries

Future living place		Country				Total
		Finland	Russia	Norway	Sweden	
The same place where I live now	N	47	96	59	52	254
	% within Country	12.8%	16.4 %	21.4 %	13.8 %	15.8 %
In a big city	N	79	221	57	92	449
	% within Country	21.5 %	37.8 %	20.7 %	24.5 %	28.0 %
In a average size city	N	139	172	101	161	573
	% within Country	37.8 %	29.5 %	36.6 %	42.8 %	35.7 %
In a small city	N	56	48	20	32	156
	% within Country	15.2 %	8.2 %	7.2 %	8.5 %	9.7 %
In a municipality centre	N	11	13	11	4	39
	% within Country	3.0 %	2.2 %	4.0 %	1.1 %	2.4 %
In a scattered settlement area	N	10	15	12	9	46
	% within Country	2.7 %	2.6 %	4.3 %	2.4 %	2.9 %
In a village in the country side	N	26	18	11	26	81
	% within Country	7.1 %	3.1 %	4.0 %	6.9 %	5.0 %
I do not know	N	0	1	5	0	6
	% within Country	0.0 %	0.2 %	1.8 %	0.0 %	0.4 %
Total	N	368	584	276	376	1604
	% within Country	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

The data shows that urban living environments are popular targets in respondents' migration plans. The bigger the respondent's living place was at the point of research, the more often the respondent would like to live in the same place in the future as well. This is not a surprise, since the places people migrate to are generally more prosperous economically and more advantageous politi-

cally (Massey & Jess 1995b, 219). Furthermore, young people tend to feel that the living environment where they are always seems just a little bit too small (Jukarainen & Tuhkunen 2004, 98), as the following table shows.

Table 10: Sizes of respondents' living places and the preferred size of their future living place

Future living place		Size of living place						Total
		Big city	Average size city	Small city	Municipality centre	Scat. settlement	Village	
Same place where I live now	N	14	86	44	43	43	21	251
	% within size of living place	26.4%	21.2%	11.0%	13.7%	19.0%	10.8%	15.8%
In a big city	N	24	122	138	63	47	53	447
	% within size of living place	45.3%	30.1%	34.4%	20.1%	20.8%	27.3%	28.1%
In a average size city	N	10	133	149	138	65	74	569
	% within size of living place	18.9%	32.8%	37.2%	43.9%	28.8%	38.1%	35.7%
In a small city	N	1	33	35	43	26	18	156
	% within size of living place	1.9%	8.1%	8.7%	13.7%	11.5%	9.3%	9.8%
In a municipality centre	N	0	3	8	11	12	5	39
	% within size of living place	0.0%	0.7%	2.0%	3.5%	5.3%	2.6%	2.4%
In a scattered settlement area	N	2	12	9	9	11	3	46
	% within size of living place	3.8%	3.0%	2.2%	2.9%	4.9%	1.5%	2.9%
In a village in the country side	N	2	14	18	7	18	20	79
	% within size of living place	3.8%	3.5%	4.5%	2.2%	8.0%	10.3%	5.0%
I do not know	N	0	2	0	0	4	0	6
	% within size of living place	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.4%
Total	N	53	405	401	314	226	194	1593
	% of all respondents	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %



The message is clear when looking more closely at the cross-tabulation of respondents' size of the living place at the point of research and the preferred size of their future living place. For example, the portions of respondents living in municipality centres and wanting to move into average size cities in the future were rather high: around 44 %; compared with 38 % of those living in villages and 29 % of those living in scattered settlement areas wanting to move to a place of this scale. Furthermore, those respondents coming from an urban environment tend to prefer either to stay in same area in the future as well, or to move into a bigger city. Municipality centres, scattered settlement areas and villages are not really tempting respondents away from urban living environments; only about one in ten would like to live in a rural or remote environment in the future – and most of those already live there

Most respondents want to remain in their home country in the future. The majority of all age groups want to live in their home country, but young people born in years 1982-1985 (14-18 years old at the time of the survey) were the most eager to move abroad. For example of those respondents born in years 1982-1983 about 42 % would like to live abroad in the future, the equivalent portion was 30 % among respondent born in years 1984-1985. In contrast to that, only one of the oldest respondents (born in years 1970-1971) would like to migrate abroad.

These percentages show the age-effect in this data: the older the respondent is, the more realistic their answers seem to be. This may be a consequence, not only of the older age, but also the phase of life respondents are in and restrictions created by, e.g., forming a family, and ties to the local living environment such as buying a house or getting a permanent job. This shows that the younger respondents are the most mobile group in this research, and perhaps in society in general as well (see Jonsson 2003).

The age-effect may have also another aspect: the internationalisation of education on the upper level of comprehensive school and higher education. Studying abroad not only affects young people's language skills and general knowledge, but also their thinking processes by creating a more international approach to personal goals and their manifestation in personal future orientations. Also, those young people who have international experiences are more likely to be geographically mobile than those who have not, for example, studied abroad (Jonsson 2003, 89). It is also possible that general opinion in our society favours lifestyles which involve a certain level of internationalisation.

The data show that respondents from Finland were more strongly rooted to their home country than respondents from other countries: About 68 % of the Finnish respondents would prefer to live in their home country in the future, whereas e.g. only about 51 % of our Russian respondents would like to remain in their home country in the future. The Norwegians and Swedes were half way in between their eastern neighbours in this regard: about six out of ten there would prefer to remain in their home country in the future. Of the two, however, Swedish respondent were far less likely to show a clear desire to move abroad in the future – only about 15 % of them noting such a preference.

There were no big regional differences in wishes to live abroad in the future. However, respondents from the Republic of Karelia and the County of Murmansk were slightly more eager than other respondents to emigrate in the

future: 29 % of respondents from the Republic of Karelia, 26 % of respondents from the County of Murmansk and about 25 % of respondents from the counties Troms and Arkhangelsk would like to live abroad in the future, while only 13 % of respondents from Lapland would like to live abroad in the future.

Table 11: Emigration readiness of respondents from different countries

		Future living country			Total	
		Homeland	Abroad	Cannot say		
Country	Finland	N	253	47	71	371
		% within Country	68.2 %	12.7 %	19.1 %	100 %
	Russia	N	300	154	132	586
		% within Country	51.2 %	26.3 %	22.5 %	100 %
	Norway	N	171	63	48	282
		% within Country	60.6 %	22.3 %	17.0 %	100 %
	Sweden	N	226	55	98	379
		% within Country	59.6 %	14.5 %	25.9 %	100 %
Total		N	950	319	349	1618
		% of all resp.	58.7 %	19.7 %	21.6 %	100 %

Centre/periphery and North/South dichotomies were present in the data, because frequently mentioned migration targets within the respondents' home countries were their national capital cities and cities in the southern parts of their countries. Regional centres also tended to attract young migrants of this study. Those who were eager to move abroad often named well known cities such as Paris, London, Moscow and New York as their preferred migration targets. Also certain countries, such as the USA, Canada and England were mentioned as a possible migration targets.

The simplest explanation for these wishes to emigrate abroad could be a matter of fascination. According to Yndigegn (2003, 246) fascination is a central factor in explaining young people's attitudes towards foreign countries. Fascination and gaining exotic experiences in different culture can be regarded as a motivation for emigrating or travelling<sup>56</sup> abroad (Jonsson 2003).

This result of setting foreign places as a preferred migration targets may also be explained in a more complicated way – in terms of “the consumption of images of distant places” (Morley 2000, 14). This means that faraway places, especially famous cities, become familiar in their generic forms even to those who have never visited such places. These places become recognisable through tele-

<sup>56</sup> Travelling to foreign countries, and a wish to go abroad, seem to be continuation of the historically (in the Romantic era) elitist habit of travelling abroad. Travelling can also be seen as a part of the process of personal development: “leaving is a coming back stronger and more mature” (Yndigegn 2003, 247, 248).

vision and other media. This apparent familiarity of places reduces both geographical and mental distances. This aspect is possibly reflected in the way in which young people may have ideological and unrealistic dreams of modern lifestyles and prosperous environments on the grounds of the media – reflecting their present lives against the world seen in popular television series (Wilder-muth & Dalsgaard 2006). Some of the respondents' possible migration targets were thus quite uncommon and perhaps unrealistic<sup>57</sup>. Some ideas about preferred migration targets seemed to have been constructed on the basis of commercials or the entertainment media. A good example of this is when one respondent gave the name and postal code of an elite district of Los Angeles, California as his preferred migration target, which coincidentally happens to be the name of an internationally famous American TV serial for teenagers: "Beverly Hills 90210" (Swe,275,KP,m,85).

Another convincing explanation for foreign migration targets can be found in the ever increasing importance of international awareness, including language skills and knowledge about world news, which is stressed in education and the media. Education and an increased awareness of environmental issues were reflected in the answers regarding one's future place of residence. E.g. some respondents did not name any places, but they had clear criteria as to what kind of place they would like to migrate to, including an ecologically sound and unpolluted living environment. Also features like high technology, cultural variety and a warm climate were tempting for young people. Political stability was also regarded by some as an important element of any potential new home town. One Russian respondent went as far as to say, "One must move to a place where there are clever people in the government." (Ru,937,AU,f,82).

While this young lady's impetus for migration clearly comes from the field of politics, there are many other aspects of migration discussed in the data as well. In the next chapter we will concentrate more on young people's opinions in order to discover other motivating factors for migration alacrity.

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<sup>57</sup> Rationally speaking, some of the respondents' migration targets can be regarded as unrealistic: it is unlikely that a teenager would migrate to other side of the world within the next 5-10 years. The author is not, however, in a position to ultimately evaluate how realistic these migration targets are. Maybe the unrealistic nature of these plans is solely in the mind of the author. It is entirely possible that the young person who stated that plans to move to the Beverly Hills district of Los Angeles may some day really carrying out this plan – or has already carried out this plan. Stranger things have happened. But even though the author lacks the authority to judge respondents' plans, in the name of science it has to be said that the data includes certain responses which lead the author to the conclusion that some of these migration plans are rather unrealistic.

## 7. Motivating factors and migration alacrity

In the contemporary world mobility is regarded as a positive part of the individual's life. This is particularly true in areas characterised as peripheral or perhaps northern – which are not associated with an urban, lively and stimulating environment. Respondents living in areas which have an image as the “distant end of the earth” (Lehtinen 1997, 80; 2003, 37), show a strong alacrity towards mobility. It can be assumed, however, that reasons for their potential mobility are various. Their motives for migration alacrity may be connected to the local opportunity structure, local social practises or their personal experiences of the place. Respondents may perhaps be seeking for a more distinctive environment for their self-development than their childhood residence has turned out to be. Their reasons for migration may be based on either conscious or subconscious ideas. In this chapter the main focus is on investigating those factors that affect migration alacrity.

In this study I use three basic approaches in investigating the question of motivational factors for migration. Following Agnew's (1993) typology of components of place, these are, firstly, to focus on young people's views about *location*, or relative geographical position – e.g. the peripherality of the Barents Region – as well as local realities e.g. in work and education. The second is to focus on *locale*: social interaction and local networking practices. Then finally we can look at the *sense of place*, which in turn represents individual feelings and meaningful experiences of place. Each of these three components has its own section within this chapter, in which I discuss how the component in question is visible in young people's answers and how it affects on their migration alacrity. But first, it is vital to look at what the respondents think is important in life in general. After that it is easier to make comparisons between personal wishes and different components of place, and to investigate those factors which affect migration plans<sup>58</sup>.

### 7.1 What is important in life for the respondents?

In order to find out what are important issues in respondent's lives, they were asked “What is the most important part of your life for you at the moment?”

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<sup>58</sup> Some parts of this chapter dealing with respondents' opinions of their living environment (7.2, 7.3 and 7.4) have been previously published in the author's internet publication (Soininen 2002).

(open-ended question, # 35). Answers respondents gave to this question were partly expected and related e.g. to well known and individualistically orientated migration reasons, such as education and work. However in some respects the answers were more surprising, e.g. gaining new experiences was not mentioned at all in the answers, and the role of the living environment, its peripherality or features related to place attachment were nearly nonexistent in the answers. Answers can be divided into three groups, related to different theoretical concepts: firstly, to individualism and individualistic orientations; secondly, to the future orientation and gaining competences; and lastly, to social life.

“Me”<sup>59</sup> is the key concept for the category of individualistic orientations. Respondents were anchoring “me” with several important projects. E.g. developing oneself was among the most important things altogether for 30 young people involved in the research. Some of the respondents wanted to develop the harmony in their personal life, but also the harmony with their living environment, harmony between self and place. Some of the answers were looking for religious harmony in life, naming their religion and God as the most important issues in their life.

“New experiences” were not mentioned at all by the respondents. This is a surprising result, because gaining new experiences are regarded as one of the most important reason for young people’s migration in literature on the subject (see e.g. Waara 1996, Soininen 1998; 2002; Viinamäki 1999). The result shows that gaining new experiences is not in first place in young people’s order of significance. However there were other issues dealing with future orientations that were mentioned more often than new experiences<sup>60</sup>, such as future plans and gaining competence in order to satisfy the institutional demands of society, e.g. through earning degrees. This is closely connected to reasons often mentioned for migration: “the trinity of education, work and career”.

This trinity was also found in the important issues and it seems to be a very important part of respondents’ individual orientations to the future. It is tightly connected to self-development and achieving competences. Thus matters linked to education, work and career can be regarded as one of the most important starting points for migration alacrity of young people involved in this study. In fact, respondent’s references to education, work and career vastly outnumbered any other consideration; overwhelming numbers of respondents spoke of the importance of education in particular, especially among Russian respondents<sup>61</sup>. This was crystallised in the answer, “education is the most critical thing in my life” (Ru,632,PC,f,84).

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<sup>59</sup> This is quite an expected result, because already the question “what is the most important part of your life for you at the moment?” is guiding respondents to reflect only the issues which are significant to each of them personally.

<sup>60</sup> It could also be speculated that issues related to gaining new experiences were embedded into answers speaking, e.g. of self-development and free-time amusements. If I am to avoid over-interpretation (Eco 1992) it is impossible to dig out the real reason for the conspicuous absence of the phrase “gaining new experiences” in the answers regarding the most significant issue in the life of each respondent.

<sup>61</sup> This idea is generally shared in today’s societies, but this can also be a leftover of the Communist era, during which “the significance of work was ideologically stressed, and all citizens capable of work were expected to pull their weight” (Haavisto & Pakkasvirta 1999, 79).

Education and work were lumped tightly together in many answers, again especially from Russian respondents. Usually it was supposed that education automatically leads to some “prestigious” and/or “well paid” job. Some of the answers were characterised by a “not to learn, but to earn” mentality. It seemed that these respondents were not so interested in learning as such, or cultural standards of living in general; they were interested in economics – money – which beyond “me” was the other key concept in individualistic respondents’ answers. This sort of thinking has its connections to *location* and the opportunity structures it offers to work and earn. This also puts *location* and respective features of different places in a rather dominant position in the respondent’s life. *Location* seems to be the component of place which is most closely connected to work, money and career in terms of the limitations a peripheral location can place on local educational opportunities and labour market possibilities.

The third category which came up in terms of important issues in respondents’ lives was social life. Social life, a social network and good social contacts – ingredients of a *locale* – were highly valued as part of personal life among respondents. Respondents frequently named social relations as the most important aspect of their personal life, or they spoke of personal well-being for themselves and people they are close to. Health, for instance, both one’s own and that of loved ones, was an issue which was brought up often in the answers. The data shows that closeness to relatives and friends is important for the respondents. This closeness appears to be important in a psychological sense, but also in geographically measured way: long distances between oneself and important persons were not a preferable situation. Some respondents hoped, e.g., to live close to their relatives.

Young people’s social lives in respect to family and relatives usually involve fixed, private places and settings. On the other hand, young people’s relationships with friends are in some way dependant on public meeting places of both the official and unofficial sorts. “Official meeting places” are usually offered by towns, municipalities and private entrepreneurs in the form of recreation halls, restaurants, cafes, night clubs and discos. Young people’s unofficial meeting places can be called a “fourth environment” (Kaivola & Rikkinen 2003, 33) which refers to the phenomenon of young people finding their way to the public space of shopping malls to gather with their peers and to spend their free time. Both types of meeting places, official and unofficial, were important to the respondents in this study. Also hobbies and free time amusements in general were on the list of important issues.

This is possibly due to the life phase of respondents, which stresses and sometimes even demands an extensive social life. Furthermore, activities and interests outside of the home offer an arena for adopting different roles and practicing independence from the home (Soininen 1999). Thus public grouping could be the right term to describe the whole range of respondents’ important bases for social life apart from familial bonds and the official constraints of school. It can be argued that public grouping is linked with leisure consumption and in this way it is possible to see services as creators of opportunities for social life, especially in the field of hobbies. It was surprising, though, that service as a word was not mentioned in the respondents’ answers. Services came up only indirectly in reference to hobbies and free-time amusements.

The same observation is relevant to living environments: respondents mentioned living environment as such only couple of times. However, nature as an important element was mentioned more often. This could suggest that the living environment as such is not relevant for young people; only the substance and opportunity structures within it are significant. This also applies to the fact that young people involved in this study did not mention anything in their answers (other than two different references to migration plans) which could be taken as a reference to peripheralness as such. It can thus be concluded that the living environment as a physical setting alone seems to be unimportant for respondents; but personal goals, self-development and an overall individualistic orientation, contrasted with the local opportunity structure, form the core set of attributes respondents are building their life politics on. This is seen in their strong faith in education and gaining competences in order to achieve a financially secure life, and at the same time perhaps a higher social status.

All these previous categories included, in fact, orientation to the future; many of these important issues include future plans at least on some level. Personally important things of respondents refer mostly to the matters which still lie in the future, e.g. education and a degree, a prestigious job and a career. This is, however, rather obvious, because respondents are young people who are expected to have their life in front of them with all its various possibilities. Respondents were oriented to the future also in respect to finding a romantic partner and starting a family. These two issues were also in the list of respondents' pleasant and personally significant future events.

There were also some answers which included not only an orientation to the future, but also two other important points in terms of issues tackled in this study. These points were individual wish fulfilment and place attachment. E.g. one young man wrote, "I want to win the heart of one girl, to enter a decent university, get married, have a son, plant a tree and build a house" (Ru,684,ApU,m,83). In this answer we can see how personal life politics and a recipe for a good life are formulated by illustrating it with clear examples. A strong orientation to the future and obtaining education gets its deeper meaning from forming and supporting a family. A wish to be "local," rooted and attached to the place of residence takes shape as a house built with one's own hands, and in the planting of a tree. This sort of depiction tells a lot about a sense of place, which is connected on locale but not necessarily to location: family and house could be anywhere, in any place.

That answer and case did not stress individualism, but other aspects presented in the previous chapters are more or less matters which are at the intersection between life politics and individualism. Individualism became clearly visible in answers which underlined "me" as important and "developing myself" as the most important issue for me in life. It seems that the future of the home region or physical living environment is virtually in no one's concern; but rather personal happiness, the main aim of the life politics, is a leading thought of respondents. After all, they still live in a certain place with certain local possibilities and limitations, and it can be argued that the fundamental starting point for migration alacrity of respondents is distance between those issues which are the primary concerns of inhabitants and those issues which form the local realities and

limitations in terms of creating a social network, daily routines, life politics and future plans.

## 7.2 Location

Location is the first approach to the motivating factors of migration alacrity. Location represents features which affect people on an external level and consequently cause migration alacrity. In this research these features are in close relation to peripherality, local conditions and opportunity structure; e.g. in the fields of employment, education and political participation. In the analysis here the meaning and significance of local factors on this external level will become clear through young people's opinions about their living environments; especially their opinions about things which are important to them and their references to peripherality. This latter notion is an important part of the analysis because peripherality indicates long distances, and usually restricted possibilities for education, jobs and leisure time activities, e.g. discos and nightclubs. Sometimes it also affects housing and even computer network availability.

In addition to this, peripherality is an important issue in researching migration alacrity since, according to Jukarainen (2000, 163), it is a predominantly negative phenomenon. Thus, it can be said that peripherality has major significance in migration plans, because it sets the local, possibly oppressive, constraints within which young people negotiate their life politics, setting individual(istic) goals and orientating to the future.

The meanings and representations of *location* are traced via relevant parts of the answers of following questions (see Appendix 3):

- How important are the following issues for you in choosing your place of residence? (structured question, # 27)
- How good possibilities do you have in your home region in terms of the following matters? (structured question, # 19)
- How satisfied are you with your life? (structured question, # 18)
- How do you see the future of your home district? (structured question, # 20)

In this analysis the focus will be first on the importance of different factors in respondent's home region. After that analysis will be concentrated on young people's opinions about local conditions and opportunity structures. This is done by looking at how satisfied young people are with different factors in their home district; and how young people see the future of their home district.

### *7.2.1 What is important and satisfactory in the living environment?*

Young people's representations of important and satisfactory features of their living environment, and their personal possibilities within the constraints of the local opportunity structure, reflect and provide the framework for their personal



life politics. The order of importance of these respondents' representations suggests us what kind of things a young person who is still moulding his/her goals and life politics tends to focus on. It can also be assumed that the respondents' level of satisfaction with his/her living environment guides his/her migration plans. The living environment and features related to *location* represent private goals and a personal orientation to the future: negotiation between personal, individual(istic) aspirations and features of place of residence is continuous (Jovero & Horelli 2002, 59). These personal goals further develop and mould the young person's place experience, and thus also migration alacrity. To know what aspects are important and satisfactory in the living environment is fundamental when trying to compare young people's wishes with local realities and opportunity structures.

The relevant parts of the structured questions, "How important are the following issues for you in choosing your place of residence," (# 27 in the questionnaire), and "How satisfied are you with your life," (# 18) were analysed by cross-tabulating with the following variables:

- Country of residence (basic coding)
- County of residence (structured question, # 8)
- Sex of the respondent (structured question, # 1)
- Respondent's year of birth (structured question, # 2)
- Migration willingness (structured question, # 28)
- Size of the living place (structured question, # 9)

Those relevant parts analysed and cross-tabulated were chosen because they included suitable analytical units (see chapter 4.6) for dealing with factors related to the *location*. The analytical units analysed here are: possibilities to get an education, opportunities to enter a career, possibilities to take part in local politics, reasonably priced housing, closeness to nature, good services, proper tele/computer connections, possibility to go discos and night clubs, and possibilities to have interesting hobbies.

These results are in line with the answers to the open-ended question, "What is the most important part of your life for you at the moment?" (# 35). They also bring another angle to the analysis: the issue of important things in the living environment.

Analyses show that there are virtually no differences between the sexes<sup>62</sup> in respondents' opinions about the importance of different issues regarding one's place of residence. Male and female respondents are rather unanimous in their answers. However, the data shows that in regard to some issues the respondents' country (and county) of residence, the size of their living place, the respondents' age and their migration willingness<sup>63</sup> all made a difference in what they were looking for in a place to live.

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<sup>62</sup> If the difference between the opinions of female and male respondents is notable, the percentages will be included in the text, otherwise analysis is based on supposition that the difference is minimal and not worth of mentioning, or there is no difference between sexes.

<sup>63</sup> Respondents have been divided into two groups in the analysis on the basis of their answer to the question about their migration willingness (# 28 in the questionnaire). Those who plan to migrate are referred to as "movers"; those without such plans, as "abiders".

## Education, finances and career

The significance of some areas of life politics, such as possibilities for education<sup>64</sup> is supported by the results discussed in the previous section. *A possibility for education* was one of the major issues on the respondents' list of most important things for their future place of residence. It can thus be suggested that education is hugely significant for young people involved in this study in terms of their individual life planning. Education can thus be regarded as a factor closely connected to *location* and local resources, which has a significant meaning for respondents.

The importance of local possibilities for education is an issue which has revealed differences in the values of respondents from different countries and different age groups. Table 12 shows more specifically the differences in answers of respondents from different countries.

Table 12: Respondents' home country and how important they regard possibilities for education to be in their living environment

			Country				Total	
			Finland	Russia	Norway	Sweden		
Importance of education possibilities	Very important	N	169	364	141	127	801	
		% within Country	45.9 %	62.2 %	50.9 %	34.1 %	50.0 %	
	Important	N	131	152	79	142	504	
		% within Country	35.6 %	26.0 %	28.5 %	38.2 %	31.5 %	
	Difficult to say	N	50	47	34	81	212	
		% within Country	13.6 %	8.0 %	12.3 %	21.8 %	13.2 %	
	Somewhat important	N	15	9	15	14	53	
		% within Country	4.1 %	1.5 %	5.4 %	3.8 %	3.3 %	
	Not at all important	N	3	13	8	8	32	
		% within Country	0.8 %	2.2 %	2.9 %	2.2 %	2.0 %	
	Total		N	368	585	277	372	1602
			% of all resp.	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Russian respondents put education in first place in their personal life. The clear majority of respondents living in counties of Archangelsk (68 %) and

<sup>64</sup> The importance of education may be high also because the sample is a result of a school survey. It can be assumed that the sample consists of persons who appreciate education and their attitude toward education is highly positive. It is impossible to say how different the results would have been if the sample frame would have included young people who are outside of education, e.g. unemployed or already working.

Murmansk (65 %) regard educational opportunities as a “very important” issue when thinking about their living place in the future. This tendency can also be seen in the analysis presented in section 7.1. Swedish respondents, on the other hand, did not place as much value on possibilities for education as those from other countries. For example, just 34 % of those living in Norrbotten regard education as a “very important” matter. On a general level though, looking at the data as a whole, it was remarkable to see how few respondents, only 2 %, stated that educational opportunities are “not at all important”.

These differences may be due to changes in the Russian education system, which has gone through more fundamental and uncontrolled changes than the educational systems in Nordic countries. These changes have possibly created insecurity among Russian youngsters (Puuronen & Kasurinen 2000, 49), as a consequence of which they particularly tend to stress the importance of education. On the Nordic side there may be a more relaxed way of relating to education. These two possible ways to approach educational opportunities, insecure and relaxed, may also be reflected in the valuation of one’s place of residence, especially in the context of future orientation. This means that the individual is actively planning a personal life and the potential place of residence is valued in relation to expectations of the successful realization of personal plans and aims there.

The data and cross-tabulations show that education is more important for female than male respondents. Approximately 86 % of female and 76 % of male respondents stated that possibilities for education are a “very important” or “important” issue for them when considering their future place of residence. The issue of educational did not reveal big difference between “movers” and “abiders”, though “movers” chose “very important” slightly more often than “abiders” did. As table 13 shows, about 80 % of both groups value educational opportunities as a “very important” or “important” issue.

