Higher Education Dynamics 48

Marit Sundet
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Higher Education in the High North

Academic Exchanges between Norway and Russia

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Foreword

It is always both an honour and a challenge to write a foreword on a book, an honour not least because you get to have “the first say” on what is to come. In the case of this book *Higher Education in the High North: Academic Exchange Between Norway and Russia* edited by Marit Sundet, Per-Anders Forstorp and Anders Örtenblad, having the first say means pointing to the original nature of the project that they report on and the important contribution the book makes to our understanding of the “internationalization of higher education”.

This is also a book that is always “more than”. It is “more than” a study of two countries joined at the hip by the Barents Region, Russia and Norway. Both face each other as neighbours, but with profoundly different histories, institutions, politics and trajectories. It is also a book that is “more than” a study of internationalization processes in the higher education sector – a term that needs a great deal more problematizing by writers on higher education than it tends to receive. Typically, internationalization is juxtaposed to globalization, as a “good thing”, and the case rests there. However, as one of the editors writes: “internationalization as a key signifier serves multiple meanings and functions, such as symbol of development and progress, a guide for quality criteria, and a carrier of content that often reaches far beyond the field of higher education. Like ‘love’ in the short story by Raymond Carver, ‘internationalization’ (and ‘globalization’) can be talked about with tenderness and friendship as well as with an ethos of violence” (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume).

The key defining feature of the volume is its geopolitical focus, on the “Barents” Region, so that while some recourse is made to wider literature on internationalization, the discussions of the cases are intensely focused and enable considerable enhancement of understanding through the intensity of the focus. This book on internationalization is an engagement with what it might mean at its best.

In this collection of chapters, we see “internationalization” being “done”, as well as/rather than described or defined. We are shown a wide range of purposes and practices of internationalization, which are intensified by their joint focus on “NORRUS”. This is central to the significance of the volume. While it might be expected that a concentrated focus on such a “small” region might inevitably lead to repetition, this is not at all the case. While the various chapters do not explicitly "talk to" each other, and while there is no claim that they collectively exhaust what might be said about higher education in the Barents Region, they nevertheless contribute to a depth and coherence that is quite unusual in studies of regional higher education.

Readers will be able to draw a quadruple benefit from this intensity of focus and continuity of topic. First, they will be able to recognize and understand in some depth the distinct forms, quality, purposes and practices of higher education programmes in the Barents Region. Second, they will be exposed to, and enabled to recognize the significance of, the processes of constructing and teaching transnationally. Third, and perhaps most importantly in a theoretical sense, recognizing and being able to identify the nature of this distinctive regional project provides a fresh lens through which to view, reappraise and readdress the more conventional forms of analysing the internationalization of higher education. And fourth, an especially valuable feature of the volume is the fresh light it sheds on "post-Soviet" Russia. This has been the focus of many theories and studies, but they have tended to focus on wider geopolitical tensions, which followed the end of the Cold War. One result of this is that "Russia" has become rather one dimensional in these literatures, consequently neglecting the basic argument about the centrality of the tension between harmonization and tradition (Kriulya, Chap. 8 in this volume; Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume).

The book as a whole is a genuinely fresh, novel and important contribution to the literature on the internationalization of higher education, and it can only be hoped that it will be read and digested by the practitioners of that particular field of enquiry.

The nature and value of the book's approach cannot be better summed up than in the final sentence of Per-Anders Forstorp's chapter:

> The short answer to the question in focus here "What are we talking about when we talk about internationalization?" is that we talk of what we are supposed to talk about (internationalization in and of higher education) in a narrow sense but we also talk of many other things in a broader sense. Such encounters are not just occasions for reflecting on an activity but are also a demonstration of and a performance of the activity which is talked about. (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume)

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Roger Dale
Susan Robertson

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I feel very fortunate to have enjoyed many forms and sources of support during the long and often difficult process of working on this book. It is a pleasure to acknowledge them here.

In 2012 The Faculty of Social Sciences at Nord University had developed a project sketch which was closely linked to the core activities occupying university employees, namely teaching and research. With the project; *Higher education in the High North: Regional Restructuring through Educational Exchanges and Student Mobility*, we had the ambition to understand the meaning of internationalization, research, education and collaboration beyond national borders. Although, the research questions are closely linked to the practice-oriented experience that Nord University had in relation to the many foreign students where students from Northwest Russia were dominant.

The project received generous financial support from the Research programme on the High North and Russia (NORRUSS) at the *Research Council of Norway*. Without the grant, this book had not exists. Thank you for having faith in our goal to keep the research-group closely connected to unable all researchers involved in the project to follow the research process from the beginning four years ago ending with this edition.

A number of colleagues and friends have assisted in the development of this edition. Special thanks to Mariann Monsen that have helped us all with the financial management of the project situated at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Nord University, you have been essential for this research project. In addition to Mariann, scholars as Per Anders Forstorp, Ulf Mellström, and Anders Örtenblad must have a special thanks. Per-Anders and Ulf because "internationalization of higher education institutions" has been a central topic for our discussions for years. I consider them as my mentors in this field of research. Anders because of his courage, encouragement, challenging discussions and not least the great work of formatting and styling this book. Of course, it is with great humility that I say thank you to all of my colleagues who are authors of this book – this is the research group. We have held together for four years crossed the borders between Norway, Russia and Sweden and met face-to-face at repeated and regular times a year. All have attended international and national conferences to discuss our findings with other scholars. The essence of our research collaboration is now available in this book.

To all assisted in this edition, both directly and indirectly – Thank you for the fruitful research-cooperation that gave a deeper insight and knowledge regarding cross- border educational cooperation.

Marit Sundet

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Håkan T. Sandersen has worked with various issues in the Barents Region for more than 20 years in such fields as aquaculture development, coastal zone management, mining, nature protection and regional development. His main interests are within environmental and nature resource management, institutional analysis and user-group participation. In the last decade, he has taken part in several Norwegian-Russian projects that involve research cooperation and comparative perspectives. Sandersen is an associate professor of political science at the Faculty of Social Science at Nord University, Bodø, Norway.

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Marit Sundet is a professor at Nord University, Norway, and member of the Academic Leadership Team of UArctic (ALT of UArctic). Her main scholarly interest is international cooperation between higher educational institutions (HEIs), which has captivated her for more than 15 years. Her empirical studies of international cooperation between HEIs have been published in journals such as *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, revealing that such cooperation is rooted in very different political, social, economic and cultural conditions and that these conditions are prerequisites for the individuals participating in international networks.

Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen has a long career in higher education research. Student mobility and internationalization are among her fields of expertise, along with transition from higher education to work and students' experiences and assessments of higher education. She holds a PhD in sociology and is currently working as a research professor at the Nordic Institute for Studies in Education, Research and Innovation, in addition to her main position as associate professor at the Centre for Study of Professions, Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences.

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Chapter 1
Introduction and Background

Marit Sundet, Per-Anders Forstorp, and Anders Örtenblad

1.1 Introduction

All across the contemporary world we are witnessing a widespread belief in higher education ("educationism" in Dale and Robertson 2009) as a key to transforming the future. Higher education is associated with traditional values, such as empowerment and personal development, but also with such societal values as paying service to the economy and the local community while also fostering a regional and/or national identity. Increasingly, higher education and knowledge-sharing across national borders is understood as an important step in the cultivation of regional identities during a perceived time of global challenges related to the economy, the environment and society, in general (Gürüz 2011). The cultivation of regional identities, and the mobilization for the future through processes of higher education and cultural exchange, forms new educational landscapes (*eduscapes* in Forstorp and Mellström 2013) and sustains the hope that the advantages of the region will be identified and explored.

International cooperation is not always an easy thing to accomplish. It is especially difficult to establish long-lasting and fruitful cooperations. Yet this is what an increasing number of corporations and institutions not only are expected to do but even need to do, in a world described as globalized. One area in which cross-border collaboration is rapidly increasing is student exchange. For a higher educational

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institution (HEI) to claim that it is “internationalizing”, it needs to develop links to HEIs in other countries and to formulate policies and visions.

This book addresses student mobility and regional cooperation through higher education in the Euro-Arctic area known as the Barents Region. We focus on how the northern futures are transformed through regional cooperation in the Barents eduscape: a study of the social, cultural and political aspects of higher education and the exchange of learning and people in the region.

We provide an analysis of the outstanding features of the practice of education cooperation between Norway and Russia, in particular. What the different actors can do, what they actually do, and why they act as they do are basic questions that focus on the interactional processes in educational cooperation. The book will showcase the cultural dimensions of the Northern Areas Initiative in addition to illuminating how the goodwill of High North politics is significant for what is actually going on. Terms such as internationalization, educational cooperation, and international research are interrogated throughout the volume and the contributors' show, in different ways, how theories and practices change in relation to their own national movement, and how they change less than that of international trends. It is therefore not unreasonable to ask the question, can cooperation between different academic institutions be institutionalized?

This book demonstrates that educational cooperation between Norway and Russia is possible, while also showing that the existing practices are extremely vulnerable to change. By developing new perspectives that bind major theories, international political decisions, methodological procedures and contextual descriptions together, this is a first step in the direction of understanding the institutionalization of educational cooperation between different academic societies, cultures and political systems. Our focus is on educational cooperation and it discusses the strategies that are desirable and possible for HEIs to become internationally recognized. Researchers from Norway, Russia and Sweden explore what cross-border cooperation in education is all about, both in theory and practice. This empirical and processual study gives us knowledge about everyday challenges that need to be understood and added to the grand theories and expectations about the internationalization of HEIs.

1.1.1 Problem Statement

This book deals with cooperation in higher education between universities in Russia and Norway. It describes and analyzes how institutions with very different assumptions and conditions have jointly developed and run educational programs for more than 15 years. The unique aspect of this book is that it shows what internationalization of higher education means in practice. It takes the reader to the almost unknown Barents Region, with an eduscape characterized by historical, cultural, economic, political and social differences and peculiarities. Insight into what the internationalization of higher education is all about requires an understanding of how such social circumstances determine how both academic courses and the cooperation itself take shape and develop content.

In similar ways, the features and characteristics of the collaborating institutions are regarded as significant for how the cooperation may work, what resources are necessary for the running of educational programs, and what level of interest and reputation the international study programs instill. Likewise, this volume focuses on the individuals involved in these programs. The actors are included in the communicative, problem-solving work, and they facilitate the networks that constitute the necessary conditions for the operation of these international courses. Moreover, and not least of all, in this book we put the spotlight on the students; how they are recruited for and adapt to these study programs and what career paths they choose.

In other words, this volume is based on a specific international education cooperation studied from three different perspectives: macro analytical, institutional theory, and micro sociological. The intention is to give the reader insight into what the internationalization of higher education is all about, and to understand this form of cooperation not only in isolation but also from the perspective of a joint venture between two or more institutions. That these institutions are located in two different countries is obviously a prerequisite to defining the cooperation as international or interregional. Far more challenging, and therefore more interesting, is when the differences between them, rather than the similarities, are the most empirically striking. Two general questions guide the contributions to this book:

- What is internationalization in practice?
- What are the contextual meanings of the internationalization of higher education?

Through these general questions, and by exploring normative pressures and the ideology of internationalism and globalism we are able to address several issues and sub questions; such as how international student mobility and regional cooperation in HE become possible in the region. We strive to concretize the details and machinery of international cooperation: what can internationalization be and how does it take place? The Bologna process plays a role as a model of adaptation, and we examine how this adaptation is accomplished in different ways in both countries.

Educational cooperation in the Barents Region is one example of political projects to foster regional identities through the establishment of a regional eduscape in the context of wider globalization. We show how educational collaboration is not just about academic content and skills, and the economy, but it is also about people-to-people interaction, foreign policy, diplomacy and soft power. Language and gender are crucial dimensions of international higher education and academic mobility. The core of these contributions outlines the scope of Russian-Norwegian exchange.

Table 1.1 Location of HEIs participating in the educational cooperation

Murmansk (3 HEIs):	International Institute of Business Education (MIBO)
	Murmansk State Humanities University (MSHU)
	Murmansk State Technical University (MSTU)
Arkhangelsk (1 HEI):	The Northern (Arctic) Federal University (NArFU)
St.Petersburg (1 HEI):	State Polar Academy
Syktyvkar (2 HEIs):	Syktyvkar State University
	Komi Republican Academy of State Service and Administration
Bodø (1 HEI):	University of Nordland

1.1.2 Contexts

This book addresses student mobility and regional higher education cooperation in the Euro-Arctic area referred to as the Barents Region, especially between one Norwegian and seven Russian HEIs (Table 1.1). There are a number of names given to this Euro-Arctic area, such as the High North, the Northern Dimension, the Circumpolar region, the North Calotte, Fennoscandia and the Arctic, among others. The different naming practices are tied to the contextual emergence of an interest in this region, whether from the countries involved, from regional authorities such as the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and EU, or from transnational organizations such as the University of the Arctic (UArctic).

The Barents Region, which is the preferred designation in this book, is strategically situated at the very margins of climate zones and political regions. It is right at the intersection where the EU mainland (Sweden and Finland) meets the EES (Norway) and Russia. The region spans across 1,755,800 km^2, approximating the combined area of France, Spain, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, or historically equivalent to the size of the Roman Empire from 800 CE. The region has a population of around 5.2 million, 3.6 million of which live in Russia (Arctic Stat 2014). The remaining population resides in the northern parts of Finland, Sweden and Norway. The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR, headed by BEAC) constitutes the gateway to the Northeast Passage Sea Route which links the Occident with the Orient. The Arctic, in general, is currently the focus of intense national and geopolitical interests and controversial natural resource prospecting. The impact of climate change is highly noticeable in this vulnerable region, leading to such negative consequences as habitat destruction, and, some would argue, positive effects like the opening of a Northern Sea Route far beyond Novaya Zemlya; where Dutch Arctic explorer Willem Barentsz's expedition, in search of a northeast passage, tragically ended in the sixteenth century.

The Barents Region constitutes an eduscape consisting of a vast stretch of land, across which the network's eight HEI's are spread from the Barents Sea in the northeast to the Norwegian Sea in the northwest. The Barents cooperation was formally established at the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration in 1993. The intention, to ensure positive post-Cold War relations, economic and social development and stability (White paper No. 7 (2011–2012)), was manifested in a formal agreement involving the foreign ministers. Education would be just one of many fields to be addressed by the regional partnership. In addition to the four countries in the Barents Region, Denmark, Iceland and the E.U. also took part in the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration. Representatives from the countries that signed the Declaration are all members of the BEAC, which meets at the foreign minister level every other year in the country that is responsible for chairmanship for the given period. Chairmanship rotates between the four Barents countries. The goal is to promote economic and social development in the Barents region, thereby contributing to a peaceful development in the northernmost part of Europe. Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Great Britain and the U.S.A. all have observer status at the BEAC meetings.

Today, the Barents Region is being consolidated as a transnational political and cultural region, stretching from the fishing communities of northern Norway through the Barents Sea to the distant forests of western Ural. The region is an invention and a political project, the history of which has only recently become the focus of research (Elenius 2015); previously almost unknown in the research field. One element of this regionalization process is the exchange system within higher education. When traditions meet and people communicate, things happen: centuries-old connections through the Pomor trade are brought to the surface as well as long-standing security issues. The specific characteristics of the region frame and affect the concepts of internationalization in several ways, as indicated by historian Lars Elenius:

> Considering the cultural exchanges within the Barents Region in the long period from 800 to 2010 one might ask what is a common cultural heritage and what a national one. In a way we could say that we start with the history of independent ethnic groups in a common area, move on through the era of building strong nation states, empires and super-powers and end with today's striving for a new kind of global ethnic independence. We can see that international matters have influenced the different parts of the region from the very beginning of the period we are dealing with. Against this background one might ask what is the meaning of *internationalization* and *globalization* in this context. (Elenius 2015, p. 26 [emphasis in original])

Like Elenius, we focus on the meanings of internationalization and related concepts in this geopolitical context. The empirical knowledge that has emerged through research cooperation represents an important factor contributing to the development of democracy and individual welfare. Higher education in the Barents Region cannot compare in numbers with what is currently being undertaken in the populous and prosperous regions of China, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, but the changes in higher education and cultural exchange that are currently being implemented in the High North are what counts in this region. The region is virtually unknown in research on higher education and globalization. There are many characteristics in this region, not least of which include the differences between Nordic and Russian notions and/or practices of internationalization. Until recently (1992), intercultural connections were explicitly forbidden on the Russian side. Citizens of the Soviet Union, and then the Russian Federation, were prohibited from traveling abroad. In a short time period, since 1993, this has changed dramatically, leading to the promotion of many kinds of intercultural exchange today. As witnessed during the past few years, incidents in world politics, such as the Russian annexation of Crimea and the western response to it, can affect exchange through sanctions on behaviour and the flow of goods and people. In just two decades, international relations in the region have gone from being forbidden, to becoming a love affair between neighbours to yet another emerging sense of hesitance. Given the cultural and political differences between Norway and Russia it is quite remarkable that educational collaboration and institutional partnerships have even become possible, much less successful. In several chapters of the book, we explore the differences between the Norwegian and Russian systems of higher education; the policies and changes as well as the institutionalization and corresponding adaptations.

Knowledge of the region is primarily framed through a network consisting of academics and administrators from eight HEIs located in the Barents Region. The Norwegian HEI is located in the northern part of Norway, and the seven others are located in northwestern Russia (see Table 1.1). These eight HEIs work together in managing the Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies (BCS) program, which is a net-based educational program that primarily focuses on the social science and humanities perspectives on topics pertaining to the Arctic. This educational collaboration is a new multilateral regional cooperative resulting from the 1993 declaration at Kirkenes. The case study's most prominent network – the BCS program – offers insight into the everyday operations, however, the data collection also includes in-depth interviews and close collaboration with the University of Tromsø (since February 15, 2013 UiT, The Arctic University of Norway) and the UiT faculty in Alta who run a parallel program, the Bachelor of Northern Studies (BNS).

There are large geographical distances between the cooperating HEIs in this network. Although some of the Russian HEIs are located in the same city, there are considerable differences between them in relation to size (from 1600 to 20,000 students), academic profile, financial foundation, management principles and strategies for internationalization as well. The Norwegian HEI, University of Nordland (renamed Nord University since January 1, 2016), is the institution that enrolls the most Russian students in Norway each year, 75% of which apply for the BCS program.

During the period of research, several institutional changes have taken place among the participating HEIs, such as mergers between institutions and name changes. In some of the cases, institutions have lost their identity as independent institutions; e.g. the State Polar Academy in St. Petersburg, which is now part of the Russian State Hydrometeorological University, and Finnmark University College in Alta, which is now identified as Campus Finnmark and belongs to UiT The Arctic University of Norway. In the book, we have not imposed retrospective changes of these names, but have followed the naming practices given at the time of the research. Therefore, some institutions will be referred to differently according to context.

A few changes worked as incentives for the project and the establishment of the network. Among these changes, there are two factors in particular that should be highlighted. One factor was the awakening of possibilities after the Cold War, born of a close political cooperation to face unresolved issues and challenges encompassing a range of fields. The other major factor was the realization of large and ample opportunities to harness natural resources and develop business in the northern regions. The oil industry, fisheries, mining and other businesses based on natural resources, however, are connected to environmental considerations and sustainability. Exploitation of natural resources and environmental challenges are, therefore, central issues in the political cooperation. Additionally, both Russia and Norway have strategic geopolitical and defense interests in the region. The development of the bilateral relationship, therefore, has the function of preserving the peace as well. From the Norwegian perspective, Russia comprises a cornerstone of the northern political arena (Whitepaper 2011–2012, p. 11), while the northern regions are simultaneously described as Norway's most important strategic area of foreign politics. On the Russian side, Foreign Minister Sergei V. Lavrov spoke at a 2008 meeting in Kirkenes about the Barents Cooperation as an example of Russia's desire to work together with its neighboring countries. During a speech in Moscow on the Barents Cooperation, President Vladimir V. Putin emphasized the significance the Russians place on such work by pointing out, among other things, that "preserving the Arctic as a zone of peace and cooperation is of the utmost importance for Russia" (Putin 2010).

