

THE ARCTIC CALLS – FINLAND, THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE ARCTIC REGION.

Markku Heikkilä and Marjo Laukkanen. 2013. Helsinki: Europe Information/Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. 94 p, softcover, illustrated. ISBN 978-952-281-065-6. Free of Charge

It is difficult to communicate complex contexts to a wider public. This is especially as regards Arctic climate change and its implications for Arctic cultures, peoples and environment, Arctic law, Arctic politics and economies. This is exactly what *The Arctic calls* has set out to do. It is a non-scientific book, well illustrated, that in seven short chapters takes the reader on a journey through the Arctic with many of its different facets. Since it is a publication partly financed by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a special focus lies on Finland's and the EU as an active player in the Arctic.

Therefore, the preface is written by Finland's President, Sauli Niinistö, who emphasises that the challenges in the Arctic call for a view on security devoid of a military dimension, but rather focusing on northern values, traditional knowledge and biodiversity. Unfortunately, Niinistö abstains from clarifying what his referred-to 'northern values' are and how security is connected to these. Yet, he presents an encompassing view on the Arctic: also the EU should be considered an Arctic actor due to its research on climate change and its tremendous markets that make it an important partner for the Arctic region.

The first chapter, 'Around the Arctic world', introduces what the Arctic is and gives a glimpse of different Arctic conditions relating to living, environment, people and politics. The language used has indeed a poetic, sometimes even slightly melancholic tone to it, which makes the reader easily understand what region of the world the book deals with. To deepen the understanding, the authors included nine sample cities around the Arctic, three from Russia, and one each from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Norway, Sweden and Finland, and provide snapshots of different characteristics, histories, problems and prospects of these cities. Different facets of human settlements of the contemporary Arctic are nicely introduced and illustrated. Why, however, an Icelandic city was not included here remains questionable and this certainly would have completed the circum-Arctic snapshot.

'At home in the north' also touches upon human presence in the Arctic, but expands this to issues of modernisation and indigenism using the example of *Oddasat* – Scandinavia's Sámi news programme. Different living conditions in connection with differences of economics are briefly explained, supplemented by photos that give further insight into important elements of Arctic life, such as the role of fishing in Lofoten, Norway. The chapter proceeds with three maps on city size, Arctic nation states and Arctic indigenous peoples and a basic explanation of the interconnection of these. Here, the first 'case studies', in integral element of this publication, is presented on the Sámi and two young, female Sámi celebrities in Finland, their connection to their homeland and innovative means to promote Sámi culture. Also the accounts of an outsider having come to northern Finland and her internalisation of certain cultural features make the notion of 'home' comprehensible.

Basic processes and impacts of climate change are explained in chapter three: 'A changing climate'. Not only is the Arctic impacted, also other regions of this world are

experiencing or will experience effects due to melting Arctic ice and permafrost. Indeed, it is a very brief summary of the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA 2004), easily understandable, with further reference to Arctic pollution and environmental law. Climate change and climate sciences are made further explainable through personal accounts of scientists working in the field, reproduced in a journalistic fashion with direct citations and individual perceptions. This is very nicely done, as it makes the layperson understand two facets of climate sciences that go beyond notions of 'weather' and 'atmosphere.'

The book moves to hydrocarbon resources and their extraction in 'A northern treasure trove'. Challenges of extraction and the law of the sea as the underlying legal framework find brief explanation here while also some geopolitical implications are touched upon. Yet, as Niinistö in the preface mentions, emphasis lies on cooperation instead of confrontation. The bridge is then built to increasing traffic in the northern sea route and the northwest passage as well as the extension of the railroad system in northern Finland. Again in a journalistic style, two researchers present their appraisal what climate change and changes in the dietary and living habits have for Sámi and Nenets reindeer herders. In a very short and personal way, the reader learns of educational challenges in the north or general characteristics of the Nenets culture. This is beautifully done as every sentence seems to carry information of interest to the reader. Reindeer herding and other land use in Finland constitutes the last part of this chapter and the reader is introduced to the Finnish reindeer herding system, gold prospects and wildlife use.

The emergence of the Arctic as a zone of cooperation via the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS 1991) and the establishment of the Arctic Council (AC 1996) is skilfully explained in 'From Missiles to Cooperation'. The chapter stresses that, while in the beginning rather uninteresting for media and politics, the Arctic Council has evolved into an important cooperative forum. The council's work is rudimentarily explained, but its special role in international politics and international relations is emphasised, due to its inclusion of indigenous organisations as permanent participants. Finland's Senior Arctic Official (SAO), Hannu Halinen, and former head of the SAOs, Gustaf Lind, give their personal accounts of the role of the EU in the Arctic as well as the role of the Arctic Council in combating climate change. Here, again in a journalistic fashion, several aspects are raised that give insight into politics surrounding the Arctic Council. Also an interview with Finland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Erkki Tuomioja, broaches several issues relating to the importance of the Arctic for Finland, the role of the EU and Finland's *inertia* in ratifying ILO Convention No. 169, which grants special rights to indigenous peoples.

'Networks in the Barents' focuses on life and living in the European Arctic: the Barents Region. The EU's role in supporting the region, education and tourism are briefly introduced. Again personal accounts of people living and working in the Barents Region make the characteristics, life and identity of the region accessible. The chapter concludes with a Finn's account on living in Murmansk and the fact that other languages than Russian are rarely heard in the city.

The last chapter 'Towards sustainable development' briefly summarises general issues the book has raised and concludes

that sustainable development in the Arctic is indeed a challenge. This is especially, since most of the Arctic is unpopulated and that wildlife and vegetation are undergoing drastic change.

This short book is very well suited for laypersons interested in the Arctic. Although certainly not a political publication, upon comparison it could in fact be considered a popularised version of Finland's Arctic Strategy (Prime Minister's Office, Finland 2010) due to the overlap in content. Both the written content and the numerous pictures that supplement the given information make the reader aware of the multitude of different characteristics of the Arctic. The book makes clear that the Arctic is not a frozen wasteland, but a vibrant, colourful and peaceful, yet fragile, region. Its clear and personal language and the fact that it is available in English, Finnish, Swedish and northern Sámi makes it 'a read for everyone'. It is indeed also very suitable as teaching material in schools due to its

encompassing and exciting content and lively design. Moreover it is free! To order visit <http://www.eurooppatiedotus.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=114400&GUID={64B0882E-C890-4B0F-B23C-FFFBAE208620}> or it can be ordered from eurooppatiedotus@formin.fi (Nikolas Sellheim, Faculty of Law, University of Lapland, PO Box 122, 96101 Rovaniemi, Finland (nikolas.sellheim@ulapland.fi)).

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