Table 13: The importance of educational possibilities in relation to respondents' migration plans

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
<b>Importance of educational possibilities</b>	Very important	N	584	180	764	
		% for migration alacrity	51.3 %	45.5 %	49.8 %	
	Important	N	350	138	488	
		% for migration alacrity	30.7 %	34.8 %	31.8 %	
	Difficult to say	N	139	64	203	
		% for migration alacrity	12.2 %	16.2 %	13.2 %	
	Somewhat important	N	44	9	53	
		% for migration alacrity	3.9 %	2.3 %	3.5 %	
	Not at all important	N	22	5	27	
		% for migration alacrity	1.9 %	1.3 %	1.8 %	
	Total		N	1139	396	1535
			% for migration alacrity	100 %	100 %	100 %

The differences between age groups were quite remarkable when looking at the numbers of those who stated that educational opportunities are a “very important” matter. About 60 % of the 14-15-year-old respondents were certain that education is very important; where as only 18 % of 24-25-year-old respondents shared this opinion. The issue of the importance of educational possibilities is one which clearly shows how age and different life situations affect respondents' opinions. The oldest respondents have possibly already been trained for one occupation, or they might at least be close to finished with their first degree.

Age seems to have effects not only on migration alacrity (see section 6.2), but also on the importance placed on education, on two different levels: the personal and the public. According to the data, possibilities for education are a “very important” feature for respondents personally, but besides that they appreciate possibilities for education also as a feature of their living environment. This observation seems to be independent of the place where respondents live; the data shows that the size of the living place at the point of the research had little effect on this variable. About every second respondent from all different living environments (percentages varied between 46 in municipality centres and 55 in villages) considered education to be a “very important” issue. Those respondents who live in villages, scattered settlement areas and small cities stressed the importance of educational possibilities slightly more often than other respondents.

While we can see that those most eager respondents to migrate were living in places which do not necessarily represent a very versatile opportunity structure, relative to the percentages for other types of settlements the difference is really

not that big. The percentage of respondents placing a high priority on education also remains quite consistent between living environments of different sizes, as table 14 shows.

Table 14: Size of living place relative to the importance of educational possibilities for respondents

			Importance of possibilities for education					Total	
			Very important	Important	Difficult to say	Some-what important	Not at all important		
Size of living place	Big city	N	26	14	7	4	2	53	
		% within size of living place	49.1 %	26.4 %	13.2 %	7.5 %	3.8 %	100 %	
	Average size city	N	197	132	55	16	9	409	
		% within size of living place	48.2 %	32.3 %	13.4 %	3.9 %	2.2 %	100 %	
	Small city	N	205	126	51	9	7	398	
		% within size of living place	51.5 %	31.7 %	12.8 %	2.3 %	1.8 %	100 %	
	Municipality centre	N	144	104	48	9	6	311	
		% within size of living place	46.3 %	33.4 %	15.4 %	2.9 %	1.9 %	100 %	
	Scattered settlement	N	116	74	23	10	3	226	
		% within size of living place	51.3 %	32.7 %	10.2 %	4.4 %	1.3 %	100 %	
	Village	N	107	51	26	4	5	193	
		% within size of living place	55.4 %	26.4 %	13.5 %	2.1 %	2.6 %	100 %	
	Total		N	795	501	210	52	32	1590
			% of all resp.	50.0 %	31.5 %	13.2 %	3.3 %	2.0 %	100 %

This reflects the surprising fact that the opinions of respondents from different sized living environments do not differ all that greatly when they are asked what aspects of a place of residence are important to them. It seems that ideas about desirable living environments are similar in the minds of respondents from

all different settlement types and sizes. Opinions about important factors do not depend so much on local realities or opportunity structures. Certain features of *location* are equally attractive to all types of respondents.

Education and work seem to be the issues which produce the most coherent answers among respondents. These two issues were often linked to each other, especially in Russian young people's answers. It was clearly stated in their answers that hopes of finding a good job – usually a highly paid one – hold a very important place in their plans for the future. Work and career were combined in many answers, reflecting the idea that high education automatically leads to a good job and a high salary. This could easily be interpreted as admiration of a consumption-oriented lifestyle. On the other hand, the consumer resources and financial situations of the respondents' generation have not developed in a way corresponding to supply of goods available in the information society (Wilska 2001, 52-53). Thus, respondents' aims of getting well paid jobs may also be interpreted as a life political move, setting personal performance goals in entirely economic terms. This can make sense to the young person especially in the situation in which he/she is dissatisfied with his/her personal financial situation. Setting such personal performance goals is also linked, at least in some cases, to career prospects and higher personal social status.

The subjective experience of one's personal financial situation can be linked to lifestyle and consumption. Consumption can be regarded as a materialistic notion of individualism. An individualistic and youthful lifestyle consists of looking, dressing and spending your free time just right. All these include consumption, at least in some respect. In order to follow personal, self-imposed style demands or general trends, a young person has to have at least some income (Wilska & Eresmaa 2002, 189). This issue of the subjective experience of one's financial situation may be one of the factors driving young people towards higher education, better positions and greater income – towards a better *location* and opportunity structure. If one's financial situation is felt to be unsatisfactory, it may also feel as though the possibilities to fulfil one's individual(istic) needs are suppressed. Feelings about one's financial situation are also reflections of a personal performance structure.

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with their financial situation. About 27 % of all respondents said that they are “rather dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their economic situation, and 9 % went as far as to say that they do not have any finances whatsoever. Only about 9 % of the respondents were “very satisfied” with their financial situation. Those “rather satisfied” made up another 18 % of all respondents. About 37 % could not say whether or not they are satisfied with their financial situation. Young people of 15-17 years old were more often pleased with their economic situation than respondents in other age groups. It can be speculated that young people in this age group were still living in their parental home and being supported by their parents at the point of research. We also find that respondents from Troms, Murmansk and Arkhangelsk counties were more often dissatisfied with their economic situation than respondents from other research venues. Respondents living in municipal centres, scattered settlement areas or villages were more often satisfied with their financial situation than their peers living in urban areas. The data shows that those respondents who were at least to some extent dissatisfied with their

finances were slightly more prone to be “movers” than those who were more satisfied.

*A good opportunity to enter a career* was also linked to economic standing. It appears to be as important to respondents as possibilities for education: a little over 80 % considered this as well to be either a “very important” or “important” feature of their future living environment. Good career opportunities were most important for Finnish and Russian respondents, with young people from Lapland (84 %) Murmansk County (83 %) being particularly likely to rate the opportunity to enter into a career as a “very important” or “important” factor in choosing their future place of residence. About 80 % of Norwegian and 73 % of Swedish respondents shared the same view.

The differences between “movers” and “abiders” were not so large but they were clear in this issue: about 84 % of “movers” tend to think that career opportunity is a “very important” or “important” feature, whereas only about 72 % of “abiders” set such a high value on career opportunities. This difference between groups is slightly more visible, if we consider only those respondents who answered that career opportunities are “very important”; about 57 % of “movers” and 41 % of “abiders” shared this idea. Table 15 shows this difference in more detail.

Table 15: The importance of career opportunities relative to respondents’ migration plans

			Migration plans		Total
			Yes	No	
<b>Importance of individual career opportunities</b>	Very important	N	645	163	808
		% for migration alacrity	56.7 %	41.3 %	52.7 %
	Important	N	315	125	440
		% for migration alacrity	27.7 %	31.6 %	28.7 %
	Difficult to say	N	112	74	186
		% for migration alacrity	9.8 %	18.7 %	12.1 %
	Somewhat important	N	35	18	53
		% for migration alacrity	3.1 %	4.6 %	3.5 %
	Not at all important	N	31	15	46
		% for migration alacrity	2.7 %	3.8 %	3.0 %
Total		N	1138	395	1533
		% for migration alacrity	100 %	100 %	100 %

A good opportunity to enter a career seems to be important nearly for all respondents, but it was slightly more important to female respondents and those

from urban environments. The data indicates that the bigger respondent's living place is, the more important opportunities to enter a career are to that person. In respect to age, over 80 % of 16-20 and 22-23-year-olds stated that they regard career opportunities as "very important" or "important" when thinking about their future living place. The equivalent percentages in other age groups ranged between 60 and 79 %.

The issue of having good career possibilities can theoretically be regarded as an important component of migration plans of respondents, if the case is that local opportunity structures have a weak link in terms of career opportunities in different fields. There are, however, significant differences between regions and places in terms of career opportunities because of variations in local traditional occupations and economic life. E.g. in Troms the fishing industry is the traditional source of livelihood, and in Murmansk Oblast the main industry is mining and processing non-ferrous metals; whereas in the Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Republic of Karelia, the industrial base is built on forestry and wood-processing (Barents Info, 2005b). These are, however, traditional ways of living in the area, and young people are trying to find their way out into different, and perhaps more trendy, occupations. Young people living in remote areas also tend to break away from their parents' educational and occupational backgrounds (Soininen 1998). This trend is also seen in this study: young people involved in this research are aiming towards higher degrees than their parents have.

These results furthermore suggest that career prospects are related to migration alacrity – both in terms of employment and in terms of personal identity construction. It can be argued that self-identity may be constructed on the basis of certain lifestyles which are associated with a "good and successful" life – and a successful life, in turn, is often connected to wealth and profession.

### **Taking part in local politics**

Regional differences exist not only in sources of livelihood, but also in local systems of decision making. One important part of *location* is local politics and young people's opportunities to take part therein<sup>65</sup>. It has been said that the possibility to affect local politics is an important part of adapting to different roles in a broader social context (Gretschel 2003) and it is also a significant factor in the integration of young people into local society and local governance (Paunikallio 2000) where they bond to the local, face-to-face society. It has been reported that there is a positive correlation between being satisfied with one's living environment and having a possibility to influence matters locally; i.e. the more satisfied a young person is with his/her level of political participation, the more optimistic his/her attitude will be towards the living environment (Kurikka 2000, 45). Following this logic, it can be argued that the more optimistic young

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<sup>65</sup> In this chapter – and also in this entire study – the focus is not on arguing about the quality or quantity of existing and already realised possibilities to take part in local politics, or politics on national level. What is being considered here is young people's opinions about the importance and satisfaction of opportunities to take part in politics on the local level.



people's attitudes are towards their living environment, the fewer will be eager to migrate.

As political satisfaction was thus, in theory, a potentially significant factor in migration alacrity, it was taken up as one of the variables to be measured in this survey. Young people were thus asked how important it is to them to have an influence in politics in general and local politics in particular (question # 27), and how satisfied they were with the influence they have (questions # 18 and 19).

Respondents from different countries had slightly differing opinions about the importance of possibilities to take part in local politics. Russian respondents were the most likely to think that having an opportunity to take part in politics locally is an important matter when choosing living place in the future; 27 % of the Russian respondents regarded political possibilities a "very important" or "important" feature. Norwegian respondents placed the least value on political participation: only about 13 % of them accorded such significance to political opportunities. The equivalent percentage in Finland was 15 %; in Sweden, 16 %.

Politics were not even close to top answers when respondents were stating important issues in their life (open-ended question # 35, see 7.1 above). There were only three respondents, from Russia, who mentioned anything which could be liberally interpreted as references to politics. One mentioned, for example, that the future of one's own country is the most important thing in the life.

In this light it can be surmised that politics actually falls into the class of "not at all important". This issue seems not to be very important to respondents, since only about 19 % marked alternatives indicating that possibilities to affect local matters are at least to some extent important to them. This also seems to confirm the conventional wisdom in the field of youth research that young people are a politically inactive group and that they are not interested in politics as such (Paakkunainen 1997, 198; Borg 1996, 3). Instead of traditional politics, young people are using unconventional ways of expressing their opinions and trying to affect decision makers, e.g. via protest demonstrations (see e.g. Lundbom 2001). Also the goals of traditional party politics may be fundamentally opposed to young people's personal goals and individual life politics.

Table 16: Respondents' county of residence and the importance of possibilities to take part in local politics

County of residence		Possibility to take part in local politics					Total
		Very important	Important	Difficult to say	Some-what important	Not at all important	
Lapland	N	20	34	115	100	100	369
	% within county of residence	5.4 %	9.2 %	31.2%	27.1%	27.1%	100%
Republic of Karelia	N	24	33	60	42	38	197
	% within county of residence	12.2 %	16.8 %	30.5%	21.3%	19.3%	100%
County of Archangelsk	N	10	38	58	40	47	193
	% within county of residence	5.2 %	19.7 %	30.1%	20.7%	24.4%	100%
County of Murmansk	N	14	37	60	26	50	187
	% within county of residence	7.5 %	19.8 %	32.1%	13.9%	26.7%	100%
Nordland	N	0	4	12	9	15	40
	% within county of residence	0.0 %	10.0 %	30.0%	22.5%	37.5%	100%
Troms	N	9	20	50	61	84	224
	% within county of residence	4.0 %	8.9 %	22.3%	27.2%	37.5%	100%
Norrbotten	N	22	38	122	99	80	361
	% within county of residence	6.1 %	10.5 %	33.8%	27.4%	22.2%	100%
Other*	N	1	1	2	4	3	11
	% within county of residence	9.1 %	9.1 %	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	100%
Total	N	100	205	479	381	417	1582
	% of all resp.	6.3 %	13.0 %	30.3%	24.1%	26.4%	100%

\* Includes respondents from Finnmark and Västerbotten

In terms of roughly mapping out differences within the region, we can say that respondents from the Republic of Karelia were the most interested in taking part in local politics, whereas Nordland had the fewest young political enthusi-

asts. It is also noteworthy that in every county in the study there were far more respondents who regarded possibilities to take part in local politics as “not at all important” than who regarded such possibilities as “very important”. The *importance of possibilities to take part in local politics* on a regional level is examined more closely in table 16 (above).

Male respondents were slightly more interested than female respondents in local political opportunities as an aspect of their future place of residence. The respondents’ age also made some differences: e.g. there were none born in 1974-1975 (24-25 years old) who stated that the possibility to take part in local politics would be a “very important” issue; on the contrary, 16 % of them said that possibility to take part in local politics is “not at all important”. When looking at the combined percentage of “very important” and “important” answers, however, the data shows that the previous age group, 26-27-year-olds, were the least interested in local politics. The youngest respondents, born in 1986 (13 years old at the time), were the most interested in local politics, with about 33 % of them regarding this issue as “very important” or “important”.<sup>66</sup>

These examples clearly illustrate a prevailing disbelief among all respondents towards political practices<sup>67</sup>: 32 % said that it is impossible for them to affect politics, and beyond that about 38 % were either “very dissatisfied” or “rather dissatisfied” with their possibilities to influence politics. Only a small portion of all respondents, 9 %, were “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their possibilities of influencing politics. Young people born after the year 1978 (less than 21 years old) were especially sceptical about their potential influence.

Respondents from Lapland were the most positive group regarding political matters, with 18 % of them “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their possibilities to affect politics. When compared with those of other counties this is a rather high percentage; the second most satisfied region was Troms, where the percentage of satisfied respondents was 12. A tie for third place here goes to Nordland and Norrbotten, each with a young people’s political satisfaction rating of just 8 %. Russian respondents were particularly dissatisfied with their political influence. The most dissatisfied respondents were those from Arkhangelsk and Murmansk; 55 % and 60 % of the respondents from these districts, respectively, said that they do not have any opportunities to influence politics in their region. Among all Russian respondents only about 2 % were “very satisfied” with their possibilities to influence politics. This result is possibly explainable in terms of recent changes in Russian political system and its relative poorly developed civil society.

The data also showed that respondents from scattered settlement areas and villages tended to be less satisfied with their potential political influence than their more urban peers. Respondents seem to be a little bit more satisfied with

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<sup>66</sup> This might also be a factor in the relative importance of politics among Russian respondents noted above. The Russian respondents were, relatively speaking, the youngest informants in this study. Their age may have been a factor in their trustful and interested attitude towards politics; it is possible that they were not yet frustrated with political practises and they still have positive future prospects in their minds.

<sup>67</sup> See e.g. Hellsten & Martikainen (2002).

their possibilities to affect local matters<sup>68</sup> than with their possibilities to influence politics in general: 11 % of all respondents were “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their chances to affect local matters in their home district. But here too about 42 % were to some extent dissatisfied with their chances to affect local matters, and about 22 % said that they do not have any opportunities to affect local decision making. Regional variations put this question in a particularly interesting light. For instance 38 % of the respondents from Arkhangelsk County and 42 % of respondents from Murmansk County were of the opinion that they have absolutely no possible influence in local matters in their home regions. Respondents from these two districts were also the most certain of their views, with far fewer there choosing the “difficult to say” option for this question than in other regions. Nordland also stands out here in the sense that none of the respondents there were “very satisfied” in this regard. As with politics in general, respondents in younger age groups were even more often dissatisfied with their possibilities to participate in local decision making than older respondents. On this question, however, no correlation was found with the population density of the respondents’ place of residence; about 40 % of the respondents were dissatisfied with their possibilities to influence local matters no matter what sized city or settlement they came from.

The responses concerning satisfaction with politics and local decision making were also analysed in relation to whether the respondents were “movers” or “abiders.” Both of these groups were generally dissatisfied with their potential influence; both having a notably high percentage of respondents saying that it is impossible for them to affect local decision making or politics in general. Surprisingly though, these percentages were higher among the “abiders” than among the “movers.” Resignation from politics in general was seen in 31 % of the “movers” and in 35 % of the “abiders.” When it comes to local decision making, 21 % of “movers” said that they have no possibilities; for “abiders” this figure was up to 25 %. The reason for this higher level of satisfaction among movers might simply be the fact that those who are planning to settle down in their home district are more worried about local matters and are more eager to affect matters which are touching their living environment and personal life.

This interpretation is supported by Paunikallio’s (2000) research results. In her research dealing with young people and their motivation to affect their municipalities, she found that young people in general value their home districts and take them seriously and they would like to take part in decision making in their municipalities. Possibilities to affect local matters can be regarded as a factor which integrates young people to their home districts (Soininen 1999, 80). This option is applicable possibly only those who are planning to settle down.

On the other hand, for some “movers” local politics may be uninteresting because they may be planning to leave relatively soon and they are thus orienting themselves towards other areas already in upper secondary school. They may not be willing to put any effort into local politics because, as they are leaving anyway, local matters are not worth bothering with. They may also have deterministic and negative attitudes towards the future of their home district and place of

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<sup>68</sup> “Local matters” here is in reference to issues which deal with one’s residential area and, for example, neighbourhood decision making.

residence. Moreover, interests in local politics may be weak among respondents because they feel that they are not capable of developing their place of residence; firstly, because they do not know what sort of network to use in order to get their ideas through, and secondly, they are lacking information about political practises and decision making. In addition, the aims of local decision makers and needs of the local community may be opposed to individual goals and needs. It diminishes young people's political activity when the issues stressed by politicians are not important to them as individuals. Individualism is also one side of the coin of political activity. Young people are used to solving their problems alone. They trust themselves and they may believe that political means are simply ineffective.

## Housing

Housing, also on general level, is an important part of *location* and living standards. Thus it can be argued, e.g., that housing costs might affect on young people's decisions about their future living place. Finnish respondents placed more value on *reasonable prices for flats or houses*<sup>69</sup> when choosing their future living place than those from other countries involved in the research. Around 81 % of Finnish respondents' set reasonable prices as a "very important" or "important" feature. Equivalent percentages among respondents from other countries were 66 % in Russia, 69 % in Sweden and 74 % in Norway. Those numbers indicate clearly the nature of regional differences. The data shows that respondents from Lapland (81 %), Nordland (75 %) and Troms (75 %) are the most interested in the prices of flats and houses in the place where they are planning to migrate. On the other hand, those living in Republic of Karelia are the most indifferent group in regard to these prices; about 61 % of them regard this issue as "very important" or "important". They have also stated more often than other respondents that housing prices are "not at all important".

The reasons for these regional differences may lie firstly in the age of the respondents and secondly in the differences in family structure between countries involved in this research. The age of the respondents may have an effect here, because the Russian respondents were in general younger than other respondents and so it can be assumed that they are still in a phase of life where they have not paid attention to costs of living yet. On the other hand, Russian young people tend to live longer in their parental home than their peers in Finland, Norway and Sweden (Puuronen & Kasurinen 2000, 48). In combination with each other, these factors suggest us that on average the Russian respondents will still be living in their parental home far longer than those from the Nordic countries.

Reasonably priced flats or houses interest more female than male respondents: about 75 % of female respondents answered that reasonable prices are a "very important" or "important" feature in their future living place, whereas

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<sup>69</sup> It might have been wiser to ask about reasonable rents than about (purchase) prices of flats or houses, since young people seldom have money to buy their own flats. Nevertheless responses to this question still tell us something about respondents' attitudes towards housing price levels in general.

about 68 % of male respondents shared this opinion. The oldest respondents, 28-29 years old, said more often than others that reasonable prices are “very important” or “important” to them when choosing a living place; about 77 % of those respondents shared this opinion. Also a particularly large majority of those respondents who lived in scattered settlement areas (82 %) stated that reasonable housing prices are a “very important” or “important” issue. This may be one of the factors which keep those who are already living in scattered settlement areas in their home districts. Usually housing prices are cheaper in remote areas than in city centres or in urban environments in general.

Like female respondents, “movers” in particular tended to value reasonable housing prices. About 73 % of “movers” regard the price issue as a “very important” or “important” feature, compared with about 68 % among “abiders”.

Young people were also asked how satisfied they are with the flats they live in. This is an important aspect of migration. Kytö (1998, 203) has stated in his dissertation about migration intentions among Finnish urban dwellers that dissatisfaction with one’s flat correlated positively with migration intentions. Respondents living in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk counties were the least satisfied group in this regard. Young people living in Lapland, Nordland and Norrbotten chose the options of “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” more often to describe their feelings about their flats than did respondents from other areas. All age groups were mostly satisfied with their flats, but the 13-year-olds were the most satisfied. It can be assumed that these young people were still living at home with their parents, and therefore they possibly have a reasonably high standard of living compared with those who are on their own.

The population density of the respondents’ living places also shows some correlation with their satisfaction with their flats. The data shows that those living in scattered settlement areas are more often satisfied with their flat than respondents from other environments. One possible explanation for this would be linked with different types of residences typical for different living environments. Respondents living in scattered settlement areas would more often tend to live in bigger flats, or in single family dwellings, than those living in urban environments, who are more likely to be living in a block of flats and in relatively small flats.

However, there were also young people who were dissatisfied with their flats: 6 % of respondents were “very dissatisfied”, 10 % of respondents are “rather dissatisfied.” The most dissatisfied respondents here were the 16-17-year-olds and 20-21-year-olds (those born in years 1978-1979 and 1982-1983). These two rather small groups possibly consist of students who just have moved away from their parental home and are living first time on their own – e.g. in student housing – and then those who have just moved from student housing into the housing on the open market, and due to that are living perhaps in smaller flats than before because of higher rents.

## **Nature**

Besides housing, nature creates a certain image for a living environment, both in urban and rural environments. However, in northern areas nature possibly plays

an even stronger role in the minds of northerners, because many of them – and many of the respondents involved in this study – have internalised the meta-narrative of the meaning of nature and its original peacefulness and calming and refreshing effect (Soininen 2002, 25; Ollila 2004, 85). Nature is clearly one of the major resources in the northern area. Many times experiences of the North are linked with nature (Österholm 1994, 161).

Table 17: Regard for closeness to the nature in relation to respondents country of residence

County of residence			Closeness to the nature					Total
			Very important	Important	Difficult to say	Some-what important	Not at all important	
Lapland	N	141	104	78	38	9	370	
	% within county of residence	38.1 %	28.1 %	21.1%	10.3%	2.4 %	100%	
Republic of Karelia	N	86	62	28	11	10	197	
	% within county of residence	43.7 %	31.5 %	14.2%	5.6 %	5.1 %	100%	
County of Archangelsk	N	63	66	39	13	13	194	
	% within county of residence	32.5 %	34.0 %	20.1%	6.7 %	6.7 %	100%	
County of Murmansk	N	74	46	38	15	15	188	
	% within county of residence	39.4 %	24.5 %	20.2%	8,0 %	8.0 %	100%	
Nordland	N	5	10	12	6	7	40	
	% within county of residence	12.5 %	25.0 %	30.0%	15.0%	17.5%	100%	
Troms	N	56	72	54	29	15	226	
	% within county of residence	24.8 %	31.9 %	23.9%	12.8%	6.6 %	100%	
Norrbotten	N	120	100	92	28	23	363	
	% within county of residence	33.1 %	27.5 %	25.3%	7.7 %	6.3 %	100%	
Other	N	5	2	4	0	0	11	
	% within county of residence	45.5 %	18.2 %	36.4%	0.0 %	0.0 %	100%	
Total		N	550	462	345	140	92	1589
		% of all resp.	34.6 %	29.1 %	21.7%	8.8 %	5.8 %	100%

The data shows that *Closeness to nature* is not so important for Norwegian respondents than for other respondents. About 53 % of Norwegian respondents, compared to, e.g., 69 % of Russian respondents, think that closeness to the nature is a “very important” or “important” feature in their future living environment. Among Finnish respondents the equivalent percentages were 66; among Swedish, 61. On the regional level there is quite a big difference in opinions, as table 17 shows, in that, e.g., about 39 % of respondents from Murmansk County, but only about 13 % of those from Nordland value closeness to the nature enough to rank it as a “very important” issue when choosing their future place of residence.

The numbers above may suggest some kind of connection between the heterogeneity of the different living environments within the research area and importance nature has in each. This result surmises that in places where nature is clean, admired by outsiders coming in as tourists, and an inseparable and very visible part of the everyday life living environment, as in Norway, nature is not seen by young people to be so important as in places in which nature may be polluted or harnessed by industry, as in the Murmansk area. It seems, that nature is taken as granted by Norwegian respondents, whereas among Russian respondents, who may have, e.g., experienced difficulties in accessing clean nature for recreation, nature is a more highly valued factor in one’s living environment. This result means that for some respondents nature may be a feature luring them towards other places to live, and for others nature may be an insignificant factor in migration alacrity. This also suggests that those features and factors which are present in one’s own living environment are perhaps not those which are looked for when choosing a place of residence for the future.

However closeness to the nature is a somewhat peculiar factor in living environments, because it is the only factor which is valued more among “abiders” than “movers”. What’s more, the percentage gap here is rather large: 75 % of “abiders” regard closeness to the nature as a “very important” or “important” feature, as compared with 59 % among “movers”. Furthermore, “movers” more often than “abiders” think that closeness to the nature is “not at all important”. The data did not reveal any major differences in opinion between different age groups but there was a clear general trend: the older the respondent was, the more important closeness to the nature was to him/her.