As a foundation for the educational collaboration, two areas of prioritization are often referred to. One is the development of knowledge in a range of different fields that primarily include the natural science disciplines. The other is the so-called "people-to-people cooperation" involving approximately the same number of fields, where education is brought into focus as a particularly critical area of collaboration. With cooperation in the areas of research and education as a priority, the Norwegian side has invested a considerable amount of financial support – primarily toward the natural sciences here as well. Additionally, they have provided clear expectations in the form of politically formulated goals for all of the relevant institutions; including treaties, white papers and speeches. These types of political expectations have had a clear influence on the adaptations made by HEIs in the Barents Region.

The other institutionalized innovation that is important to highlight is the net-based University of the Arctic (UArctic), which was established in 1997 by the Arctic Council and, therefore, is primarily a circumpolar collaboration between eight member countries. It was through UArctic that actors in the three northernmost regions of Norway discovered how they could connect their HEIs to Russian educational institutions. Over time, they succeeded in establishing what, today, is a relatively well-functioning educational cooperation between eight HEIs in the Barents Region.

The process of European integration takes place largely through the mobility of work but also through the mobility of education and cultural exchange by means of intercultural communication and sharing of identities, symbols and values. Explicit goals within the European Higher Education Area (the Bologna process) are to enhance employability and mobility in order to increase international competitiveness. Internationalization and the Bologna process work in parallel in the region. Bologna, however, does not serve as an all-embracing umbrella to all internationalization activities in the region, since several of the exchange activities are initiated and governed by other institutional actors such as the individual nations of the UArctic. In the Barents Region, Sweden, Finland and Norway are already well into this process of institutional restructuring while there is an ongoing, extremely rapid transition of higher education also taking place in Russia, with the goal of conforming to the joint standards that were set by the Bologna process in 2010 (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005; Johnson 2008; Maximova-Mentzoni 2013). This process, however, only picked up momentum after 2013.

1.2 Conceptual Framework: Contributions to Research on Internationalization in HE

Cultural exchange through higher education, involving actors such as students and institutions, is an integral part of both the Bologna process and the policies currently changing higher education. It is also a process of social and cultural change of which we have limited knowledge (Brooks and Waters 2011). Although internationalization is an attractive buzzword almost everywhere, cultural exchange does not just happen – it has to be organized, learned and implemented by the actors who are involved from the highest political and administrative levels to the grassroots participants and the students themselves (Robertson 2006). Available knowledge of these macro- and micro-processes of cultural exchange is largely fragmented and distinctly framed in national and/or disciplinary (i.e. pedagogical) contexts. In order to understand the transformative potentials of higher education and cultural exchange, and the possible impacts of such, there is a strong need for empirical studies focusing on the social, cultural and political aspects of the transformations of the future in the North. We, therefore, turn to the notion of the actors' "everyday life" (Gullestad 1992), in that we focus on the actors that are practicing contemporary internationalization. The need for empirical studies that attempt to describe and understand the thoughts, words and actions of those individuals is strong. Nevertheless, we want to emphasize that the main difference between those who are guarding the political and economic objectives of internationalization and those who practice internationalization is that the ideologies of practitioners are generally not documented. As Marianne Gullestad says: "Several analytical perspectives are required (…). Above all, we must be able to grasp how these spheres and activities are crucial to the reproduction of the total political and economic system" (1992, p. 60). She highlights a structural point of view, saying that everyday life is not a defended enclave of traditional values, but a fundamentally modern construction.

Internationalization blends here into interregionalization, where higher educational regionalism is defined as "[A] political project of region creation involving at least some state authority (national, supranational, international), who in turn designates and delineates the world's geographical region to which such activities extend, in the higher education policy sector" (Chou and Ravinet 2015, p. 368; see also Robertson et al. 2016). Internationalization, as a concept, may also seem not entirely appropriate in relation to the fact that this book primarily addresses two nations. However, internationalization has emerged in various ways as a unifying concept due to the simple fact that the HEIs and the informants in both nations highlight their need to be internationally attractive in order to survive in a globalized world. Concepts such as "cross-border cooperation" are possibly somewhat more accurate in describing and contextualizing parts of this book; nevertheless, we must include the ways in which the HEIs "cope" (Bærenholdt 2011) with the demands of their governments to act internationally. Bærenholdt says that "[t]o cope means to manage a problem successfully, but a problem not of the actor's own making. It is something people have to contend with, something they cannot escape" (2011, p. 2). In our context, we cannot escape from the concept of internationalization.

Internationalization is normally reflected upon by using concepts that refer to macro levels, large structures and extensive processes (Luke 2006). The terms belonging to macro levels tend to refer to markets and policy areas, while rarely addressing what happens in discussions between the people who are practicing the work that results from the internationalization processes. The macro level terms are, therefore, applicable when denoting and describing systems in which participants are not visible (Delgado-Marquez et al. 2013), as in some of the chapters in this book that are concerned with national and institutional higher education policy. The terms for internationalization, however, are insufficient when describing the feelings, attitudes, expectations and ways of thinking that are expressed in meetings with and between individuals who operate within these systems. Therefore, the current book focuses on the very concrete, hands-on activities that make up the work of internationalization.

Naming the concrete activities of internationalization opens up for a wide vocabulary of similar terms such as academic exchange, student exchange, and cultural exchange, all of which refer to a field of actions or forms of representing various components of cooperation/internationalization practices. The book is characterized by a high degree of multiplicity, not least regarding the very concept of internationalization. Firstly, the contributors bring up a multitude of explanations/motivations/drivers for internationalization. Secondly, a multitude of definitions and meanings of internationalization are dealt with. Two chapters are actually dedicated to exploring people's understandings of internationalization (Chaps. 7 and 8). Furthermore, several different definitions of internationalization are brought up in many of the chapters. Thirdly, a number of dimensions for categorizing different types of internationalization are addressed, more or less explicitly. One such dimension is whether internationalization is and/or should be built on individuals and/or institutions, which, in fact, is a dimension that seems to run through the entire book. Another dimension is whether internationalization is problem-driven or visionary, an aspect that is indicated by Kukarenko and Zashikina (Chap. 2, in this volume). We would suggest, for instance, that Sandersen (Chap. 6, in this volume) describes internationalization more in accordance with the visionary end of the spectrum, while Goes (Chap. 5, in this volume) is closer to the “problem-driven” end.

There are also dimensions that are less explicit in the chapters, but that could easily be used to categorize the chapters. One such dimension views internationalization as an opportunity, at one end of the spectrum, and as a problem, at the other end. For example, Kukarenko and Zashikina’s chapter (Chap. 2, in this volume), in which the authors suggest that one reason for Russia to internationalize may have been a wish to modernize, could be viewed as a proponent of internationalization as an opportunity. On the other hand, Forstorp and Kriulya’s chapter on plagiarism (Chap. 9, in this volume) could represent the other end of the spectrum – a problem.

Of course, there are alternatives to multiplicity. We could have defined internationalization when this research project was initiated and seen to it that all the contributors stuck to the single definition. This would have been in accordance with the “validity police” position on concepts. However, we chose to take the “umbrella advocate” that Hirsch and Levin (1999) discuss, in which there are many different definitions of any particular concept, thus creating an “umbrella”. We definitely believe that there are times and places where the validity police position is the most relevant; however, in a project such as this, where not much previous literature exists, we have chosen a more open attitude towards many of the concepts that are involved, not least of which being the concept of internationalization. Nevertheless, we cannot fail to mention the pioneering contributions of linguist, Ingvild Broch (Broch and Jahr 1999), to the field of Norwegian and Russian academic exchange. Since the establishment of the University of Tromsø in 1972, professor Broch has used her efforts to convey the Russian language and culture in northern Norway. She has put a lot of effort into developing relations between the University of Tromsø and Pomor University in Arkhangelsk. In 1996 she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Pomor University for her contribution to Norwegian-Russian cooperation. In the fall of 2000, she received the International Russian Teacher Association Award for her work in spreading Russian language and culture. In 1998, she was awarded the Pushkin medal for her contributions to the dissemination of Russian culture.

Our take on the concept of internationalization is, thus, largely derived from a practice-based and bottom-up approach by which we follow the processes that are taking place. Rather than searching for an all-embracing definition for internationalization, we are looking for practices that make up internationalization and explicitly show an interest in the meanings of this given by the people we talk to. With our empirical research led by the ongoing processes, we provide knowledge of recent developments and grasp the initial foundation on which “internationalization”, “mergers in higher education”, “global processes”, and the like, are dealt with in practice. We strongly believe that empirical and contextual accounts are needed in this research field, which is also mirrored by the conceptual multiplicity.

The activities associated with internationalization achieve a specific character in a geopolitical context, which is also largely defined as regional. What we look at are not internationalizing activities, in general, but what passes for such activities in a regional context.

1.3 Methods

First of all, every contribution to this book is based on empirical data collected in the High North during the period 2012–2015 within the framework of a larger research project on the educational institutional collaboration and student exchange between Norway and Russia presented above. The contributors to this book have participated throughout the research process. We have shared data, analyzed and discussed our ideas together with the specific aim of exchanging research experiences between Norway, Sweden and Russia. The contributions, therefore, also reflect that the researchers themselves actually are included as empirical material in a quest to understand different cultural systems and follow the knowledge production that the process of research collaboration entails. Here, we present some general notes on methods that have been used to study the project. Each chapter contributor will then offer more specific information on methods.

The main questions concerning internationalization of higher education in practice and its contextual meanings are addressed in at least two different ways. One way is to count the number of international students (students that are studying in a foreign country), or to count the number of exams submitted by foreign students at a local university. These figures show the extent to which people are studying outside their own country and, as such, these numerical data are an expression of internationalization. Chapters 3, 10 and 12 rely on quantitative data collected in both Norway and Russia.

The second way to answer these questions is to study what forms the foundation for international exchange for both students and institutions. These data are based on the notes, minutes, calls of meetings, interviews, and participant observations. Why and how do students want to get their education in a country other than their own? These understandings include how students become familiar with opportunities to study abroad, what they find tempting with such studies, and what it entails for them personally and for subsequent life choices. Qualitative data are based on interviews with students in both countries, exploring the grassroots aspects of their academic mobility (Chaps. 11 and 13). Questions are also addressed to institutional representatives such as international coordinators, faculty and high level administrators. How is cross-border education established, operated and developed? Interviews with institutional representatives form the material for several chapters (Chaps. 6, 7, 8, and 9). Aside from interviews (Briggs 1992), data have been acquired through participant observation and by being involved in the administration and governing of international exchange, per se, especially in Chaps. 2, 4, and 5, but also throughout the other chapters.

One approach does not discount the other; the first refers to the successful indicators of the institutions' efforts towards international cooperation and, as such, these are measurable variables for international cooperation. The second approach is the premise for the first; therefore, this volume starts from the second approach by asking what internationalization is, in practice, in a contextualized connection. Thus, methodologically we argue for an understanding of what is hidden to the outside observer. Educational cooperation cannot be understood by merely looking at fixed indicators of political goodwill and the different HEIs' strategic plans for internationalization. We want to include the contexts and affective dimensions in our story, and that requires engaged ethnographic methods rather than interview data alone.

1.4 Outline of the Book

This volume, in itself, is an interdisciplinary project involving researchers from areas such as higher education studies, political science, cultural anthropology, cultural geography, organization studies, and sociology. It is also an intercultural project, which was started 4 years ago by a group of researchers who all ended up as contributing authors to the book. As we all come from different countries, and none of us has English as a mother tongue, we have found it necessary to make use of a single copy editor. We are not primarily concerned with linguistic barriers, but rather how to include the contextual and cultural variations within each chapter. We do not want to camouflage these differences and present them as a priori; as a given and passive opposite to the English language. The context must be seen as the active and "unstable" result of specific practices we are following in performing research together despite the varied research procedures in Russia, as opposed to those that similarly exist between Norway and Sweden. In the research process, we had the opportunity to clear up any linguistic misunderstandings and different interpretations of the English language, however, the same cannot be done in writing; thus, the volume shows signs of linguistic variations despite the copy editing. We do not wish to take for granted that we are bearers of different native languages and yet, despite this fact, we emphasize that the author's opinions and intentions are faithfully represented throughout the book. One of our foremost objectives throughout this research project was to safeguard our Russian colleagues, which also involves international production of written materials. With our strong unity and openness to cultural differences, we have succeeded and chosen one professional copy editor as a strategy to prepare our various chapters in the best possible way as a whole entity.

The characteristic approach taken here is to try and concretize international cooperation between HEIs in the field of international student exchange. Thus, the book starts off from a relatively abstract perspective (nations and networks), presenting political intentions and policies that are relevant to the exchange programs studied. Thereafter, the book takes on a much more concrete perspective, with an effort to explore how such cooperation can actually come about through people exchange and practice at the institutional and student levels.

Part I, "Nations", introduces a retrospective processual and historical insight into two different nations, Norway and Russia. The political, social and cultural forces/

drivers are analyzed and contextualized. This section provides a close-up of the internationalization processes and student mobility in Russia and Norway, in which the contributors present their own countries and are, thus, the guardians of cultural peculiarities. In Chap. 2, “Internationalization the Russian Way: Modernization of a Higher Education System in Russia”, Natalia Kukarenko and Inga Zashikina argue that international cooperation was an additional activity within the national system during the Soviet period. Today’s Russian HEIs function as instruments of institutional diversification. Using contextual data from this project, however, they show that the educational cooperation between Norway and Russia emerges as a driving power and valuable resource for the modernization of the Russian HEIs. In Chap. 3, “The Norwegian Framework: Educational Policy with a Hint of Foreign Affairs”, Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen and Håkan T. Sandersen argue that the Norwegian HEIs’ previous focus on international solidarity has lost some of its importance, but that HEIs in Norway nonetheless relate their policy rationales to foreign aid in addition to regional cooperation.

Part II, “Networks”, pays close attention to the cultural aspects of the education cooperation between Norway and Russia. We find it extremely important to theorize on the effects of traditional flows of people and ideas, however, in this section we want to recall the cultural variation and creation of meaning, inspired by the Norwegian anthropologist Marianne Gullestad (1992) and her “everyday life” perspective. We pay attention to the relatively distinct regional networking individuals. Gullestad expresses how important it is to capture the cultural variations in this way; “… while cultural variation is now often not framed geographically, it is clear that networks spread out geographically still have a spatial dimension” (Gullestad 1992, p. 13). In Chap. 4, “Walking the Talk: Putting Internationalization into Practice”, Marit Sundet points out that structures set the framework for the actions of individuals, but also that the establishment of an international network involves far more than simply discovering a well-suited model for interaction. The second chapter in this section (Chap. 5), “Educational Collaboration in the Barents Region: An Island of Freedom?”, by Sander Goes, questions whether the educational cooperation between Norway and Russia may be considered as an “Island of Freedom” as we still do not understand the informal norms in Russia that, nonetheless, have influence on the formal decision-making process.

Part III, “Institutions”, starts off with Chap. 6, “Success by Necessity? Educational Partnerships Between Individual Initiatives and Institutional Frameworks”, in which Håkan T. Sandersen offers detailed accounts of different educational initiatives by Norwegian actors on Russian soil. He shows the crucial importance of entrepreneurs and visionaries for the successful implementation of educational endeavors and goals. In the following Chap. 7, “What We Talk About When We Talk About Internationalization”, Per-Anders Forstorp offers perspectives on the meanings of the multidimensional concept of internationalization for the practical circumstances of students, institutions and nations. Internationalization is far from a uniform concept in the hands of the different actors. Chapter 8, “‘Bologna Coat’ for the Barents Weather: Paradoxes of Integrating into International Educational Dimension in Russia”, by Lidia Kriulya, critically examines how Russian faculty talk about internationalization. She distinguishes these perceptions from the ones put forth by institutions and governments and shows, unsurprisingly, how these interpretations differ remarkably. In Chap. 9, “Learning Exchange and the Ethics of Textual Borrowing: Pedagogy, Mobility and Intertextuality Between Academic Cultures”, Per-Anders Forstorp and Lidia Kriulya suggest that it is vital to understand the context for learning in academic cultures. Not least of all, it is important to have these contexts in mind when violations of academic ethics are alleged. Plagiarism is a recurring issue in international education, including the Barents Region; however, in order to avoid jumping to hasty conclusions, “plagiarism” needs to be interpreted within a cultural framework of learning and practices of academic intertextuality.

Part IV focuses on “Students”. In Chap. 10, “Russian Students in Norway: Why They Come and How They Manage”, authored by Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen, analyzes data collected in a survey from the spring of 2014, focusing on student exchange between Norway and Russia. This chapter leads us through many interesting discoveries and gives the author grounds to ask whether higher education institutions may give priority to other rationales for student mobility than quality enhancement and cultural exchange. In Chap. 11, “Global Horizons and Regional Mobility: Russian Student Mobility to Northern Norway and Northern Sweden”, Ulf Mellström provides additional data from interviews with Russian students in Sweden. The main attractions of international study are the potential to escape gender structures in Russian society in addition to a kind of “welfarism”, i.e. the attraction of living in a society deemed more socioeconomically stable. In Chap. 12, “Russian Students’ Mobility Capital at the University Internationalization Field”, Anna Soloviova provides data from Russian students in Russia, exploring their interest in international study through the concept of mobility capital. In Chap. 13, “Leaving Russia? Russian Students in Norway”, Eivind Karlsen examines the controversial question of whether Russian students actually use internationalization as a stepping stone in a strategy seeking permanent migration.

1.5 Outcomes and Practical Relevance

The aim of the book is to contribute to the body of knowledge within such areas as international and comparative education, international education collaboration, internationalizing higher education, and regionalization of higher education, by highlighting the case of the regional and nonetheless international cooperation between the Barents higher education institutions. The primary objective have been to produce new knowledge about challenges, outcomes, successes and failures of interregional educational cooperation, how this is manifested through institutions and individuals, and what kind of learning processes that are involved. Many questions are asked and clear cut answers are hard to give. Through the emphasis on contextual embeddedness and thick descriptions, the answers largely lies in the detailed accounts given by people and narrated by us as researchers. It is thus difficult to give condensed answers when this means stripping the accounts of their contextual embeddedness and explanatory frameworks. At the risk of overly generalizing the qualitative accounts, her is anyway an attempt at satisfying the will for short answers.

- *What are the driving forces and barriers for internationalization and what are the gate-keeping and door-opening roles?* The driving forces are the intercultural "thawing" processes including the impact of discourses of globalization such as those endorsed by the EU and the EHEA. The barriers are obstacles to international relations often taking place elsewhere (Ukraine, Syria, etc.) as well as the command structure of Russian higher education administration which can be rapidly altered at the will of the Russian Federation's Ministry of Education. Institutional representatives as well as individual faculty and administrative staff can be operative in the roles of both gate-keeper and door-opener.
- *How can international mobility flows in the institutions be accounted for?* During the period of study, internationalization efforts were a high priority in both countries. Institutions acted on the will of domestic ministries as well as autonomously within the limits given by the legal framework. Towards the end of the period of study, and coinciding with world political events, we noticed a tendency of slowing down the initial enthusiasm for internationalization at all costs. Mobility flows in the institutions can be adjusted by the institution itself, but not in a definite way.
- *What are the obstacles to academic mobility and what can be done to overcome these and promote mobility? What are the institutional challenges for academic mobility and what is the role of administrative support structures?* On the Russian side, a lack of interest in the English language (the lingua franca of academic mobility) in particular among older faculty members can be explained by a recent history in which the Russian language provided a sufficient bridge to international relations. Language issues is clearly an obstacles also on the Norwegian side where incentives to learn Russian is scant in a time which generally promote English. Thus, improving language policies is one way of overcoming these obstacles. Academic support structures such as the operative functionality of international offices and exchange coordinators, including scholarship schemes are extremely important for successful educational exchange. One should also mention the key role played by individuals with engagement and driving spirits that can embody an otherwise challenging administrative procedure.
- *How is internationalization valued by actors? What are the students' motivations, expectations and experiences of mobility and exchange?* By most students it is highly valued, especially by those who actually travel and strive to learn a foreign language. Students that are restrictive in terms of the motivation to learn language also prove to be more moderate in terms of their affirmation of the values of internationalization. Anyone who is involved in the intercultural exchange, however, seems to prize this activity as something that add values to their educational experience.

- *What are the extended social and cultural implications a student exchange in the Barents region, eventually leading to job opportunities at home or abroad or to enhanced migration?* Student exchange seems to have little impact on job opportunities. It should be recalled that the exchange framework is highly asymmetrical. Russian students coming to Norway are often employed in the service industries although many are complaining about the conditions that need to be met in order to have also the least unqualified jobs. The value of an educational experience seems to be appreciated more by the individual him/herself than by any employer, although, beyond the individual's own realm of experience, these values may be very hard to achieve wider recognition. Russian students in Norway often regard the international experience in the regional context as the first step in skilled migration reaching beyond the Barents Region.
- *What informal networks are developed and maintained in the processes of student exchange?* Informal networks are key to the functionality of these exchange processes. First of all, keeping up with the exchange schemes is not possible without the personal investment and the networking abilities of those who are involved. Institutional support is not always a sufficient condition for maintaining networks. On the side of students, staff and faculty, informal networks seems to be the actual interface of academic exchange. It is the people one meet during an international exposure that provide substance and that is kept in memory.

This book thus claims a very broad academic focus while also providing a statement of aims that includes a practical agenda. The intended audiences are not only scholars interested in internationalization of higher education but also practitioners who work with these issues on a daily basis, as well as politicians and administrators concerned with international relations in the service sector. Issues of practical relevance, such as the following, are considered: To what extent is collaboration within higher education in the Barents Region possible? What are the barriers and facilitators for such collaboration? Is it a given that an existing educational cooperation between different academic cultures should be institutionalized? How can international education collaboration best be established? How is this relevant for the politics of higher education and region-building in the Barents Region? What happens when the projects are over? Obviously, no final answers are given to these broad practical questions, and answers may differ between the specific chapters, yet we have striven to keep them in mind while writing, both because most of the authors are involved in the practical dimensions of international exchange and because there is a need to address those of our colleagues who could benefit from a deeper understanding. Larger questions of practical relevance are also addressed, such as how people-to-people activities constitute ways to approach the transformations of the region and the future of higher education exchange in the Barents Region. Does long-lasting cooperation at the individual level lead to an institutionalization of cooperation between the HEIs in the Barents Region?

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Part I
Nations

Chapter 2
Internationalization the Russian Way: Modernization of the Higher Education System in Russia

Natalia Kukarenko and Inga Zashikhina

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter we will give a brief overview of higher education (HE) system development in Russia in light of international activities and practices within the Russian HE system. Since 1992 the Russian Federation proclaimed internationalization as an essential element for the modernization of the national higher education system (Kuraev 2014). At the same time some researchers claim that the international dimension of the Russian higher education system has been part of the system since the nineteenth century when Russia started educating foreign students – primarily from Serbia and Bulgaria (Sheregi et al. 2006). Nevertheless, many researchers agree that institutionalization of internationalization as a policy in Russia only began in the twenty-first century (Gounko and Smale 2007; Knyazev and Drantusova 2013). Thus, we will look at how world trends in internationalization have affected the modernization of the Russian higher education system and at the Russian higher education institutions' response to internationalization with a particular focus on Russian–Norwegian cooperation, as viewed from a Russian perspective.

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2.2 From Internationalism to Internationalization in Russian Education

In this section, we present a brief history of higher education development during Soviet times with a focus on international activities, tools used, and the Soviet state's motivation to go international.

According to Sheregi et al. (2006) the development of international education in Russia started as early as the mid-nineteenth century with the National Education Ministry's decision to educate foreign citizens. In order to attract foreign students the government initiated scholarships. Nonetheless, numbers remained quite low; students primarily came from Bulgaria and Serbia and were predominantly concentrated at the universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg. By the early 1900s, the proportion of foreign students studying at Russian universities did not exceed 1% of the total number of students (Barrows 1990).

The socialist revolution that took place in Russia in 1917 changed the entire regime and ideological platform of the newly established Soviet state. The major ideological doctrine of the young state was developed around Lenin's interpretation of Marxist philosophy and the idea of the international union of workers from all countries to stand up against capitalism and exploitation. Marxism-Leninism became the ruling ideology for a period of more than 70 years and was projected worldwide. Marxism-Leninism evolved from a purely revolutionary ideology into an ideology rationalizing the actions of the Soviet Union as a superpower. The Soviet government made serious efforts to spread communist ideals around the world and to gain sympathy as a country where the proletariat had won. Internationalism in that context transformed from a form of class struggle into a method for the USSR to provide assistance in the fields of economy, trade, science and education to countries who approved the socialist model.

For ideological and political reasons, immediately following the revolution of 1917 the Soviet Union started developing international educational cooperation by inviting groups of students from Afghanistan, Turkey and Mongolia. After World War II many sympathies lay with the country that managed to combat fascism and some states took the path of development offered by the Soviet communist party. Among such followers were European countries (e.g., Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Romania), Latin American countries (mainly Cuba), Asian states (e.g., Yemen, Vietnam, and Afghanistan) and African republics (e.g., Somali, Congo, Ethiopia). These countries made up the so-called socialist camp and cooperated in various fields. As the countries around the world split into two camps (capitalist and socialist), Soviet education was mainly oriented toward cooperation with socialist countries. In 1946, 90 Bulgarian students, including 30 post-graduates, entered Soviet higher educational institutions for the first time as part of the socialist collaboration. During the period of 1946–1972 Soviet tertiary education supplied 4500 qualified professionals to the People's Republic of Bulgaria, with more than 900 post-graduates among them (Selivanov 1972). Until 1960 Soviet assistance to former socialist states in professional development training was provided on a legal basis via bilateral agreements and contracts between the governments of the USSR and other states practicing "people's democracy".

At the same time it should be noted that socialist internationalism allegedly regulated relationships between socialist countries. In reality the Soviet Union controlled smaller countries using CoMEcon and the Warsaw Pact to prevent countries in the Soviet Union's sphere of influence from moving towards that of the Americans and Southeast Asia, even by means of force when invading Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, rather than lose control.

Since 1950 the number of foreign students enrolled in the Russian education system has increased significantly due to several factors. Firstly, beginning with the second half of the 1950s the Soviet Union initiated "humanitarian aid" in tertiary education modernization and professional training for the countries of the "third world". Asian, African and Latin American states that gained independence in the process of decolonization experienced significant difficulties in terms of fostering educated people and qualified specialists. The USSR provided considerable input in the strengthening of education for these countries. On one hand, these countries needed educated people and the USSR, having achieved total "liquidation of illiteracy" in a very short period for a country of such geographical scope, represented a "promising case" of rapid and successful mass education. On the other hand, as mentioned above, providing education in the form of "humanitarian aid" was also securing the Soviet Union's position as a superpower state. In 1956 a regular annual admission of students from Asian and African states was organized (Sokhin 1972) and, in 1979–1980, more than 38,700 students were enrolled in Russian tertiary educational institutions (Sophinsky 1970, 1980). Secondly, Peoples' Friendship University of Russia was established in Moscow as the world's largest university purposefully engaged in the training of foreign students (Barrows 1990). The Peoples' Friendship University was inauguratedon February 5, 1960, and until the early 1990s, it bore the name of the first prime minister of Congo, Patrice Lumumba. The aim of the university was to spread the USSR's influence to the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, by providing training and education to young people from those regions. Through the export of education, Moscow also tried to spread the Russian language and culture overseas. At the same time, Soviet leaders expected to promote communist values to these countries as well by educating their young leaders and specialists. In fact, quite a number of presidents and diplomats from Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Latin America were educated at PFU. At the same time, the USSR was sending more than 17,000 professors, tutors and students abroad each year and accepted the same amount of foreigners at home (Sophinsky 1980).

By the end of 1980s, more than half of foreign students (nearly 70,000 in 1987) who studied in the Soviet Union were from developing countries. Within this group, 41,100 students studied in higher education graduate programs, 4400 students studied in post-graduate programs, about 1000 attended training programs and 10,200 were enrolled in preparatory programs. The total number of students from developing countries studying in the USSR included more than 25,000 students from Africa, 28,000 (approximately) from Asia and more than 7000 from Latin America (Barrows 1990).

Making Soviet higher education attractive for foreigners was also a question of prestige for the government of the USSR. Ensuring a high standard of professional training for the students coming from East European socialist countries and developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America was a matter of securing friendly relations with young developing countries. Basically speaking, the education of foreign students from countries of strategic importance was used by the USSR as a means of "soft power". In line with that, some researchers claim that the USSR used higher education as a geopolitical tool and as an "ideological weapon" in times of confrontation with the West and during the Cold War period, "long before the term 'soft power' was coined" (Torkunov 2013). In the 1960s higher education institutions in various cities throughout the country started establishing special faculties for foreign students, borrowing on the model of leading universities in Moscow and Leningrad. Unlike the average conditions for Russian student hostels, foreign student hostels were more comfortable with adaptation programs and better stipends. In this way, the Soviet government tried to portray the socialist state as being successful and efficient in various areas including education (Petrik 2007). Educating foreign students was important for the USSR while many of those educated in the Soviet Union spoke Russian and, upon returning to their home countries, became ideological supporters and allies of the Soviet system.

International mobility reached its peak in 1990 with 126,500 foreign students enrolled in the Russian higher education system, and Russia was among the top 10 countries providing academic services to international students. In order to attract foreign students the government launched such initiatives as Russian language courses, free access to libraries and a program of scholarships. Most of the students who studied in the Soviet Union were from Eastern Europe (Poland, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia), Asia and the Middle East (Vietnam, Mongolia, China, Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen), Africa (Ethiopia, Congo, Nigeria and Ghana) and Cuba. When it comes to preferences in fields of study, 53% of foreign students chose engineering professions, 17% selected health sciences and about 7% of foreign students specialized in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fishery (Sheregi et al. 2006).

At the same time, significant changes took place in Russia during the 1990s, in general, and within the system of higher education in particular. At this point, international activities within higher education ceased to be the exclusive responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. Higher education institutions were given the freedom to choose cooperation formats with foreign partners as well as partner institutions. Consequently, new geographical preferences appeared and Russian universities turned their attention towards cooperation with universities from western countries. In addition to changes in western Europe's higher education sphere due to the Bologna process, this new geographic focus forced Russia and the former socialist countries of Central and East Europe to reform their higher education systems while also transitioning to democracy and a market economy. In this new move, international cooperation, rather than becoming a goal for the "post-socialist" countries, became an important tool for restructuring their higher education systems (Kälvemark and van der Wende 1997). This may perhaps be considered the main difference between the internationalization of higher education in Russia and Norway, as the internationalization of higher education in Norway was more of a response to globalization as such (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume).

2.3 Methodological Notes and Theoretical Frame

Before we proceed with the discussion of internationalization in the Russian higher education system, a remark should be made concerning theoretical framing. In our analysis we will employ a theoretical framework consisting of Knight's understanding of internationalization, four rationales for internationalization developed by Knight and de Wit and analysis of key documents dealing with the internationalization of Russian higher education. In line with other authors in this book (see Forstorp, Chap. 7; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3), when using the term internationalization we refer to the definition given by Knight. Internationalization is understood as "the process of integrating international, intercultural or global dimension into purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight 2003, p. 2). In this understanding, internationalization is a tool for incorporating globalization in higher education and it refers to specific policies and initiatives of countries and individual academic institutions responding to global trends (Altbach and Teichler 2001). Internationalization includes policies relating to the recruitment of foreign students, collaboration with academic institutions in other countries and establishment of branch campuses abroad. At the same time, Knight's approach implies that internationalization is not about the simple "adding" of international activities to all the other academic practices. Rather, in her approach, internationalization is an indicator for the advancement of the international dimension in the national systems of higher education, which brings about changes in organizational structures, funding procedures, quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms (Altbach and Knight 2007). In this sense the type of international cooperation that existed in the USSR did not change the basis of national higher education systems. Academic environments in Soviet times carried out a number of international activities including the establishment of international committees, the arrangement of conferences and scientific events, implementation of research projects and development of academic teams. Students focused on participating in academic exchanges and practical training in different countries, language courses and summer camps. Inter-governmental agreements and statements declaring new international arrangements for better communication between national academic systems were in place in addition to the provision of state funds for internationalization purposes. However, regardless of the status of these activities, the basics of national higher education systems remained and Soviet international educational policy reflected a world order dominated by nation states (Kuraev 2014). This theoretical standpoint allows us to claim that the Soviet system's international activities within the higher education system may be called internationalism in higher education rather than actual internationalization.

Another important theoretical point relevant to the context of this chapter is the four rationales developed by Knight (1997, 2004) and de Wit (1999, 2002), explaining the political, economic, educational and cultural motives and driving forces behind internationalization policy (see Sundet et al., Chap. 1, in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3, in this volume). Until the 1990s internationalization in higher education was largely understood as a cooperative effort with its rationale based primarily on political, cultural and academic arguments. Nowadays many researchers have come to the conclusion that internationalization is becoming increasingly economically motivated (Kälvemark and Van der Wende 1997). The Russian case is no exception: during the Soviet period the main rationales for developing international education, as shown above, were political (i.e. "soft power" to develop alliances in a bi-polar world), academic (i.e. lack of qualified specialists in developing countries) and cultural (i.e. exporting the Soviet model and the Russian language and culture via acceptance of foreign students in the USSR). In present-day Russia a number of researchers support the idea that all of these rationales are present in internationalization policies but that the economic rationale dominates in the processes of institutionalization of internationalization in the Russian higher education system (e.g. Gounko and Smale 2007; Knyazev and Drantusova 2013; Burquel et al. 2014). And as we will show further in this chapter, internationalization has started functioning not only as a tool of modernization of the higher education system, in response to global trends, but also as an institutional diversifier within the Russian context.

Selected legislation, official documents and speeches of the Russian government, as well as policy papers and reports, have been analyzed for the purposes of this study. The selection was based on establishing connections between internationalization and higher education modernization in Russia. The analysis primarily focuses on initiatives taken by the Putin administration since the year 2000.

2.4 Modernization of Russian Higher Education During the 1990s

The economic and political transformations of the 1990s have had an impact on all aspects of Russian life, including the sphere of education. Some researchers claim that the reforms of the 1990s "brought new ideological and managerial freedom for universities as well as new opportunities and demands" (Gounko and Smale 2007, p. 533).

The major changes within the education system included transformation of:

- goals – a demand to consider the needs of the market, society and individuals in the training of specialists;

- structure – decentralization in contrast to Soviet-style centralized planning;
- autonomy – emergence of private higher education institutions and tuition fees;
- financing – diversification of financial resources instead of a total dependency on government financing;
- content – more freedom given to higher educational institutions (HEIs) to develop curriculum components and diversify programs and courses. (Smolentseva 1999, p. 13)

These new ideological and structural transformations were accompanied by many problems resulting from economic difficulties in Russia during the transition to a market economy. Neoliberal thinking, lack of appropriate funding, issues surrounding free higher education and the introduction of tuition fees led to the situation in which higher education institutions "imitated" western education and research (Gounko and Smale 2007; Knyazev and Drantusova 2013). In the 1990s many private universities were established and, according to monitoring carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science starting infrom 2000, many of them provided low-quality educational services. In the words of the Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation they are "just offices for the sale of diplomas without an established training process, without qualified teaching staff, etc." (Information Agency Rosbalt 2015). For the purposes of this chapter, we will not go deeper into the discussions that occurred among Russian academics on both the results of the monitoring as well as the general ideology of higher education modernization. We would merely like to highlight that the Ministry and the government met strong opposition to the reforms, claiming that the state wanted to establish control over the education sector, as well support for the reforms, claiming that the 1990s brought devaluation of higher education, diplomas and degrees. When considering figures alone, in 1990, there were 700 higher education institutions with 280,000 students and, in 2012, there were 6,075,400 students attending 1046 HEIs with 437 private HEIs educating 930,100 students (Statistics Norway's Information Centre 2014). Consequently, the quality of Russian higher education has been described, at the government level, as being one of the major reasons to reform the entire system of higher education in Russia.

Institutionalization of internationalization in the Russian higher education system has rapidly become a part of modernization discourse through key documents and policies adopted since 2006 (Drantusova and Knyazev 2014). Although the phenomenon is claimed by some to be a part of the Soviet system (e.g. Kuraev 2014), the twenty-first century has definitely been a period when internationalization has been placed high on the agenda in Russian higher education policy and research. Recent initiatives by the government in the area of higher education include transformation of the entire system of higher education institutions, innovative educational projects and the introduction of international competitiveness programs.

2.4.1 Internationalization as an Instrument of Modernization

Russia's participation in the Bologna process in 2003 is considered one of the pillars of the modernization reform (Gounko and Smale 2007). The signing of the Bologna Declaration was viewed as a vitally important step in the successful integration of Russian higher education into the European system with the aim of making Russia competitive in the market of educational services and attractive for international students and world-famous researchers. The process implies the development of the higher education system at the bachelor and master levels; the introduction of an ECTS system and the diploma supplement; the creation of mechanisms for recognition of Russian and international education credentials; and the facilitation of academic mobility for students and professors.

In line with the Bologna process, the federal law "On Education" (1992) has provided new opportunities from the point of view of internationalization of institutionalization. It has granted educational institutions the right to establish direct international connections, defined the forms of international cooperation and, as mentioned above, has ended the Ministry of Education and Science's exclusive responsibility for international activities. Within this legal framework, Russian HEIs have been given the right to participate in international cooperation by:

- participating in bilateral and multilateral exchange programs for students, postgraduate students, doctoral students and teaching staff;
- conducting joint research;
- organizing international conferences and scientific events;
- implementing basic and applied research projects and participating in R&D with foreign partners; and
- developing joint international higher education programs.

The law "On Education" from 2012 even more strongly stressed the autonomy and liberty of HEIs to establish international contacts and awarded some selected HEIs[1] with the right to recognize education (modules, courses, subjects) received abroad (Ministry of Education and Science, the Russian Federation 2012).

It is worth mentioning that the large public universities that receive state funding have traditionally enjoyed more economic resources to manage international cooperation than small private institutions have. Additionally, the leading Russian HEIs possess sufficient human resources to conduct and participate in international cooperation as well as enjoying more advantages due to their geographical placement. Consequently, Russian universities that have participated in international cooperation in Soviet times have been more successful in reforming their internal activities as well (Zornikov 2004).

Since 2003, internationalization policy has been greatly influenced by the Bologna process and integration into the European Higher Education Area. Whereas

[1] Two national universities, ten federal universities and 29 national research universities will be described further in the text.

exchange programs such as ERASMUS were aimed at the individual student, teacher or institution, as a result of the Bologna process, internationalization in higher education has been taken to the national level through reforms of degree program structures to make them more comparable between the different countries. Key developments since Russia joined Bologna in 2003 include: the passing of legislation that makes provisions for the implementation of the two-cycle system; introduction of uniform state examinations as a basis for admission to HEIs; quality assurance and academic recognition; permission for HEIs to adapt programs to suit specific features of the institution; participation of employers in developing and implementing state education policy; integration of education and science aimed at strengthening research and development and enhancing HEIs.

The State Program, "Education Development" for 2013–2020, announced the main objective of Russian higher education to be enhancement of the quality and international competitiveness of Russian higher education (Government of the Russian Federation 2013). The Program aims at improving the quality of post-secondary education in the following areas:

- student and academic mobility;
- exchange programs;
- joint international research and teaching programs at different academic levels; and
- international cooperation development via strategic alliances in the field of education.

In order to push the Russian HEIs towards international recognition in the academic world market, the Presidential Decree of May 2012 was issued, articulating a new set of goals for the leading Russian HEIs: at least five Russian HEIs should be placed on the list of the first 100 HEIs to be internationally recognized by 2020; the number of foreign students should amount to 5%; and revenue from the export of educational services should amount to 10% of public funding by 2020 (Information and Rights Portal Garant 2012). This put all of the HEIs that wanted to become "leading" institutions into a competitive situation in the hunt for resources and privileges. At the same time, selected internationalization indicators became markers for modernization of Russian higher education institutions while also forming grounds for institutional diversification within the Russian context.