Based on previous studies it can be argued that nature is an important part of one’s living environment – especially in the North, since according to common opinion northern areas attract tourists with unspoilt nature, snow-covered mountains and unique fauna. Experiences of the North are linked with nature, nature conservation and sustainable development (Österholm 1994, 161). This “northern nature ideology” is clearly seen in the responses to our survey. Closeness to nature is one of the few things in this region which is clearly regarded as satisfactory by a great majority of respondents: nearly 70 % answered that they are “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” with closeness to nature in their home district. Only 11 % of all respondents were not satisfied with their closeness to the nature.

The data does show, however, that there are small differences in this regard between the different geographical areas studied. Respondents from Arkhangelsk and Murmansk counties are not very satisfied with their closeness to nature.



About 6 % of the respondents from each of these areas think that there is no closeness to nature in their home district. This may be related to the fact that these areas, especially Murmansk, can be regarded as more polluted than other research areas (see Olsson & Sekarev 1994). Respondents from municipal centres and scattered settlement areas were more satisfied with their closeness to nature than other respondents.

According to the data, nature as a part of the living environment was seen in a positive light: answers from all countries showed an appreciation for the importance of the nature. This viewpoint is a good example, and virtually the only example, of how special features of the periphery are regarded as a means to a better life.

## **Services**

*Good services* are an issue, pull factor and “concept” which are commonly regarded as one of the most important reasons for choosing a particular living environment, because well-being is usually closely connected to the service standard for the area (Kytö 1998, 46). This data supports that argument. The majority of the respondents, especially female respondents (76 % of female, 70 % of male respondents) and those living in small city (78 %), in each country stated that good services are a “very important” or “important” feature for a living environment.

“Movers” and “abiders” regard services about equally: about 73 % of both groups regard the service issue as a “very important” or “important” matter. However there are differences between respondents from different countries. Russian respondents seem to place the most value on services, whereas Swedish respondents are not so interested in services when thinking about a future place of residence. This can be explained in terms of Sweden perhaps having a more uniform and stable service standard than the research venues located in Russia. The following table shows the precise figures for responses for each country.

Table 18: Respondents' country of residence and the importance they placed on good services

			Country				Total	
			Finland	Russia	Norway	Sweden		
<b>Importance of high quality services</b>	Very important	N	130	346	64	69	609	
		% within Country	35.3 %	59.2 %	23.4 %	18.7 %	38.2 %	
	Important	N	163	149	107	134	553	
		% within Country	44.3 %	25.5 %	39.1 %	36.3 %	34.7 %	
	Difficult to say	N	59	61	74	120	314	
		% within Country	16.0 %	10.4 %	27.0 %	32.5 %	19.7 %	
	Rather important	N	11	15	21	33	80	
		% within Country	3.0 %	2.6 %	7.7 %	8.9 %	5.0 %	
	Not at all important	N	5	13	8	13	39	
		% within Country	1.4 %	2.2 %	2.9 %	3.5 %	2.4 %	
	Total		N	368	584	274	369	1595
			% within Country	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

This also indicates difference on a county level. In round numbers it can be said that over 60 % of the respondents living in the counties of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk regard service standards as a “very important” issue, whereas few respondents living in Nordland (10 %) and Norrbotten (19 %) shared that opinion.

The explanation for the differences in respondents' attitudes here could, however, be roughly the same here as for closeness to nature: those who have decent services near them are not able to think of a need for services as clearly as those living in a place characterised by a lower service standard. The evidence here suggests such a conclusion, since it can be assumed that there are lower service standards in Murmansk Oblast than in Norrbotten, for example.

Good services take on a new importance though when we factor in respondents' concepts of the ideal life in question # 36 (see Appendix 2). Some respondents from villages and rural municipalities mentioned that there are no possibilities for an ideal life in their neighbourhood or living area because there are not enough services. The services they are longing for are presumably related to the free-time amusements and hobbies, which play a central role in the life of youngsters. The issue of leisure activities and services is crucial especially to the young living in more remote areas. Those areas more often lack possibilities for leisure activities than more central and urban areas. In this connection, respondents from villages and rural municipalities may have considered “services” in question # 27 to refer to areas of life which are more a matter of their parents' day-to-day responsibility, such as food shops, health care or insurance claims

adjustment. It was surprising, after all, how few of the respondents linked together ideal life and services. This was all the more remarkable because a lack of services was often mentioned in answers to other questions, e.g. what young people would like to change in their home district (question # 21, see Appendix 2). One possible explanation for this may be that respondents have an image in mind of their potential future place of residence. That image may not contain a low service standard, but variety of possibilities for both leisure activities and normal daily routines. If that is the case, it may seem almost self-evident for young people that there will be no worries about services in their future place of residence.

One concrete example of services is *proper tele/computer connections*. This means, e.g., high speed Internet connections which create an interconnectedness between places and enable young people to form social networks outside of their own living environments. Proper tele/computer (ICT) connections were most valued by Finnish respondents, about 68 % of whom regarded these as a “very important” or “important” feature of their future living environment. Swedish respondents placed the least value on ICT connections, but at that the difference between the Finns and Swedes was not so big: around 61 % of Swedish respondents rated these connections as a “very important” or “important” feature. The equivalent figures for the other two countries were 64 % in Russia and 65 % in Norway.

There were, however, some regional differences in valuing ICT connections, in that nearly half (49 %) of the respondents from Murmansk County rated these connections as “very important”, while for e.g. only about one out of four respondents (26 %) living in Norrbotten gave ICT connections this top rating. Here the heterogeneity and diversity of local opportunity structures and resources between different research venues becomes visible. ICT connections are a rather basic service in Sweden and in Finland, at least in urban environments, and because of that connections may be taken for granted by some respondents. County differences here may thus once again reflect the same phenomenon as we saw in respect to the closeness to the nature. If some feature is as an inseparable, existing part of everyday practises and living environments, it is seen not as important, compared with how it might be seen in places where this feature is difficult to access or where it is totally missing.

ICT connections may seem to be taken for granted in some research venues, but they may still be an important motivational factor for some respondents in respect to migration plans. “Movers” again placed a slightly higher value on proper ICT connections than “abiders”. About 66 % of “movers” and about 61 % “abiders” thought that the proper connections are a “very important” or “important” feature when they are thinking about their future place of residence.

*Possibility to go discos and nightclubs* is another example of services which certainly concerns the majority of young people. The discos issue, however, should not be seen only as a matter of local services, because it also has a strong linkage to the *locale* aspect of place. As part of the network of public places in which young people spend their free time, discos and night clubs provide a variety of possibilities for building social relations and “seeing other people”, which is significant for young people in relation to their phase of life and interests. Discos, and other meeting places for young people, thus indirectly help to build and

develop face-to-face society, especially among the youngest respondents. Having a certain disco in the area, which some regard as “the best disco in the country,” may also be a source of pride in one’s home district. In this way “night life” also has an impact on forming *a sense of place*, which is individually formed on the basis of personal experiences.

All this is evident when looking at respondents’ opinions about the importance of discos and night clubs. In this research the youngest respondents, born between 1980 and 1986<sup>70</sup>, were the ones most interested in night life; over half of respondents in each cohort stated that the question of possibilities to go discos and night clubs is “very important” or “important” to them. On the other hand, at least one out of three of the oldest respondents, born in the 1970s<sup>71</sup>, shared this opinion.

The data shows that this issue is quite uniformly of interest to respondents from each country, with the Finns, however, showing the least interest in such possibilities. About 45 % of Finnish respondents considered this matter to be “very important” or “important”, compared with about 56 % of Russian respondents regarding it as such. Norwegians, however, considered the possibility to go discos and night clubs “very important” more often than their peers in other countries. Analysing on the county level, respondents living in Troms and Murmansk were especially interested in night life possibilities, with the least interest among respondents from Lapland.

Possibilities for night life were more important to “movers” than to “abiders”. About 57 % of “movers” rated this as a “very important” or “important” issue, whereas only 46 % of the latter group regarded it as important. “Abiders” also stated more often than “movers” that the possibility to go discos or night clubs is “not at all important”. The data shows that “big city dwellers” are the group which value most possibilities to go discos and nightclubs. It may also be possible that they are stressing the importance of it, because discos and clubs are dominant features of their free-time activities and social life. In big cities night life culture is more prominent among young people than, e.g., in scattered settlement areas or in villages. Maybe this is one of the features which keeps them in urban environments or which causes them, and their rural peers, to list still larger cities as their possible migration targets. This may be the case especially if “big city dwellers” are not satisfied with their night life possibilities in their original living environments, but are seeking for a still livelier big city night life.

*Possibilities to have interesting hobbies*, in turn, is a feature which seems to be less important for Russian young people than for others in the region: about 56 % of Russian respondents regard interesting hobbies as “very important” or “important”. The equivalent figures among respondents from the other countries were just over 70 %: 74 % in Finland, 73 % in Norway and 72 % in Sweden. Especially respondents from Archangelsk showed a relative lack of interest in hobbies: about 54 % of them regarded amusing hobbies as a “very important” or “important” matter. Young people from Lapland and Troms were the most eager

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<sup>70</sup> Age groups identified in the questionnaire as part of this category were those born in 1980-1981, 1982-1983, 1984-1985 and 1986.

<sup>71</sup> Age groups identified in the questionnaire as part of this category were those born in 1970-1971, 1972-1973, 1974-1975, 1976-1977 and 1978-1979.

to have hobbies: about 74 % of respondents from both counties acknowledging their importance as a criterion.

Opinions in this case differ slightly between “movers” and “abiders”: about 69 % of “movers” put hobby possibilities down as “very important” or “important” criteria, as opposed to about 63 % for “abiders”. The size of the respondent’s living place did not seem to create very big differences on this issue, though it is worth mentioning that “big-city dwellers” put hobbies in the “very important” category more often than those living in smaller places. But if we compare the portion of those respondents who set hobbies as either a “very important” or “important” issue, the highest numbers can be found among those who live in municipality centres or in scattered settlement areas. This may suggest that migration among those from smaller places could be in search of better possibilities for leisure pursuits.

There were bigger differences in the answers from different age groups here. The cohort born in 1972-1973 were the most interested in opportunities for hobbies: about 81 % of them considered this issue to be “very important” or “important”. The oldest respondents, born in 1970-1971, were the least interested in such activities; about 48 % of them rated this issue as “very important” or “important”. The observation that there are not very coherent clusters among age groups could reflect a factor of interesting hobbies (in this data set at least) being more bound to the level of personal and individual life politics and tastes than to certain phases of life and places of residence.

After looking at the respondents’ opinions about important issues in their future place of residence, one cannot conclude that “movers” tend to be more demanding than “abiders” in many respects when thinking about important issues in their future living environment, or at least the data here shows that they considered almost all of the same matters to be “very important” or “important”. It seems that the older respondents had different requirements than the younger respondents. Older respondents paid more attention to the living environment as such, while the younger ones focussed more on possibilities for self-development and possibilities to fulfil their individual(istic) needs. On the basis of this, and simple reasoning, one could argue that migration alacrity of respondents is a consequence of particularly high demands for a satisfying living environment.

### *7.2.2 Suggestions for improving the place of residence*

Respondents were asked to tell, in their own words, what they would like to change in their home districts (question # 21 in questionnaire). The answers given to this question provide us with especially important information in terms of understanding young people’s satisfaction with their residential environments. The following portion offers a few hints as to what these young people would like to see changed in their living environments and places of residence in order to make them more appealing. The task of improving their places of residence is not very simple, in that respondents brought up a huge number of areas for improvement. Many of the answers were also in conflict with each other. This shows that a place of residence is experienced individually and the same feature

of a living place is seen by one as an advantage and by another as a disadvantage. It can be claimed that complex nature of migration is seen here rather clearly: every individual has own special combination of features which are attracting or irritating. Living environment is also examined and analysed individually through personal needs and personal life politics.

### **Residential environment and current problems**

Residential environment and housing were one of the biggest topics brought up by respondents here, and they had several proposals as to how to improve their living environment. Young people's various proposals in for improving their living environments reflect their dissatisfaction towards their places of residence and thus the need for a change of *location*. These proposals also tell us that there are several features in their places of residence which are not felt positively and which are thus not strengthening their place attachment and feelings of "distinctiveness" (Gustafson 2001a).

Respondents who live in urban environments often mentioned public transportation as a matter which they would like to see made more efficient and encompassing. Respondents from urban areas all over the Barents Region mentioned that cityscapes should be improved and new suburbs and residential areas should be established. Towns should also be made cleaner. Respondents from urban environments mentioned that new housing construction in city centres should be limited, because in many cases these centres are already overbuilt. One way mentioned to improve city centres is to restore and renovate old buildings, but there was also a contrary proposal to beautify the cities by destroying all of the old buildings and replacing them with new, trendier ones. Respondents from both urban and scattered settlement areas have also taken a stand on traffic arrangements. For instance, some hoped that there would be more street lights, more pedestrian crossings or areas in the city centre with no cars allowed. Railroad locations were also criticised in a few cases as being too close to residential areas.

The afore-mentioned issues may be connected to respondents' ideals of the good life. They would possibly like to live in beautiful, clean and peaceful environment, in that they are proposing changes leading in such a direction. These answers should not be seen as just plain opinions, but they should rather be understood as notions of elements connected to prerequisites for a good life in one's place of residence. These kinds of notions should not be underestimated, because "everyone has to live somewhere" and a place of residence can be a basis for a good life (Karjalainen 1993, 65). In this way respondents' suggestions for improving their places of residence can be one element of personal life politics and future orientation, with the aim of living in a pleasant environment in the future.

General housing standards are also connected to a pleasant place of residence, since human dwellings do not just happen in certain geographical areas. What's more, a certain house is always connected to certain experiences. Discussions of dwelling and housing are closely linked to the place of residence (Karjalainen 1993, 65). On the whole, ideas of developing housing were often

mentioned also by respondents. Those from Russia in particular said that they should have better central heating and that water supply problems should be solved so that people could get hot water in their homes. Better internet connections and cable television were also mentioned often in Russian answers. Finnish respondents wished more for lower rents. Respondents from all countries pointed out that there should be more building sites made available for new houses.

Especially respondents living in small places such as villages or scattered settlement areas would like to see new houses and more people brought in, especially those of their own age. Many of the respondents in each country said that they would like to have more people in their residential areas; yet there were also those who said that there are too many people already, with migration in their direction putting their peaceful and lovely milieus at risk. These answers can be regarded as hints of the desire to live in livelier place, though not everyone is ready for such. One respondent suggested that the construction of new summer cottages should be restricted, and another would even like to prohibit any new people moving into the area where she lives.

Constructing a place of residence with a livelier social atmosphere was possibly also the idea behind those answers which stressed the need for improvements in services. In every country surveyed, respondents had all kinds of proposals for public initiatives. The basic message behind all of these was that there should be more services which enable a livelier social life, and beyond that more activities and amusements made available for young people. The most sought after services were cafes, movie theatres, discos, night clubs, clothing shops, shopping centres and other possibilities for consumption. Cultural activities were also near the top of the list of services which respondents thought were missing. Respondents said that there should be more cultural activities such as art exhibits and concerts. Spiritual events were also desired, as well as possibilities to practice yoga and meditation. It was frequently mentioned that there are just not enough meeting places for young people.

Some answers also contained direct references to specific current problems in their living environments, such as unemployment, drunkenness, homelessness and crime. Some respondents, especially from Norway and Russia, paid a lot of attention to drug problems among young people. Respondents naturally expressed their wish for these issues to be dealt with. For example, young drug abusers should be rehabilitated and drug dealers should be punished. Some respondents from Sweden thought that there were too many immigrants in their home district.

These are issues which have effect individual self-identification and “distinctiveness” in certain places. Feelings of living in the middle of drug or alcohol abuse do not support the feelings of “us” and “self-esteem” (Gustafson 2001a). These current problems also possibly lower the local image and in that way affect respondents’ cost-benefit analyses in comparing different potential places of residence.

Cost-benefit analyses and, on the other hand, feelings of “continuity” (Gustafson 2001a) are also affected by local opportunities for work. The apparent availability of employment raises the value of the living place in the minds of young residents. Furthermore, local jobs that young people aspire to

may create a feeling of the place of residence providing some security in the form of “continuity” in the future. That, in turn, strengthens place attachment and also faith in the future. The data shows that finding more job possibilities for young people was the most common wish found in the answers of all respondents from every country surveyed. Some respondents had written suggestions of what should be done in order to create more jobs. One such suggestion was to start retiring old people already at 50 years old in order to provide more jobs for young people. Respondents also mentioned that new enterprises should be given assistance and that there should be more jobs created in all lines of industry and business. Technology was generally seen as an effective means of increasing job possibilities. Another related issue raised by respondents was that the livelihoods of indigenous peoples should be maintained.

### **Issues concerning pupils, students and decision making**

Finnish respondents in particular paid attention to matters relating to schooling and living standards for students. That can be seen as an attempt to develop individual life political means by paying attention to issues which are important for their future plans. It can be argued that these young people are in that way also trying to create a favourable place for their identity work and self-development.

Respondents were hoping that more educational opportunities, and a wider scale of such opportunities, would be made available. Also more attention should be given to student housing, making cheaper student flats available. Respondents also expressed the opinion that municipalities should take better care of students in terms of the decisions they make which relate to young people’s lives and which affect students in particular. One Finnish respondent went as far as to write a rather long essay about her concern for the way in which students are pushed to the breaking point, both mentally and financially. In her opinion, these things should be changed as soon as possible in many municipalities. One of the youngest respondents made the concrete suggestion of having shorter school days during the darkest part of the winter. Respondents living in scattered settlements hoped for schools closer by, so that they would not have to travel so far each day. Russian respondents often suggested that there should be cheaper or even free public services for students, such as free public transportation and the elimination of tuition fees in educational establishments.

These respondents’ proposals tell us about their viewpoints regarding the geographical location of their place of residence. Behind these proposals can be seen a wish for easier mobility, e.g. through lowering bus fares, thus reducing the possible gap between personal performance structures due to remote location and long distance commutes. In some cases lowering travelling expenses could bring a significant improvement in personal performance structures, which in turn could significantly benefit the person’s life politics.

The issue of travelling expenses is an example of a matter which seems to be important to respondents, which is also, at least to some extent, a matter which can be tackled and dealt with by local decision makers. Another example is that respondents from every country mentioned that the voices of young people



themselves should be heard more when public decisions concerning young people are being made. There is a tension, however, between these opinions and general statements concerning young people's political activity. Young people are seen to be uninterested in politics, in part because of their low voting rates in elections. Yet it is reasonable to assume that youngsters are not uninterested in politics as such; but they are rather disappointed with the somewhat ritualistic means of political participation available to them, such as elections, parties and voting (Hellsten & Martikainen 2002, 154). This is supported by the writings of respondents who stressed that young people should be invested in and listened to. Respondents also stated that they do not trust the skills of their present political leaders, and some said that certain politicians should be replaced by "experts" instead. Local decision makers were also characterised as old and mulish politicians, without any intention of developing their city. Respondents had a clear position on this: selfish politicians should be removed from their posts. These answers can be linked with young people's frustration with traditional politics and orientations towards new, if possible more interactive, means of political participation.

### **No use in making changes**

Answers also included some rather deterministic attitudes which clearly reflected negative future prospects and weak place attachment. E.g., one respondent wrote, "there's no use trying to change my home village; it's been dead for years already" (Fi,1277,PP,f,84). Other respondents stated that it is impossible to even try to affect local matters – simply beyond the realm of possibility. Again, "movers" have noted that they have no opinion about this matter and there is nothing that they want to try to change in their home districts, because they will be moving out anyway.

This group of respondents with such negative attitudes can be seen to follow a negative future prospects-centred orientation in their plans (Soininen 2002), i.e. for them migration alacrity is a consequence of a pessimistic attitude towards local opportunity structures and future hopes.

### *7.2.3 Location and future prospects*

On the basis of the analysis thus far we can see that respondents of this study in general do not feel very positively towards their place of residence. These same negative feelings can also be seen in their responses to questions dealing with the future of the Barents region. Question # 20 included sample statements about the future of respondents' home districts, e.g., "there will be better opportunities for young people to join associations in the future," and "there will be environmental problems in the area in the future." Respondents were asked simply to either agree or disagree with these statements. This chapter focuses on different issues raised in these statements and what they imply for the future prospects of the Barents Region.

Young people involved in this study were more guarded in what they said about the future of their home district than what they said about their own life and future. Overall a very slight majority (52 %) of the young people who filled in the questionnaire were optimistic about the future of their home districts. Major, divisive differences were not found between the sexes or between “movers” and “abiders” in these regards, but it were easy to see a general trend for male respondents and “abiders” to have a more positive attitude towards the future of their home district than female respondents and “movers” across the board.

### **Education and job opportunities**

Since education is one of the main reasons for migration, we must note that young people involved in this study do not have very high expectations for better educational opportunities in their home district in the future. Only about 34 % of all respondents think that there will be better educational opportunities in the future. There were a notable difference between “movers” and “abiders” on this question though: “Abiders” tend to have more optimistic future expectations for educational opportunities: about 42 % of them agreed with the statement that better educational possibilities were coming in their home district, as opposed to just 31 % among the “movers.” Here possible explanation could be that “abiders” are possibly planning to educate themselves for occupations which have low unemployment rates in their living area, or perhaps they are continuing on with a family enterprise.

This issue is important when stressing that access to personal goals is important for respondents. Especially issues dealing with education and employment have been as seen important and at the same time as a guarantee of an ideal life; again *location* seems to be setting certain conditions for young people’s future plans. Work is the most general issue in answers which refer directly to public space. The data shows that work was the first prerequisite for an ideal life among respondents from all different living environments. In many answers, from both towns and municipalities/villages, the possibility to get a job was lumped together with an ideal life. However those respondents who answered that they do not have possibilities for an ideal life in their home district due to work related reasons, more often lived in villages and municipalities than in towns. They justified their opinions by saying, e.g., that a clear obstacle to the ideal life was the lack of good career prospects.

This mode of thinking is visible also in the respondents’ ways of thinking regarding future prospects for employment near them. Altogether only 18 % of all respondents think that there will be more work in their home district in the future. As might be expected, the data shows that “abiders” are more likely to believe that in the future there will be more jobs, with about 26 % of them agreeing with such a statement. The “movers” are a bit more sceptical; only about 15 % of them believing that more jobs are coming. Male respondents more often believe in future job opportunities than do female respondents. This relative optimism may be due to the fact that the local means of livelihood in the North are mostly in occupations which have usually been regarded as “male-

occupations”, such as fishing and mining. On the other hand, the number of jobs in traditionally female professions – such as education, (public) services and health care – may be decreased as a consequence of out-migration. If we look at differences between respondents from different areas, it can be seen that respondents from Norrbotten and Lapland believe in improved future employment prospects more often than respondents from other areas.

About 39 % of all respondents assume that there will be more private enterprises coming to their municipalities in the future. Young people from the Republic of Karelia and from Murmansk and Arkhangelsk counties are very optimistic about the future of private enterprises in their home districts. The difference is very clear: 71 % of the respondents from the Republic of Karelia, 60 % of those from Arkhangelsk County and 56 % from Murmansk County believe that more private enterprises are coming. The comparative percentage of respondents from other areas is around 30 %. “Abiders” and male respondents are more optimistic than “movers” and female respondents concerning the amount of private enterprises coming. These numbers reflect the general tendency which is dominant in this study: “abiders” and male respondents seem to possess brighter future prospects than “movers” and female respondents.

### **Environmental and residential issues**

Inquiring into expectations of environmental problems in the future did not reveal any great differences between sample groups. About 32 % of all respondents agreed with a statement that there will be environmental problems in their home district in the future. This percentage was very close to equal for “movers” and “abiders.”

Regional differences, however, were very clear. Respondents from Russia agreed with the statement given more often than others. E.g. about 56 % of the respondents from Murmansk and 40 % of those from the Republic of Karelia were convinced that there will be environmental problems in the future, whereas only 13 % of those from Norrbotten and 20 % from Lapland expect environmental problems.

Respondents’ expectations regarding their standard of living were also asked about. The resulting data shows that respondents are not very optimistic about this, with only about 28 % of all respondents believing that the standard of living in their region will be higher in the future. Here again it can be seen that “abiders” are more optimistic about the future of their home districts than “movers,” with about 39 % of “abiders” agreeing to the statement, as compared with about 25 % of “movers.” It can also be seen that male respondents are again more optimistic than female respondents in respect to the higher living standard. The data also shows that respondents from Lapland and Norrbotten are the most sceptical regarding the standard of living question, with those from the Republic of Karelia and from Nordland being the most optimistic.

Young people were next asked about what they anticipate in terms of service standards in their home district: Did they agree or disagree with the statement, “service standards will be lower in the future”? One fourth of the “movers” tended to think that service standards in their home district will be low in the

future. The “abiders” are clearly more optimistic regarding this issue, with only 15 % of them expecting such problems. There were virtually no differences between the answers of male and female respondents on this question. Differences can, however, be seen when looking at figures from the different areas of the Barents Region: Respondents from Norrbotten and Lapland agreed with the statement about low service standards in their area in the future more often than other respondents. At the other end of the spectrum, respondents from the Republic of Karelia were the most optimistic group in relation to the threat low service standards in the future.

### **Age composition and migration**

Respondents share a general belief that the migration tendency will continue; 62 % of all respondents agreeing with the statement that “young people will be leaving our home district.” Opinions differ between “movers” and “abiders” on this point. It seems that most of those respondents who are planning to migrate are assuming, that many others will also be migrating, and those who are planning to stay believe that there are many others who are also planning to stay in their home district. Female respondents were more distrustful of their peer’s geographical persistence than male respondents; about 66 % of the female respondents, as opposed to 53 % of the male respondents, agreed with the given statement. A majority of respondents from every regions surveyed believed that young people will be moving out from their home district, but this majority was greater in Lapland and Norrbotten than in other places, and at its smallest in the Republic of Karelia.

Respondents were also asked to speculate about migration in the opposite direction, agreeing or disagreeing with the statement, “more people will be moving into this area in the future.” Pessimism was quite widespread on this issue. About 25 % of the male respondents and 21 % of female respondents agreed with the statement. The “abiders” were decidedly more positive on this subject; about one out of three believing that new neighbours were coming. Only one out of five “movers” shared this faith. Even larger differences, however, turned up between different regions in this regard. Young people from Nordland have by far the highest expectations when it comes to new people migrating into their area; about 48 % of them agreeing with the given statement. Troms came second in this category, with 38 % there agreed believing that more people will be moving to the area. At the other extreme, young people from Norrbotten and Murmansk County were the most incredulous concerning the attractions of their areas for newcomers; only about 12 % from Murmansk and about 13 % from Norrbotten agreed with the given statement.

The statement, “more old than young people will live in this area in the future,” drew a fairly uniform response. Altogether about 41 % of the respondents agreed that there will be more old people than young people living in their home district, with no significant differences between male and female responses. Only small differences showed up between the different geographical areas surveyed. Respondents from Lapland were the most likely to expect such a

demographic imbalance in the future; those from Murmansk, the least likely to expect such.