2.4.2 Reforms in the New Millennium

Since May 2000 three major documents (Strategy for the Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2010; National Doctrine for Education; and Concept of Modernization of Russian Education) presented the revised education policy of the RF, where the role of education as a major factor in the country's economic development and transition to a democratic state was emphasized. Competitiveness of the national economy in the global market, flexibility and innovation, productive and cumulative efficiency in the education sector, accountability and transparency, educational quality and responsiveness to the needs of the labor market, and the growth of the country's human capital were cited as objectives for the entire system of education modernization. The state actually announced that it wanted Russian HEIs to become innovative while at the same time strengthening control over the quality of higher education in new ways; for example, via monitoring of stake-holders or labor market performance of the graduates.

In line with the above-mentioned objectives for the new millennium, the government has initiated several principal projects within the higher education sphere with a focus on internationalization of the HEI system. This means that the state has diversified support for the HEIs that promote Russian higher education internationally in addition to projects aimed at reforming the structure of the HEI system (cutting down on the number of HEIs that provide low–quality education) and a selection of leading universities. Currently the Russian higher education system is represented by 969 HEIs educating more than 5,500,000 students (Ianova and Yanova 2015). These HEIs include both public and private schools, varying from small and highly specialized universities to universities with a strong regional or national agenda.

To ensure the quality of education, the state has initiated a restructuring process for the higher education sector. Since 2006, this has resulted in supporting measures for certain leading universities which are considered by the state as potential drivers for the *innovation and development agenda* on the federal, national and international levels. Interestingly, level of internationalization became one of the selection criteria for the RF's state support for leading HEIs, along with a demand on citation indexes, number of publications in Web of Science and Scopus databases, and percentage of money earned per staff member through grants and external services. At the same time, the number of foreign students, visiting professors and leading scientists attracted by the HEI and the number of joint education and research projects were consdidered the most important criteria.

The current structure of leading higher education institutions includes:

- Two national universities – Moscow State University and St. Petersburg State University – leading universities that received special status as unique science and educational institutions;
- Ten federal universities – leading universities created by merging several regional universities with a mission to become the drivers of development and change in the ten federal geopolitically strategic areas of the RF;
- Twenty-nine national research universities – leading universities established to support the increasing role of research conducted at universities with the goal of integrating science and education at the university level;
- Fifteen regional multi-profile "anchor" ("opornyh") universities – a brand new type of university created by merging small regional universities with the major goal of providing regions with a qualified labor force.

In order to select the universities that fit into the category of leading university, the government has introduced several special instruments; among the major ones, the Innovative Educational Programs (2006–2008), the Development Programs of National Research Universities (2006–2010), the Programs of Strategic Development (2011), the Leading Universities' International Competitiveness Enhancement Program (2013) and the competition, "Personnel for the Regions" ("Kadry dlya regionov") (2013). In this way the state provides selected universities with not only grants and extra funding but also, as mentioned above, extra academic freedoms such as the right to recognize degrees from any foreign HEIs without any additional state notification procedure, to define their own educational and quality assurance standard approaches, or to implement their own educational standards (Burquel et al. 2014).

In return, these universities are to become autonomous and competitive in the world education market. All of the universities that fell into one of the groups (aside from the first group of national universities) took part in an open competition and had to defend their projects before the Ministry of Education and Science, RF, which included the use of development programs, road maps and budgets.

2.4.3 Project 5-100

In 2013 the Russian HEIs called for support and, already in August of the same year, 15 Russian HEIs were awarded a prestigious grant by the government of the Russian Federation (592,400,000 RUR for each Russian university in 2013) to implement the Program of the Leading University International Competitiveness Enhancement. The Ministry of Education and Science currently refers to this program as the "Project 5-100" (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation 2013).

According to the government's vision, the main goal for the 15 universities selected under this initiative is to reach the Top 200 in at least one of the world university rankings by 2020. The core idea is the internationalization of education and research; to be achieved by attracting foreign researchers and the best foreign students to Russia and developing joint projects in education and research with leading world universities. These universities were in fact forced to upgrade their management teams and create conditions that would attract top academics from leading Russian and foreign universities, as well as talented young researchers, heads of scientific laboratories and famous scientists. In addition, they will be required to implement joint educational programs with Russian and foreign universities and to take part in research and development projects in cooperation with local and international high-tech companies.

Consequently, the internationalization of higher education has become a means for modernization of post-secondary education and an integral part of general higher education policy as well as an obvious instrument in the differentiation between HEIs according to the level of internationalization being implemented at each individual HEI. This actually demonstrates how internationalization came to be, on one hand, a tool for modernization in the Russian context and, on the other hand, a tool for (financial) diversification of the Russian HEIs.

2.4.4 Russia's Financial Obligations in International Cooperation

Many Russian and western researchers point to the fact that, during the 1990s and 2000s, most of the programs for international cooperation and academic mobility with Russia were primarily funded with the help of foreign funds (Korteniemi 2011; Kuraev 2014; Sundet, Chap. 4 and Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10, in this volume).

TACIS/TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus, DAAD, Institute "Open Society", IREX, British Council, and American Councils for International Education, Campus France, and the Swedish Institute have been among the most important instruments for facilitating the internationalization of Russian higher education since the 1990s. For a long period, these organizations provided Russian students and academic staff with financial resources to go international. In particular, the EU-funded Tempus program, the largest fund for cooperation in higher education with Central and East European countries, has the specific aim of assisting these countries in the transition to democracy and a market economy. The Tempus projects implemented in Russia have had a strong impact on both the modernization of higher education in Russia and the integration of Russian HEIs into the European Higher Education Area. The program has impacted the improvement of curriculum content and has initiated new competence-based programs. The Tempus program has also contributed considerably to the adoption of the two-cycle higher education structure and the development of the Federal Standards of Higher Education that are currently being put into practice. Another sizable contribution of the Tempus program has been the facilitation of international cooperation and the creation of conditions for multiple partnerships between Russian and European universities.

Nevertheless, some international projects have also benefited from Russian funding, although such funding has not been commensurate. Eeva Korteniemi provides an example from the Finnish neighborhood cooperation program where Russian education project participants have provided some co-financing of staff costs and costs related to premises (Korteniemi 2011).

At present Russia has had relatively few of its own international cooperation projects in the fields of education and research. One of the few cooperation programs that involves Russian funding is the Russian scholarships offered foreign students in order to participate in an exchange/degree program in Russia. For this purpose, Russian authorities have defined quotas for different students (this year's quota for Norwegian students, for example, has been limited to 5[2]). This scholarship

[2] This is so called State Quota of a federal level defined by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RF, together with Ministry of Education and Science, RF. Apart from that there are also HEIs' quotas that are

program provides foreign students in Russia with free tuition, a monthly grant of the same amount that Russian students receive and a dormitory place (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2008). Another such example is a cooperation program between Russia and Norway in the field of research. In June 2009, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) signed a joint declaration with the intention of cooperating in the area of science and technology. In line with this declaration, the Russian Foundation for Humanities (RFH) and the Research Council of Norway (NIS) have made a cooperative agreement and have called for an international competition for joint research projects in the humanities and social sciences (SocioLogos, Portal of Russian Applied Sociology 2016).

Another program, first announced in 2010, is “attracting leading scientists to Russian universities” with the aim of enticing such scientists to work in Russia. Scientists from all countries and of all nationalities are eligible to apply but have to comply with certain criteria such as high citation indexes or having won a scientific prize. They must also be prepared to stay in Russia for the period of 120 days annually, receiving generous funding for the 3-year period (Ministry of Education and Science, the Russian Federation 2010).

The promotion of Russian language, literature and culture worldwide is another important project for the Russian Federation. For this purpose the Russian World Foundation (“Russkiy Mir Foundation”) was established to support Russian language teaching programs abroad (Russian World Foundation 2007).

2.4.5 Numbers and Geographical Preferences in Russian Internationalization

Internationalization policy has become increasingly linked to higher education policy. International policy arenas for Russian higher education include the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS), Europe, the Asia-Pacific region and the global arena. The CIS arena and Europe are the main priorities. At the same time, it should be noted that the Asia-Pacific region is more recently becoming one of the important priorities. Bilateral and multilateral links with Brazil, India, China, and South Africa within the BRICS framework confirm this trend. Cooperation centers on academic staff and student mobility is primarily occurring through various programs and legal agreements that are designed to reduce the formal barriers for student and staff mobility.

Additionally, it is crucial to underline relations with the United States and Canada, as Russia‘s efforts are aimed at strengthening the export potential of its education system in the world market of education services and integrating Russian higher education into the international education arena.

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delegated to the Universities directly. Northern (Arctic) Federal University received this year (2016/2017) a quota for two Norwegian students.

At present Russia has 51,171 Russian students on the move, which is 1,5% of the world share. As destinations for educational purposes, Russian students prefer Germany (10%), the USA (4,7%), France (4,3%), Great Britain (3,5%), the Czech Republic (2,9%) and Belorussia (2,6%). As a destination country itself, Russia ranks 6th among the top 10 countries attracting 171,627 foreign students; which is 4,9% of all the students on the move in the world. As a host-country, Russia is mainly chosen by students from the CIS countries like Belorussia (31,2%), Kazakhstan (29,9%), the Ukraine (12,8%), Azerbaijan (12,2%), Uzbekistan (11,3%) and Turkmenistan (6,9%), in addition to China (9,8%) (Education-Events.RU 2014).

At the same time, taking into consideration the size of the Russian Federation, it is clear that the geographical location of universities influences international cooperation preferences. The HEIs in the Russian Far East, for example, develop cooperation more actively with countries of the Asia-Pacific region and North America and have benefited more from international cooperation programs in the USA, Canada and Japan. Furthermore, HEIs in the European part of Russia enjoy strong contacts with European universities thanks to the availability of European and bilateral programs with the region. As we will discuss further, the geographical proximity of Russian Universities located near the borders of Nordic countries – Finland and Norway in particular – guides the partnership and collaborative preferences towards the HEIs from these countries to a large degree.

2.5 Cooperation Between Russia and Norway in Higher Education from a Russian Perspective

Cooperation between Russia and Norway has begun to develop rapidly since the 1990s, with a special emphasis on cooperation in the field of education and science. Establishment of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) in 1993 contributed to the strengthening of cooperation between the 13 northern[3] counties of Russia, Norway, Sweden and Finland on both the federal and regional levels.

Currently Russian-Norwegian cooperation in education and research is quite active and highly developed. This cooperation exists in many different fields of research and at all educational levels (Sandersen, Chap. 6, in this volume). Furthermore, although ministries and state agencies are active developers of cooperation universities and research institutions are, nonetheless, active developers of cooperation themselves in both countries. In fact, cooperation between higher education institutions in the BEAR became one of the driving forces of collaboration in the area, turning it into a successful case of regional people-to-people cooperation

[3] The Norwegian member regions are Finnmark, Nordland and Troms, the Swedish member regions are Norrbotten and Västerbotten, the Russian members regions are Arkhangelsk, Republics of Karelia and Komi, Murmansk and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, and the Finnish member regions are Kainuu, Lapland and Oulu.

(Staalesen 2010). Since the 1990s there has been an active development in cooperation between the universities of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk and universities (university colleges) in northern Norway. The main directions of this cooperation included the joint training of Russian students in Russian and Norwegian universities, academic mobility and the implementation of joint research and development work (since the beginning of the 2000s). The Norwegian side (Sokolov et al. 2001) has provided funding for most of these initiatives.

Many scholarships and cooperation programs for different fields and levels are coordinated and administered by different agencies like the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education, the Norwegian Research Council and the Norwegian Barents Secretariat (NBS).

The Norwegian Barents Secretariat, established in 1993 and acting on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for the development of Norwegian-Russian relations in the north. Since 1993, NBS has supported more than 3000 joint Russian-Norwegian projects (including research and education) (The Norwegian Barents Secretariat 1993; The Norwegian Barents Secretariat 2010).

In the early 2000s, the Norwegian government launched a series of special programs aimed at strengthening scientific and educational ties with Russia (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3, in this volume). The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU), a public Norwegian agency promoting international cooperation in education, coordinates the following programs related to Russia: the Fellowship Program for Studies in the High North, the Scheme for Norwegian Studies Abroad, the Quota Scheme and, together with the Research Council of Norway, the Cooperation Program with Russia 2007–2010 (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2004; The Research Council of Norway 1993). In addition, the Research Council of Norway coordinates the Yggdrasil grants for research opportunities for PhD students in Norway.

From 2002–2006, the Norwegian government, along with the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation (SIU) implemented the "Program for Higher Education and Research between Norway and Russia," which supported 12 large-scale joint projects with a total budget of 40,000,000 NOK (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2010). In the period of 2007–2010, the Norwegian Research Council, along with continued support from SIU secured a budget of NOK 48,000,000 for the "Program of Cooperation with Russia". In total, the program was supported by seven educational and eight research projects (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2009). Today there is already a third "Program of Cooperation with Russia" for the period of 2011–2016. Within its framework, 14 long-term and 21 short-term joint projects are being supported (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2016). In 2013, under the supervision of SIU, a new program was launched – High North Program 2013–2018, which supports joint projects not only with Russia but also with other Arctic countries, Japan and the Republic of Korea (*Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education* 2014).

Additionally, cooperation between Norwegian and Russian scientists is being realized within the framework of individual thematic initiatives coordinated by the Norwegian Research Council. Furthermore, as mentioned above, due to relatively recent federal-level attention to the Arctic region in Russia, (the first document was adopted in 2008: Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the Period up to 2020 and Beyond), a significant share of the financing for Russian-Norwegian cooperation has been provided by the Norwegian side.

Another area of collaboration between the two countries was the Norwegian government's technical assistance to improve the safety of industrial facilities in the Murmansk region, in particular the Kola Nuclear Power Plant (Nord-News Information Agency 2013).

Additionally, since the 1990s, the Polar Research Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography in Murmansk has been implementing joint research projects with Norwegian research and educational organizations. Within the framework of Russian-Norwegian cooperation, scientists from both countries have bilaterally carried out comprehensive joint studies, the results of which were used as recommendations for the annual session of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission (*Docme – Portal for Documents Publication* 2010*)*.

It is also worth mentioning that Norway and Russia participate in a joint "Presidential Program". In the framework of this program and agreement, young Russian business managers carry out internships in Norwegian companies. Every year, Norwegian employees are invited to Saint Petersburg to participate in a course on "Doing Business in Russia" (Korteniemi 2011). The agreement on education cooperation between Norway and Russia, signed in April 2010, also describes different forms of cooperation – lifelong learning or training for an annual maximum of 15 Russians to Norway and 15 Norwegians to Russia for study purposes, as well as the promotion of language and culture (The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise 2013).

2.5.1 Student Mobility

The statistics on student mobility between Russia and Norway report an imbalance between the amount of Russian students in Norway versus the number of Norwegian students in Russia (Karlsen, Chap. 13, and Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10, in this volume). In the autumn of 2010, Norwegian newspapers reported a boom in the number of Russian students in Norway, having increased 33% from 2009 to 2010. For the first time, in 2010, Russian citizens represented the largest foreign student group in North Norway (BarentsObserver.com 2010*)*. The years leading up to this saw the number rise steadily. In 2000, the number of Russian students was 190, in 2005 it was 663, and in 2010 it was 1035 students. The number of Norwegian students studying in Russian universities is insignificant by comparison. According to statistics from the State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen), the number has fluctuated between 60 and 145 students per year since 2000 and, currently, there are about 70

Norwegian students in Russia with the majority of them being exchange students who came to study the Russian language. Only 7 to 8 students are registered annually as full–time students at Russian universities (Statistics Norway's Information Centre 2014). Thus, mobility between Russia and Norway appears to be imbalanced. What is interesting here is that:

- the statistics on Russian students in Norway also include Russian students registered as distance learners in programs administered by Norwegian institutions of higher education (e.g. Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies – Sundet, Chap. 4 in this volume), which means that not all of the students registered as foreign students in the Norwegian database necessarily reside in Norway (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) 2009);
- in absolute figures the number of Russian students who choose Norway as their destination for study purposes is relatively small in relation to overall numbers of mobile Russian students. Furthermore, as shown above, Norway is far from being in the top ten countries for mobile Russian students. Additionally, another issue to be discussed in this volume is that the motivation of Russian students to come to Norway, in some cases, involves a safe track to go abroad taking advantage of bilateral agreements between universities (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume).

2.5.2 Barents Region – Arctic Focus

Northern and Arctic perspectives are claimed to be among the priorities in Russian politics, more generally and in education and research policies in particular. Taking this into account, it seems natural that a lot of cooperation in the High North takes place on the institutional level. Cooperation with universities in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk has traditionally been important (Sandersen, Chap. 6, and Sundet, Chap. 4, in this volume); however, geographical cooperation has recently extended to Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Komi, Yakutia and Siberia.

Both countries face similar problems in the northern regions: depopulation, high transportation costs, rich deposits of natural resources combined with relatively low industrial and commercial activity, and poor infrastructure are familiar to Russian policymakers (Government of the Russian Federation 2008). Northern areas are seen as potential and important but in need of innovation and development in the areas of competence and knowledge surrounding the North; with a focus on environment and climate, natural resources and energy, society and life quality. Cooperation in the north is emphasized as a strategy to develop the peripheral areas through innovation and the creation of learning arenas where local and regional knowledge and experiences can be deepened and contribute to national and international knowledge exchange and activities. Cooperation in the High North also contributes to the stability of the region by establishing positive cooperative relations in the area.

Furthermore, general reforms within higher education systems in both countries have led to the establishment of Arctic HEIs in the area: the Northern (Arctic) Federal University – NarFU – was established in Arkhangelsk in 2010 as a part of the Russian government policy on the High North. In 2014, the Arctic University of Norway was united with Finnmark College and renamed the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway. Additionally, in 2015 Murmansk State University was renamed Murmansk Arctic State University (Murmansk Arctic State University 2015*)*. The mission for all of these HEIs is to become internationally leading centers for education and research on the Arctic with strategic goals to provide innovative and scientific research and train specialists for the needs of the Arctic region.

Both Russian and Norwegian institutions in the North are generally active in cooperation with the University of the Arctic. Until recently, Finnmark University College administered the North2North program (now it is part of the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway). The Norwegian Ministry of Education distributed funding to North2North mobility between University of the Arctic partner institutions in Russia and Norway (Korteniemi 2011).

This Arctic focus provides both Russian and Norwegian universities with a unique identity, while simultaneously allowing for a niche in the academic world that is difficult for other universities outside the Arctic region to occupy. This focus allows the universities to strengthen their cooperation in education and research by developing joint programs and projects with an expertise on the Arctic theme.

2.5.3 The Case of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University in Arkhangelsk

As mentioned above, cooperation between Russia and Norway entered an active phase in the 1990s, with the fall of the "Iron Curtain". Cooperation between Norwegian educational, scientific and research organizations, and representatives of the business community and the Northern (Arctic) Federal University, also dates back to the beginning of the 1990s (the Arkhangelsk State Technical University and the Pomor State University merged into one university – the Northern [Arctic] Federal University [NArFU] – in 2011).

Some History The 1990s was a period of very difficult economic circumstances for Russia, which was transitioning to a market economy. During these hard economic times cooperation between HEIs became a source of development not only within the sphere of education but also for the Barents Region in general. The HEIs became initiators of small and large-scale development and innovative regional projects. By integrating the potential of science, business and the non-profit sector in the region, the universities became centers for the training of specialists and development of innovative technologies to meet the needs of the region. Cross-border cooperation within the BEAR provided a powerful impetus to the institutionalization of a number of new areas of training such as: oil and gas, economics, social work, information and communication technologies, Nordic languages, expertise and management of real estate, etc. This facilitated the exchange of new knowledge and competence in different fields of expertise and, what is more, via international project activity, academic mobility and joint programs, Arkhangelsk HEIs managed to enter the international educational space. The Norwegian-Pomor Center was created in 1993, through cooperation between the University of Tromsø, the Regional University of Bodø, the University College of Finnmark, the University College of Harstad and the University College of Tromsø at Pomor State University, following which a dialogue within academia from Russia and Norway on a people-to-people level was initiated. The centre coordinated activities between Arkhangelsk HEIs and Northern Norway. It functioned as both a resource and education centre by providing courses in Norwegian language and culture, arranging Russian language courses for Norwegians, running a library of Nordic literature, arranging joint events and projects, providing information on possible partners and developing a network of Russian and Norwegian HEIs in the BEAR area. Russian students got the opportunity to take 3–4 years of training under the Norwegian Quota program; including internships in Norwegian enterprises and institutions within joint projects, separate courses within Norwegian programs, semester programs in Norwegian language at the University of Tromsø, and access to Norwegian supervisors for PhD students. The major financing came from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway and the Norwegian Research Council, totaling five million NOK for the period of 2002–2006 alone.

Bilateral agreements between Pomor State University and Bodø University College allowed Pomor State University to establish the Faculty of Social Work and to develop a considerable amount of research and action projects in the prevention of adolescent drug abuse, violence against women and juvenile crime prevention. Another example of bilateral cooperation occurred between Pomor State University and the University of Tromsø. This cooperation led to the establishment of student mobility between these two universities via quota schemes. Each year, a group of Russian students went to Tromsø to study Norwegian while a group of Norwegian students came to study Russian history. This cooperation between Russian and Norwegian universities and colleges helped Pomor State University (PSU) to develop its Faculty of Law and establish an Institute of Medical and Biological Research on Child Development. The cooperation went far beyond simple contacts between researchers, academicians and students. This academic cooperation at the institutional level provided new knowledge, introduced brand new education programs (e.g. social work, property valuation, gender studies, Nordic languages, etc.), and allocated intellectual and material resources through joint projects. Another important benefit of this cooperation was the development of human capital on both sides through intercultural communication, which helped expand language skills and the ability to work in international and interdisciplinary teams. In fact, this trans-regional, cross-university cooperation created an innovative and creative environment for further development of both the university and the region in general. It is also worth mentioning that, through the international activities of HEIs, the

Network of Crisis Centers for Women of the Barents Region (NCRB) was established, resulting in the formation of crisis centers for women in Arkhangelsk, Murmansk and Petrozavodsk (Saarinen 2014). The international experience of both Pomor State University (PSU) and Arkhangelsk State Technical University (ASTU), and the results of networking with international HEIs, authorities and companies for the academic mobility programs of the BEAR, were catalysts for the establishment of a university with "federal" status in Arkhangelsk. Furthermore, NArFU's mission is to become a leading intellectual centre on the Arctic worldwide, which is an impossible goal to achieve without an established list of international contacts.

The Current Situation Today the NArFU has about 20,000 students, including 400 PhD students, and about 4000 employees. Its structure includes 3 branches in the cities of Severodvinsk, Koryazhma and Naryan-Mar, and 15 institutes. The NArFU prepares specialists for the development of the northern areas in engineering, technical science, mathematics, natural sciences and humanities. Having partnership agreements with more than 130 universities and organizations from 29 countries, being a member of 7 international consortia and training more than 500 foreign students from 45 countries, NArFU strives to become an internationally-recognized university. At the same time NArFU continues its strategic cooperation with Norwegian partners and initiates new joint projects that benefit both parties. The main formats and directions of cooperation are: bilateral relations and participation in networking within the University Consortium (the University of the Arctic, the Joint Working Group on Education and Research of the BEAC and the Institute of the Northern Dimension), the development and implementation of joint educational programs, international academic mobility of staff and students, implementation of international scientific and educational projects, transport activity, and the organization of joint events (conferences, seminars, competitions, etc.).

Currently NArFU is the subject of ten agreements and memorandums on partnership with institutions of science and education, and enterprises in Norway including:

- University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway,
- University of Oslo,
- University of Stavanger,
- Nord University (former Nordland University),
- the University Centre in Svalbard,
- the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education,
- the Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine,
- Norsk Energy ("Norwegian Energy"),
- Statoil ("State Oil"), and
- the Norwegian-Russian Chamber of Commerce.

NArFU is a member of the Intergovernmental Russian-Norwegian Working Group on Education, the Working Party on Shipbuilding, and the Working Group on International and Cross-Border Cooperation of the Russian-Norwegian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific-Technical Cooperation.

As part of the University of the Arctic network, NArFU is involved in the work of this international organization and actively participates in nine expert thematic networks ("Arctic Legislation", "Local and Regional Development in the North", "Management of Small and Medium-sized Businesses in the North", "North Tourism", "Management of the North", "Health and Well-being in the Arctic", "Arctic Council Model") in conjunction with the University of Oslo, University of Bergen, Nord University, and the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway. In 2014, in collaboration with the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway, and the University of Alaska – Fairbanks (USA), NArFU managed to implement a project called, "Global Access to Higher Education in the North", which aims to create conditions for the successful promotion of northern universities as educational destinations. In cooperation with Norwegian partners from the Norwegian Institute of Agro-Economic Research (NILF, Oslo), NArFU has prepared an application for the EU "Horizon 2020" program and is currently preparing an application in bioeconomy for the program, "Northern Periphery".

In 2011–2013, in conjunction with the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway, NArFU was co-chairmen of the BEAC Joint Working Group on Education and Research, which aims at strengthening cross-border cooperation in the fields of education, science and innovation in the BEAR (Barents Euro-Arctic Council 2004). Among the main outcomes of this co-chairmanship were: the expansion of the group (15 BEAR universities), an international conference on "Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region in the Sphere of Education and Research as a Source of Regional Development" (November 2012), proposals for the development of academic cooperation in the Kirkenes Declaration 2.0 and a contribution to developing an Action Plan on Climate Change of the Barents Region. In June 2015 a Joint Working Group on Education and Research (JWGER) meeting took place at Nord University (Bodø, Norway) within the framework of the international conference, "Internationalization of Higher Education: the Barents Region and Beyond".

Cooperation in the Field of Education Together with Norwegian partners, NArFU has introduced and currently implements the following English-language educational programs: a master's program in "Environmental Management in the Arctic" (together with the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway); a master's program in "Information Technologies in Medicine and Social Sphere" (with the Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine, Tromsø); a semester-long undergraduate program in "Russian Studies" (with the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway); a bachelor's program in "Travel and Tourism Management" (with the University College of Harstad); and a bachelor's program in "Circumpolar Studies" (with Nord University).

The program, "Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies," was implemented at NArFU in 2004 with the aim of providing students coming from different program levels and fields with interdisciplinary knowledge on the contemporary situation and problems in the circumpolar region, such as environmental issues and natural resources, history and politics, and culture of the peoples of the North. The number of NArFU students – graduates of the integrated distance program, "Bachelor of Circumpolar

Studies", has increased by 20 told from 2006 to 2013. At present, 189 students are taking the "Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies" program, with a further opportunity to continue training at Nord University.

The university has offered studies in Norwegian language and culture to students of various areas of training (about 130 students each year) since 1993. Students coming from linguistics have an opportunity to take Norwegian as a second foreign language and, later, to compete for a full scholarship for a semester internship at the University of Tromsø – the Arctic University of Norway (10 students per year). In the period from 1993 to 2015, 6 Norwegian guest lecturers worked as language teachers at NArFU.

Academic Mobility In the period from 2014 to September 2015, 317 students and 128 of the NArFU staff took part in mobility to Norwegian universities and business enterprises with the financial support of the Barents Plus program, High North Fellowship program for studies in the High North, the Norwegian quota program, "North-to-North" the "Arkhangelsk-Tromsø" program and the NArFU Development Program (more than 40% of all exchanges).

Eighty-one students and 66 teachers and scientists from Norway (among them, representatives of the University College of Harstad, University of Nordland, the University of Tromsø, University of Oslo, the University College of Nord-Trøndelag, the Northern Institute of Innovation, Research and Education, the Norwegian Police College, the Norwegian University College of Defense, the Rescue coordination Centre of North Norway, Narvik University College, and the Norwegian Institute of Agro-Economic Research) visited NArFU for the purposes of either studying or teaching.

Nine of the 72 NArFU honorary doctors are leading Norwegian researchers, officials and businesspeople who have significantly contributed to NArFU's development.

Research Cooperation In collaboration with Norwegian partners, NArFU implements research and educational projects within the following thematic fields: extraction and processing of hydrocarbons in the Arctic, environmental security, climate change, construction in northern climates, security in the Arctic, the mining industry in the North, renewable energy, information and communication technology, the development of tourism in the North, higher education in the Barents Region, inclusive education in the North, and history and current problems of international relations in the Arctic. NArFU's major financial instruments to support these research themes are: the "Kolarctic ENPI CBC" program, Research Council of Norway programs, the Norwegian Barents Secretariat grants, the Russian Federation's Ministry of Education and Science programs, the Russian Foundation for Basic Research programs, the Russian Humanitarian Science Foundation programs, the Nordic Council of Ministers programs, the "Erasmus +" program, and the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Education programs.

Thus, NArFU has gained cooperation networks with Norway from the 1990s and, at the same time, the university has expanded its international activities. Furthermore, in the situation of national competition between HEIs for the resources and extra financing to become a leading university, the international experience and good ties of the universities that later merged into NArFU with Nordic HEIs played a decisive role in the establishment of a federal university in Arkhangelsk. This, in turn, stimulated the university to introduce an internationalization program to integrate international dimensions into all aspects of its activities. This has already made an impact on quality and quantity of education programs, research, academic mobility, organizational structure and funding opportunities.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how internationalization, as a policy, was implemented in Russia from the Soviet times to the present. One of the major conclusions is that, during the Soviet period, international cooperation was developed within the national system as an additional activity, the main objective of which was to strengthen the image of the Soviet Union as a super-power nation. The post-Soviet period led to devaluation of higher education due to the high numbers of HEIs appearing in Russia and lack of proper quality control. The Bologna process has provided a new turn in higher education policy, resulting in a major discourse on the modernization of higher education in Russia that has led to internationalization. At the same time, internationalization became a tool of the Russian State for the diversification of provisions for higher education institutions. Despite the fact that the state addresses the higher education system generally, its expectations are linked to a very limited number of HEIs that are expected to become leading universities on a global scale. As a consequence, internationalization functions as an institutional diversifier and has a limited impact. What is more, Russian HEIs find themselves in a competition for resources and privileges both within and outside of Russia. Establishment of a group of “leading” universities in Russia creates a “race” for complying with the state-defined international indicators via development programs. In this situation, Russian-Norwegian cooperation in the higher education sphere turns out to be a driving force for internationalization and a valuable resource for modernization of Russian universities (at least) within the BEAR region. Using NArFU as an example, we have shown that, when it comes to both national and international competition between HEIs for resources and recognition, international cooperation within the BEAR, the Arctic and, in particular, with Norway, has become a resource and driving force of university development.

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Chapter 3
The Norwegian Framework for Educational Cooperation with Russia: Educational Policy with a Hint of Foreign Affairs

Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen and Håkan T. Sandersen

3.1 Introduction

During the past few decades, a Norwegian policy on internationalization of higher education has developed. From being something that "just happened", primarily initiated by individuals, internationalization has become more institutionalized and an integrated part of higher education policy at the government level, in addition to its inclusion in the strategies of higher education institutions (HEIs). This development has not taken place in a vacuum. Norwegian policy on internationalization is highly influenced by trends from abroad, of which globalisation and EU policy for higher education are of particular significance. In this chapter, we will look at the framework within which higher education cooperation and student mobility between Russia and Norway is taking place. We will look at the drivers of internationalization and student mobility, in general, and see how these influence developments in Norwegian policy and practice. We will also look at how institutions have responded to this, with a particular focus on the Barents region, educational collaboration with Russian HEIs, and programs targeting Russian students.

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3.2 International Student Mobility – Drivers and Rationales

The number of internationally mobile students in tertiary education around the world has doubled from 2000 to 2012, and has passed 4,500,000 in 2012, according to statistics from OECD (2014). The biggest exporters of students are Asian countries, China, India and Korea, in particular, and the largest importers are Western, English-speaking countries, in particular the USA, the UK, Australia, and Canada), while France, Germany and the Russian Federation also rank high on the list (OECD 2014).

There are several reasons why international student mobility is expanding. Firstly, the number of students in higher education in general is on the rise, and a growth in international students is part of this development. Secondly, certain aspects of globalisation and internationalization have facilitated mobility. Globalisation and internationalization are concepts that are interrelated, while being applied and defined in different ways. Both phenomena describe increased communication and interconnectedness across borders and the exchange of services, knowledge and ideas. It has been argued that internationalization in higher education is a *response* to globalisation (van der Wende 1997), but internationalization can also be seen as a strategy or process that has an order of its own. Knight (2003) defines internationalization in higher education as "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education". While globalisation is usually seen as spontaneous and economically driven, and facilitated by communication and communication technology, internationalization processes are generally more deliberate and politically driven.

The eduscape concept (Luke 2006; Forstorp and Mellström 2013) refers to the contemporary transnational flow of ideas, images, finances and peoples related to higher education. This flow is patterned by certain resource and power structures that make some regions, countries and universities more popular and relevant than others, which again creates visible, spatial or geographical patterns (Robertson and Keeling 2008). These geographical movement patterns can be seen as the aggregated results of "spontaneous" and rather unmanageable globalisation processes and deliberate, more or less strategic internationalization policies. Most commonly, studies on such geographical movements focus on the movement from exporting countries in the South and East to the importing countries in the North or West (Forstorp and Mellström 2013), but may also be meaningfully applied to movements in the Barents region.

Internationalization of higher education is high on the political agenda in many countries, and student mobility is a very visible form of internationalization that has been facilitated and encouraged. This development is particularly noticeable in Europe. The establishment of the ERASMUS program in 1987, the Lisbon convention and the Bologna process, including harmonisation of degree structures, establishment of exchange programs and a common credit point system (ECTS) and the aim to establish a common European higher education area (EHEA) are among the most important achievements. However, in other parts of the world as well, there is an increased awareness of the importance of internationalization in higher education.

The Barents region is no exception to this. Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia have all joined the Bologna process and embarked on various internationalization processes and strategies.

A core political rationale for encouraging student mobility rests on the assumption that the skills provided by studies abroad correspond to the needs of the modern labour market and a knowledge-based economy. The driving forces and policy rationales for student mobility overlap with drivers and rationales for internationalization of higher education in general. Research literature in this field often distinguishes between four types of rationales; academic/educational, cultural, economic and political (Blumenthal et al. 1996; van der Wende 1997; De Wit 2002; Quiang 2003; Knight 2004; Wiers-Jenssen 2008). These categories partially overlap and often have different significance at the national vs. institutional level. A brief outline of the different rationales is found below:

- **Educational/academic rationales**. Adding an international dimension to teaching and research is often seen as a means of quality enhancement in higher education. Student exchange encourages the exchange of ideas and the extension of the academic horizon, and may serve as a tool to prevent academic inbreeding. For small or less-developed countries, the export of students is a strategy used to compensate for deficits in domestic provision of higher education. Educational rationales are often closely linked to economic competitiveness.
- **Economic rationales**. Internationalization is believed to have a positive effect on technological development and economic growth, and this is perhaps the most important justification of policy efforts to promote studying abroad (Knight and de Wit 1995). Student exchange is seen as an investment in future economic relations and economic competitiveness. In addition, student exchange can be related to more direct economic benefits. Some countries see full-fee-paying students as an important source of revenue, while others prioritize the stimulation of student export over investments in expanding domestic enrolment capacity. Economic rationales are definitely important for fee-charging institutions, however, HEIs that do not charge fees may have economic benefits from recruiting international students as well; e.g. through performance-based funding from the government.
- **Cultural (and social) rationales.** In a globalized world, the need for developing individuals' intercultural skills is acknowledged. Understanding culture and language can generate economic and political returns in the long run. Exporting cultural values may be another objective of promoting student exchange, overlapping with political rationales.
- **Political rationales.** Education may also be seen as a dimension of foreign policy; i.e. as a way of making strategic alliances. Student mobility can advance mutual understanding, peace and regional identity, and mobile students may well become important decision-makers in their home countries upon return. Student exchange may be considered a means of maintaining or improving the image of a country, overlapping with cultural rationales.

National and institutional policies for internationalization are usually based on a mixture of various rationales and are the result of an interplay of various international and national drivers and actors (Qiang 2003), and the weight between them may change over time. In the decades just after the Second World War, the internationalization policy of many countries was focused on improving mutual human understanding and promoting solidarity with developing countries. More recently, there has been a development towards increased emphasis on economic rationales. Students are increasingly considered a revenue source (Kälvermark and van der Wende 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004; Frølich 2006; Robertson and Keeling 2008; Stensaker et al. 2008). Higher education is increasingly becoming a commodity in a global educational market, and it has been argued that the internationalization of higher education has gone from "aid" to "trade" (De Wit 2013).

It has been observed that internationalization and student mobility is increasingly becoming a vital part of the strategies of higher education institutions in many countries. Recruiting from a larger pool of students increases the likelihood of attracting the most talented students. Having students from other parts of the world on campus may also contribute to quality enhancement and bring in different perspectives. The latter aspect is related to the concept of internationalization at home (Knight 2003). This term is a current buzzword in the discourse on internationalization and is used to describe the goal that non-mobile students may also be exposed to international impulses. Political rationales are less obvious at the institutional level, though regional ties and international solidarity may be mentioned.

Internationally, there is also an increased tendency to focus on interregional mobility, where the emphasis is that many students are not necessarily travelling very far on their sojourn and that student mobility may also be seen as part of a region-building process. This makes it relevant to study inter-regional processes (Knight 2013), such as what is currently taking place in the Barents region (Sundet 2016).

3.3 Norwegian Policy for Internationalization

The four main types of rationales for internationalization and student mobility described above are also found in Norwegian policy for internationalization of higher education. The perspectives and policy on student mobility have changed over time. Norway has a long tradition of research cooperation with other countries and outgoing student mobility, while incoming mobility is a more recent development. Important features of the Norwegian policy for internationalization, and how these have developed are described below.

3.3.1 Capacity Building Through Student Export

The first university in Norway was established as late as 1811; until then it was necessary to go abroad to obtain higher education. Even after the establishment of higher education institutions in Norway, the tradition of studying abroad continued, particularly in fields like business, medicine, engineering and architecture (Bie 1974). After the Second World War, Norway was particularly short on academics, leading to a stage of heightened outgoing mobility. Due to insufficient domestic enrolment capacity, many Norwegian students were "pushed" abroad and, in the 1950s, as much as 30% of Norwegian students went abroad (Bie 1974). Seen from the government's perspective, providing public financial support for higher education abroad was a means of compensating for the shortages in professional segments of the labour market (NOU 1989; Kälvemark and van der Wende 1997). Activities that are labelled today as internationalization were more or less synonymous with outgoing mobility. The State Educational Loan Fund (established in 1947) has been – and still is – a prerequisite for the fact that a large proportion of Norway's total student body has been abroad as compared to most other western countries. For a high-cost country like Norway, studies abroad are not necessarily more expensive than studies at home, regardless of the perspective – national or individual.

Student export is a form of capacity building that may be seen as an economic rationale. It takes time to build up a sufficiently high-quality supply of higher education; furthermore, it is also expensive and some form of international division of labour in higher education may be beneficial. This is one of the reasons why a high proportion of Norwegian medical doctors are still educated abroad.

3.3.2 International Solidarity

A central feature of Norwegian internationalization policy has been a focus on international solidarity and capacity building in developing countries. International solidarity and development were arguments for attracting international students, in addition to the promotion of Norwegian international contact and cultural understanding (NOU 1989, p. 13; White paper No. 66 1984–1985; Frølich 2005). However, in their study on strategies of Norwegian universities, document that the former strong focus on international solidarity, peace and "Bildung" is hardly present anymore. The same study finds that institutional strategies largely reflect national educational aims. Higher education and foreign aid policy have been closely intertwined, even though there has also been tensions between the two.