### 7.3 Locale

*Locale* (Agnew 1993, 263), the second approach to the migration alacrity, represents macro order (formal) and subjective experiences (informal) of face-to-face community and social relations. Peripherality may affect *locale* mostly on the level of the public sphere, e.g. through a lack of meeting places for young people, interesting hobbies or possibilities to spend free-time with peers. On personal level, *locale* has significant meaning in terms of subjective experiences through family members, relatives and friends. This has a close connection with future orientation, since personal migration alacrity and, on the other hand, the migration of family members, relatives and peers affect *locale* by changing its structure and coherence, and at the same time orientating individual towards other regions.

In connection to *locale* one becomes orientated to the future by comparing oneself to members of certain social reference groups or excluding oneself from certain groups (Nurmi 1994, 6). Youngsters include themselves firstly in a familial context. That context binds them to their place of residence by close present personal relationships, but also through the past, through the memory of ancestors. Secondly, at the same time, young people include themselves in their own age-group and circle of friends. That social reference group and social network presents examples in different ways than the familial social group, of how to carry out personal life politics, plan the future and develop oneself. Exclusion from some social group may happen by making a distinction in respect to people belonging to other social aggregations living in the same place. Drug addicts, for instance, may represent a social group which is not regarded as a positive reference group.

This shows that identity work and life planning do not happen in a social void or vacuum. In order to develop and build an identity and personality, and to plan the future, one has to be a member in one way or another of a social world (Ulvinen 1998, 1). Migration and features of individualism connected thereto can be interpreted as struggles to break out of familial bonds and work towards independence, but also as struggles to break out of one's childhood place of residence towards place(s) which are thought to offer more opportunities to develop competences and one's own identity. Struggling out of one's childhood living place and planning migration does not necessarily mean breaking social bonds and having weak place attachments; but rather social network and place attachments may be moulded into new forms, which better serve personal needs and aspirations.

### 7.3.1 Social relations: an important component of locale

It is said that *locale* as a component of place represents the glue in local society (Agnew 1993, 263). Also the data from this study shows that social relations, such as friends and romantic partners, are very important factors for respondents of this study who are making decisions about their future living places. 61 % of respondents regard “friends living close by” as an important or very important factor in choosing their future place of residence. Girlfriends and boyfriends have an even greater influence on respondents when they choose their future place of residence, in that 79 % of all respondents regard girl- or boyfriends as “very important” or “important” considerations when settling down. Only 34 %, on the other hand, say that it is very important or important to live close to their parents. This result reflects the same trend which was depicted already in the section 7.1 above.

The quality of relationships with parents and friends is also a factor which has an effect on happiness and satisfaction. Young people involved in the survey seem to be happy with their family connections and social relationships. The vast majority (78 %) of all respondents are “very satisfied” or “rather satisfied” with their relationships with their parents. Only about 7 % of all respondents in the survey are “rather dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their parental relations. Of the areas surveyed, those living in Norrbotten were the most satisfied with their relationships with their parents; those from Murmansk County, the least satisfied. One interesting finding from this research is that the smaller respondents’ living place is, the more satisfactory they regard their relationship with their parents to be.

According to the data, it is clear that the survey respondents consider their relationships with their friends important: altogether 87 % of the respondents were “very satisfied” or “rather satisfied” with their relationships with friends. Younger respondents seemed to be more satisfied with their friendships than older ones, and those from Nordland were more satisfied with their friendships than respondents from other areas. In this case difference between Nordland and other areas is quite distinct: none of the respondents in Nordland chose the options of “rather dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” when asked about satisfaction with their friendships; they all chose options showing some degree of satisfaction.

Social relations are not necessarily binding all young people to their home region. This can be assumed on the grounds of the ideas of Serdedakis & Tsiolis (2000) and Yndigegn (2003). Familial bonds may have a strong effect on young people’s occupational choices, since these strong bonds cause a person to bear in mind the needs of the group (family, perhaps relatives) and thus the subject is less inclined to regard her-/himself as an autonomous unit and as the bearer of an individual biography (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 10). Family relations and chains of generations may be a tight bond to the childhood living environment. This may also affect migration plans, if the person is encouraged, by relatives for example, to choose future occupation among local working traditions. On the other hand, family relations may also be a reason to think about leaving the area. For those young people who are planning migration, family bonds may be seen as restrictive, for example in some small communities (ibid. 12-13). Thus while

family bonds may keep some young people reluctantly in their home district, this same restrictive mechanism may be the very factor that motivates other young people to leave their home region. Overall strong family bonds may not have any effect on migration alacrity one way or the other. Typically familial bonds do not break just because some members of the family are living far away from their childhood home and there are long distances between family members. Such distances are usually the case within one's immediate family these days.

For others, however, social relationships outside the family are an important factor. Respondents' writings here tend to suggest that the parental influence is less powerful than what it is usually thought to be. Young people do not respect their parents' opinions so much, but instead they are "consulting" their friends and copying their peers. This too can have both positive and negative effects on migration alacrity. Some respondents mentioned that they do not want to break their social ties in order to go and get an education outside of their home district and away from childhood friends. On the other hand, their peer group may be full of those who are planning migration, giving their social network a whole different meaning. Rather than binding young people to their home regions, in this case the social network can have a "pushing away" effect. This effect is cumulated in a situation where the young person has created a social network which reaches to other areas and places, to other cities and possibly abroad. In those cases social networks may also have a "pulling away" effect. Thus vast social networks weaken the locale, and thereby place attachment and personal sense of place. It has previously been seen that young people who do not have relatives or a network of friends outside of their home region are not so likely to migrate as their peers with such networks (Yndigeñ 2003, 244).

This idea is creating new angle in the discussion of the meaning of social networks and place attachment. It can be said that the meaning of the social network is accompanied by the same tendencies as place attachment and the meaning of place: social relations are not local anymore and locality does not necessarily mean social relations (Massey 1995).

The situation is different when young people form their own family, a new family unit. The familial structure changes and the new family is attached in a new way to its environment. E.g. they become the clients of all new branches of the social services, such as the child welfare clinic. They also form new social connections to other people in the same situation. These new connections may be even stronger than those coming from their childhood families and their own parents. This is one example of changing types of place attachment. This change is closely connected to growing into adulthood. Growing into adulthood, the individual is setting and confronting new life political aims, and making sometimes individual(istic) decisions when choosing an occupation and place of residence. Growing into the adulthood in this sense means a new orientation towards the future, place itself and its components. *Location* is, for example, setting a framework for working life; *locale* affects the person's social network and well-being; *sense of place* and meaningful experiences operate on a mental level, creating feelings of safety and being at home. Different factors of components of place are thus guiding the person towards a new form of place attachment and sense of place. It can be argued that this is a typical form of change of focus in relation to one's living place for young people when growing

into adulthood. Through this change from childhood to adulthood, the core of locale and sense of place has been changed from “self” to a more relational attitude towards the living environment.

### 7.3.2 Leisure time as a dimension of locale

Leisure time is an important part of young people’s lives. It was thus necessary to ask about respondents’ satisfaction with their free-time activities. Table 19 shows that young people involved in the survey are quite happy with their leisure time, since 54 % of all respondents were satisfied with their leisure time to some extent, and 22 % of them were very satisfied even. It is worth noting that respondents from Nordland were more satisfied with their leisure time than the respondents from other areas. There was only one respondent from Nordland who was dissatisfied with leisure time there; all other respondents from that area were satisfied at least to some degree with their free time, or else they chose the option “difficult to say.” The size of the living place had no major significance in terms of satisfaction with leisure time, but those living in big cities or municipal centres did show slightly more satisfaction with their leisure time than did other respondents.

Table 19: Respondents’ satisfaction with their leisure time relative to their having migration plans

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
Satisfaction with leisure time	Totally dissatisfied	N	28	8	36	
		% for migration alacrity	2.5 %	2.0 %	2.3 %	
	Very dissatisfied	N	76	17	93	
		% for migration alacrity	6.7 %	4.3 %	6.0 %	
	Rather dissatisfied	N	143	35	178	
		% for migration alacrity	12.5 %	8.8 %	11.6 %	
	Difficult to say	N	307	103	410	
		% for migration alacrity	26.9 %	25.9 %	26.7 %	
	Rather satisfied	N	358	128	486	
		% for migration alacrity	31.4 %	32.2 %	31.6 %	
	Very satisfied	N	229	106	335	
		% for migration alacrity	20.1 %	26.7 %	21.8 %	
	Total		N	1141	397	1538
			% for migration alacrity	100 %	100 %	100 %



There is, however, a significant minority, as table 19 shows, which is not very happy with their leisure opportunities. Approximately 11 % of all respondents when asked about their satisfaction with their leisure time chose the option, “rather dissatisfied,” and about 6 % were “very dissatisfied”; about 2 % of respondents even claim that they have no leisure time to be satisfied with.

Table 19 shows, not surprisingly, that “movers” are a bit less satisfied and “abiders” in turn are a bit more satisfied with their leisure time activities. Most of these unhappy respondents were over 20 years old. The correlation between age and satisfaction with leisure activities can also be seen in answers to the question of how satisfied young people are with possibilities to have hobbies in their home districts. Respondents from older age groups are more cynical about their possibilities of having hobbies in the region. The youngest respondents, born in the years 1984-1986 (13-16 years old at the time) were the most content with their leisure opportunities. In total, 47 % of all respondents said that they were to some extent satisfied with their possibilities to have hobbies, with 26 % of the respondents to some degree dissenting with this opinion. Respondents from Nordland differ here from the rest because of their high levels of satisfaction in this regard. Respondents from Norrbotten as well seem to be more satisfied with their possibilities to have hobbies than respondents living in other parts of the Barents Region. Respondents from Murmansk, on the other hand, differ from the rest in the sense of having a notably higher portion of respondents (9 %) who think that there are no possibilities for having hobbies in their present living environment. Respondents living in big cities were the most satisfied with their hobby possibilities; those from small cities, the least satisfied.

Young people taking part in the survey seemed to be quite content with their leisure time, but they tend to think that there are not enough proper meeting places for young people in their home districts. About 38 % of all respondents are to some extent dissatisfied with the meeting places available for young people and about 7 % say that there are no meeting places at all for young people. Young people from Murmansk County and Troms showed the strongest tendency to think that meeting places for young people are nonexistent. In terms of age group, the most dissatisfied respondents were those born in 1980-1983 (16-19 years old). This is possibly the age at which they are too old for traditional community youth centres, but too young to be allowed into many restaurants and night clubs. Respondents living in scattered settlement areas were the least satisfied with the meeting places available for young people. The most satisfied in this respect were those living in average size cities. There were, in fact, many young people who think that they do have satisfactory meeting places for young in their neighbourhood. Especially young people in their mid-20s and those living the Republic of Karelia or in Arkhangelsk County tended to feel this way.

This concern over the lack of meeting places is also visible in the sense of a “fourth environment” (Kaivola & Rikkinen 2003, 33) which refers to the phenomenon of young people finding their way to the public space in shopping malls. The attractiveness of this “fourth environment” is said to be in the quality of individual freedom, free social interaction and mobility which shopping malls,

for instance, are offering. This “fourth environment” is seen also as a contrast to institutional public spaces, such as schools.

The “fourth environment” may be relative to the size of the living place. The finding above regarding the popularity of bigger places as tempting living environments (see table 10 and surrounding text) also shows up in this connection. The data shows that one of the most common complaints and reasons for not having an ideal life in their home district had to do with the size of the residential area. This was clearly a scourge of villages and rural municipalities, though respondents who lived in towns were also complaining in some extent about the size of their home town. One Swedish respondent wrote, “this is such a small town it almost makes me claustrophobic” (Swe,450,LY,f,79).

The size of the living place was clearly connected with the idea that small places do not offer enough social contacts or enough people. Due to that, it was no surprise that respondents from rural municipalities and villages more often than others doubted their possibilities of having an ideal life. Another related issue is the matter of meeting new, interesting people, which also seems to be important to respondents. Many answers included complaints about their home towns not providing enough of a social life, nor meeting places for young people. This is related to the respondents’ evaluation of importance of discos and night clubs in their living place. Meeting places for young people may not, however, be the answer to the problem, because as one Russian girl wrote, “I need a change of scenery. I cannot look at the same faces all the time,” (Ru,91,AC,f,1985). It was also said that it is impossible to “taste life” in the neighbourhood. After all, many of the respondents – no matter how big their home town, municipality or village was – were longing for “bigger circles”.

That longing for “bigger circles” may have its roots also in the idea that too tight shared or local an identity is not something young people involved in the survey want to have – even though shared identity used to be seen as a positive feature of residential areas. Thus too collective a local identity may be disadvantage, repelling young people from the area. This comment is especially based on the opinions of respondents who suffered from local rumours and other unwanted social activities. The undesirability of a strong, shared local identity is also emerging through respondents’ preferred migration targets. Most of the respondents wanted to migrate to urban environments, because of various possibilities which they offer. It can be argued that an urban location also offers weak shared identity, even anonymity, which is just what is wanted.

### *7.3.3 Local possibilities to join associations*

Participation locally in activities organised by associations offers a good, and sometimes useful, arena for getting to know people living in one’s place of residence. Participation also attaches youngsters to their neighbourhood and local social networks (Soininen 1999, 129). Therefore, in order to anticipate young people’s ideas about their future possibilities of integrating themselves

into local activities, it is important to look at their opinions about their projected chances to join associations in the future.

“I will have better opportunities to join associations in the future,” is a statement that not many respondents could accept for themselves; overall only 25 % agreed with the statement. “Movers” again tended to be more sceptical than “abiders” regarding their future possibilities of joining associations. Only one out of five among the “movers” agreed with this statement, whereas about one out of three “abiders” was ready to sign on. This may reflect the fact that “abiders” have a more positive image than “movers” of their place of residence and the possibilities and the future offered by it. It also can be a question of the local image represented in news papers and elsewhere in the media. Furthermore, it may be a matter of real personal experiences in local activities and feelings of belonging to local social networks. After all, it seems that “abiders” have a more positive attitude towards their home district, or at least a stronger faith in a bright future, and in this way they also have more solid expectations, since they are planning to stay in the same place in the future as well.

Respondents from Nordland, besides being rather moderate in their migration alacrity, maintain particularly high hopes here, with about 55 % of them believing that young people will have better possibilities to join associations in the future. In contrast with that, respondents from Norrbotten and Arkhangelsk, who do not trust in things getting much better, did not suppose that there will be better chances for them to join associations in the future either; only about 14 % of the respondents from Arkhangelsk County and about 20 % of those from Norrbotten agreed with the statement.

Reasons for the clear regional differences here can be found in the respondents’ settlement type. The data shows that the lack of belief in possibilities to join associations refers mostly to smaller settlement types. Those respondents living in urban environments tended to believe in better opportunities for joining association in the future more often than those living in more rural environments. It should be mentioned that vast majority of respondents living in Nordland, which had the highest hopes here, are living in small cities, whereas half of the respondents in Norrbotten, with not so high expectations, are living in municipality centres, scattered settlement areas and villages. The case of Arkhangelsk forms an interesting exception here though: the vast majority of respondents from Arkhangelsk live in medium-sized or small cities, but still only one out of five of them believe in better possibilities to join associations in the future.

It can be assumed that in smaller settlement types the living environment does not offer sufficient services or possibilities for respondents to realise their personal potential and gain the competences they desire. This suggests that the local environment does not support young people’s individual development and choices. That may be a problem in a situation where young people are expected to integrate into the society, *locale*, and learn how to be a good citizen – an independent and responsible person in society. The dilemma here lies in the process by which society sets a clear model and goals of decent citizenship for young people, but is not able to offer measures to achieve those goals. Here a lack of local possibilities, and also resources, for organisation activities can be seen as restricting in two ways. First, respondents miss out on possibilities to

integrate with the *locale*, forming local social networks by participating in organization activities. Secondly, respondents miss the feeling of being important and competent in issues regarding their personal development and aims in life, and also their possible ideas regarding their living environment and belonging to a local social network (see e.g. Soininen 1999).

This may lead to missing the positive experience of local participation, and weaker local attachment. This, in turn, may lead to complications in the respondents' lives when they feel they are supposed to be proud of their living environment but at the same time they feel that they have not been given enough possibilities to get to know the local way of life and social circles. They may also feel that their being left out of decision making means that there is no possibility, and possibly never will be any possibility, of bringing their home district closer their own personal wishes, and thus to make their place of residence more meaningful to them. This was clearly brought up by Norwegian respondents, who argued, e.g., that the community is not investing in young people's needs and that the status of young people is too low.

Not only possibilities for joining associations, but politicians as well were criticised in the answers. The data shows that some respondents tend to think that leading persons in the communal politics are entirely incompetent. One respondent from Norway went as far as to say that "the public system is a joke" (No,1611,BL,f,81). Local politics were also a source of frustration for Russian respondents. One of them noted that he cannot be proud of this home district, though the area has significant human resources, because these resources are not utilised; or if they are used, it is done inefficiently. Russian respondents also said that young people living in the north do not have a chance to be educated in the region and therefore they are not given a chance to live in the region. A couple of respondents saw e.g. industry as a potential source of work and regional income, but they feel that this issue does not get enough attention and thus young people's abilities are wasted. Some respondents wrote that, when it comes to migration trends, the government making matters worse. Russian respondents also noticed other problem areas, such as care for the elderly, which they claim is left unattended. These feelings of some social groups not receiving enough attention do nothing to strengthen respondents' sense of being a part of a *locale*; they rather destroy the sense of local "continuity". Young people involved in this survey do not feel that their place of residence is able to offer the sort of social networks and security which could serve as a solid base for building a good life in the present, nor for a long time to come.

#### *7.3.4 How should the locale be changed?*

Looking more closely at respondents' ideas about things which ought to be changed provides us with another angle on matters which are considered to be insufficient or unsatisfactory in the living environments involved in this research. These suggestions for changing things did not deal with relationships to parents, friends or relatives, but instead a major part of the answers dealt with local atmosphere. To the extent that these suggestions for improving matters are a

matter of the local social sphere, outside of the person’s private sphere, being experienced as unsatisfactory, they are related to the *locale*.

Local atmosphere in particular was something that young people taking part in the survey would like to change in their living environment. In general the data here shows that the smaller the respondent’s living place is, the more often dissatisfaction is expressed. Following table, number 20, shows in turn that rather many of the respondents are dissatisfied with the local ambience – especially the “movers”.

Table 20: Respondents’ satisfaction with the local atmosphere in relation to their migration plans

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
<b>Satisfaction with local atmosphere</b>	Totally dissatisfied	N	23	8	31	
		% for migration alacrity	2.0 %	2.0 %	2.0 %	
	Very dissatisfied	N	61	9	70	
		% for migration alacrity	5.4 %	2.3 %	4.6 %	
	Rather dissatisfied	N	116	21	137	
		% for migration alacrity	10.3 %	5.3 %	9.0 %	
	Difficult to say	N	329	97	426	
		% for migration alacrity	29.1 %	24.6 %	28.0 %	
	Rather satisfied	N	394	162	556	
		% for migration alacrity	34.9 %	41.0 %	36.5 %	
	Very satisfied	N	206	98	304	
		% for migration alacrity	18.2 %	24.8 %	19.9 %	
	Total		N	1129	395	1524
			% for migration alacrity	100 %	100 %	100 %

Especially the mental attitude of other local residents was a target for critique. Many respondents in each country said that people should be more broad-minded. The local atmosphere was seen as an obstacle to an ideal life, in that, as some Finnish respondents said, it is just plain oppressive. This was especially the case in answers which dealt with people’s attitudes towards homosexuality. Finnish and Norwegian respondents in particular raised the issues of gender equality and sexual minority rights. A couple of these respondents wrote that, in their opinion, an ideal life is impossible as long as one cannot walk down the streets with a partner of the same sex. One Finnish respondent wrote that “attitudes towards women and minorities” (Fi,1154,RY,f,72) need to be changed. She believed that “women are not considered to be full participants,” e.g. in financing for sports, where she sees

girls as being in a weaker position. She also mentioned problems experienced by sexual minorities, e.g. they “cannot even have gathering places because of people’s prejudices”. These answers show how respondents may feel that their living environment is oppressive.

Answers also suggested that the image of people from the North is not flattering and that respondents wanted to make a distinction between themselves and some other people living in the same place. This shows us that it is not only depopulation which makes northern areas undesirable in the eyes of young people involved in this survey. The image of people living in an area is an aspect of the area which also strongly affects respondents’ contentment in such a living environment. These images of people living in the area can be based on respondents’ personal experiences or on attitudes they have picked up from others.

Living environments in the North are often regarded as 'one-horse-towns', which do not take the needs of their population into account. This is also reflected in the images of people living in the area; which are often not very flattering. It was noted that people living in the North are elsewhere regarded as 'hicks'. One respondent from Finland wrote, “I don’t want people to think that I’m from Lapland, I only study here. The image among my friends of people from Lapland is not very flattering: loutish, uncivilised, narrow minded, rustic.” (Fi,1163,R,Y,f,80) This quote seems to speak for a considerable portion of the respondents. There were quite many who thought that people from Lapland are regarded as uncivilised and narrow-minded. Respondents also regard people living in the area as “stuck in place, always going through the same greyness” (Fi,1276,P,P,f,84).

These rather negative comments were somewhat unexpected, in that this kind of rhetoric is usually used in the way of residents taking local community imagery and applying positive attributes to themselves and negative attributes to others. Usually such rhetoric is used, e.g., in the way of people living in small towns or other smaller communities characterising their identity as part of a “small-town ideology” with such positive attributes as being easy-going, friendly, and genuine; as opposed to “city-people” who are depicted as shallow, rude and materialistic. In the same way, urban dwellers use city-imagery and describe themselves as open minded, liberal and active; in contrast with rural folks who are said to be closed-minded and old fashioned. In this case, however, respondents were talking about themselves with negative words, or they had adopted the negative phrases used by others, who are not from the area.

According to those rather negative comments, respondents have adopted a mostly urban way of representing people living in remote areas. At the same time this selective appropriation of urban community imagery functions as a self-characterisation and facilitates the development of a positive self-image, and in this way constructs an attachment to the chosen form of community; but not with the *local* community. When those peripheral young people who involved in the survey use unfavourable comparisons with urbanites to describe those living in their community, their chosen target of attachment is not the local community; they have rather already oriented themselves towards some other place and/or form of community. Rather than constructing local attachments or positive feelings of being part of local social networks, these negative images and

representations used by respondents were about making a distinction between their personal and local identities.

This distinction is not necessarily based entirely on identification with the perspectives of their target communities though. Personal observations of the undignified behaviour of people living in the area can also cause the young person to feel a need to make a distinction between self and others. Some of the respondents tend to think that all people living in their area are drunkards. Respondents also pointed to their peers who have problems with alcohol and drug abuse. The following quote is a good example of this sentiment: "A big problem in Apatity is drug abuse. Over 50 % have tried drugs. Over 30 % are addicted to them. I think this must be fought against. There should be lectures for children, starting from early age, and other to public activities to keep people away from drugs" (Ru,695,ApU,f,83). This quote shows how some Russian respondents are worried about drug abuse among their peers. They have good reason for their concern; studies such as that by Goranskaya & Ivanova (1999; see also Predtechenskaya & Sinisalo 1999; 2000; Haavisto-Pakkasvirta 1999), confirm respondents' observations regarding drug problems in their living environment. For the respondents in this research, drug problems, either as a visible phenomenon or as a hidden experience within their own peer groups, is a factor which is negatively affecting their mental images of their place of residence. Some respondents wrote that they cannot be proud of their home region because there are so many drug addicts there.

We must bear in mind that local identities have a capacity to stigmatise inhabitants of a certain area or community (Hummon 1992, 259) and in that way affect the local image and also, on the individual level, life politics and migration alacrity. Young people do not want to be seen as belonging to a group of alcoholics or drug users. Furthermore, these groups act as a warning signal for young people, who may think that if they stay too long in their home region; they too will end up as alcoholics or drug addicts (Soininen 1998, 25). This same phenomenon appears now and then in Russian respondents' responses to the final item in the questionnaire (# 39), which asks respondents to mention anything which the researcher might possibly have been forgotten to ask, or whatever they would like to say about being young in this day and age. Some responses criticised the survey for not investigating such things as drug problems. Some respondents were especially worried about their peers who have been dealing with drugs. Drugs were, in some cases, regarded as a real problem on the streets. Local administrators taking care of these problems by would possibly improve the image of the local area in the minds of the respondents.

In a similar way, one of the features of smaller settlement types which caused negative feelings among respondents was gossiping. One Finnish respondent in particular said that people just gossip and talk about other people's business, and that "rumours spread quickly and everybody knows everybody" (Fi,1390, IL,f,83). Young people involved in the survey seemed to feel that gossiping is a particularly crude way of interfering in other people's lives. The data seems to indicate, however, that the problem of gossip was rarely of concern to respondents from outside of Finland. Otherwise there were only a couple of hints at such problems from Norwegian respondents. However gossiping is not just a scourge for young people these days, but an ancient form of social control

(Waara 2001). Respondents may regard gossiping as a disturbance of their personal and private sphere of life. In this way gossiping may be seen as a form of interaction between the individual and other people in the same living environment, where the public space is opposed to individual privacy (Tuhkunen 2002, 55). This interaction between the personal and the public is also connected with individual place experiences and feelings which have developed based on being part of the *locale*, but at the same time being able to establish a meaningful relationship between “me” and local environment (see Karjalainen 1993). All this finally has an effect on the personal sense of place.

## 7.4 Sense of place

*Sense of place* is the third approach in the analysis of factors affecting migration alacrity. Meanings and experiences of *location* and *locale* melt together in the mind of individual, generating a basis for personal *sense of place*. Those experiences and feelings might be expressed, e.g., in respondents’ sense of pride and their viewpoints on their living environment as a place in which it is possible to have a good – even ideal – life.

The picture of the ideal life develops in the heads and hearts of individuals, through a process in which both the rational and emotional sides of experiences take shape as feelings. In addition, proud feelings can be regarded as more than just opinions, because pride is often a very emotionally charged issue. Proud feelings, if those exist, evidently include something positive – some picture, image or experience of the living environment. In this sense, of all the components of place, *sense of place* (Agnew 1993, 263) plays the most subjective role. Sense of place refers to the internal and emotional side of place attachment and thus to the subjective feelings and perceptions of one’s place of residence.

*Sense of place* presumably has a great significance also on the formation of migration alacrity. In this section of analysis I trace respondents’ statements about their roots, chains of generations, possibilities to realise their dreams and develop themselves, proud feelings and meaningful experiences. These issues are important for this study, because *sense of place* causes and emphasises the significance of place as a focus of personal feelings (Rose 1995, 88). Within *sense of place* the individual is expressing personal feelings about his/her living place at that point. In this way sense of place is the ultimate evaluation arena, in which person is forming – according to his/her life politics and future orientation – opinions about his/her possibilities to live an ideal life in the area. All aspects of personal experiences in the living environment are included to the valuation process. Feelings about one’s own possibilities to have an ideal life in the home district and proud feelings are one dimension of *sense of place*<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>72</sup> The meanings and representations of sense of place are traced via answers to the following questions (questionnaires: see Appendix 2): “Are you proud of your home district?” (open-ended question, # 22) and “Do you think you have possibilities for an ideal life in your home district?” (open-ended question, # 36)



Sense of place also has to do with the interplay of personal will and life politics and place experience. Valuation of the living environment, with the help of place experiences, produces the sense of place. The nature of the personal sense of place affects place attachment and finally the personal will either to stay or to migrate – migration alacrity.

#### *7.4.1 Realizing dreams and developing oneself*

Issues at the intersection between satisfaction in personal life and the living environment are very important for the development of a *sense of place*, life politics and personal decision making, and future orientation. Feelings relating to satisfaction reflect the valuation which is done with respect to the living environment. One example of a future oriented satisfaction issue is that addressed in question # 18 in the questionnaire, in which respondents were given the chance to evaluate their satisfaction with their possibilities to realise their dreams in their home districts.

The percentage of respondents who were “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their possibilities to realise their dreams was 47. The percentage of “rather dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” respondents was 22. Only about 3 % thought that they have absolutely no possibilities to realise their dreams in their home districts. Those very dissatisfied made up only 8 % of all respondents. Young people living in Nordland and Troms were more often satisfied than respondents in other research areas. Respondents living in Murmansk county had a more pessimistic view of their possibilities to realise their dreams in their home districts than did other respondents. The general trend was that in all age groups there were more who were satisfied than dissatisfied with their possibilities to realise their dreams. There are no crucial differences between age groups. The only exception which must be noted is that there were very few or no “very dissatisfied” respondents among oldest groups surveyed – those born in years the 1971-1973.

Self-development is one of the issues raised above here (7.1). Young people involved in the survey considered self-development to be one of the more important issues in their life. Thus it is interesting to see how satisfied they were with their possibilities to develop themselves in their living environments. The data shows that respondents seem to be generally satisfied with their possibilities to develop themselves, with 44 % of all respondents giving positive responses to the survey questions in this regard. Only 2 % of all respondents said that there are no possibilities for them to develop themselves. Yet this question clearly divided the respondents into two groups – the first consisting of respondents born before 1979 (over 20 years old), who are principally satisfied with their opportunities to develop themselves; the second consisting of respondents born after 1979 (less than 20 years old), who are rather dissatisfied with their development possibilities. In particular, respondents living in the Republic of Karelia tended to be more often satisfied with their possibilities to develop themselves than those in other districts. Size of the living place seems to have some effect on satisfaction in this issue. Respondents from average size or small

cities find themselves, more often than others, satisfied with their possibilities to develop themselves, while respondents from scattered settlement areas and villages are more often dissatisfied with their possibilities in this regard.

The cross-tabulation in table 21 shows us that there are some differences between the opinions of respondents in groups of “movers” and “abiders”. The data show that dissatisfaction with possibilities to develop oneself is slightly more common among respondents in the “movers” group. The portion of “movers” who are “very satisfied” with their possibilities to develop themselves is 13 %, whereas the same portion among “abiders” is 22 %. Beyond this, about 8 % of “movers” and 3 % of “abiders” were “very dissatisfied” with their self-developmental possibilities.

These numbers suggest that the place of residence may not be offering enough possibilities for self-development for respondents – or at least the respondents seem to feel that way. This could also be interpreted as saying that lacking a sense of these possibilities weakens respondents’ sense of place, thus increasing migration alacrity; especially since “movers” seems to be more dissatisfied with their possibilities to realise their dreams and develop themselves.

Table 21: Migration plans of respondents and how satisfied they are with their possibilities to develop themselves (within their home district)

			Migration plans		Total	
			Yes	No		
<b>Satisfaction with possibilities to develop oneself</b>	Totally dissatisfied	N	27	6	33	
		% for migration alacrity	2.4 %	1.5 %	2.2 %	
	Very dissatisfied	N	87	11	98	
		% for migration alacrity	7.7 %	2.8 %	6.4 %	
	Rather dissatisfied	N	172	42	214	
		% for migration alacrity	15.2 %	10.6 %	14.0 %	
	Difficult to say	N	368	141	509	
		% for migration alacrity	32.5 %	35.5 %	33.3 %	
	Rather satisfied	N	329	111	440	
		% for migration alacrity	29.1 %	28.0 %	28.8 %	
	Very satisfied	N	149	86	235	
		% for migration alacrity	13.2 %	21.7 %	15.4 %	
	Total		N	1132	397	1529
			% for migration alacrity	100 %	100 %	100 %

### 7.4.2 Proud feelings and expressions of shame

One factor in the emergence of migration alacrity is pride<sup>73</sup> in one's own living environment. Proud feelings are one dimension of contentment. Pride in one's home region can also be regarded as part of place attachment and sense of place.

Young people taking part in the survey were asked whether they are proud of their home district and why they are or are not. Respondents often had many different aspects in their answers; this meant that in the same response could contain both well-satisfied opinions of the home region and references to issues which certainly do not inspire proud feelings. These multi-approach answers possibly reflected the complexity of the evaluation process, which is continuously carried out by individual, either consciously or unconsciously.

For some respondents a sense of the dignity of the region was taken for granted: this was the place where they were born and where their families have been living for generations. For some of the respondents' proud feelings were clearly linked with the features their home regions have, or do not have. In the following section the most common opinions and the some of the more unusual points of view from respondents in this regard are presented. First we have the answers of the respondents who have stated that they are proud of their home district, followed by the opinions of the respondents who have expressed that they are not proud of their home district.

The broadest category of answers to the question of proud feelings consists of issues related to the environment and features linked to local specialities. This category reflects opinions which are regarded as positive features according to the prevailing image of the northern area, which is well described by Österholm (1994). He writes that the Barents Region is attracting tourists with its unspoilt nature, snow covered mountains and unique fauna. Experiences of the North are linked with nature, nature conservation and sustainable development. (ibid. 161). Some respondents construct positive feelings towards what is sometimes a very stereotypical image of the North in their answers by talking about the wild and untouched nature and the uniqueness of the local climate. Others mentioned winter and exotic nature. It was also said that the clear change of the seasons brings variety to life. Nature was an important source of local pride especially for young people from Norway and Finland. Special places in the nature were mentioned, e.g. mountains. Access to the mountains and the sea is a reason to be proud, according to one respondent from Norway (No,1677,BL,m,83). Also respondents of the Archangel region mentioned that they are proud of their home district, "because it is an important seaport" (Ru,897,AC,m,85).

It was said in the answers, that one can be proud, because the beauty of the northern nature is recognised and know all over the world. It was mentioned, that if the town or region where one lives – even located in the north – is well know around the world, one has to be proud. One Finnish respondent had stated that she proudly tells people abroad that she "lives in the city of Santa Claus, where

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<sup>73</sup> The concept of proud feelings originally arose from respondents' answers in the author's previous study (Soininen 1998, see also Tuhkunen 2002), though not very clearly. It was rational to seize on these small hints and an idea of the significance of proud feelings linked with dwelling in remote areas.

there is always plenty of snow in the winter” (Fi,1108,RY,f,74). The same respondent was also pleased with the international atmosphere in her home town, presumably because of tourism there. International relations were mentioned also in one Russian answer: “The town is acquiring new good relations with foreign countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland)” (Ru,1030,AUn,f,79). Mentioning these connections in relation to other countries can be interpreted as a positive belonging to a wider context than just one’s own place of residence. These answers also show how internationalisation and hopes for mobility can be transferred as a positive feature of one’s place of residence.

Respondents from the urban areas were satisfied with the cultural services in their home towns more often than their peers living in villages and municipalities. Also schooling opportunities were commended among the respondents who live in cities with a university. Especially respondents living in the Republic of Karelia were pleased with their educational possibilities. Respondents from Russia mentioned special features of their towns many times, such as the history of the town and architecture, or famous people who have lived in the town and who are sources of local pride. For instance one respondent said, “I’m proud of my town. Great people come from here, like Lomonosov...” (Ru,932,AU,m,83).

Proud feelings can originate from local features, but they can also be based on a personal experience of place. This viewpoint is seen in answers dealing with the respondents’ most immediate sphere of action: personal experiences and feelings of attachment. Their involvement and subjective view make a place meaningful and worth being proud of. Roots, respect and attachment were seen as a source of feelings of dignity for respondents from all countries; yet more so in those from Russia and Sweden than those from Norway or Finland.

Some of the respondents’ personal experiences were linked with their roots in the area, because their relatives have been living in the area for generations. Sometimes attachment to birthplace was said to be so deep that the young person is not able to think about living somewhere else. In addition to this, there were perceivable hints of patriotism in many answers. For example, a respondent from Russia wrote, “I’m proud of my town, because it’s MY town. I live here. It’s my homeland and I will live here, love, work and do everything needed for the benefit of Russia” (Ru,598,PC,m,84). Another Russian respondent, however, said that it is difficult to be proud of his home district, because there is a popular “worship of foreign countries” (Ru,699,ApU,m,83).

Answers also included many negative remarks though. One respondent answered that one cannot be proud of his area since, “nature has been ruined by little roads and abandoned houses” (Fi,1250,PP,m,85). Others have said that one cannot be proud of a place which is in the middle of nowhere and which has nothing to offer – other than perhaps an unsafe and suspicious social milieu and living environment, as following quote shows: “I’m not proud, because there are many drug addicts here, and because it’s dirty and there’s a lot of stealing” (Ru,62,ApC,m,85). The lack of inhabitants belonging to the other, more positive, end of the social spectrum and structure was clearly expressed in the following answer of a Russian respondent from a village: “I’m not proud of my village. No famous people were born here. My village is dirty. It’s not a paragon. I simply have nothing to be proud of!” (Ru,881,AC,f,85). One aspect of this quote which

can be found in a few other responses as well is that of famous people. It seems that respondents tend to think that celebrities who were born or have lived in the area bring some surplus value to their living environment in the eyes of the others.

One respondent from the region of Archangel wrote, "I'm not proud, because the town does not correspond to my view of a town which is worth living in" (Ru,1056,AUn,m,80). This is important, since it crystallises the negative *sense of place* and also the idea of migration alacrity in this respect. The local opportunity structure and attitudes have to be suited to individual needs in order for the place to be seen as "worth living in" and for a positive *sense of place* to be able to develop. This individual(istic) aspect could be summarised in terms of the following attitude: *I am not willing to adapt on local conditions; I'd rather find a new place of residence.*

It can be said that young people taking part in the survey are behaving in an individualistic way when planning migration. However, this kind of ethos of "rather finding a new structure" may also be a consequence of the individualistic principle, according to which a person is responsible to oneself one's own personal happiness. That principle is taught by society and that principle is guiding young people not to trust local opportunities. On the contrary, young people trust themselves and they have a belief that since the surrounding environment cannot be changed, they have to change the milieu and to migrate.

This way of thinking may also have roots in dissatisfaction with political means: politics should be a way to influence and change one's living environment, but if it is not working, or young people are not heard, they fall into the ethos of "finding a new structure" in order to have a good – or ideal – life. This usually equals migration.

### 7.4.3 *Aspects of the ideal life*

Respondents' opinions about their possibilities for an ideal life<sup>74</sup> are good indicators of their sense of place, as these opinions are developed on the basis of subjective experiences and connections to the place. When orientating towards the future and setting their goals, young people evaluate their living environment on the basis of their own conception of their individual possibilities to create an ideal life within the local conditions and opportunity structure. The personal experience of place plays a key role in this evaluation process. Possibilities for an ideal life are fundamentally buried in the personal place experience and place attachment. In this research the ideal life is taken as a reference to issues

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<sup>74</sup> The bases for the use of the concept of the "ideal life" here have been empirical observations and the development of research questions during the data collection process for the author's previous study (Soininen 1998), in which young people living in remote areas were interviewed about their everyday life and operational models in the countryside. In these interviews the concept of the "ideal life" emerged directly from the data, where one respondent referred to an ideal life as an indicative thing in a person's life politics. That sparked an interest in asking about the ideal life and investigating its possible connections with out-migration and opinions about current residential areas. Most of this section is based on the author's article published in the journal *Young* (Tuhkunen 2002).

embedded in the life political goals and finally in connection to the *sense of place*.

Young people involved in the survey were asked if they think that it is possible for them to experience an ideal life in their home district (question # 36 in questionnaire). I asked this because I wanted to find out if the concept of an ideal life is linked with migration plans, and also what kind of image the Barents Region has in respondents' eyes vis-à-vis their possibilities of having an ideal life relative to local realities in their home district. Answers generally reflected a view that possibilities for an ideal life are relative to public space and matters which are beyond a person's direct influence. In general, respondents' opinions about their possibilities to have an ideal life in their home district seemed to be quite conditional. Among older respondents in particular, few simply said yes or no; their answers reflected a predominant ethos of the "if-world".

The possibility to have an ideal life was clearly seen as dependant on local realities and opportunities coming about, e.g., through local decision making. This "conditional situation" means that respondents' *sense of place* is weak in the positive direction and strong in the negative direction; and that they are not ready and willing – and, because of their personal goals, perhaps not even able – to adapt to the local environment as it is. Younger respondents, however, reacted more directly to the question about the ideal life and were able to speak out in more secure terms than the older respondents. This may be a consequence of absoluteness in opinions which tends to be usual, at least to some extent, among young people. For some respondents "no" as an answer was so clear that it was followed with the rhetorical question, "Are you kidding?" (Ru,815,ApUn,m,79).

Respondents living in smaller towns, in talking about the ideal life, focused their answers on career opportunities. They were thinking positively, however, saying that there an ideal life in their home region would be possible if one could have a career and get a reasonable salary there. At first it seemed that there was no hint of a sense of place in answers dealing with the ideal life and work as a prerequisite for it. Some answers, however, seemed to stress that bringing in jobs would be one way to develop the living environment. That connects their ideas to a sense of place, in that they felt a need to develop their neighbourhood and perhaps to attach themselves to the local living environment. It was also interesting that respondents tended to talk about interesting, challenging and meaningful job possibilities as a reason to stay. This can be seen, first of all, as an attempt to convince themselves that the living environment is possible to improve; secondly, as a way of carving out enough public space for them to be able to develop their own identities and capacities there; and finally, as a way of adapting to the local situation and making the best of it. On the other hand, some respondents said that though there would otherwise be sufficient circumstances for an ideal life in the area where they are living, it is still difficult to get a job – the crucial link is missing.

Also poor possibilities for education have been seen as a hindrance to an ideal life for young people living in areas which lack vocational training and chances for higher education. The data also showed that special occupational dreams can be seen as prerequisites to having an ideal life, for example in small municipalities, where available jobs are highly concentrated in certain branches

of industry, or where the majority of openings are clearly regarded as either traditional male or female occupations (See also Soininen 1998, 28).

Respondents' answers also included statements according to which young people evaluate their possibilities for an ideal life in terms independent of geographical location. Opinions belonging to this cluster were found among the answers of respondents from all nationalities and from all settlement types<sup>75</sup>. According to these replies, geographical location is not a determining factor of sense of place and an ideal life: the possibilities for such lie within the person. "Ideal life is possible in any town; the only requirement is a corresponding state of the soul" (Ru,680,PU,m,83). This answer, from a Russian respondent, well summarizes where this group of answers is coming from. These answers are not comparable with the themes in previous categories, since respondents were writing about persons mental abilities to create an ideal life. It became clear from Russian answers in particular that respondents had a mentality reflecting strong individualism as can be seen in the following answer: "Everyone is the maker of his own life" (Ru,661,PU,f,82).

The above quote illustrates well respondents' feelings of *just trust your self, not political practises*. Some respondents here paid attention to the political matters and issues dealing with social structures when talking about the ideal life. These issues were again raised by Russian respondents in particular. It was said by a female respondent from Apatity that there are no possibilities for an ideal life there because, "it requires favourable social, economic, ecological and other conditions" (Ru,841,ApUn,m,78). In some Russian answers the home region was also regarded as a destitute place, which cannot offer an ideal life. Some of the respondents blamed their government for the missing conditions for an ideal life. In the answers from the Nordic countries "blame" for poor or insufficient conditions in their home district was dealt out on a regional level; whereas Russian answers in many cases laid the blame on national leaders.

Some respondents thought of the ideal life in relation to the micro level, however. They associated the future and positive features of their place of residence, such as clean nature, with a positive *sense of place*. These thoughts referred strongly to future generations. Many of the respondents wrote in their answers that it is important that nature is close, clean and safe. It was also frequent said that it is possible to live an ideal life in the North because it is a good place for raising children<sup>76</sup>. This was stressed notably in Finnish answers. Peacefulness and feelings of having a safe environment were also mentioned as factors in having an ideal life. Especially respondents from Russia had pointed out that an ideal life can be created through close relations to the relatives and family. On the other hand respondents from Sweden did not seem to share this view, since only couple of them dealt with relatives and friends in connection to the ideal life.

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<sup>75</sup> However, especially Russian respondents had opinions that deviated from the mainstream answers in this category. Their answers, were often more philosophical than those written by respondents from the other countries.

<sup>76</sup> For example the following quotes from Finland demonstrate this: "It would be good to raise children here" (Fi, 1282, PP, f, 84) and "I want to see other parts of the world first and then settle down here to raise my children" (Fi, 1398, IL, f, 81).

A few respondents also questioned whether there is such a thing as an “ideal life” in practice, because life includes many obstacles and difficulties – i.e. life is always something of a struggle. There were also a few respondents, who had very pessimistic views of life, saying that the ideal never happens in real life, because the ideal is a situation where all needs are satisfied. One respondent from Russia even wrote: “What is ideal life? There are possibilities for life; not an ideal one. Life cannot be ideal” (Ru,1098,Pun,m,80).

#### *7.4.4 Fear of getting stuck*

The fear of getting stuck, which was expressed by some respondents, is based on images connected to other people living in the same area. Respondents were taking an outside perspective and putting themselves on a different, more active level than other residents of their area. The dichotomy between a rural and urban people is visible in this group. According to these answers, the images of people who live in the area seem to be an important factor which affects the chance to have an ideal life. Respondents living in small places, e.g. villages and municipalities, are slightly more often regarded as “stuck” than those who live in a clearly urban environment. Due to this, people living in small places may be seen as the opposites of the urbanites. Also the people who have stayed permanently in the North are seen to be “stuck” there (See also Wiborg 2001b). As one respondent from Finland said, “I am a city person, I do not think that I would be satisfied here for a long time” (Fi,1104,RY,f,78). Another respondent from Finland said that she would regard herself as “stuck” if she were to stay in her home region (See also Soininen 1998). One young lady from Finland had wrote, “I am distressed by living here. I feel like a loser, because I have lived here my whole life. I have to see other places too, besides just this scabby little town” (Fi,1153,RY,f,79).



## 8. Conclusions

The data collected for this study has provided both quantitative information about migration alacrity, and qualitative information about young people's attitudes towards their home districts and the future there. These findings are deepening our understanding of young people's migration willingness, future orientations and local roots. Data of this study indicate that migration alacrity is a dominant feature among respondents living in all of the research venues. The results suggest that migration is a process which is closely linked with factors dealing with different components of place and, on the personal level, with young people's identity work, life politics and individualism. Results also provide a new perspective on young people's ideas about different images of their living environments.

### 8.1 High migration alacrity

The first research question in this study has been, "*How high is migration alacrity among young people in the Barents Region?*" It has been demonstrated that migration alacrity in the region is quite high: 74 % of all respondents in the survey said that they have migration plans. This shows that a desire to migrate is a dominant tendency among young people involved in the survey. Migration alacrity is high throughout the data, but there are some differences in migration readiness in different countries. The strongest desire to migrate can be found among Finnish and Swedish respondents, but the majority of young people surveyed in Russia and Norway also have migration plans.

These numbers suggest that a desire to migrate is a dominant characteristic in the future orientation of respondents. This also reflects the fact that young people taking part in the survey are, at least in their minds and thoughts, courageous enough to search for new possibilities for their life politics if the local opportunity structure does not satisfy them. One possible reason for high migration alacrity is linked with the idea that these young people belong to a generation which has grown up in an international and globalised world, which furthermore stresses and values mobility. These young people will be more highly educated than their parents and therefore they will be a rather mobile group in our society.

The data also shows that migration alacrity is highest among those who live in smaller or more remote places, such as villages or municipality centres. That result is not surprising, but it is a significant finding that a high portion of those living in large or average-sized cities are also planning to migrate. Yet while

“movers” are the dominant group in urban areas as well, migration alacrity is lower there than in other, smaller and more marginal places.

Thus, in spite of the heterogeneity of their living environments, the majority of all classifications of respondents in our survey had migration plans. The phenomenon of migration alacrity is high both in rural and urban living environments; therefore migration alacrity does not seem to be totally dependant on the local opportunity structure, its possibilities and restrictions. It can thus be suggested that migration alacrity is merely grounded on personal life politics and individual goals and preferences, and the evaluation process carried out by individuals when orienting to the future. This tells us, that ample possibilities in all arenas of life, offered e.g. in urban environments, do not necessarily diminish respondents’ will to migrate; migration seems to be more a question of personal and individual wishes.

Furthermore, the high number of respondents planning to migrate and their opinions about their home districts suggest the conclusion that young people’s images of their living environments as potential places for an ideal life are rather negative, full of notions about local limitations. However at the same time there are young people who are optimistic about the future and proud of their living environment. This contradiction in respondents’ attitudes towards their place of residence illustrates how complex the phenomenon of individual relation to place is, and how nuanced the origin of migration alacrity can be.

## 8.2 Factors affecting migration alacrity

### *8.2.1 Location: local realities and questionable diversity of possibilities*

Earlier migration in peripheral areas has been characterised by changes in local economics, e.g. the spatial restructuring of labour markets (Rannikko 1989, 38-40; Oksa 1998) and changes in regional traditions (Viinamäki 1999). Now, as I see it, migration alacrity is also being steered by mental restructuring, evaluating personal life politics and individual goals and decisions.

As was mentioned above, the common feature in the history of the Barents Region has been economic and mental contrasts and conflicts between peripheral and urban areas. Now, even though the material contrast has faded, mental centre/periphery conflicts are still present. This remaining mental dichotomy affects the interpretation of various situations in every day life, both in remote and urban areas (Granberg 1998b, 240). Time has not weakened the dichotomy in relations between rural and urban areas, in which urban areas are seen as being in the stronger position. This dichotomy is still alive and well, taking on new representations in the minds of young people. Such an attitude also has a major impact on respondents’ relation to place, and their comprehension of local opportunity

structures and their possibilities for success in personal life politics. When it comes to place attachment, this impact has not been positive.

As previous chapters have shown, young people taking part in the survey have a fairly positive attitude towards some features of their home districts, especially in relation to nature and their social relationships there. However the data also shows that respondents are quite critical of some aspects of their region, particularly those which come close to their private sphere, in terms of which young people look to the future of their home districts and their personal future possibilities there. It is not enough that respondents have a positive attitude towards only marginal features of their living environment, if at the same time they clearly see a lack of positive future prospects for their home districts in the wider context.

This idea that there would be a lack of positive future prospects for young people involved in the survey is an important factor affecting their migration alacrity and future orientations, further demonstrated here by the greater pessimism of “movers” concerning the future of their home districts. It is also notable, that one part of this pessimism is the imbalance between individual goals and local opportunity structures. By closing the gap between individual wishes and the existing local reality, pessimism and migration alacrity may be reduced. This leads to another question: How can young people be made more optimistic about the future of their home regions in order to increase their chances of staying there?

Changing their living environment to make it more alluring is one basic answer. That will not be an easy task, however, if young people expect those changes to be in line with images offered by media, or if they expect them to result in the region taking on a dynamic and urban image adapted from that of crowded city life, as the data seems to indicate in some cases. The juxtaposition of the world of TV and Internet onto their own real living environment may create glaring contrasts in the minds of young people, causing their own lives to feel boring and static. If there are real signs of poverty or defeat in the air, such as a low standard of housing, this may further add to the sense of contrast and frustration. If, on top of this, there are serious environmental problems, that can further reduce the region's ability to attract migrants, industries and tourists (Kazantseva & Westin, 1994, 106). These factors can thus hinder regional development and image building. A low housing standard, for instance, can be a sign of a poor local image; and since local image seems to be particularly important for respondents, this is not a good sign. Negative experiences may also be the result of respondents comparing their place of residence with what they have seen elsewhere as tourists, or a dislike for local architecture, or matters relating to the local opportunity structure. In this way respondents' experiences, and ultimately their feelings, are important in the origin of migration plans.

One side of migration alacrity is the situation where, on the one hand, we have the local reality with its advantages and disadvantages, and on the other hand there is a belief that there is an open horizon of possibilities somewhere. This means that young people taking part in the survey feel and understand that somewhere out there they can find a “diversity of open possibilities”, but the crucial point is: *this diversity exists somewhere else than near them*. They have the idea that open possibilities cannot be found locally; even if, e.g. in urban

areas, there might actually be such possibilities. It may also be, however, that the reason these young people do not see any viable options for themselves locally is simply because those options do not exist within restricted opportunity structures of their living environments. All they have is a belief in a horizon of open possibilities.

All this relates back to life politics. When young people have to decide about their future, they try to establish what possibilities are open to them in order to make best possible decisions and choose the most suitable and desirable lifestyle in terms of their individual goals. This is one possible reason for respondents' migration alacrity being so high: open possibilities have to be found somewhere else than in their present living place. Education is a good example of an issue to be included in this dimension of migration alacrity; possibilities for education must be sought for elsewhere, or at least respondents tend to think so.

The most important reasons for migration among young people are education<sup>77</sup>, employment and career prospects<sup>78</sup>. Among these familiar and traditional motives for migration, the survey data points to education as the clear number one. The value and meaning of education to these young people is obvious when we are looking at young people's answers to the question "what is the most important thing for you in your life?" Also the portion of respondents who want to have a university degree in the future supports this conclusion in some respect, as 59 % of respondents say that their future occupation would possibly require a university degree. This is a very high percentage, especially considering that only about 20 % of these young people come from families where both parents have university degrees.