In the 1990s internationalization policy was quite focused on quantity. Increasing outgoing as well as incoming mobility seemed to have become a goal in itself (White paper No. 19 1996–1997). All Norwegian students were supposed to be offered the opportunity for a sojourn abroad (White paper No. 27 2000–2001). Shorter international sojourns abroad through exchange programs were particularly encouraged. Despite not being an EU member, Norway joined the EU mobility program ERASMUS[1] at an early stage, and higher education institutions established bi- and multilateral exchange agreements with numerous foreign counterparts.

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[1] *European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students* was adopted by the European Commission in 1987.

3.3.3 The Added Value of International Education

As studying abroad became increasingly common, the potential cultural and social advantages of education abroad were also acknowledged. However, according to Rotevatn (1998, p. 97), it was not until the 1970s that students and the government became fully aware that studying abroad had a value of its own. It was "discovered" that language skills, cultural skills and networks were added values that may be useful, not only for a career abroad but also for the Norwegian labour market.

Most restrictions on the type of study program and the range of destination countries to be covered by public student support were gradually removed in the 1980s and 1990s. Until then, students could only get public support if they studied in the USA or Europe. A wider geographical distribution of students became an added objective and a wider range of study programs were eligible for support. However, the incentives for regulating the outgoing student flow in accordance with policy goals may be seen as insufficient (Wiers-Jenssen 2008).

An increased awareness of the potential for incoming students emerged in the 1980s and the establishment of study programs in English was encouraged (NOU 1989, p. 13). Despite the fact that, growing incoming mobility was cited as an important goal already in the 1980s, it took almost two decades before a substantial increase in incoming mobility was seen. Establishing more programs in English was a prerequisite for attracting students from countries outside Scandinavia. Providing courses in English, with the idea of targeting Norwegian students as well, has not been without controversy and has taken some time to implement at the institutional level. In recent years, a policy goal of improving the balance between outgoing and incoming students has been reached. The number of outgoing students has continued to grow, however, the number of incoming students has grown at a more rapid pace.

3.3.4 Quality and Relevance

In recent years, there has been an unambiguous development towards more focus on quality and relevance in policy for internationalization of higher education. This is expressed in the most recent white paper on internationalization (White paper No. 14 2008–2009). Internationalization policy is linked to knowledge policy, and internationalization and student mobility are meant to enhance the quality of Norwegian higher education institutions.

> The government thereby suggests giving increased internationalization of Norwegian education a better rooting in the national knowledge policy. This means that internationalization of education is not only defined as a goal in itself but also as a tool to further increased quality and relevance in higher education. (Authors' translation) (White paper No. 14 2008–2009)

It is believed that internationalization will strengthen global competitiveness, and that mobility will enhance quality in Norwegian higher education institutions. In a report on internationalization strategies at Norwegian universities, SIU (2013) find that quality is the most common justification for internationalization; and the mechanism through which it occurs is believed to be international recognition and quality enhancement by means of comparison and competitive power. Internationalization is also seen as a necessary response and adaptation to an increasingly international labour market. Strategies also reflect that internationalization is required to approach the research front in most fields.

The concept of internationalization at home has become a central part of the internationalization vocabulary and quality concerns; it is regarded as being equally important as internationalization abroad (Michelsen and Aamodt 2007). Norwegian students who are not mobile are supposed to gain exposure to internationalization; some ways of achieving this include additional courses and programs taught in English, internationalised curricula and incoming foreign students that contribute to an international environment on campus.

A stronger emphasis on economic rationales has also been observed. An educational market has developed globally, of which the recruitment of tuition-paying students forms the backbone (SIU 2013). This is generally not the situation in Norway, with its highly held tuition-free policy; however, the Norwegian funding system still makes internationalization economically relevant, as the higher education institutions receive lump sums for each foreign student as well as for each exam and degree in line with Norwegian students. Foreign students may thus provide the higher education institutions with additional income as a result of the performance-based funding system, even though they may not constitute an economic basis on their own.

3.3.5 Priorities of Different Regions and Countries

Internationalization of Norwegian higher education involves a wide geographical scope and many different regions have been prioritized. There are economic and academic rationales attached to this; however, different forms of political rationales are definitely present as well, including geopolitical interests and international solidarity. Cooperation in education may, therefore, also be seen as a form of educational or "soft" diplomacy (cf. Goes, Chap. 5 and Sandersen, Chap. 6 in this volume).

There is a long and extensive tradition of cooperation between Nordic countries. The establishment of a Nordic agreement on higher education was established 1971. Additionally, the Nordic mobility program, Nordplus, inaugurated in 1988, are tools aimed at strengthening collaboration and mobility between Nordic countries. Cooperation with the EU has also been highly prioritized for decades, and Norway joined the ERASMUS program at an early stage. Thus, even though Norway is not a member of the European Union, there has been a very strong commitment to the Bologna process and cooperation with EU institutions. In recent years, there has been a revival of cooperation with North America. Strategies and partnership programs have been launched in order to increase research collaboration as well as student and staff mobility.

Traditionally, Norway has had substantial cooperation with developing countries. Foreign aid policy and internationalization policy are heavily interwoven in this field. An important tool has been The Quota Scheme, a program providing financial support for students from developing countries in the South and countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe (including Russia) and in Central Asia to study in Norway. The objective of the scheme was to provide relevant education that would benefit the students' home countries when they return. The Norwegian government, however, in its proposed budget for 2016, decided to phase out the Norwegian Quota Scheme. They suggest replacing it with more direct and bilateral exchange agreements and partnerships. Other cooperation programs, such as NOMA (Norads's program for master's students from developing countries) and NUFU (Norwegian Program for Development, Research and Education) have also been important.

In recent years, there has been an emphasis on cooperation with the so-called BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) (Panorama 2015). However, cooperation with Russia had been on the agenda before the invention of the term "BRICS" and has been strongly accentuated since the demise of the Soviet Union. The older and larger universities in Norway tend to state their mission in relation to global aims and concerns, whereas the smaller and newer ones have more sub-national mission statements regarding their internationalization efforts. The universities in the northern part of the country generally have mission statements related to their location in the High North, circumpolar or Arctic neighbourhood, which is also their main or only geographic priority (SIU 2013).

The political invention of the Barents region has had important effects on educational collaboration as well. The Barents region and the so-called Barents cooperation is a political construct (Tunander 1994) founded on 11 January 1993, related to the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration, where the foreign ministers of the four countries established the forum for cooperation. The aims were sustainable development, long-term, secure political stability (cf. above), and possible reduction of tensions in addition to fostering a sense of unity among the people of a region previously marked by Cold War military confrontation. The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) is a two-tier cooperative platform. One level is intergovernmental (Barents Euro-Arctic Council, BEAC) and the other is interregional (Barents Regional Council, BRC). The members of the BEAC are Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission, whereas 13 counties or similar subnational entities form the BRC. Through the Norwegian funded Barents Secretariat, BEAR has encouraged, facilitated, and supported educational cooperation since the very beginning of 1993.

3.3.6 The Quality Reform and Internationalization at the Institutional Level

The success of national policy on internationalization is heavily dependent upon implementation at the institutional level. Slowly, the national aims have drizzled down to institutional strategies and practice. A report investigating strategic plans for internationalization at Norwegian higher education institutions (SIU 2013), shows academic rationales (quality, knowledge policy) are high on the agenda in most institutions, but that rationales related to economy/resources and "social mission" are also frequently mentioned. Some see internationalization as a response to political signals. Cultural aspects and international solidarity is now less frequently mentioned than before. Hence, national policy is also reflected in institutional strategies (Frølich 2005; SIU 2013).

Many of the changes at the institutional level are closely linked to a reform in Norwegian higher education introduced in 2003, called *The Quality Reform* (White paper No. 27 2000–2001). In part, this reform was a response to the Bologna process (Gornitzka 2006) and formed a watershed in Norwegian policy on internationalization as well. As the name of the reform suggests, the idea was that the quality of Norwegian higher education was to be improved, and internationalization was one of the means by which to achieve that. Internationalization would now permeate the higher education institutions and most of their activities. While student exchange had previously been characterized by uncoordinated and occasional measures, and more or less left up to the student, internationalization was now supposed to be integrated into the study programs; additionally, studying abroad for a semester or two should be encouraged and facilitated.

A new degree system, in accordance with the Bologna principles (bachelor's and master's degrees, 3 + 2 model), was introduced. This was supposed to facilitate recognition and mobility. Further, elements of performance-based funding were introduced. Institutions received a proportion of their funding according to the number of credit points students "produced" (cf. above). As a consequence, competition between higher education institutions increased. It became more important to attract students, nationally as well as internationally. This became an incentive to establish more programs in English (Frølich 2005). Attracting international students can be a means to internationalise the institution and attract the most talented students (academic rationale). However, it may also be a strategy to compensate for limited domestic enrolments (economic rationale). Some institutions are struggling to recruit local and national students and, therefore, look for opportunities abroad (cf. Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume).

In connection with the reform, the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) and the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) were established. The first was established to support the institutions' work on internationalization, while the second was an independent body that would control and develop the quality of Norwegian HEIs.

3.3.7 A Distinct Norwegian Model of Internationalization?

The aims of the Norwegian internationalization policy has been more clearly defined, and the rhetoric has shifted towards greater emphasis on quality and relevance while also linking internationalization more closely to the general knowledge policy (White Paper No. 19 2008–2009). However, policy documents are vaguer regarding *the ways in which* internationalization is supposed to enhance quality and *which forms of* quality it is meant to improve. Quality in higher education can be defined in many ways, e.g. as exception, perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money and as transformative potential (Harvey and Green 1993). An increase in the number of English-taught programs and international students is observed; however, such quantitative measures cannot indicate to what extent student mobility contributes, de facto, to enhancing quality and increasing relevance.

Economic rationales for internationalization are still less obvious in Norwegian policy than in the policies of many other countries. Institutional autonomy is limited and is highly dependent on government funding and legislation. University funding is partly based on grants – with funding on a “per student” basis – and supplemented by a performance-based (number of credit points awarded) system. As tuition fees are not charged in public institutions (in which 90% of all students are enrolled), the direct economic benefits for attracting international students are small, if not negligible. Universities are paid by the state for each finished/passed exam, regardless of the results, nationality and geographic location of the student. In addition, universities receive extra money for each enrolled foreign student. Both of these factors create an economic incentive to enrol foreign students.

From the government’s perspective, it seems that there are primarily costs attached to international students, because the education is provided for free. Introducing tuition fees for students from outside the EU has been proposed, in particular after neighbouring countries like Sweden and Denmark introduced such fees. The proposition has not obtained sufficient support in the parliament as of now, however, this may change in the future. Absence of tuition fees is reported to be one of the most important reasons among international students for choosing to undertake a full degree in Norway (Wiers-Jenssen 2015). Hence, at the institutional level, this may be seen as a national and structural “comparative advantage” for student mobility and internationalization. Though an explicit policy of skilled migration is absent, substantial proportions of international students find work in Norway upon graduation. Hence, attracting international students may be beneficial for the national economy in the long run.

Political rationales are still clearly important in Norwegian policy for internationalization of higher education. Norway is a small country, dependent on strategic economic and political alliances. Links to other Nordic countries, the European Union and North America are strong. In the last couple of decades we have seen a substantial commitment to cooperation in higher education and research in the High North, with a particular emphasis on Northwest Russia. Norway is also a country with strong traditions of public commitment to developing countries.

Providing higher education for students from the developing world – in Norway – is an important part of this policy.

3.4 Educational Cooperation with Russia

Cooperation with Northwest Russia has a special focus in Norway. Maintaining good relations with Russia is an aim for Nordic and Baltic countries, and cooperation in higher education is seen as an important tool to strengthen the economic, cultural and political ties across this border region (Korteniemi 2011). Russia and Norway share a common border of almost 200 km, and historically there has been considerable contact between the two countries. The relations were subdued during the Cold War and throughout the 70 years with the USSR, but they have been revived since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Regional cooperation with Russia is thus an important part of several policy areas in Norway. Norway has largely seen the Barents cooperation and bilateral educational agreements in the context of geopolitics and region-building, where exchange and cooperation are regarded as a way to further improve and stabilize relations with Russia and to create a shared "Barents identity". For Norwegian universities the economic potential related to incoming Russian students is relevant, however, student exchange is mainly founded in mission statements, institutional strategies and normative pressure towards internationalization as well as funding opportunities related to Barents region building. Additionally, national educational strategies and the High North Strategy have introduced a range of relevant topics and drivers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007), which are reflected in the institutions' strategies (Frølich 2005; SIU 2013).

Of particular importance is The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU), a Norwegian public sector agency that promotes international cooperation in education and research. SIU is funded through assignments from various ministries and international bodies and invites Norwegian HEIs to apply for funds for projects related to higher education collaboration with institutions in other countries. The Norwegian Cooperation Program in Higher Education with Russia supports collaboration between universities and university colleges in Russia and Norway (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education [SIU]).

There are several exchange programs targeting Russians students and faculty and there is a substantial number of cooperation programs relevant for or deliberately targeting higher education institutions in northern Norway and northwest Russia. The above-mentioned Norwegian Quota Scheme, which is discontinued from 2017, included courses and programs at the master's and doctoral levels in addition to certain professional/bachelor's degrees. Here, each student received the same amount of money as a Norwegian student in an equivalent educational program would, however, the loan portion was waived when the student returns to his/her home country after completing the course of study. As a rule the scheme only enrolled students from institutions that had collaboration agreements with Norwegian universities or university colleges. A frequently raised criticism was that the majority of the students who received support from this program stayed in Norway following their education (cf. Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume).

After the establishment of the Barents regional cooperation in 1993, regional cooperation was high on the agenda and the Barents Plus program was the first to be established. Barents Plus is a regional (bilateral) scholarship program supporting cooperation between higher education institutions in Norwegian and Russian parts of the Barents region.[2] North2North is a mobility program provided by the University of the Arctic. Students can apply for a North2North scholarship and/or a travel grant[3] to attend another circumpolar institution for a period of 3–12 months. Both Barents Plus and North2North are administered by University of Tromsø, Finnmark campus.

In an effort to motivate Norwegians to study in Russia, the Norwegian government has established a trial program with support for students attending Russian language training in Russia, and the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund provides loans to students for their first year at selected Russian universities (White paper No. 18 2012–2013). In order to strengthen cooperation between the countries, a position has been established at the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow dedicated to dealing with research, innovation and higher educational cooperation (White paper No. 18 2012–2013).

The Norwegian aim is to build a stronger integration of research cooperation and cooperation in higher education (White paper No. 14 2008–2009). Research cooperation with Russia is encouraged and facilitated through several programs of The Norwegian Research Council. The NORRUSS program (The Research Council of Norway 2012) – the research from which forms the basis of this book – aims to "broaden, reinforce and renew the wide-range research being conducted by Norway on a large number of issues related to Russia and the High North – in a period where the attention of research communities and governments in a growing number of countries moves in the direction of the Arctic". The program introduces new resources for research on Russia and its national challenges and opportunities, in addition to mainstream issues on Russian society. The policy framework for the program is "The High North – Visions and Strategies" (White paper No. 7 2011–2012), and the Norwegian Research Council's Research Strategy for the Arctic and Northern Areas 2011–2016. Additionally, a number of other programs have been established that include research cooperation between Norway and Russia on certain strategic areas. Petromaks I and II aimed at developing knowledge related to a number of petroleum related issues and encouraged Norwegian-Russian collaboration.

Furthermore, the University of the Arctic (UArctic) has proved to be an effective platform for educational cooperation between Norway and Russia at the bachelor level. UArctic is a Pan-Arctic cooperative network of universities, colleges, research

[2] The objects of the program is to further internationalization of HE in the North through bilateral academic and student exchange as well as improving cultural understanding and development of a mutual regional identity.

[3] Students participating in a North2North exchange in the North American region can apply for North2North tuition waivers.

institutes and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the North. The university also includes a number of non-Arctic member institutions – established to promote collaboration in higher education and research in the Arctic region in order to develop a strong and sustainable circumpolar region. Eight countries in the Arctic have joined UArctic and Norway has ten university and university college members. Particularly, Nord University[4] and the Finnmark branch campus of University of Tromsø have been actively involved in UArctic educational activities, whereas University of Tromsø has been most involved in the thematic research networks.

Several projects have also received direct support from ministries, particularly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two projects that have received such support are described by Sandersen (Chap. 6 in this volume).

3.4.1 Cooperation Between Russian and Norwegian Higher Education Institutions

In northern Norway higher education institutions have been active in internationalization work and educational cooperation with Russian universities. For many years, *Nord University* has emphasized internationalization and currently has more than 90 collaboration agreements with foreign universities and network organizations. More than 50 nations are represented at the university, and foreign students account for about 10% of the students. Over a third of the international students come from Russia and Ukraine. The Faculty of Social Science has the highest number of Russian students, through the Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies program, where Northern (Artic) Federal (NArFU) in Archangelsk is the main counterpart. The Faculty of Professional Studies runs a joint Master's Degree in Borderology in collaboration with Murmansk State Humanities University (MSHU) in Murmansk. The Business School runs a joint Master's Degree in Energy Management in collaboration with MGIMO University in Moscow and a joint Master of Science in sustainable management in cooperation with four partner institutions in Russia, where the most important is Baltic State Technical University (BSTU). There is also a joint Master in Business and Engineering through Nord University, Bodø, and Baltic State Technical University, St. Petersburg.

University of Tromsø (UiT) has about 100 cooperation projects annually with Russian partners. UiT and NArFU in Arkhangelsk are the leaders of the joint working group on education and research in the Barents Region (BEARWGER). UiT is the northernmost university in the world and, with the 2013 merger, added Arctic University of Norway to its name, reflecting a national responsibility regarding Arctic areas and issues. The most successful educational cooperation with Russia has been the Public Health Program in cooperation with Northern State Medical

[4] As a result of a merger Nordland University changed name to Nord University in January 2016.

University, Archangelsk. UiT is the university with by far the highest number of educational and research collaborative programs with Russia. Recently three university colleges have been merged with UiT and are now branch campuses.

UiT's Finnmark Branch Campus (Finnmark University College until 2013) in Alta is the Norwegian institution located closest to the Russian border, with a branch campus in the border town of Kirkenes, located about 200 km from Murmansk. The main cooperation is related to the Bachelor of Northern Studies (BNS) that operates primarily with Murmansk State Humanities University, although other Russian HEIs take part in the program. This branch campus also provides English-taught bachelor programs in arctic adventure tourism and cultural and creative entrepreneurship as well as a Master of Tourism Studies, which also recruit Russian students.

UiT's Narvik Branch Campus (Narvik University College until 2016) has five different English-taught master's programs in science. UiT has via this campus bilateral agreement with Murmansk and Archangelsk State Technical Universities, but the master's programs do not target Russian students in particular. The campus also runs a 1-year program in Norwegian for foreigners to prepare them for studies in Norwegian. The campus has some 250 foreign students from more than 40 countries, many of them from Russia. The Russian students are currently largely self-financed.

UiT's Harstad Branch Campus (Harstad University College until 2016) has a 1-year full-time specialization program in advanced marketing, and some of the students come from various Russian universities. The Russian students have generally been financed through the Quota program and North2North fellowships. This branch campus also offers a 1-year online program in travel and tourism management based on a cooperation with Northern Arctic Federal University, Arkhangelsk and Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Rovaniemi, Finland).

3.5 Conclusion

From existing solely through more or less spontaneous and uncoordinated processes, internationalization has become a central part of strategies on both the national and institutional level in Norway. Norway has eagerly adapted to a range of EU initiatives, such as the Lisbon convention and the Bologna process,[5] and has been at the head of the line in the EHEA when it comes to implementing measures. Over the years a large institutional toolbox has been developed in order to facilitate educational cooperation. However, Norwegian internationalization strategies have focused minimally on direct economic gains and commercialization, in contrast to many other western countries. Nonetheless, the Norwegian funding system

[5] As stated by Robertson and Keeling (2008, p. 223) region-building and development of "European culture and values" was the initial motives for EU's educational exchange policy.

provides an incentive structure that encourages higher education institutions to receive foreign students in order to receive additional income or compensate for the costs related to internationalization.