The importance of educational opportunities for respondents can be accounted for in four different ways. First, education and work play a very important role in young people's identity work. Work is seen by some as a means of self-fulfilment (Tuohinen 1990). Secondly, it is known that a high level of education increases one's probability of employment (Kilpeläinen 2000; Kaivola & Rikkinen 2003, 135), which in turn is a person's source of money and commodities<sup>79</sup> (Tuohinen 1990). Thirdly, young people have broken away from their parents' educational traditions (Soininen 1998, Koivuluhta 1999). Then beyond all this, fourthly, Tuohinen (1990) claims that young people have a more individualistic attitude towards work than their predecessors.

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<sup>77</sup> Respondents in Kugelberg's (2000, 44-45) study of becoming an adult in Swedish society emphasise the significance of a university degree in personal development. On the other hand, Kugelberg's study also shows that respondents' main reason for going into higher education is to have a good job. Arguably, education has a dual significance: a measure of personal development and also an instrument for gaining a good position (stimulating work and a good salary) for further self-development.

<sup>78</sup> Kugelberg's (ibid.) findings support this conclusion as well. According to the majority of Kugelberg's respondents, a job is part of desirable adult life. Both female and male respondents saw work as providing, e.g., opportunities for personal development, well-being, a good salary, a meaningful social context, personal contacts and personal stimulation.

<sup>79</sup> It can further be assumed that this tells not only of an individualistic attitude among respondents, but also of an instrumental attitude towards work. This was seen when focusing on the question of salary. A high salary seems to be an important issue when it comes to respondents' choices of occupations: About 65 % of all respondents said that salary has an affect on their process of choosing an occupation.

Moreover, a strong orientation towards education can be seen as part of an individualistic way of life, but also as a quite sophisticated way to act autonomously without hurting anyone. It is clear that some education is needed in order to enter working life, but education can also be seen as a measure to gain personal respect in society, in that a degree is usually recognised by the community, family and relatives. Entering education also opens up broad opportunities to change lifestyle and geographical location without breaking any rules or values (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 13).

Nowadays work plays a major role in social life and it can be seen as an important arena for social participation (Sinisalo & Shvets 2000, 92). Work also sets a pattern for people's daily lives, which are divided into two categories: work and leisure. Work is no longer just a way to make a living; it is also a way to fulfil oneself and establish an identity.

In the data from this study the meaning of education and individualistic attitudes are also reflected in respondents' thoughts about their career prospects. The possibility of entering a successful career is generally considered by respondents to be an important factor in making decisions in life and choosing a place to live in the future. In fact we cannot blame young people for their opinions and migration plans, since mobility and migration can be regarded as the rational pattern of behaviour which (together with education, of course) best insures future employment (Kilpeläinen 2000). When education is combined with migration, it is more probable that the individual will gain a better and more satisfying life. Among university students migration plans are particularly common. This is not surprising, since e.g. Jolkkonen (2000) has also reported that in Finland migration alacrity is higher among persons in higher education<sup>80</sup>. This also has to do with the rather homogenous and restricted work and career possibilities in peripheral areas, sometimes with rather narrow sources of livelihood. Thus migration alacrity, through importance of education, has strong ties to *location* – to local realities and possibilities, or the lack thereof.

*Location* was also connected to questionable possibilities in the fields of politics; even though politics was not on the list of important matters. Young people involved in the survey referred to gaps in the political competence they saw around them when stating their ideas about their preferred migration targets. A rather sharp criticism can be read between the lines of the answer of the Russian respondent who said that, one has to move to a place “where there are clever people in the government” (Ru,937,AU,f,82). It can thus be suggested that the futureless perspectives of some of these young people may be linked to their cynicism and distrust towards political practices, which was prevalent among all respondents. This can be seen in the responses to the questions about possibilities to affect politics and local matters. The results demonstrated that respondents are very sceptical about political matters. This is an important issue; as Serdedakis & Tsiolis (2000, 2) argue, one of the most important factors shaping and differentiating young people's life plans is a membership in the local

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<sup>80</sup> Koivuluhta's (1999, 85) findings concerning young people's vocational interests and careers in northern Karelia support this view. She found a negative correlation between willingness to stay in one's home district and one's level of education; i.e. young people with a lower education were more willing to stay in their home district.

community. The implication of that here is that when young people taking part in the survey have weak connections to their living environment, it shapes their life plans and future prospects in a way which leads them away their home region and childhood living environment. In order to strengthen young people's place attachment, it would be important to get young people involved in the activities of local organisations and local decision making. As Hummon (1992, 257) has stated, local social involvement is the most consistent and significant base of sentimental ties to local places.

This leads us to suggest that young people should be given a chance at least to express their needs and to be heard and taken into account. It makes a difference if young people are given the feeling that they are taken seriously and that they actually have a chance to affect issues which are of concern to them. It can be argued that young people with possibilities to somehow affect local matters are more likely to stay permanently in their home districts. Chances of affecting local matters are important to young people and especially to the process of integrating young people into their home districts. If young people are not adopting old, traditional ways of influencing matters, the old, traditional machinery of decision making must adopt and get used to new types of influence and participation.

This would be rather important in order to avoid misunderstanding of aims and goals between young people and local decision makers. The tension between young residents and decision makers fundamentally consists of goals, which are sometimes impossible to fit together. The young resident aims to meet individual needs in terms of a pleasant and satisfied life, whereas local decision makers are looking towards more common goals, such as regional development or even a better local imago. The problems young residents are confronting in these kinds of conflict situations reflect "*relation to place*", which is the result of personal valuation and "cost/benefit analysis" (Brown & Perkins 1992, 281, 283). The residential area is not seen as a geographical place with a psychological bond as such, but as an arena of possibilities to develop oneself. In this way the emergence of life politics and individualism are creating new challenges to living places and environments, not just in northern areas, but in many areas suffering from depopulation through migration. A place of residence should be able to offer various possibilities for things young residents are demanding, such as schooling, jobs, leisure activities and opportunities to have unique experiences. It seems that young people and local decision makers have wound up in a dilemma, in which individuals are pulling in a different direction than local politicians. This is a fundamental point for consideration, especially in investigating young people's migration alacrity.

This is also a dilemma for the labour needs of the local economy. A typical feature of almost all peripheral areas, including the Barents Region, is a narrow, and sometimes rather traditionally based economy; where capital, labour and know-how have to be brought in from outside the area; and where natural resources and land are the only local assets. This naturally leads to out-migration of the well educated labour force (Granberg 1998b, 239). This kind of development has put northern areas in a difficult situation, creating a negative image for the whole area. This situation inevitably has a long-term impact on contemporary young people's future orientations by sending a message – perhaps with out any

current foundation – of poor local possibilities for work. There has to be a connection between migration alacrity, future orientations and historical events. The twin local factors of weak employment possibilities and image are both significant in young people's migration alacrity. It could be assumed, however, that poor possibilities for work are a more important factor in planning migration. This idea is supported by results here which emphasise the importance of work in life.

This brings us to the issue of migration patterns, raised by Viinamäki (1999, 118) in her dissertation about the formation of young adults' lives. According to Viinamäki, there are three different orientations which structure young people's decisions concerning migration. These are: *an individualistic orientation*, *a family-centred orientation*, and *a compromise-based orientation*. I would add a fourth orientation to explain the problem of migration patterns: *a negative future prospect orientation* (Soininen 2002). Deterministic attitudes towards both the future of small rural places and young people's own personal future in small rural places are part of a negative future prospect orientation. For young people it may seem that the future in a small village is already known – already written. As Telinkangas (2005, 137) says, "the only future of the pine seed is to be a pine tree." However, the future is partly unknown. This is the lure of migration plans: it seems that one's own, individual future is already written in one's home region – as just a copy of the same old course of life followed by previous generations; but the future in other places, on the other hand, seems to be full of open possibilities. Any other area than one's own place of residence appears to be fruitful soil for future self-development and an ideal life.

### *8.2.2 Locale and sense of place: other people, the ideal life and feelings of pride*

Sense of place and personal feelings and experiences related to the place of residence have been presented in this study as a major part of place attachment. However, it can be argued that place attachment is not just a matter of sense of place; it can also be realised through locale – local social networks.

*Sense of place* has been investigated here in terms of personal feelings of local pride and ideas of possibly having an ideal life in one's home town. Sense of place has thus been the subject of mixed feelings among respondents here. On the one hand, respondents were proud of, e.g., their northerness and belonging to a chain of generations; on the other hand, respondents said that, e.g., the peripherality of their home towns and the consequences of depopulation there embarrass them. It thus stands to reason that migration alacrity in the region is snowballing – depopulation and vanishing local social networks are causing even more young people to leave.

*Locale* and local social networks were investigated in this study in terms of relatives, friends and romantic partners. In this way *locale* was also anchored to consideration of geographical distances and future possibilities. Closeness to family members, relatives and friends appeared to be psychologically important to the young people involved in this study. These loved ones were also important

in geographical terms; living long distances from important persons was not seen as a preferable situation. Some respondents hoped to live close to their relatives, for example.

But this may also be a cause of increased migration alacrity. As part of out-migration, young people and their relationships are escaping from the area. In peripheral areas it is probable that some respondents have siblings, relatives and peers who have already left or are leaving the area. It is hard to create a local social network beyond family members and relatives in the situation where most of one's peers have moved away. Young people thus have less and less possibilities to hold onto that part of *locale*, peers and friends, which are particularly important to them. Being close to loved ones might mean *going* with them rather than *staying* with them. This is the case even in relation to parents, siblings and friends whom young people would like to live geographically close to. If siblings and peers are migrating, *locale* is being transformed into a "portable locale".

This shows that migration plans are also guided by factors other than education and work. Migration can be the result of a basic orientation based on other factors, such as issues arising from the living environment and the young person's way of looking at his/her home district and immediate place of residence, and also local social networks. Migration can also be a result of valuation, i.e. cost/benefit analysis (Brown & Perkins 1992, 281, 283), which weighs the contemporary living environment against individual wishes and concepts of the ideal life<sup>81</sup>.

Some of the respondents felt that an ideal life would be possible in their home region, but this was not a strongly or popularly held position. Many of these answers had a built-in ethos of "if-world" – grammatically gravitating towards the conditional form. *If* seems to be a key word in speaking of possibilities for an ideal life in the Barents Region. However, these answers still show us how local features, especially nature, can be regarded as strengths and sources for an ideal life. This is connected with issues that are meaningful on a personal level, and which are possible to influence. These matters belong to the private sphere and have reference to a certain place. The data shows that those respondents who think that an ideal life is not possible in a peripheral area see factors belonging to the local atmosphere as hindrances to the ideal life.

It can be seen in the answers given, that the public sphere is regarded as an active subject, which does something to the individual, who in turn is seen as a passive object. This is quite an interesting observation when we consider individualisation, with its emphasis on acts and decisions on a personal level. Choices have to be authored by the individual as expressions of autonomy and having one's own will (Wiborg 2001a). Thus living or staying in the periphery has to be seen as matter of will. Yet it is also a question of local choices and possibilities. Together these two factors lead to the question of migration: only a small portion of young people involved in the survey are ready and willing to adapt to the limited choices and possibilities offered by their living environment. Adapting to local possibilities is possible only if the person is able to gear his regular practices, wishes for the future and self-actualisation to the living place.

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<sup>81</sup> Major portions of this text, dealing with the ideal life, have been published earlier in *Young – Nordic Journal of Youth Research* (Tuhkunen 2002).



However, this is a difficult process to carry out in an era which values individualized, independent and mobile persons (Giddens 1991, 147).

A lack of opportunities for an ideal life in respondents' living environments can be regarded as a possible reason for migration plans. An ideal and good life is the main goal of life politics. The ideal life thus has a close connection to future orientation, because individuals are aiming all the time towards greater satisfaction of their needs and desires. Future plans are dependant on personal wishes, but also on *location*, local opportunity structure and image.

In the respondents' answers, possibilities for an ideal life are broadly related to the gap between individual requirements and local opportunity structures. From these answers it can clearly be seen that the reasons for an ideal life being impossible locally are seen as outside of the person's sphere of influence. Respondents from every country had something to complain about in their home district, with Russian respondents being the most active in this regard. One reason for this may be that Russian respondents' answers throughout questionnaire were longer and more nuanced than the others, but it is also possible that Russian respondents are more dissatisfied with their current place of residence than respondents from other countries. This is supported by the result derived from the quantitative data: respondents living in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk counties were the least satisfied with their living places and the flats they lived in (Soininen 2002).

Dissatisfaction with one's living environment poses a self-fulfilling negative prophecy: a dreary living environment offers weak soil for life politics to take root in. Proud feelings are the base of positive attitudes towards one's living environment. If the living environment is unsatisfactory, there is no support for such feelings. Nor does a dreary living environment support place attachment; it rather strengthens individualism. This prophecy affects young people's *sense of place* and place attachment.

Young people's *sense of place* can be examined in relation to their expressions of pride. Hints of pride in respondents' answers reflect certain aspects of place attachment. It can be argued that for the living place to be worth attaching oneself to, it must be alluring to its residents. It can be assumed that a clean, cosy, safe and aesthetically attractive environment gives rise to positive feelings among the locals. Views which could be included in this category were set forth mostly by Swedish respondents, but there were at least a couple respondents from each country who thought that there is nothing to be proud of in their home region. When dealing with answers that express a distinct lack of pride, we are again confronting issues connected to the two components of living environment, *location* and *locale*. Examples of these are answers in which respondents talk about distorted age composition, neglected villages and absent people and friends.

This leads to a vicious circle, since the depopulation of northern areas clearly affects respondents' attitudes towards and images of their home districts, and also place attachment. This can be seen in answers in which respondents say that they are not proud of their home district, because the milieu is too dreary and desolate. In this way depopulation is creating more depopulation, because it makes the northern regions even more undesirable. Urban life is seen as the normal way of life (Scmauch 2001), meaning that living in rural or peripheral

areas is seen as abnormal. This belief may be so strong that even urban living environments located in peripheral areas are not associated with the same attributes as urban areas located closer to large population centres – in this case southern parts of the respective countries. These ideas and unequal values attributed to different living environments draw young people towards a so-called normal life, away from the failure and grey everyday life of the periphery. Migrating is also seen as a one way to build an identity as a capable individual – a mobile person is seen as a modern individual (Wiborg 2001b).

Another significant factor in the emergence of a solid *locale* and *sense of place* as respondents develop their future plans and weigh one plan against another is the image they have of those who live in the North. If this image is positive, it shows young people that the area they live in is worth attaching themselves to. Feelings of dignity, based in part on having one's origin in a certain geographical area, are a basic part of self-image. This is a matter of roots and local background, which are in many cases linked with kinship, social class and way of life (Wiborg 2001a), which are furthermore attached normally to a certain geographical place. When young people feel that beginning their life in such an area gives them brilliant chances, pride in the home district becomes a powerful personal resource. On the negative side in respect to meaning of place, it can be argued that young people are less likely to become attached to living environments which do not offer very many role models to identify with or significant experiences which create a positive image to be proud of. This, in turn, causes a lack of local pride of the sort that would cause them to postpone migration plans or to stay in the region. On the contrary, respondents may have a negative image and experiences of the local population which can also be a significant factor in leading them to look for other places to live.

Even if young people involved in the survey do have roots and pride in their home district, that still may not be enough to keep them living in the region for the rest of their lives; more than a sense of place is needed to keep them in their home districts. Proud feelings do not prevent respondents from forming migration plans, since the majority of our respondents said that they are proud of their home district, and at the same time the majority of them said that they plan to move away in the near future. Existing conditions in terms of *location* can dishearten even those with the strongest bonds to the *locale* and *sense of place* if they have a strong enough future orientation – following principles of personal life politics and setting personal, even individualistic, goals. Feelings about the ideal life and the opportunity structures of one's home district, on the other hand, are more fundamental when thinking about migration rates. If a person feels that the home region cannot offer an ideal life, the conclusion is simple: one has to move somewhere else. As was written in the brochure for an exhibition of photographs by Sebastião Salgado (2001), "Most migrants leave their home filled with hope."

### 8.2.3 Features of different living environments, place experiences and a global sense of place

It can be argued that behind each individual's place experience and *sense of place* is a valuation process, during which the person compares her/his own contemporary living environment and place of residence with other places and areas, on either a realistic or an imaginary level. Relation to the place is constructed during this process on the basis of place experience and features of the living environment; and on knowledge about the history and the future prospects there, compared with knowledge or imaginary ideas of other places.

Table 22 below shows some of the most common positive and negative features which are connected to the peripheral and urban areas, based in part on Bæck's (2004) findings, and in part on qualitative data from this study. The negative features of peripheral environments listed here may even be things which some respondents are trying to escape from in their planned migration. Furthermore, it seems that the positive features of urban environments listed here are those which are luring the majority of respondents in this study. It seems that urban areas are thus reaping a double benefit here.

Table 22: Positive and negative features of peripheral and urban living environments

	Peripheral environment	Urban environment
<b>Positive features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ safe</li> <li>▪ unpolluted</li> <li>▪ open</li> <li>▪ friendly</li> <li>▪ closeness to the nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ dynamic</li> <li>▪ exiting</li> <li>▪ challenging</li> <li>▪ individualistic</li> <li>▪ new experiences</li> <li>▪ ample possibilities</li> <li>▪ modern/developed</li> </ul>
<b>Negative features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ stationary</li> <li>▪ transparent</li> <li>▪ limiting</li> <li>▪ traditional</li> <li>▪ stagnant atmosphere</li> <li>▪ social control</li> <li>▪ bad image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ loneliness</li> <li>▪ impersonal</li> <li>▪ unsafe/violent</li> <li>▪ polluted</li> </ul>

Different attributes of places, such as those presented above, are used as “measuring sticks” which determine what sort of value will be given to a particular place. Place experience is thus rather strongly guided by common

opinion and traditional patterns of behaviour, which may be the result of local traditions and culture. Waara (1996) for example, in the research for his dissertation, studied the intensity of young people's local attachment. His conclusions indicate that peripheral cultures foster traditional patterns of behaviour in their members. If this really is the case, it is no wonder if young people may have felt misunderstood in their living environments. Traditional patterns are possibly not what young people are looking for in their future. If young people feel that their living environment faces a depressing and negative future, it will affect their opinions about their possibilities to have ideal life in their home district and adapt themselves to local possibilities. Urban and centrally located environments play a significant role in respondents' imagined self-actualisation because of various possibilities which are thought to be offered by these lively living environments.

Even if respondents also have positive experiences of their living environments – even if they have many intense feelings of belonging based on the sense of safety they get from domestic places such as their house and garden (Rose 1995, 89) – they still may have negative place experiences in other arenas of life. Or having a safe living environment may not be at the top of their list of priorities. Traditionally urban centres have been associated with foreignness, alienation and hectic life rhythms, and that may be just what is wanted these days. Even if the violence, danger and hectic pace of urban areas are generally considered to be negative features, young people involved in this study do not seem to see it that way.

This is the opinion of respondents. Bäck, however, (2004, 101-102) presents a contradictory angle by claiming that forms of living and consuming are very similar in peripheral areas and in urban locations. The differences between central and peripheral areas are becoming less significant and regional and local components are rather marginal in a person's identity work. In addition, regional variations in culture and tradition manifest themselves less and less – conversational topics, lifestyle, clothes and home decoration do not give a lot of information about a person's background these days. Normative centres do not exist in the periphery, or in local communities, and geographical background or belonging do not necessarily determine one's cultural expressions.

Thus life politics and individualism are not just challenging people's relation to the place; they are affecting the attractiveness of many residential areas on an imaginary level. This causes problems for living environments in terms of a loss of young people to migration if the region is not able to correspond to their demands for an individualistic lifestyle and project an attractive enough image. The traditional concept of "place" has been challenged by the late modern world. It has been said that place is becoming merely an illusion, because the structures that constitute place are not so much locally anchored any more. Place does not necessarily represent the arena for experience, and does not form the experimental parameters for the individual. People's knowledge and understanding of other people and other places does not primarily depend on local milieus anymore (Bäck 2004, 102): feelings of belonging and sense of place can be located also on a regional, national or even an international scale. Respondents' plans to migrate abroad may be regarded as such references.

Sense of place on a national scale usually means strong national identity, national landscapes and traditions. Sense of place can be also felt on supra-national scale, e.g. identifying oneself as European (Rose 1995, 90-91). A sense of place on the supranational scale is not unusual in these days, when the EU is expanding both its powers and its borders, and when education is becoming more and more international, united and comparable; to say nothing of information channels which offer a supra-national window on events around the world. This setting easily leads to a global sense of place. Rose (1995, 92) states that e.g. the global economy is producing a new sense of place, focusing on new information and communication technology. This also includes international consortia in the entertainment industry, and communication and networking by e-mail and news bulletins all around the world.

Relation to the place may be pluralistic on a mental level – focused on different places, and also on different spatial scales, at the same time. A person may, on the one hand, feel attached to some given place, but on the other hand, the person may at the same time experience “feelings of being at home” somewhere else. As Relph (1989, 27) has said, we have to “realize our possibilities: a here from which to discover the world, a there to which we can return”.

#### *8.2.4 Individual level: “the place in me”*

Based on the section above, and in relation to life politics, migration can be seen as a visible outcome of the person’s relation to place. Over and above that, migration can also be seen as a spatial implication of individualism; at least in the situation where the person is migrating purely for personal reasons and pursuing individual aims, without taking into account other people’s contrary opinions or wishes. Migration can likewise be seen as a spatial implication of individualism when young people’s relation to the place is based on a static place image and time there has come to feel like a series of brief episodes – “fateful moments” (Heggen 2000, 57) – and long-term life plans are difficult to form as the future is hard to foresee. This leads to a change mentality – people are getting used to life with uncertain future prospects. Young people tend to think that nothing – jobs, marriages, places to live – lasts forever (Karisto 1998, 61). Thus life decisions (also decision about migration) are made individualistically, with more ease of mind, without relying much on history, permanent living environment or other people’s opinions.

It is reasonable to argue that most “movers” in this study follow an *individualistic orientation* (Viinamäki 1999) and therefore respondents’ migration alacrity is partly a consequence of their individualistic world views and values, and not only their relation to opportunities in education, work and/or living environment. Moving away from home has always been a sign of independence and adulthood. Nowadays young people, through different means, have better access to information about other parts of the world. This has made new places and towns more familiar and easy for them to approach. Young people tend to travel a lot, constantly gaining new experiences, and they want get everything possible out of their lives. Their home region may not offer enough material for

“distinctiveness” and “continuity” (Gustafson 2001a). Instead, the home region is seen to offer negative future prospects. Young people involved in the survey do not see their home region in the light of home sickness and nostalgia; on the contrary, if person is forced to stay home he may fall sick (see Tuan 1971, 189).

Moreover, nowadays young people do not stay in their childhood neighbourhoods, following in their parents’ career footsteps. In this sense migration plans can be regarded as an important part of these young peoples’ intentions to establish independent lives for themselves. In this way a migration orientation can be regarded as an important factor in respondents’ life politics and identity construction. Respondents, who are following an *individualistic orientation*, are not moving out from their home districts just because things are in a bad way there, but rather because they want to find a place where they are able to create for themselves the networks and scenery required to build their identities. This interpretation is supported by the fact that almost half (46 %) of the young people surveyed were to some extent at least satisfied with their living place, but that many of these respondents were planning to move away regardless.

This may be connected to the strength of *sense of place* and place attachment; and also the way how young people evaluate their and their home district’s future has an impact on decision making when choosing place of residence. *Sense of place* is formed on the basis of different individual aspects and needs in different age groups. The data clearly show that there are some issues in living environment which seem to be more important for younger respondents than for some older ones. Thus the formation of a *sense of place* through place experience has different criteria in different age groups. Also different connections, which vary accordingly between respondents, create different outcomes in terms of *sense of place*.

Age has an effect on *sense of place* and place attachment. In section 7.3.1 above I discussed how forming a new family of one’s own may affect *locale* and *sense of place* for older respondents. By forming their own families they are attached in a new way to their living environment. Among young respondents, however, the situation is different: their *locale* primarily consists of their childhood family and peers. In these cases, when *locale*, and place attachment with it, relates closely to social contacts with peers, it can be assumed that nowadays place attachment may have some mobile features. This refers to a situation in which friends, siblings and peers have already migrated – or have migration plans – away from childhood living environment. This phenomenon forms a “locale network” which reaches out to different places all over one’s home country and even abroad. This makes migration to unknown or foreign destinations easier, because there is a probability for the young individual “mover” that *locale*, in the form of friends and siblings, extends to the possible destination. This can be described as “portable locale”. This creates a rather smooth continuum of “mobile individualism” (Rose 1995, 90), since in guiding young people to plan migration, “portable locale” is making migration easier and is thus increasing respondents’ migration alacrity.

In addition, this phenomenon of “portable locale” is in a sense diminishing respondents’ *sense of place* and rootedness. A *locale* with no peers is regarded as unappealing and dreary. This, together with a spreading network of friends, directs their interests away from their home district towards more appealing

areas and places. This has a clear connection to place experience and *sense of place*, and also to the image of the place. The importance of this idea is easy to understand when it is considered together with the valuation process – the personal cost/benefit analysis (Brown & Perkins 1992) carried out by a young person when he/she is making decisions about a future place of residence. The image of the place is formed on the basis of subjective experiences, yet it is also somewhat held in common. It is shared by local individuals, and it is to some extent constructed on the basis of what the other people, living somewhere else, think about the place where young person lives. Yet when looking at migration alacrity, the most important factor is the personal relationship with and personally constructed image of the place, inter-subjective as it may be.

Migration can be an exponent of individualism, in that the fundamental reasons for migration are based on personal place experience, preferences, attaining wealth, better social status or just simply a little bit more satisfactory life. When we talk about young people and migration, we are facing a phenomenon related to the individual development process. Migration and migration alacrity are clearly and inseparably a parts of young people's life stage and course of life.

Along these ideas we have progressed rather far from the situation depicted in the introduction. There it was hypothesised that migration can create chaos and have a negative impact on the person (Morley 2000, 33; c.f. Creswell 1996; Gustafson 2001b, 670). However, my research suggests that migration functions quite to the contrary. Migration is rather, from the individual point of view, a desirable and perhaps even inevitable development process.<sup>82</sup> In an individualistic society, an individual and unique life plan is highly valued, and migration has become a major tool for building such individual life plans.

On the other hand, migration is no longer a very unique part of one's life plan, at least if we look at the results of this study: 74 % of all respondents were planning migration. According to this, it would be more unique and individualistic *not* to plan migration. The case is not that simple, however. As a matter of fact, we have to take migration not just as a part of individual life, but also as a resource for reaching circumstances in which one can fulfil personal and individual needs. "Mobile individualism" (Rose 1995, 90) could be the right phrase for the principle contemporary young people live by in the periphery. A lack of will to adapt to the local environment and to establish a permanent residence there, together with individualistic feelings about the option of moving on independently, is embedded in "mobile individualism". Mobile individuals just have to find the right place for themselves – to find "the place in me".

"The place in me", an intensive form of place attachment, represents a micro-level sense of place. E.g., younger respondents in this study tended to concentrate on issues which lead them towards their personal goals. It was interesting to see how individualistic voices were raised in answer to the survey question about the most important things in the life. This could even be said to comprise a fourth component of place, inner self, which could be described with the motto "sense of self - place in me". This new and hypothetical component of place is

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<sup>82</sup> Regional development is another story: what is in the interest of individual is not necessary in the interest of local decision makers; and migration is still seen as problematic in terms of local resource development.

grounded very much on an individualistic attitude, which became clear when some of the respondents stated that the most important thing for them at the point of research is oneself. Inner balance between the individual and place seems thus to be quite an important component of place; or if it is not a new component of place it could be argued that it is a new, intensive and demanding form of place attachment.

### *8.2.5 Personal performance structure versus local opportunity structure*

Reasons for migration are always dependant both on the subjective – personal experience, “the place in me” and future orientation – and on the objective – public space and structure. We have learned so far that important issues of *location* for young people involved in the survey are definitely opportunities for education, work and career. We have also noticed that a minority of respondents are satisfied with the matters they regard as important. At this point we need to consider, do respondents feel that they are able to use life politics and orientate to their future in such conditions? The question is also how well their individual(istic) needs are fulfilled in these conditions. Respondents’ future prospects regarding the future of their home region can be described with one word: “grey”. Matters included in the component of *location* should not be disparaged, because they set the fundamental base both for social life – *locale* – and personal experiences of place – *a sense of place*; as well for the ideal life.

The meanings of *location* and *locale* are very significant in this point. The *location* has a significant role in defining those realities in the living environment on which respondents have to adapt to if they are not ready to seek fulfilment for their needs and wishes somewhere else. It seems that the young people involved in this study are not willing to adapt to local realities. *Locale* in turn refers to a social network which is in many cases mobile, or at least “portable”. This means that social networks often establish themselves in other places even before the individuals have moved away from their home district. Or the social network may follow after them, when possible siblings and younger friends get old enough in order to migrate to the same place to fulfil their needs. *Sense of place* has little to do in this scenario, though it has strong personal meaning to young people. Every one of us has our own sense of place, which is highly personal – sometimes strong, sometimes weak – but usually not defining individual decisions, overriding the restrictions of *location* or *locale*. Sense of place should not, however, be understood only as a positive factor causing a certain degree of attachment between young people and their childhood homes; for some sense of place may mean more negative experiences and feelings of stagnancy and hopelessness for the future. Nor are these issues black and white; there are also tints of grey in sense of place, as in all components of place.

Among young people involved in this study migration can be seen as a rational human behaviour. An action takes on meaning when aims and measures of the acting individual are understood (Kangas 2000, 66). All in all, White & Woods (1980, 7) crystallise the whole idea of reasons for migration:



“Migration occurs because migrants believe that they will be more satisfied in their needs and desires in the place that they move to than in the place from which they come. An important emphasis must be placed on the word ‘believe’. Migration occurs as a result of decisions made by individuals in the light of what they perceive the objective world to be like...”

Individual belief in the profitability of migration is crystallised at the intersection of personal performance structure (Groß 2005) and local opportunity structure. A high personal performance structure may increase belief in the profitability of personal initiative, thus increasing migration alacrity. When the person believes that it is possible to have a better life and to more effectively achieve personal goals somewhere else, that may be the driving force behind migration alacrity. The following table<sup>83</sup> specifies some attributes of personal performance structure and local opportunity structure. Personal performance structure affects both migration alacrity and the will to remain in one’s home district. On the other hand, while personal performance structure may make it easier to form migration plans, and also to carry out those plans, it may also be a factor diminishing possibilities to migrate.

It should be mentioned that migration alacrity, i.e. “plans for geographical mobility” may also be experienced only on an imaginary level, if there are no possibilities to realise these plans. The imaginary dimension of migration may be, e.g., a coping strategy in a small community, in which individualistic or eccentric life plans are not feasible (Serdedakis & Tsiolis 2000, 13). Imaginary migration is possible via the media and Internet; a person does not have to be in certain place in order to be able to know and dream about it. Images thus acquired also affect beliefs in possibilities of a higher personal performance structure.

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<sup>83</sup> This table is based on round table discussions (Groß 2005) at the annual seminar of European Ph.D. students in Socio-Economic and Statistical Studies, and on the results of this study.

Table 23: Personal performance structure versus local opportunity structure

	<b>Personal performance structure</b>	<b>Local opportunity structure</b>
<b>Micro</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ social capital</li> <li>▪ money, income</li> <li>▪ motivation</li> <li>▪ access to the information sources</li> <li>▪ family relations</li> <li>▪ social status</li> <li>▪ social contacts</li> <li>▪ lifestyle</li> <li>▪ value</li> <li>▪ personal wishes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ educational opportunities</li> <li>▪ working opportunities</li> <li>▪ career opportunities</li> <li>▪ social capital</li> </ul>
<b>Macro</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ geographical location</li> <li>▪ local cultural tradition and inheritance</li> <li>▪ traffic connections</li> <li>▪ distance</li> <li>▪ distribution of work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ local atmosphere</li> <li>▪ education in general</li> <li>▪ means of livelihood</li> <li>▪ variety of jobs</li> <li>▪ cultural resources</li> <li>▪ housing standard</li> <li>▪ future prospects</li> </ul>

### 8.2.6 Places and their different images

It is important to understand the significance of different images of settlements when analysing migration alacrity. Earlier we have learned that image of the place does make the difference; and young people taking part in this study do not necessarily migrate because of the size of a settlement so much as because of the image they have of it. This is supported by the finding here that respondents' migration alacrity is higher than their will to stay in their home regions even among those living in urban areas. Image and migration alacrity are not dependant on the size of the place, but on personal experience of place, place attachment and local resources. They are furthermore tied to an understanding and belief about what the area has to offer to its residents. These are the factors respondents take into consideration when evaluating different places and making their future plans and decisions.

Kotler et al. (1993, 3-4) have analysed different images of living environments, formulating e.g. their concept of "*dying or chronically depressed places*" in reference to places that are suffering from vanishing major industry, unemployment, diminishing services and out-migration. "*Places with healthy transformations,*" on the other hand, are investing in the creation of new settings to

upgrade their attractiveness, while “*the favoured few*” possess good financial conditions and features that attract tourists and new residents continuously. Typical of such places are Paris, London and Vienna (Tuhkunen 2002). In these places the local atmosphere can be so strong that it can be felt by anyone, even tourists.

It can be speculated that smaller municipalities involved in this study, e.g. Pajala, Kalix, Sinettä, Pirttikoski and Narvik, fall into the category of “dying and chronically depressed places”, since these places are suffering from out-migration at least on some scale. There are also quite narrow branches of local industry and trade, and thus limited possibilities for means of livelihood and variation of occupational careers. “Places with healthy transformations”, e.g. Luleå, Rovaniemi, Bodø and Alta, have both tourism and breath-taking nature and educational opportunities as local assets. Petrozavodsk can also be included this group, having good educational opportunities and a good economic-geography location. Tromsø is possibly only place studied here which is close to qualifying for membership in the category of “the favoured few”. Tromsø has an active tourist industry, it is an established university town and it has a lively cultural life (Tuhkunen 2002). Tromsø has even been called “the Paris of the North” (Destinasjon Tromsø 2005).

The key to the classification above is to notice that there are different living environments which have their own character, image and local identity. This character can be created e.g. through literature. A good example of this is London, which has an unmistakable character and identity because it is so thoroughly transformed by the literary imagination. We can thus say that “words can call places into being” (Tuan 1991, 686, 691). However, it is not just words which enable places to build successful images. The character or identity of a certain region does not just simply appear from nothing. Identity development requires concrete action – effort and “a systematic selection of features to be advocated as genuine to a region” – i.e., region building (Keskitalo 2002, 3).

On the basis of this research it can be argued that respondents’ tendencies to migrate and their migration alacrity are tied to beliefs they have concerning their home district and what their home district is not able to offer them. Respondents’ migration alacrity is thus partly a consequence of their belief that their home district has no future; their living environments have images which are associated with futureless prospects. Firstly, for example, the data shows that those young people who have migration plans, the “movers”, seem to have more pessimistic attitudes towards almost all aspects of their home district. Secondly, the data also shows that the areas where young people have the highest migration alacrity – Norrbotten and Lapland – are also the places where survey respondents have, in many respects, the most negative attitudes towards their home districts. Thirdly, it can be seen that young people involved in this study are very much aware of the basic social problems associated with remote areas. The data shows that respondents have noticed signs of these problems in their home districts, since many of them believe that a distorted age structure and greater unemployment will be problems in the future. Respondents also share a general belief that this trend towards migration will continue (Soininen 2002). This whole is possibly associated with a negative image.

It seems that migration alacrity among respondents is a cold fact. It is easy to see that this is a strong tendency, and that it will continue to be a strong tendency for some time to come. It is relevant to ask if there anything that can be done about this tendency. When looking at the responses received, one does get the feeling that there is nothing to be done about the matter; young people will continue to move out in any case. That maybe true, but that is not the point. The fundamental issue here, on the point of places of origin, is to create an image of a good living environment. It is not enough to try to increase job opportunities or try to cling to young people with false promises about possibilities of distance working. It is just as essential to think of young people's own motivations for staying in their home regions as it is to think of how young people could be lured back to their home district after they have finished their education. Migration out of the Barents Region to the south should be transformed into migration within the Barents Region. This kind of development would require creating a tempting Nordic image or a collection of tempting local images, which would require holistic youth work and youth policy in the Barents Region (Soininen 2002).

Future expectations are also matters of difference when it comes to images of the living environment. Rubin (1998, 10) makes the astute remark, "images of the future influence human behaviour and that behaviour in turn contributes to making the future." The ways in which respondents describe the places they are going to move to, or the reasons why they want to migrate, tell something about the images of different places, as well as about their attitudes towards the places they were living at the point of research – and towards the future of these places. A good example of this came in one of the answers to the question, "Where are you going to migrate?" (question # 29 in questionnaire) to which one young person replied that she is going to move "to a town with a better future" (Ru,654,HC,f, 86).

There were several other respondents as well who did not name any specific place as their preferred migration target, but who rather gave some clear criteria as to what kind of place they would prefer to live in. One frequently mentioned criterion was an ecologically sound and unpolluted living environment. This suggests that environmental awareness and "green consuming" are quite popular ideas among contemporary young people, who are said to be both informed and consuming citizens with awareness of environmental problems (Autio & Wilska 2003, 7, 8, 10). Other features, like high technology, cultural variety and a warm climate, are also tempting for young people. In a pointed way, this may mean that many young people involved in this study think that the places where they now live have an old-fashioned image and a serious lack of cultural activity and ecological thinking (Soininen 2002).

Development of places and their images may be complicated process, because of the different aims and identities different counterparts' possess. For example, "local people have different set of priorities from the developers" (Rose 1995, 102). Locals are stressing sense of place, place attachment; developers something else. Developers usually deliberately construct an image of the place with slogans which highlight the superiority and uniqueness of the place (Massey & Jess 1995b, 221). For locals regional identities may be rather concrete, but that is not necessarily the case in the minds of developers. However, regional identities connected to certain places have become more and more important in cam-

paigns for regional development and creating images of places in the heads of locals and other people. In this sense images can be seen as products with the task of luring inhabitants, capital and entrepreneurs to the region (Paasi 1998, 173). All these increase the attractiveness of the region, and also maintain and increase social capital, which should not be forgotten in this process. If social capital vanishes from certain area, the accumulation process for new social capital is slow (Sinkkonen-Tolppi 2005, 30). This issue should be taken seriously, because peripheral areas are facing the risk of vanishing social capital due to high numbers of migrating young people.

What is the role of academic education and educational institutions in accumulating social capital, in region making and image construction? There is no simple answer for that; however young people involved in this study seem to respect education relatively highly. Academic education in particular seems to be at the top of their wish lists. Universities and other educational institutions in the area serve young people by offering education, but at the same time a university has symbolic meaning and significance on a cultural level (Granberg 1998b, 254-255). This significance should be recognised and utilised. A university attracts smart young people to the area and at the same time brings in jobs for well-educated people, and in addition to that promoting culture. Culture has always been a connecting factor (Heikkinen 1997, 42). Cultural co-operation, such as film festivals, is a good means to build a local identity. Northern cultural co-operation was eventually stimulated by the founding of the Barents Region. New networks have emerged in a region which was characterised by language and distance barriers. There has been a visible activation in a form of Arctic research programmes, film and dramatic art, the visual arts and literature projects (Lehtinen 1997, 80).<sup>84</sup> The Barents Region also offers multi-lingual living environments, which accustom young people to internationality in a natural way (Lehtinen 1997, 81).

Developing educational networks and a cultural atmosphere in peripheral areas, for example, could improve the local image. An attractive and improved image should not be taken for granted. Rather, as Zimmerbauer & Suutari (2004, 30, 31) claim, image is something that requires a conscious effort. Local image sometimes has a manufactured imago as its base. Thus developing an imago not only requires effort, but it also entails responsibility. The producer or builder of an imago is exercising power by choosing what aspects are shown publicly and what features are deliberately left out. Zimmerbauer & Suutari also claim that imago building has economic and public administration as its starting point.

Images, in contrast to imagoes, are not shaped only by external decision makers; images are also shaped by local features, and furthermore, by prevalent opinions regarding the status of the local living environment. In addition, images can be constructed by myths even (Paulgaard 2000). Unfortunately these myths tend to give the periphery a lower status than urban environments. Yet these myths cannot be treated indifferently, because the images they construct are a central part of place experience.

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<sup>84</sup> See e.g.: <http://www.pikene.no/> (visited 7.1.2007); <http://www.algonet.se/~barents/> (visited 7.1.2007)

### 8.3 Synthesis of location, locale and sense of place: relation to the place

It seems that those factors which have their origin in *location* are setting the major framework for respondents' migration alacrity, because these local realities are the arena in which place experiences and *sense of place* evolve. *Location* defines local opportunity structures which can be used in life politics and achieving individual goals. *Location* is also an important part of the valuation process which is carried out by the individual when orientating towards the future. *Location* thus plays the most important role in the early steps of migration planning. Following this, another rather central conclusion in this study is that the size of a living place does not necessarily explain the high number of respondents with migration plans. Migration alacrity can rather be explained in terms of *the balance between individual wishes and local opportunity structures*. The living place of the respondent may offer satisfaction in some areas of life and fulfil some of the individual wishes, but usually those wishes, such as closeness to the nature, were many times less significant than other factors in the big picture of origin of migration alacrity. The unbalance between individual wishes and local realities is seen in the way in which young people involved in this study look at their own future and the future of their living environment: usually their own future is seen as full of positive things and the future of living environment is seen as negative.

Respondents also show some personal attachment to their home region. The results show that *sense of place*, especially as an instrument producing place experiences, is an important factor weighing against young people's migration alacrity. However, the deepest place attachment is not enough if there is unbalance between individual wishes, life politics and future prospects on the one side and local realities on the other.

According to this study, respondents' streams of reasons for migration in general follow traditional push-and-pull mechanisms of migration quite neatly (Lee 1969, 285; see also Kytö 1998, 66), i.e. reasons for migration have to do with both the places and areas of origin and those of destination. However, the interplay between places of origin and destination found here has been addressed in terms of place experience; individual life politics, goals, personal sense of place and valuation processes. Traditional push-and-pull mechanisms are merely starting points for setting goals and being concerned about the future, and thus for starting to consider migration. The ultimate reasons for migration can be found in individual place experience and personal relation to the place, and of course in the balance between individual wishes and local opportunity structures.

Peripheral location itself seems not to be a very central reason for migration alacrity; it is rather one component in personal valuation processes and one variable in personal "community satisfaction" (Hummon 1992, 254-255). This is because the concept of peripherality, as an analytical term, was mainly brought to this study by the author. Young people seldom mentioned peripherality, though expressions of "boring living environments" were found in their an-

swers<sup>85</sup>. On the other hand, it was possible to dig out hints, or analytical units, dealing with peripherality from the data as a whole. In general, respondents' opinions and reactions regarding their possibilities reflect feelings of being and living in the periphery. Those feelings about their *location* constitute their *sense of place* and their place experience. This means that peripherality is not necessarily experienced geographically as a certain marginal attribute; but rather on a mental level.

That, in turn, is a crucial part of the valuation process, which collects ingredients not just from sense of place and place experience, but also from personal life politics and future orientations. Peripherality as such is thus not a real reason for migration, if we are not counting in image and distance factors. The personal valuation process is the key issue here. Using various forms of access to different information sources and taking advantage of spatial interconnectedness these days, the valuation process ranks different places, and it can be assumed that peripheral places are not among winners. On the other hand, global popular culture, global accesses to the same information sources, e.g. on the Internet, is diminishing gap between deep peripheral and central urban areas.

This, as a whole, means that migration alacrity is connected to the *sense of place* through the valuation process and personal place experience. The "old" and "solid" sense of place, according to which place attachment is a basic and fundamental human need, has partly faded away and it has been replaced by a new form of sense of place: "place in me," the most suitable place to fulfil "my" needs and bring about "my" individual development. In the contemporary world sense of place, identity, local knowledge and understanding do not necessarily depend on local milieus anymore. The new sense of place is possibly more mobile and more inclined, or even required, to accept the interconnectedness of places, individual lifestyles and means of life politics. Deep place attachment is not a basic human need; rather, it seems that free mobility is accepted with increasing frequency as a contemporary feature of a balanced personality.

However, the idea of a new sense of place has to be taken with a grain of salt: this change does not necessarily touch every person with the same intensity. One person may be an independent cosmopolitan with no place attachment but with strong personal aims, and for another person the new sense of place may have no meaning at all compared with the powerful personal significance of local bonds, regardless of whether this person has migration plans or would like stay in that home region for ever. All this has to do with personal interests, goals, world views and life phases, and more importantly with the quality of local bonds.

Thus *locale* is not indifferent to the formation of a (new) sense of place, because both *locale* and *sense of place* usually include some sort of socialisation. Socialisation into the institutions of the childhood environment and personal participation in local communities evolve a strong sense of place and place attachment (see also Sinkkonen-Tolppi 2005). In this way *locale* would diminish the need to create a new sense of place and to orientate one's personal future with weak or non-existent moorings. This local belonging provides value

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<sup>85</sup> Is boring living environment equal with peripherality is an issue which would need more consideration than it is done here, in order to draw solid conclusions.

schemes and affects future orientations. Local bonds and a sense of belonging are an important part of such personal value schemes (Moon 1995).

These schemes for evaluating the future are the products of the living environment and social conditions under which individuals grow up. Evaluation schemes are developed through specific personal experiences of place, historical conditions and locality. Individuals' evaluation processes are also characterised by their place of residence (Bæck 2004, 100). However, there are cases where local living environments and personal places of residence are felt as uninteresting and lacking opportunities, e.g. in the political sphere. The individual may also have experienced social intolerance in some respect in his/her place of residence. As a consequence of this, some residents may have a weak sense of place and place attachment. That in turn may be equated with a sense of having "no personal future in the area". This may also strengthen a new, more mobile, sense of place. Especially in the situation where a person feels that also important local bonds possess mobile features – if not now, perhaps in the future – in the form of migration alacrity or actual migration among peers and relatives.

On the whole, the fundamental idea of migration alacrity is the correspondence between individual wishes and three essential components of place, *location*, *locale* and *sense of place*. These components show the individual what kinds of possibilities are being offered by his/her living environment. The following figure illustrates this idea by showing the crucial steps between life politics and individual action, which in this case means either migration or abiding in the region.

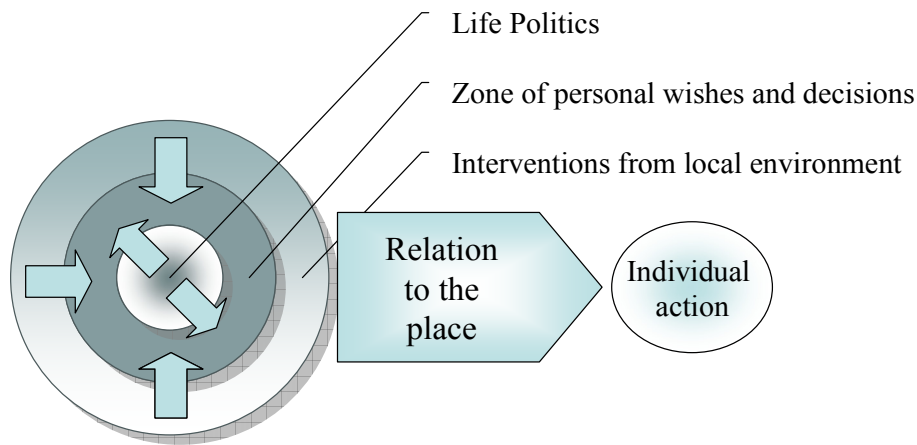


Figure 4: Steps between life politics and individual action

The middle circle in the figure includes *life politics* and its' main aims: obtaining happiness and a good life, but also measures to achieve one's goals, for example reflexive thinking and weighing one plan against another. *Zone of personal wishes and decisions*, in turn, consists of those ingredients which person is demanding in order to feel personal happiness and well-being; e.g. education, work, hobbies, marriage and family, and pleasant surroundings. This



zone includes also all the components which refer to the future, i.e. future orientation.

The outermost circle of the picture, *interventions from local environment*, contains messages the environment is sending to the individual. It also includes all the remarks the person is making about his/her present living environment on the grounds of these received signals. This circle refers to remarks which are made on the basis of signals from both *location* and *locale*. These remarks affect place attachment and personal sense of place. In summary, this figure shows how life politics and interventions from the local environment are in interaction and affect on zone of personal wishes.

The key to the understanding this figure is to see that it all has to do with the equivalence between personal wishes, personal concepts of the ideal life and remarks<sup>86</sup> coming from surrounding living environment. The results of a person's reflective thinking and valuation between individual wishes and local realities have their invisible outcome in person's *relation to the place*. The visible outcome of relation to place in individual action here will be either migration alacrity or adapting to local possibilities, i.e. willingness to stay.

This figure should not be seen, however, as strict mechanic model which applies to everyone as such. It should rather be understood as an illustration of one possible way for personal relation to place and its connections to migration alacrity to take shape. The emergence of relation to place is a highly individual process and therefore we cannot have a universal model for how it works.

Relation to place is seen here as a bunch of individually filtered experiences and pieces of information, which deal with information from outside the personal sphere. One central aspect here is the valuation of living environments and sometimes even local inhabitants. Valuation can either be positive or negative, strong or weak, but it is still an important aspect in making places important and meaningful or unimportant and insignificant (Gustafson 2001a, 13). In valuing, the person is constructing a mental image of the place. This process can be regarded as categorising one's own observations. Also fantasies, dreams and memories affect this valuation process and define the person's understanding of a certain place (Äikäs 2004a, 32).

Valuation is significant part of the emergence of *the relation to the place*, since valuation is done all the time, consciously or unconsciously, by a person who is making future plans. This valuation process is based not only on knowledge the person has of his/her own living environment, but also on information he/she has gathered about far away places. His/her own living environment is reflected and valued positively or negatively through this information. In this way the person is relating to a vast number of places and all of these places are thus meaningful in the person's development of relation to place. The interconnectedness of places has not "left the building".

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<sup>86</sup> These remarks are made by the individuals themselves while filtering sundry information relevant to their life situation and future prospects, and then acting and responding on the basis of the filtering results. This is also called "social reflexivity", which is not just knowledge of social reality, but it also influences received as to what that reality actually is. It has also been said that the world just described is a "world for clever people", i.e. individuals have to engage in various situations in a wide world in order to survive successfully. Reflective thinking also penetrates everyday life in a significant way together with an *open horizon of choices* (Giddens 1994, 6-7.)

This speculation on migration alacrity can be summarised simply by saying that *not all people are suited to all places and not all places are suitable for all people*. By this I am referring to the fact that experiences of place differ greatly between people: place is a construct of personal experience. Places and regions are lived and experienced personally – “to live in a place is to experience it” (Tuan 1975, 165). For this reason people have their individual demands, wishes and future prospects. Different people are satisfied with different things and living standards and therefore they are naturally orientated to different living environments. Knowing this, it is easy to understand the fundamental logic behind migration alacrity and actual migration itself. Of course, the interconnectedness of places and various accesses to media are creating confusion by increasing amount of information to be processed; and in this way opening potential or hypothetical opportunities for people to choose their place of residence on the grounds of their own wishes, hopes and life plans. The other factor shuffling the deck is the reality world and the prerequisites set by it, not to mention the random element of vagueness in human action (Halfacree & Boyle 1993). This includes actual educational and/or employment situations and the ties one experiences with the place of residence.

Human action and practices are products of existing social condition, but also products of conscious and active attempts to influence on those conditions (Raunio 1999, 104). On these grounds it can be said that young people’s subjective experiences evolve in living environments which are difficult to change. Their social and structural living environment is static, not leaving room for new ideas and attempts to mould it in the direction desired by young people. This is a crucial point regarding the origin of migration plans: the reality is not in balance with individual goals and wishes. The reality shows a different picture than what they see in their imaginary world. Niemi in his book “Populäärimusiikkia Vittulajänkältä”, (2000, 15) describes the sensation of seeing asphalt spread evenly on the streets of the neighbourhood, feeling and looking good, but in the character’s own yard there is just grey and rough ground, clotted and ugly oiled gravel. This depicts well what migration alacrity is all about.

Migration alacrity is a consequence of the valuation process, a consequence of unbalance between reality and an imaginary world, the unbalance between the promises of the future and realities of the present, the unbalance between *location* and individual *sense of place*.

## 9. Directions and tasks for future research

This research has been considering young people's migration alacrity on the basis of data which is situational and tied closely to a peripheral context. The data has shown that so-called "city-dwellers" as well are planning migration, but it was difficult to demonstrate that migration plans, in that case, are really a consequence of restricted local opportunity structures even in urban areas. Furthermore, it is impossible to say whether the urban opportunity structure in peripheral areas is restricted for reasons having to do with the division of labour, a lack of sufficient educational opportunities, political issues and geographical distances; or is it just a "discourse" connected to the peripheral location and a commonly adopted negative mentality towards northern areas. For this reason it would be valuable to study migration alacrity also in more central areas, e.g. in the southern parts of the respective countries, and to set the comparison between peripheral and central areas as a research target.