De Wit and Hunter define internationalization in higher education as the "intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society" (De Wit and Hunter 2015, p. 2). This definition underlines an awareness that the internationalization process should become more inclusive and less elitist, and that it should focus more on curriculum and learning outcomes rather than mobility exclusively. The Norwegian institutions studied here still seem to be oriented mainly towards mobility and cooperation agreements; and less towards curriculum, learning outcomes and internationalization at home.

Norwegian higher education institutions seek educational cooperation with a number of regions and countries for different reasons, but the previous focus on international solidarity has lost some of its importance. Although a shift towards more academic and economic rationales has been observed, policy rationales related to foreign aid as well as regional cooperation are still essential parts of Norwegian policy on internationalization of higher education.

During the last 25 years, Russia has arisen as a target for Norwegian educational cooperation, particularly among small universities and university colleges in northern Norway. In recent years, however, these universities and colleges have been subject to merger processes and are becoming larger units, which may lead to changes in their strategies and focus. On one hand, cooperation in higher education and student mobility between Norway and Russia is part of a larger pattern, where globalisation and internationalization are increasingly influencing higher education.

On the other hand, educational cooperation with Russia is also framed by a context of foreign and/or security policy. Institutions in northern Norway have been very actively seeking partners in northwest Russia, resulting in the encouragement, support and establishment of research cooperation and student exchange programs. The Barents region is of high geopolitical significance to Norway. Hence, cooperation with Russia may be seen as more than just institutional educational cooperation; it is also part of the Norwegian Barents policy and national soft security policy as a whole.

There is a conflict of interest between the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding certain issues of Norway's internationalization policy. The Ministry of Education is rather sceptical to programs that are basically funding Russian bachelor students (scholarships) and Norwegian universities (lump sums for exams and degrees, and per-student sums for foreign students enrolled) without really contributing much to internationalization or knowledge-building. The focus of these concerns is mainly directed at online bachelor programs where the bulk of students never cross the border into Norway. In contrast, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sees these programs as part of the people-to-people cooperation and soft security policy surrounding the border regions of the Barents. From this perspective student and knowledge exchange performs other functions beyond the strictly academic ones. Thus, there is reason to interpret the rather generous educational cooperation with Russia as a distinct policy field in the intersection between educational and security policy.[6]

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Part II
Networks

Chapter 4
Walking the Talk: Putting Internationalization into Practice

Marit Sundet

4.1 Introduction

Structure sets the framework for the actions of individuals. Establishing a network involves designing such structures; through not only routines and procedures, coordination and delegation of work, but also by characterizing various patterns of opinion and regulating ideas and principles for interaction. Establishment of an international network, therefore, involves far more than simply discovering a well-suited model for interaction. Initially, it means identifying and ascertaining basic similarities and differences, bringing together that which is divided, and developing mutual perceptions, understandings and perspectives with regard to both the work that needs to be done and the goals that need to be reached. The road ahead winds its way through cultural disagreements and contradictory identities, rules, feelings and convictions. Along the way, there is seldom anyone to provide directions other than those who are also along for the ride. This is how internationalization of higher education is shaped and developed.

My ambition for this chapter is to describe and discuss this complex process of development. Using a network involving various HEIs connected to a Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies (BCS) program in the Barents Region as an example, I will highlight several relations that are essential to the network's core management and to the maintenance and development of the cooperation between institutions. The purpose is to demonstrate that the practical and, thus, decisive part of what falls under the label of internationalization is a process that demands a great deal of the individuals who participate in it. The title of this chapter – Walking the talk – points to the idea that internationalization is realized within the network and, thus, the characteristics of both the individuals and the relations they establish with each

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other are the most important conditions for how successful such an internationalization will be.

The term, network, is well established and perhaps one of the most widely used terms to describe collaborative work between people who represent different resources, interests and, in some cases, countries; people who have found it appropriate to unite forces in order to achieve results they would not be able to realize on their own. In such cases, however, networks are often described as faceless structures that connect transaction-based links between agencies and actors, and where usefulness and rationality are key words for understanding the network's existence. In today's globalized world, with its effective means of logistics and communication that remove distance, *network* becomes a self-explanatory term that reflects the most obvious organizational method of all for international cooperation. The problem is that what is evident, as a rule, becomes so obvious that we overlook more than we see. As I will demonstrate, that which we overlook can be of considerable significance – not only to succeed in a cooperation but to be able to understand and illustrate processes that occur within such networks. As network researchers, this is our primary task.

This chapter, first and foremost, does not address international education programs at a higher institutional level, but rather how higher education is internationalized – which is to say that I am not as concerned about the BCS network as an educational system but that I rather look at how this system is managed and further developed.

After providing a description of key words pertaining to data, I will give a short presentation of the background leading up to the creation of BCS, where I present a model that depicts three different levels of international cooperation in the Barents Region. The idea behind the model is to clarify vertical, diagonal and horizontal bonds in the current network, which leads to my main concern: what is the driving force behind the network; how are the relations maintained; how are opinions, ambitions and objectives formed; and how is the network changed and developed as a working method? Finally, I will provide a critical analysis of what may be defined as output from this network. Do we achieve our desired results, what experiences are we left with, and would it be possible to run this type of international cooperation in other ways?

4.2 Briefly on Method and Data

In addition to the research data that is presented in the introductory chapter, this chapter builds largely on notes and observations from the BCS network's annual meetings. Aside from these data, my long-standing role being responsible for the BCS has provided a constant stream of various types of information from all the partners in the network. Through this role, there are continual opportunities to run methodical data collection. In the course of 7 years, I have had countless visits with the cooperating HEIs during which I have consciously taken on the role of participating observer.[1]

The BCS is part of the University of the Arctic, where I have been associate dean since 2010. In this capacity, I have had further access to relevant documents and possibilities for participant observation. These are data and observations that are of considerable significance in interpreting framework conditions and policy development within structures that accommodate many international education programs at the Bachelor and Master levels.

All of my informants and collaborating colleagues have been clear about my double role as leader of the network and researcher, with our mutual business and themselves as objects of study. None of them have been critical to this. They have been just as willing and open during interview situations as they have been during trivial conversations, in both task-related and social settings.

With participatory observation comes a broad spectrum of methodological challenges that we do not have time to elaborate on in this chapter, nor is it relevant to the purpose. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that my role as leader of the network has probably been significant to how my position as an insider and observer has been evaluated by my collaborative partners. It may have affected the type of information I have acquired and what has been made visible to me, such as Berreman (1962), Geertz (1983) and Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), among others, suggest.

Another important point is that the data I have gathered from network meetings, social get-togethers, electronic exchange of information, personal face-to-face conversations with individual participants and from official missions and formal negotiations at other HEIs, for obvious reasons, are not as structured or testable as the data that has been presented in the introductory chapter.

4.3 The Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies Network

In the year 2000, a professor at the University of Nordland (UiN) was invited to a conference that was sponsored by the Circumpolar Universities Association in Scotland, where he became acquainted with the University of the Arctic (UArctic). Inspired by the potential he saw in this association, shortly thereafter he sent an application on behalf of UiN for membership in UArctic. With financial support from UArctic to offer seven of their basic courses in addition to the UiN course, “Norwegian Politics and Society”, requests were then sent to universities in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk for cooperation and student exchange.

This was the humble and somewhat random beginning of the BCS. Without this enthusiastic and forward-thinking professor, and the work that he and key colleagues at UiN lay down to establish this program of study, it is unlikely this educational program and network would exist.

[1] For further elaboration on this data collection, see Sundet (2016).

At the same time, it is important to view the establishment of the BCS from a broader perspective. As mentioned other places in this book (see Kukarenko, Chap. 2 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume), internationalization of higher education is a global phenomenon. Therefore, the collaborative models and types of virtual organizations that exist between HEIs in the Barents Region are a reflection of what may be found in other regions around the world. Nonetheless, the background for formalization of the cooperation between the countries of the Barents Region has been of great significance to the establishment of the BCS, among other things (Sundet 2016). After the Cold War, opportunities opened up for countries in the region to enter into a close political cooperation to address unresolved issues and challenges in wide array of fields, not least of which were those related to the exploitation of natural resources and the development of commerce in the northern regions. Management of natural resources and environmental challenges have also had a central place in the political cooperation. Additionally, Russia and Norway have strategic geopolitical and militarily political interests in the region. The development of the bilateral relationship has, therefore, encompassed the function of preserving the peace as well. In the wake of this, the need for an educational cooperation that could follow up in two of the Barents Cooperation's areas of interest arose. One of these was the development of knowledge in a broad spectrum of fields that primarily included the natural science disciplines. The other was the so-called people-to-people cooperation in approximately just as many fields, among which education was seen as a particularly essential area for collaboration. At the same time, the regional and network-based UArctic that was founded by the Arctic Council in 1997 should also be mentioned, having initially been created for circumpolar collaboration between eight member countries. It was within these institutionalized "umbrella structures" that the UiN professor first imagined putting together a program of study and running it together with coordinators from HEIs in the Barents Region. With a broad international educational cooperation on a global level as a timely prototype, political will, promotion and implementation of similar cooperation between countries on a regional level, and a circumpolar coordination system for the HEIs in the northern region, the possibilities were there for whomever wanted to seize the opportunity. The rest consisted of hard work.

In order to shape an understanding of the members involved in the BCS network, it is appropriate to begin with a model that simplifies the actual affiliations between them while nonetheless creating a visual representation of the complex relations and differences between the various types of participants and interests that are tied to the network. Using Fig. 4.1, I would like to emphasize three points. The first alludes to the fact that the relations between the members who form this network are manifold and distinct. In order to appreciate these divergences, I make use of Granovetter's (1973) distinction between strong and weak bonds. The strength of a bond between two people is reflected in the amount of time they spend together, the degree of intimacy and emotional intensity that exists between them, and the reciprocity of their interaction. We intuitively associate weak bonds with more peripheral acquaintances to whom we have a far more superficial and fleeting connection.

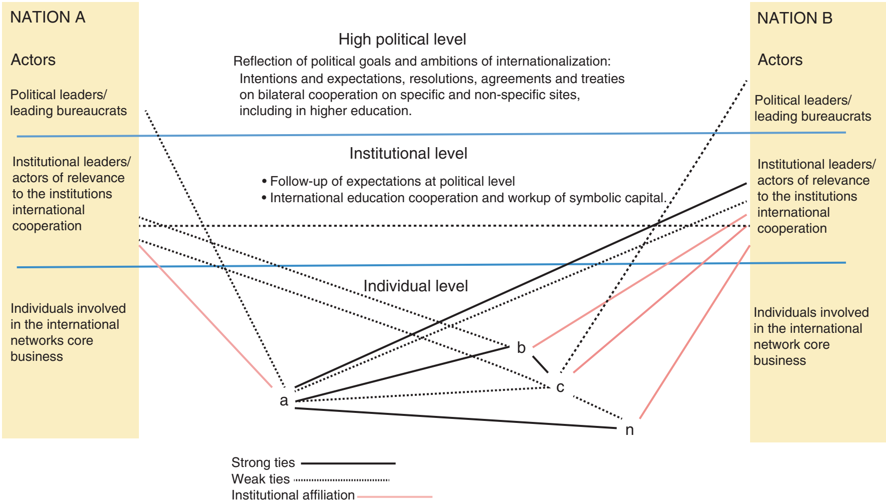

Fig. 4.1 Networks at different levels

However, Granovetter is concerned with mentioning the strength that may be found in the weak bonds and how information, opinions and behavior is dispersed throughout social systems. The relevance of this philosophy lies in the next points to come.

The other purpose of Fig. 4.1 is to illustrate that this type of network should be interpreted both as a spatial distribution of interacting partners, and from an egocentric perspective such as Barnes (1954) and the way the Manchester School studied relations based on the social ties individuals have to each other (Scott 1991). The spatial perspective is not just connected to the regional proliferation of BCS but also to the forms of communication that are possible and the challenges that naturally arise when such relations are built and maintained over large geographical distances. Granovetter portrays strong bonds as effective networks that, in themselves, are characteristic of the types of relations that should ideally evolve between the BCS participants. The egocentric perspective is, therefore, essential to understanding the individual's personal ties to other individuals as well as to the business of the network (Fig. 4.2).

The third point is that the BCS network is connected to three different levels. At a high political level everyone from state leaders, members of parliament and regional politicians to top bureaucrats and experts from various departments are actively involved. Researchers and specialists within relevant fields can also figure here, as they often contribute with the knowledge base used to reach decisions. The BCS network's roots at this level are tied to individuals only to a small degree; they are far more attached to political goals, decisions and strategies than to the decision-makers themselves. Granovetter claims that the strength of such weak bonds is that, through the group of individuals who have strong bonds to each other – the effective network – these bonds augment information, ideas, opinions and anticipations that

Murmansk (3 HEIs):	*Arkhangelsk* (1 HEI):	*St. Petersburg* (1 HEI):	*Syktyvkar* (2 HEIs):	*Bodø* (1 HEI):
International institute of Business Education (MIBO)	The Northern (Arctic) Federal University	State Polar Academy	Syktyvkar State University	University of Nordland
Murmansk State Humanities University (MSHU)			Komi Republican Academy of State Service and Administration	
Murmansk State Technical University (MSTU)				

Fig. 4.2 HEI partners in the BCS network

are of significant consequence to the work and strategies of the group and, in a broad sense, to the group's own perception of itself.

The middle level consists of institutions that are formally involved in the educational cooperation, for which the bonds lie between leaders and other participants at the individual HEIs who have some type of supervisory responsibility for the management of the BCS and for ensuring that the contracts between partners are upheld. These are weak bonds involving actors who very seldom meet in the flesh and a flow of information that seldom moves horizontally between the HEIs and almost never without those who are directly involved in the operation of the network. As I will argue later on, it is precisely this lack of rooting at the high political and institutional levels that means that the internationalization of higher education occurs at the level below.

The individual level consists of the specific people who are directly connected to the core of network operations. Most of these are coordinators and academics, while others are responsible for administrative support. Between partners from the Russian and Norwegian HEIs, the cooperation is dependent on strong bonds, while such requirements are not as important for relations between the Russian HEIs themselves. Nevertheless, the network's annual meetings have helped all members to get better acquainted and to talk about "we" and "us" when referring to the cooperation even when the conversation takes place between two people over the phone. The practical work of running the BCS in itself, and the mutual dependence we have on each other, generate strong bonds between the participants. Figure 4.1 also demonstrates that the network adheres to the overlying levels with both strong and weak bonds, and through each member due to their formalized institutional connections by being employed at one of the HEIs. The last point refers to the sense of commitment each individual feels for his/her HEI. The weak bonds refer to the flow of information to and from the meso and macro levels, while the strong bonds point to the characteristics of the social relations that exist internally in the network. These three types of connection provide input for the BCS; however, they do so to various degrees, in various ways and with various effects. The central questions is, therefore:

if internationalization of higher education occurs within such networks, how are the operations managed and regulated?

4.3.1 *Input and Regulations*

This section discusses with my main concern of demonstrating how relations in the network are maintained, how opinions, ambitions and objectives are formulated and how the network is developed and changed as a type of business. I will make use of four key terms that provide the framework for certain properties of the network that are considerably significant to the fact that any network operations at all result in legitimizing its existence. These terms describe relations that develop between participants as well as structures that are cultivated and that regulate roles and behavior within the network; that is, how internal and external perceptions of the network characterize the efforts and operations implemented and how the procedural aspects – learning and renewal – are both desirable and necessary.

4.3.1.1 Relations

The formal contracts between institutions should be viewed as impersonal obligations that each HEI believes it has to the other HEIs. It is precisely on the personal level that the cooperation takes place. For most of the participants, the network is a meeting place or part-time arena; a work process that is arranged alongside their other tasks. For some, it is just a temporary project they are involved in to satisfy an employer, as part of a long and winding career path. However, the network also offers connections to the outside world, travel, academic exposure as well as personal growth and learning; to create something that opens doors as much for others as it does for oneself. However, one member's motivations are not apparent to the others; not the personal and genuine incentives, nor those that represent hidden interests defined by the secret principles of each institution. Participation in the network is, therefore, well described through Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical metaphor associated with the terms *frontstage* and *backstage*, and with the example of the waitress who communicates with the guests in a completely different way than she does with the chefs in the kitchen. This is how interactions between network members seem to be; the communication occurs "frontstage" and is dedicated to the actors' mutual mission.

The individual's contribution, however, is characterized by "backstage" representations that are made up of individual motives, values, interpretations and expectations just as much as they include the domestically cultural grasp on mind and soul. In addition to strategies, concessions and other institutional constraints the resident HEI has placed on its network participant, such representations will always be decisive for what is perceived as wise and appropriate when meeting with other participants in any given circumstances.

As a result, to the degree that life-giving, dynamic and productive elements exist within the network, they also prevail in the very relations that the network individuals are able to develop with one another. Each time such relations are stimulated through a meeting or through mental connection, they not only accommodate the unique or everyday aspects of the current situation, but also the personal feelings, experiences, assessments and classifications that define the other half of the relationship. Likewise, the context-related elements of formalities and social contracts between the individuals specify who they are for each other. Precisely because such contextual conditions are crucial in determining the types of relations that may be developed within the network, it is essential to delve deeper into the structures that surround these network interactions and how the individuals align themselves with these structures.

4.3.1.2 Structures

To give an impression of what regulates the behavior of individuals in the BCS network, there are five properties of the cooperation, in particular, that should be highlighted. These properties are connected to social structure, structures related to responsibility and projects, trust structures, power structures and opinion structures.

Social structure refers to how the interaction within the network itself creates the structural framework that supports it, in that the individuals' daily activities manifest themselves into a practice that eventually becomes definitive for how they can act and interact (Giddens 1984). In simpler terms, this means that rules for how an interaction should take place are established through practice and, therefore, the rules for interaction seem definitive for all the participants. From this perspective, the individual's role is not shaped by an individual concern but is largely dependent on what conditions the social structure sets for limitations and what it offers in the way of possibilities related to behavior and role definition. Secondly, as a logical consequence of this reasoning, it limits as much as it allows for how power may be wielded within the network. Thirdly, and because communication is the major part of the interaction, it will also underlie the same structural framework.

An empirical presentation of how such structural frameworks are established, however, would require a meticulous ethnographic description that we cannot allow for in this chapter. For example, it could require a full portrayal of the network's first formal annual meeting. There we introduced ourselves and used our social tentacles and sonar to carefully move forward and capture echoes from voices and expectations. There we made our first impressions and judgments of each other, chose the first words, gave careful impressions of what our mutual hopes and dreams were, indicated how the meeting should be carried out, searched for confirmations and rejections, and could see from other people's open and searching gazes, with relief, that they had settled in somewhat and had become a bit more comfortable with their nervous knowledge that every single one of them would soon introduce themselves and their institution with everyone's eyes focused on them. This self-regulating and restrained vigilance towards each other gave no concessions for bullying or boastful assertion. This set the tone not only for the first meeting but for subsequent gatherings, and for how network participants would communicate with one another and express themselves outside such meetings. Such descriptions, with layers upon layers of episodes and events, could give an idea of how the social framework grows through interaction and how it can lay considerable constraints on our behavior.

Any objections that claim this is just a form of intuitive knowledge that only serves to fill space and disclose what everyone already knows may be countered with both the question of where the natural outcomes of meetings between people are and with references to numerous cooperative projects that have ended up in an obstacle course of dysfunctional relations. Nonetheless, in a research-based context, it is the explicit rather than the intuitive knowledge about life that allows for testing and generalization; something that is often reflected in macro models that explains everything while simultaneously explaining nothing.