This research shows that there really might be two different types of urban areas: central urban areas, where respondents would like to migrate, and peripheral urban areas, which are less tempting in the minds of young people. These areas represent totally different types of urban living environments. Though it is possible to talk about urban areas in general, local realities are not the same. Also the local realities and decision making in these areas should be carefully taken on account. I would theorise that place experience and sense of place do not take the same shape in all urban areas of northern Europe: sense of place and the possibilities for individual future orientations differ among young people living in central and peripheral urban areas.

It can be assumed that young people in peripheral rural areas are aware their restricted possibilities for education and work, and possibly for self-development as well in their home district. They may regard the long distances between people and places as a hindrance to personal life politics. In central urban areas the savings in regular travel distances – with loved ones, family, siblings and friends easily reachable – might even offset the trouble of migrating. In central urban areas young people also benefit from centralisation. E.g. official decision making takes place geographically closer to them, among those who are more familiar with central urban problems and needs than with the priorities of rural, or even northern urban areas.

In this study most of the data has been collected in peripheral urban areas, suggesting that the majority of young people living in those urban areas as well have migration plans. At least the majority of those involved in this study tend to think that life would be better in the South or in more central places. This tells us

that the image of one's own and other areas are significant. Urban areas located in the North, which is already regarded as peripheral, have mostly negative images, whereas far away places may possess positive, even slightly romanticised images. The dichotomies of north/south and centre/periphery do exist; as can clearly be seen in the opinions of these young people. The north/south dichotomy is not limited to the local environment and possibilities it is able to offer; it can also be seen in the opinions about other local residents. People living in the North and in one's local area there are sometimes seen as boring; but "the others", living somewhere off in big cities and more urban areas, are sometimes regarded as suspicious and dishonest persons. These aspects of living environment affect young people's place experience and sense of place, and the valuation process according to which young people are making their future plans. Therefore it would be important to investigate representations, origins and consequences of this obvious mental dichotomy.

This study has concentrated on issues which are important in relation to migration alacrity and factors which increase young people's migration plans. This has focused on things that are commonly regarded as reasons for migrations. However, it could be also useful to concentrate on things that are usually regarded as binding factors, and in this way on young people who do not have intend to migrate and who are willing to stay in their home regions. Those young people, "abiders" or "locals" whose interests in life and the future are locally orientated (Agnew 1993, 262), have been a minority in this research, but that does not make them uninteresting. On the contrary, results of a study concentrating on "abiders" could give valuable information about local communities in the light of those factors which are binding young people to their home districts. Such research data would offer scholars and youth work professionals an approach to this question which, if not tackling the matter holistically, would at least offer a good and informative start for further investigations, data collection and research projects (See Sojininen 2002).

The research setting of this study opens a variety of new directions for new research tasks. This study also shows that there would also be a need for using other methods in investigating young people's migration alacrity. For example, using qualitative material, which could be collected in interviews or which could be produced by young people themselves, e.g. in essays, could open up an understanding of more personal reasons for migration alacrity. Even though the research setting and the data collecting methods used in this research have been successful, I believe that research into migration and migration alacrity could still benefit from a more personal approach, avoiding surveys and having more direct contact with respondents. There is always a risk of misunderstanding and certain effects of the chain of representation (see chapter 3.4) in using structured questionnaires. Those risks could be avoided by using qualitatively oriented methods, e.g. methods which take advantage of interviews or personal narratives. Personal narratives could be an interesting way to research migration alacrity, in that "narratives are representations" and individuals construct past events and experiences in personal narratives to claim identities and construct images (Riessman 1993, 2). The use of narratives as research data would benefit from understanding migration and migration alacrity as a significant part of the potential migrant's biography (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 337). Thus narratives

could be useful in the process of identifying young people's representations of their place of residence and living environment, which are being used in the construction of their life politics, future orientations and perhaps their personal migration plans.

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# Appendixes

## Appendix 1.

Information sources of Table 2: Research venues with population and number of respondents

- Meliorativny: No information available
- Koashva: No information available
- Uyma: <http://www.fallingrain.com/world/RS/6/Uyemskiy.html>
- Pirttikoski: Oral notice from Rovaniemen maalaiskunta (5.8.02)
- Sinettä: Oral notice from Rovaniemen maalaiskunta (5.8.02)
- Ivalo: <http://www.urova.fi/home/sakk/ivaloeng.html> (visited 17.6.02)
- Balsfjord: [http://www.destinasjontromso.no/balsfjord\\_eng.htm](http://www.destinasjontromso.no/balsfjord_eng.htm) (visited 17.6.02)
- Pajala: <http://www.pajala.se/welcome/kommun/> (visited 17.6.02)
- Sodankylä: <http://www.sodankyla.fi/ki-perustieto.php> (visited 17.6.02)
- Alta: <http://www.destinasjonalta.no/html/info.html> (visited 7.8.02)
- Kalix: <http://www.kalix.se/t1klx/view.cfm?oid=99621&sat=no> (visited 5.8.02)
- Narvik: [http://www.narvik.kommune.no/fakta/fakta\\_befolkning.html](http://www.narvik.kommune.no/fakta/fakta_befolkning.html) (visited 17.6.02)
- Gällivare: <http://www.gellivare.se/kommunfakta/sida1.htm> (visited 5.8.02)
- Rovaniemi: <http://www.rovaniemi.fi/?deptid=3164> (visited 5.8.02)
- Bodø: <http://www.bodoe.com/e/faktabodo.htm> (visited 17.6.02)
- Tromsø: <http://www.destinasjontromso.no/fakta.htm> (visited 6.8.02)
- Luleå: <http://www.lulea.se/fakta/> (visited 15.6.05)
- Apatity: [http://www.ibrae.ac.ru/INSP/KOLA/KOLA\\_NPP.html](http://www.ibrae.ac.ru/INSP/KOLA/KOLA_NPP.html) (visited 5.8.02)
- Petrozavodsk: [http://www.karelia.ru:80/Karelia/Official/chap1\\_e.html](http://www.karelia.ru:80/Karelia/Official/chap1_e.html) (visited 17.6.02)
- Arkhangelsk: [http://russia.capital.ru/arx\\_e/arxs11.htm](http://russia.capital.ru/arx_e/arxs11.htm) (visited 17.6.02)

## Appendix 2.

Nuoret Barentsin alueella -kysely

### **HYVÄ VASTAANOTTAJA!**

Tämä kysely on osa kansainvälistä tutkimusta Barentsin alueella asuvista nuorista. Yhteensä noin 2000 nuorta Suomesta, Ruotsista, Norjasta ja Venäjältä saa tämän lomakkeen vastattavakseen. Toivomme, että myös sinä osallistuisit tutkimukseen vastaamalla oheiseen kyselyyn.

Vastauksesi auttavat ymmärtämään nuorten arkea sekä tulevaisuuden suunnitelmia Barentsin alueella. Tärkeää on myös se, että vastauksesi auttavat päätöksentekijöitä ja poliitikkoja tekemään parempia nuorisopoliittisia päätöksiä.

Toivomme, että vastaat lomakkeeseen huolellisesti. Kysymyksiin ei ole oikeita tai vääriä vastauksia. Me haluamme tietää, mitä sinä ajattelet ja mitkä ovat sinun mielipiteesi lomakkeen teemoista. Kaikki vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti.

### **KIITOS YHTEISTYÖSTÄSI!**

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### **OHJEITA KYSYMYSLOMAKKEEN TÄYTTÄMISEEN**

Kysymyksiin vastataan kahdella tavalla:

1. Sinun tulee rengastaa numero, joka vastaa mielipidettäsi.
2. Sinun tulee kirjoittaa vastauksesi sille varattuun tilaan. Voit käyttää myös paperin kääntöpuolta, jos vastaukselle varattu tila ei ole riittävä.

## KYSYMYSLOMAKE

1. Oletko? 1 mies 2 nainen

2. Syntymävuotesi? 19\_\_\_\_\_

3. Siviilisäätyysi?

- 1 naimaton
- 2 avoliitossa/kihloissa
- 3 naimisissa
- 4 eronnut
- 5 leski

4. Onko sinulla omia lapsia?

- 1 kyllä, monta? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 ei

5. Korkein koulutuksesi?

- 1 peruskoulu
- 2 lukio
- 3 ammatillinen koulutus
- 4 yliopisto

6. Kansalaisuutesi? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Missä olet syntynyt?

Paikkakunta: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lääni: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Missä asut tällä hetkellä? Paikkakunta: \_\_\_\_\_

Lääni: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Millainen kotipaikkasi mielestäsi on?

- 1 suuri kaupunki
- 2 keskikokoinen kaupunki
- 3 pieni kaupunki
- 4 kuntakeskus
- 5 haja-asutusalue

10. Kuinka kauan olet asunut tässä paikassa? (vuodet, kuukaudet) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Kenen kanssa asut?

- 1 vanhempieni kanssa
- 2 sukulaisteni kanssa
- 3 tyttö/poikaystäväni kanssa
- 4 vaimoni/aviomieheni kanssa
- 5 lasteni kanssa
- 6 ystäväni kanssa
- 7 asun yksin

12. Äitisi kansallisuus? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Isäsi kansallisuus? \_\_\_\_\_



14. Vanhempiesi korkein koulutus?

Isä	Äiti	
1	1	kansakoulu/peruskoulu
2	2	ammattikoulu
3	3	lukio
4	4	yliopisto
5	5	en tiedä

15. Mikä on toiveammattisi? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Millaista koulutusta toiveammattisi vaatii?

1	lyhyen kurssin tai työn kautta oppiminen
2	ammattillinen koulutus (2-3 vuotta)
3	yliopistotutkinto
4	jonkin muun koulutuksen
	Minkä? _____

17. Kuinka paljon seuraavat seikat vaikuttavat ammatinvalintaasi? Alleviivaa mielestäsi ammatinvalintaasi eniten vaikuttava seikka.

	1=ei vaikuta lainkaan			5=vaikuttaa paljon	
-palkka	1	2	3	4	5
-työn kiinnostavuus	1	2	3	4	5
-koulutusmahdollisuudet kotiseudulla	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuudet auttaa ihmisiä kotiseudulla	1	2	3	4	5
-vanhempien mielipide	1	2	3	4	5
-ystävien mielipide	1	2	3	4	5
-oma kiinnostus	1	2	3	4	5
-hyvät työllistymismahdollisuudet kotiseudulla	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuus kehittää kotiseutua	1	2	3	4	5
-ammatti mahdollistaa kotiseudulle jäämisen	1	2	3	4	5
-ammatti mahdollistaa kotiseudulta pois muuttamisen	1	2	3	4	5
jokin muu syy Mikä?	1	2	3	4	5

**Kysymyksiä elämäntilanteestasi ja kotiseudustasi**

18. Kuinka tyytyväinen olet elämääsi? Rengasta vastausvaihtoehto, joka vastaa mielipidettäsi parhaiten.

	0=ei ole	1=erittäin tyytymätön					5=erittäin tyytyväinen
-paikkaan jossa asut	0	1	2	3	4	5	
-asuntoon jossa asut	0	1	2	3	4	5	
-suhteisiisi vanhempiisi		0	1	2	3	4	5
-suhteisiisi ystäviisi	0	1	2	3	4	5	

	0=ei ole	1=erittäin tyytymätön	2	3	4	5=erittäin tyytyväinen
-suhde tyttö/poikaystävään/ vaimoon/aviomieheen	0	1	2	3	4	5
-vapaa-aikaasi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuuksiisi harrastaa	0	1	2	3	4	5
-opiskelu mahdollisuuksiisi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-terveyteesi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-työhösi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-taloudelliseen tilanteeseen	0	1	2	3	4	5
-koulutukseesi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-matkustus mahdollisuuksiin	0	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuuksiisi käyttää tietokonetta	0	1	2	3	4	5
-luonnon läheisyyteen	0	1	2	3	4	5
-tapaamispaikkoihin nuorille	0	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuuksiin kehittää itseäsi henkisesti	0	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuuksiisi toteuttaa tulevaisuuden suunnitelmiasi	0	1	2	3	4	5
-poliittisiin vaikuttamis- mahdollisuuksiin	0	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuuksiin vaikuttaa paikallisiin asioihin	0	1	2	3	4	5
-asuinpaikan ilmapiiri	0	1	2	3	4	5
-elämään yleensä	0	1	2	3	4	5

**19.** Kuinka hyvät mahdollisuudet sinulla mielestäsi on kotiseudullasi seuraavien asioiden suhteen? Rengasta sopivin vaihtoehto.

	1=erittäin huonot mahdollisuudet	2	3	4	5= erittäin hyvät mahdollisuudet
-kouluttautua	1	2	3	4	5
-saada työtä	1	2	3	4	5
-perustaa oma yritys	1	2	3	4	5
-asua mukavassa asunnossa	1	2	3	4	5
-harrastaa	1	2	3	4	5
-solmia ystävyysuhteita	1	2	3	4	5
-mennä diskoon/yökerhoihin	1	2	3	4	5
-perustaa perhe	1	2	3	4	5
-liittyä järjestöihin	1	2	3	4	5
-vaikuttaa paikallisiin asioihin	1	2	3	4	5
-harrastaa kulttuuria	1	2	3	4	5
-olla lähellä luontoa	1	2	3	4	5
-toteuttaa unelmia	1	2	3	4	5
-matkustaa	1	2	3	4	5
-seurata muotia	1	2	3	4	5
-asettua asumaan pysyvästi	1	2	3	4	5
-olla onnellinen	1	2	3	4	5

**20. Millaisena näet kotiseutusi tulevaisuuden?**

	1=täysin samaa mieltä	2	3	4	5=täysin erimieltä	0=en tiedä
-Alueella on enemmän työpaikkoja.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella on paremmat kouluttautumismahdollisuudet.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella on korkeampi elin taso.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Yksityisten yritysten määrä lisääntyy tulevaisuudessa.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Rikosten määrä kasvaa.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Nuoret muuttavat pois.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella asuvat ihmiset ovat toivottomia.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueelle muuttaa uusia asukkaita.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Nuorilla on hyvät mahdollisuudet liittyä kerhoihin ja järjestöihin.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella tulee asumaan enemmän vanhoja kuin nuoria ihmisiä.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Elämä tulee olemaa rauhallisempaa ja turvallisempaa tulevaisuudessa.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Elämä tulee olemaan tylsää tulevaisuudessa.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella on ympäristöongelmia.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Työttömyys on suuri ongelma.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Palvelujen taso on alhainen.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Alueella tulee olemaan enemmän turisteja.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Nuorten mielipiteet tullaan ottamaan huomioon poliittisessa päätöksenteossa.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Kotiseudullani tulee olemaan yhteistyötä Barentsin alueella.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Terveyspalveluja vähennetään.	1	2	3	4	5	0
-Kotiseudullani ei ole tulevaisuutta.	1	2	3	4	5	0

**21. Mitä haluaisit muuttaa kotiseudullasi?**

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**22. Oletko ylpeä kotiseudustasi? Tarkenna vastaustasi kertomalla miksi olet tai miksi et ole ylpeä kotiseudustasi.**

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**Kysymyksiä kotiseudulle jäämisestä ja sieltä pois muuttamisesta**

23. Missä arvelet asuvasi vuonna 2005? \_\_\_\_\_

24. Missä arvelet asuvasi vuonna 2010? \_\_\_\_\_

25. Missä asut mieluiten tulevaisuudessa?

- 1 kotimaassa
- 2 ulkomailla
- 3 en osaa sanoa

26. Millaisessa paikassa haluaisit asua tulevaisuudessa?

- 1 samassa paikassa missä asun nyt
- 2 suuressa kaupungissa
- 3 keskikokoisessa kaupungissa
- 4 pienessä kaupungissa
- 5 kuntakeskuksessa
- 6 haja-asutusalueella
- 7 kylässä maaseudulla

27. Kuinka tärkeitä sinulle ovat seuraavat asiat kun päätät asuinpaikastasi? Ympyröi mielipidettäsi vastaava numero. Alleviivaa mielestäsi tärkein asuinpaikan valintaan vaikuttava syy.

	1=hyvin tärkeä			5=ei lainkaan tärkeä	
-vanhemmat asuvat lähellä	1	2	3	4	5
-ystävät asuvat lähellä	1	2	3	4	5
-voi asua yhdessä tyttö/poika- ystävän tai vaimon/aviomiehen kanssa	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuus luoda uraa	1	2	3	4	5
-hyvät harrastusmahdollisuudet	1	2	3	4	5
-kohtuulliset asumiskustannukset	1	2	3	4	5
-kunnolliset puhelin- ja tietokone- yhteydet	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuudet käydä diskossa/ yökerhossa	1	2	3	4	5
-koulutusmahdollisuudet	1	2	3	4	5
-hyvä ympäristö lapsille	1	2	3	4	5
-luonnon läheisyys	1	2	3	4	5
-hyvä palvelutaso	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuus osallistua paikallis- politiikkaan	1	2	3	4	5
-mahdollisuus kehittää paikallis- yhteisöä	1	2	3	4	5
-tasokas kulttuuritarjonta	1	2	3	4	5
-jokin muu seikka, mikä?	1	2	3	4	5

28. Uskotko muuttavasi pois kotiseudultasi?

- 1 Kyllä (*siirry kysymyksiin 29-33*)
- 2 Ei (*siirry kysymykseen 34*)

**Kysymykset numero 29-33** ovat niille, jotka **vastasivat KYLLÄ** edelliseen kysymykseen (numero 28).

29. Minne aiot muuttaa?

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30. Milloin arvelet muuttavasi pois kotiseudultasi?

- 1 1-2 vuoden kuluessa
- 2 2-4 vuoden kuluessa
- 3 4-6 vuoden kuluessa
- 4 6-8 vuoden kuluessa
- 5 Tulevaisuudessa, 8 vuoden jälkeen

31. Mitkä ovat kolme todennäköisintä syytä muuttoosi pois kotiseudultasi? Rengasta vastausvaihtoehdon numero. Alleviivaa mielestäsi tärkein syy poismuuttoon. (Huomioithan, että vastausvaihtoehdot on myös seuraavalla sivulla.)

- 1 Täällä ei ole tarjolla kunnollisia työpaikkoja.
  - 2 Täällä ei ole minulle sopivia koulutusvaihtoehtoja.
  - 3 Tyttö/poikaystäväni/vaimoni/aviomieheni asuu muualla.
  - 4 Täällä on huonot julkiset liikenneyhteydet.
  - 5 Haluan nähdä muita paikkoja.
  - 6 Täällä on vaikea ilmasto.
  - 7 Luonto on saastunut.
  - 8 Suurin osa ystäväistäni aikoo muuttaa muualle.
  - 9 Eläminen täällä on kallista.
  - 10 Täällä ei ole mahdollista vaikuttaa paikallisiin asioihin.
  - 11 Täällä ei ole kunnollista kulttuuritarjontaa.
  - 12 Täällä ei ole mahdollisuutta kunnollisiin puhelin tai tietoliikenne yhteyksiin.
  - 13 Vanhempani ja muu perhe asuu jossain muualla.
  - 14 En halua kasvattaa täällä lapsiani.
  - 15 Täällä ei ole mielenkiintoani vastaavia harrastuksia.
  - 16 Täällä ei ole riittävästi palveluja tarjolla.
  - 17 Täällä en voi käydä diskoissa/yökerhoissa.
  - 17 Haluan asua ulkomailla. Missä?
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- 18 Jokin muu syy, mikä?
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32. Mitkä syyt saisivat sinut jäämään kotiseudullesi?

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33. Mitkä ovat syyt, jotka saivat sinut muuttamaan takaisin kotiseudullesi?

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Kysymys numero 34 on niille, jotka vastasivat EI kysymykseen numero 28.

34. Mitkä ovat kolme syytä haluusi jäädä kotiseudullesi? Ympyröi sopivan vastausvaihtoehdon numero. Alleviivaa myös mielestäsi tärkein syy haluusi jäädä kotiseudullesi.

- 1 Täällä on tarjolla kunnollisia työpaikkoja.
- 2 Täällä minulle on sopivia koulutusvaihtoehtoja.
- 3 Tyttö/poikaystäväni /vaimoni/aviomieheni asuu täällä.
- 4 Täällä on hyvät julkiset liikenneyhteydet.
- 5 Täällä on miellyttävä ilmasto.
- 6 Luonto on täällä puhdas.
- 7 Suurin osa ystäväistäni aikoo jäädä tänne.
- 8 Eläminen täällä ei ole sen kalliimpaa kuin muuallakaan.
- 9 Täällä on mahdollista vaikuttaa paikallisiin asioihin.
- 10 Täällä on kunnollista kulttuuritarjontaa.
- 11 Täällä on mahdollisuudet kunnollisiin puhelin tai tietoliikenneyhteyksiin.
- 12 Vanhempani ja muu perhe asuvat täällä.
- 13 Haluan kasvattaa lapseni täällä.
- 14 Täällä on mielenkiintoani vastaavia harrastuksia.
- 15 Täällä on riittävästi palveluja tarjolla.
- 16 Täällä voin käydä diskoissa/yökerhoissa.
- 17 Jokin muu syy, mikä?

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**Loput kysymykset ovat kaikille!**

35. Mikä on tällä hetkellä elämässäsi tärkeintä?

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36. Luuletko, että sinulla on kotiseudullasi mahdollisuudet ihanteelliseen elämään? Miksi arvelet, että sinulla on mahdollisuus tai miksi sinulla ei ole mahdollisuuksia ihanteelliseen elämään kotiseudullasi.

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37. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat sosiaaliset ryhmät ovat sinulle, kun ajattelet juuriasi?

	1=ei ollenkaan tärkeä			5=erittäin tärkeä	
-perhe ja sukulaiset	1	2	3	4	5
-ystävät	1	2	3	4	5
-jonkin ideologian kannattajat	1	2	3	4	5
-suomalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
-eurooppalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
-jokin muu ryhmä, mikä?	1	2	3	4	5

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38. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat paikat ovat sinulle, kun ajattelet juuriasi?

	1=ei ollenkaan tärkeä			5=erittäin tärkeä	
-synnyinpaikka	1	2	3	4	5
-kotiseutu	1	2	3	4	5
-kotimaa	1	2	3	4	5
-Barentsin alue	1	2	3	4	5
-Pohjoismaat	1	2	3	4	5
-Eurooppa	1	2	3	4	5
-jokin muu paikka, mikä?	1	2	3	4	5

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39. Sinun on ehkä ollut vaikea vastata näihin kysymyksiin, joissa on valmiit vastausvaihtoehdot. Jos sinusta tuntuu siltä, että me olemme unohtaneet jotain, tai sinulla on erilaisia näkökulmia nuorena olemisesta vuonna 1999, kirjoita ajatuksiasi seuraaville riveille. Voit käyttää myös paperin kääntöpuolta, jos tarvitset.

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**Kiitos vastauksistasi!**

## Appendix 3.

Abbreviations of codes used after quotations.

### Sex

- f = female
- m = male

### Countries

- Fi = Finland
- No = Norway
- Swe = Sweden
- Ru = Russia

### Schools

- Un / Y = University
- U / L = Upper secondary school
- C / P = Comprehensive school
- V = Vocational training center

### Research Venues

- A = Alta
- Ap = Apatity
- Ar = Archangel
- B = Balsfjord
- Bo = Bodø
- G = Gällivare
- H = Harlu
- I = Ivalo
- K = Kalix
- Ko = Koashva
- L = Luleå
- M = Meliorativny
- N = Narvik
- P = Pirttikoski
- Pa = Pajala
- Pe = Petrosavodsk
- R = Rovaniemi
- S = Sodankylä
- Si = Sinettä
- T = Tromsø
- U = Uyma



## Appendix 4.

### Analysis of open-ended questions

The principles of interpretation and analysis which I have followed in dealing with the qualitative data gathered by way of open-ended questions can be regarded as reducing and producing observations regarding the data. As I faced several thousand answers in total, I understood right from the beginning that I would have to find a systematic way of interpreting and analysing the research data. With this in mind, I borrowed some of the ideas and logic suggested by such quantitative data analysts as Miles & Huberman (1994, 177) for cases like this. This meant that I had to somehow categorise the answers, making them comparable and making it possible to understand the general signals given by each answer. I accomplished this standardisation by forming *analytical units* and *matrices* in order to classify and register observations.

The first step in generating analytical units was to look at previous research and the theoretical framework of this study. On that basis it was easier to see those aspects, i.e. analytical units, which were central in solving the problem of this study. This thinking was the base for a matrix (Miles & Huberman 1994) of analytical units (Mäkelä 1990, 58). I constructed a respective matrix for the answers to each question in each country. The original matrices were usually not sufficient, however, and thus new analytical units had to be added to the original matrix, developed on the basis of my theoretical framework, as they arose from the answers.

Secondly, after generating analytical units and developing matrices, I carefully read through the qualitative data, i.e. answers to each of the open-ended questions, answer by answer. In order to do this I had all of the responses transcribed into digital text files and from there printed out on paper. In this physical form the total amount of qualitative data came to over 400 pages.

The matrices and analytical units were used together as very concrete tools in reading the answers: every time a respondent mentioned or briefly referred to some analytical unit, it was marked into the matrix. Each individual answer usually included many different aspects, and every reference was marked and counted individually. These mentions were then summed up after reading through all of the answers. On the basis of those numbers I could then see the major trends in response to each question.

This data reading also gave me an actual understanding of what the respondents thought of the questions asked. Furthermore, I believe that in this process I gained some inner feeling or intuition towards a broader view – a base from which handle this research theme, questions and conclusions. By intuition here I mean *phronesis*, practical wisdom in decision making in different phases of research (Flyvbjerg 2001). Researching is all about making choices, from designing research plans to the last full stop in the text (Hirsjärvi & Remes & Sajavaara 1997, 117; Bechhofer & Paterson 2000, vii, 2).

During the reading process I also jotted down the individual reference codes for particularly interesting, illuminating, conclusive or otherwise useful answers. This served my aim of isolating certain central themes for use in the actual writing process, which chronologically came much later than the first steps of the

analysing process. This made it easy to look up those interesting answers later, using my word processing programme's basic "search" command. I also used the same command to find some central analytical units in order to return to specific answers to verify my thinking later in the analysis and writing process (see, e.g., Miles & Huberman 1994, 11). Sometimes I thought that the way I used my text files and word processing software was reminiscent of the logic of software tools developed especially for the analysis of qualitative data.

Even though the starting points for my qualitative data analysis process were borrowed from quantitative data analysis, the nature and phases of analysis process more often brought to mind a whirling river – with rapids in some places and coves along the banks in others – than a steady flowing canal. I totally agree with Mäkelä (1990, 59) when he points out that qualitative analysis and interpretation processes can never take an automatic form. With regard to this study, my thoughts were not always automatic, coherent and structured; quite the contrary. Most of the time the analysis, and the thinking process as well, was constructed on rather mixed, tentative mind models, which were arranged into an integrated whole in the process of writing, reading literature and time and again going back to the data itself.