Secondly, in addition to being a social structure, a network structure may be seen as a distributive pattern for responsibility and tasks that exists in at least two versions. One expresses the formal distribution's idealized expectations, while the other expresses what is real. The first suggests what we initially agree on, while the second points to what we, on one hand, have found relevant underway and, on the other hand, have felt forced to accept. For example, a HEI coordinator can have the best intentions of carrying out certain local administrative tasks connected to the BCS. However, unforeseen resource-related redistributions at the HEI can mean that the coordinator is not able to follow up on his or her obligations to the network. Since agreements, as a rule, are based on a minimum amount of trust, reliability and credibility, they are connected to stability and predictability for most organizations (Hatch 2006). In the case of the BCS network, it would be more accurate to say that what is predictable points to anticipated surprises and a lasting certainty that something unexpected will always ensue and that the stable and lasting elements, therefore, are characterized as much by gradual temporary devices as they are by consistent and lasting processes. Demands for flexibility and improvisation are made on all network participants and make it obvious that the network is rooted in individuals rather than in contracts that exist in file cabinets along with other contracts.

The third regulating characteristic of the BCS cooperation is tied to the mutual trust structure that has been cultivated from within. Just as Granovetter (1973) describes strong and weak bonds, Giddens (1991) writes about "thick" or "thin" trust. The thick type of trust is characterized by interaction that occurs face-to-face, in which personal characteristics and peculiarities are drawn into the relationship in ways that are consequential to how the business aspects of the interaction or the case-based core is safeguarded. The thin trust is faceless in that it becomes more impersonal the thinner it becomes. The less information about and control of other individuals' behavior one has, the thinner the trust becomes. A network that is characterized by thin trust will dissolve if the parties do not follow up with their responsibilities and do not complete their tasks. On the other hand, if it is characterized by thick trust, this type of trust is rooted in the individuals rather than in the systems and institutions. Therefore, that which is unpredictable in the operations of the BCS network is not ascribed to the individuals but to the fact that the HEIs act in a non-committal way and view the BCS as an appendix with relatively great symbolic value but, nonetheless, subordinate to their traditional operations and all internal medical attention. The network, therefore, adheres to the individuals who, for various reasons, find it meaningful to invest their time and themselves in keeping this education program alive. The person proves thus to deserve a credibility decribed by Bourdieu (1983) as social capital in capacity as valuable social relationships, and is, according to Coleman (1990) primarily defined by its function.

The many unpredictabilities within the BCS network could easily have resulted in a paralyzing mistrust of the HEIs' motivation and ability to comply with their obligations. Perceived from the outside, they may be regarded as cynical and self-centered in their priorities and institutionally political tactics at times. This mistrust, however, becomes secondary to the trust that lies in the expectations of the individuals that everyone will nonetheless follow up on his/her obligations and mutually carry out the tasks for the BCS cooperation. Based on my own longstanding experience and the data gathered through interviews with active participants in the BCS program, it is tempting to define this network, first and foremost, as a trust structure.

According to Giddens (1991), this trust consists of two components. One is previous experience, in that the individuals in question can be counted on and "have proven themselves worthy of trust". The other is a confidence that cannot rationally be explained and that includes a basic belief tied to future actions and results that we know nothing about with any certainty. From this viewpoint, trust is built by reducing complexity when individuals meet face-to-face. Confidence in the other person is transferred to assumptions about the future and, thus, facilitates future action and interaction (Luhmann 1990). Put into context, it is difficult to imagine how all of the acute problems could have been resolved, and all the long-term processes maintained, without the mutual trust that characterizes the relations within the BCS network.

In fact, the same experiences are found in research regarding teamwork in commercial businesses. In attempts to develop great teams, it appears that the mutual trust built among team members largely has its foundation in the relations that lie outside the team's key tasks. It has been pointed out that for a team to perform well across a range of challenges, it is essential for members to exhibit social sensitivity as a character trait. *To get to know others by taking on other roles and statuses than those that are strictly relevant to work tasks, in itself, is clearly considered significant to communication; how individuals come to agreement and how duty-bound they feel to one another (*Pentland 2012*). This is a quality that may also be said to characterize the BCS network to a large degree.*

The fourth property that regulates behavior is reflected in how power is distributed within this network. Given the framework that is available here, I will give a short presentation of this power structure with the help of two different theoretical perspectives. One lies within a sociological tradition where dominance is related to various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1983 [1986]). Financial capital is of great significance because it is primarily Norwegian money that keeps the BCS running. This occurs directly in that the state gives the Norwegian HEI funding based on how many diplomas – Russian as well as Norwegian – it produces each year. In a more indirect way, it is also reflected in the fact that the Norwegian HEI does not require student fees from foreign students (see also Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). However, the level of dependence these factors create for both Russian HEIs and Russian students is, paradoxically enough, shared by the Norwegian HEI; if the Norwegian state would introduce student fees for foreign students, other countries and more renowned HEIs would emerge as equally appropriate and tempting cooperative partners for the Russian HEIs and their students. In this way, the members of the BCS network share the same fate; participation is dependent on the same financial conditions – for the Russians, this is due to Norwegian financial arrangements and for the Norwegians, it is due to the fact that Russian students take exams in Norway. In other words, in this context, the power lies with the Norwegian parliament.

First and foremost, the Norwegian HEIs dominance is tied to cultural capital and, in virtue, by managing a form of competence and the right to distribute Western degrees that are highly sought after. This expertise is as much connected to how the Bologna Principles are managed as it is to academic qualifications for running the BCS. At the Norwegian HEI, decisions regarding strategies that are of significance to both the management of the program and the academic content can be made without directly involving the Russian HEIs in the process. Nevertheless, there is no clear and expressed awareness among the Norwegian participants that Russia is a great cultural nation in most fields and that any type of arrogance from the Norwegian side would be strange, cacophonous and easily perceived as offensive. The mutual respect that stems from this is reflected in a co-dependence on each other's social capital. The individuals in the BCS cooperation have their own valuable social and professional networks and acquaintances who provide information, influence and, in some contexts, resources that may be significant for individual HEIs as well as for the BCS as a whole. Additionally, the social capital is admittedly skewed in the BCS network, in part because the participants hold various positions at the respective HEIs. When compared to another coordinator who is subordinate within the network, a Vice Rector usually wields more influence and has a greater formal and informal reach, both inside and outside the framework of the HEIs. In light of this, participation in the network may also be viewed as a volunteer project, to a certain degree, where each individual contributes according to skills and capacity and where these efforts aim to develop a collective symbolic capital that strengthens the reputation of the BCS and increases the program's qualities and prestige. However, in this context, it is more correct, albeit somewhat pointedly expressed, to assert that the individual HEI is more concerned with the symbolic capital that comes with being involved in an international operation than in what actually takes place within the core operations of the BCS.

The other perspective of power lies within an organizationally theoretical tradition. In a well-known typology that is still perhaps most often referred to, French and Raven (1959) distinguish between five types of power. The first three are based on the organization's formal structure, in which one person is a legitimizing force and is presented in line with how Weber (2013) describes the legal authority; that is, the individual leader's authority is connected to his/her position and co-workers comply out of obligation. In connection to the BCS network, the position-related power is of key significance; something that is tied to the fact that there are generally considerable differences between Russian and Norwegian HEIs with respect to how decision-making processes are organized (see also Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume). At Norwegian HEIs, faculty have relatively great autonomy in both the shaping and running of the study programs. Additionally, they have a statutory right to participation and codetermination in matters that pertain to them. The legitimacy of leaders is tied to their position to a lesser degree and is more dependent on how they manage processes and implement the institution's policies. At Russian HEIs, there is a more distinct hierarchy whereby a leader who does not use the power that comes with his position may quickly be perceived as weak and indecisive. A coordinator connected to the BCS who does not have a supervisory position, therefore, does not have the same executive power in his/her own organization as a person in a supervisory position. For the Norwegian academic who holds the leading role within the network, therefore, at times it is necessary to take on the leader role when interacting or negotiating with Russian institutional leaders. The role can seem pretentious despite its being more in line with how such formal but, nonetheless, friendly meetings are handled between equals; measured by rank and prestige. When a supervisor at a HEI meets with the leader of the network, there is also a sense of how meaningful the BCS is considered at the HEI and that new agreements with greater certainty will be followed up. Moreover, this type of demonstration of the position's formal power can sometimes be necessary in situations where linguistic ambiguities as well as cultural differences mean that Russian coordinators do not fulfil expectations that are shared at annual meetings or via electronic media. The responsibility for the misunderstanding lies just as frequently with the sender as with the recipient of such information and can usually be sorted out with simple measures. Nevertheless, it happens that the Russian coordinators call for clearer and more distinct orders because it provides them with a legitimizing reference for carrying out work that may be met with skepticism or resistance at their own organization.

The other power base for French and Raven is the power of reward, where co-workers follow orders in the belief that the leader has control over benefits and, therefore, that it is advantageous to follow the leader's instructions. As I have alluded to, a mutual understanding among network participants developed early on that the cooperation would not have an exchange-based air, but would rather comprise an organic distribution of work where the individual's efforts were directed towards mutual goals and not towards individual rewards. "What's in it for me?" has never been a legitimate question within this network. On the other hand, the individual's personal investment of time and energy may also be undeniably perceived and recognized as a strategic choice in relation to professional development and international career possibilities. While the network leader has very limited opportunities to compensate for extra effort, there is nevertheless little point in defining such strategies as a form of opportunistic adaptation to the leader's expectations and tempting repertoire of rewards.

Force is the foundation for the third power base, where colleagues comply in order to avoid negative sanctions they believe the leader is both willing and capable of setting into play. This is a type of power that is without validity and legitimacy in this context. That in itself is precisely an important reason to highlight this power base; despite the fact that a cooperation is volunteer based, the dependence between parties can become considerably unevenly distributed. Therefore, the possibilities to make ultimate demands may be real and, in some special cases, tempting as well. Meanwhile, such initiatives would also be perceived as insulting and improper and could be enough to cause participants to pull out of the network. Therefore, aside from the mutual commitments the cooperation is founded on, the absence of coercion and ultimatums is a prerequisite for the BCS's continued existence. The fourth and fifth power bases are tied to the person who is in charge rather than the formal power of the position she/he holds (see the discussion on informality in Goes, Chap. 5 in this volume). Expert power involves a situation where the leader has special competence that co-workers have both confidence in and respect for.

Reference power describes a leader who encompasses special qualities and skills that co-workers look up to and can identify with. Additionally, Yukl and Falbe (1991) have applied two further personally-connected types of power. One of them describes those who have the power to persuade, and points to the fact that a person's social influence can also depend on the ability to convince others and gain approval for one's viewpoints. The other – informational power – describes the basis for a person who has control over information that is strategic, sensitive or otherwise fundamental for the outcome of processes or for other people's circumstances.

Because my position as leader in this context is largely connected to my person, I will refrain from going into depth on how such personally related power is exercised within the BCS network. Nevertheless, I find it of the utmost relevance to highlight these types of power as well, since they always have a regulating effect on participants' behavior. A leader who has a strong personal power can seem motivating, mentoring and open to discussion, new ideas and initiatives and, as such, is able to contribute to the development of community, unity and progress. On the other hand, a strong leader may also have the opposite effect by being too controlling and dominant, something that can easily result in the participants becoming hesitant, passive and unmotivated. My own experience has taught me that, in order to avoid repeating one's mistakes, it can be useful to let the leadership be a part of the daily agenda when the network comes together for meetings and discussions.

It may be asserted that the first four regulating properties are all encompassed in the fifth, which may generally be defined as culture but, when used in this context, is more relevantly described as opinion structure for two reasons. One reason is found in Clifford Geertz' (1973) well-known metaphor of culture as a web of meaning that human beings have spun themselves. It refers to how we are captured by opinions and definitions we place on ourselves and our surroundings; how our reality is shaped by the content of opinions we attach to the terms we use to describe it and how we form conditions for our actions by relating to subjective interpretations of reality, as Karl Weick (1979) describes in his clarification of sense-making within organizations. The other reason is that culture is practically an immersive concept that is not visible in itself but rather through infinite numbers and types of representations. Opinions are not a limited category of such representations, but nonetheless express understandings that, have a tendency to be explicit when individuals try to come to an agreement and cooperate in an effort to achieve a mutual goal. In such processes, therefore, sense-making is the actual method. Without a minimum of mutual understanding and agreement on questions that begin with what, who, why and how, a network cannot function. Opinions are influential without necessarily changing an individual's cultural roots. Therefore, the opinion structure that is attached to the network does not regulate how tasks/projects are understood or how they should be resolved, nor does it regulate the expectations participants can have of one another or what is reasonable, essential and non-essential. It is both impressionable and changeable, as I will come back to later on.

The five structural properties that I have referred to in the BCS network also serve as empirical examples of how problem-solving within this type of international cooperative projects are dependent on what kind of regulatory action conditions that are created through the interaction between the parties. This has to do with the art of uniting around a practice that is meaningful for the individual participants and that, first and foremost, produces results for that very reason. Our findings concur well with studies of other cooperative projects in the Arctic, in fact, that conclude that legally binding arrangements evolve over time so that rules in use differ markedly from the rules on paper (Young 2000).

4.3.1.3 Reputation and Identity

At least three points are evident when individuals from various cultures come together to collaborate on such large projects in developing and managing joint higher education. One point is that there is no "eureka" solution for how such a process should commence and be managed. The experiences of others may be useful, but it is like learning to ride a bicycle; the body needs to develop a sense of balance gradually through trial and error. The other point is that recognizability and familiarity cannot be tied to outer artifacts, but must be verified through core cultural elements. Only the most naive person would assume that establishing a cooperation across international borders is like gently slipping one's hand into a glove or easily putting a plug into a socket. Those who try will soon discover that the glove is too small and the socket too wide; that opinions, perceptions, values and goals prove not to be as compatible as indicated by the expectations in the contracts signed by institution leaders.

Even if both of these points may seem to be enlightening a priori, the formation of the work processes within the BCS has not only been characterized by "learning by doing" but also by having to learn to learn through practice (see also Forstorp and Kriulya, Chap. 9 in this volume). When, for example, Russian coordinators tell the

Norwegian study leader that they have no trouble relating to the messages and instructions from the Norwegian HEI, the most obvious response from the study leader would be to trust such a statement. Anything else would be an expression of mistrust that could easily disturb and complicate the cooperation. When, in practice, such messages are not followed up as expected, the challenge for the Norwegian study leader is then to understand and accept how circumstances and the internal chain of events at the HEI have taken the coordinator's project and tasks in a somewhat other direction than what was intended on the Norwegian side. The study leader, in this situation, may be at risk of making three mistakes. First, she may criticize the coordinator for not keeping her promises and could begin to question her credibility. Most likely, the coordinator has dutifully done what she felt was right, just under the obvious precondition that she did it in her own context where the message was transformed and adapted to local reasoning and conditions. Next, the study leader could listen to the coordinator's explanation of why things happened as they did and, based on that, come to believe that she understands what has happened. With a theory of how things are connected, the study leader will finally be tempted to instruct the coordinator on how she should proceed with both this and similar cases in the future.

The learning seems to lie in avoiding these three mistakes by simply being less concerned about how procedures and decision processes are managed through institutions with strong traditions and a legitimate and obvious right to do things in their own way. On the contrary, it proves to be far more appropriate to maintain a constant dialogue about what results are reasonable to expect. The BCS's annual meeting is, first and foremost, an arena for precisely these types of debates (for further elaboration, see Sundet 2015). With few exceptions, what participants agree upon at this meeting has to do with standards and the quality of results as well as problem-solving, whether it pertains to teaching and academics or administration. Such a consensus-oriented decision-making model supports and strengthens the feeling of ownership of the network's goals and co-ownership of the opinions of the collective. Both are expressions of the participants' recognition of the management of the network, its significance and its values. This recognition demands a mutual respect for the HEIs' institutional differences and peculiarities. At the same time, participation in the network is not built on an explicit mutual multiplum alone, but also on an implicit agreement on which institutional references are desirable, possible or wise from to bring into the network. Without comparison, in fact, it may be said that the HEIs are like parents-in-law; they are the ones who "brought up" the partner and, therefore, require respect and understanding as long as they steer clear of the intimate aspects of the marriage. Nevertheless, upbringing, socialization and many years of embossing leads to the fact that the "in-laws" will be indirectly represented within the partnership through opinions, attitudes and stories that each of the partners carry with them. In a marriage, such exposure can lead to strong conflicts. In a fragile partnership like the BCS, this type of backstage representation has been pushed more to the background. Instead, recognition of each other and the network's objectives direct the participants more towards pragmatic problem-solving rather than cultural and institutionally political challenges and contradictions that can more easily be compared to the climate and weather; there is little to be done about them. The questions about whether the plug or the socket should be changed, and whether the gloves that should be taken to the tailor or "one-sized", are answered by looking at what can practically be done. However, what is possible has no precedence over what is desirable or necessary.

This leads to a third point that emphasizes that an individual's identity is linked to the contexts he/she finds him−/herself in and is as unfixed as our modern and ever-changing society. As Meyer (2008) points out, multiple social identities go hand in hand with multiple reference groups as a characteristic of pluralistic societies. She refers to William James (1968, p. 42) who suggests that an individual has "as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinions he cares." From this perspective, each of the participants in the BCS network identify with one other and their mutual projects to the degree that they place significance on each other and the given project. Intuitively, this led to a central question on the structure of the network; what was needed for the individual members of the network to form "a distinct group of persons about whose opinions he and she cared"? For me personally, the network is of great significance since I work with BCS-related projects on a daily basis and have close and frequent contact with the coordinators of the various HEIs. The other individual members have far less contact with one another and far less responsibility for far fewer BCS-related tasks.

For this reason, the connection to the network and the cohesion among its participants could easily have been weaker; each of them could have felt like a peripheral sales agent for a circumpolar educational program. On the contrary, when asked directly how they perceive their own relations to the other individuals in the network, they answer, "we are friends". In this context, the term, "friends", refers to more than just the friendliness, although it obviously does not include the intimacy that close friends share with one another. And even though it just as obviously also points back to qualities of these individuals and their abilities to cooperate, it is probably equally related to the need to succeed; success is a more easily convertible currency on the individual's "home court" than fiasco, particularly if there is an opportunity to take credit for it. There is that possibility because everyone, without exception, is invited to participate in the forming of the framework and the content of opinions that constitute the running of the BCS. Reputation and identity are, therefore, closely related; the individual's sense of belonging stems from co-ownership of the network. The significance the individual places on the BCS is reflected in the investment she/he has the opportunity and the will to put into this project.

4.3.1.4 Learning and Renewal

As I have shown, the work within the BCS network is similar to an ordinary production process where stability and predictabilty are among the secure properties. Clearly, this does not apply to the students who simply have to trust that the study program is a reliable contract between the HEIs and themselves. On the contrary, the uncertainty is connected to the conditions of the framework at a macro level, such as student fees, international agreements that are dependent on relations between states, and structural changes in the demand for education and work force. Among other things, at a meso and institutional level, the BSC faces competition from other regional study programs, changes in management at the cooperating HEIs, changes in the HEIs' financial conditions for participation, and changes in priorities and development of new internal strategies at the individual HEIs. None of these examples are one-time events. Instead, they may be viewed as constant threats and expected occurrences, each of which can have grave consequences for the BCS and may make it necessary to renew and reshuffle routines and solutions.

On an individual level and within the network, there is a lack of stability and predictability often tied to illness, shifts in personnel and changes in the participants' work conditions at their own HEIs. In itself, this may have positive and renewing effects and can make the network more flexible in that new participants are not attached to past operations and, therefore, are more open-minded with their suggestions for solutions. On the other hand, it seems that adjustments at the macro and meso levels come simultaneously with changes at the individual level. Naturally, this is possible to say in that one factor often seems to go hand-in-hand with the other.

Change within the BCS system may theoretically be divided into two categories. One encompasses adjustments and renewal of a technical administrative nature and refers to all established structures that pertain to the operations. The other category is characterized by changes and renewal in the opinion structures and thought patterns. This refers not only to perceptions of core operations and how they can optimally be organized and managed, but at least as much to understanding one another as both people and representatives of different cultures with various expectations for participation in the network. In practice, these two categories are generally two sides of the same coin. At the same time, this distinction reflects a degree of consciousness among participants that the road to changing patterns of action must lead through a collective opinion structure. In the BCS network, the road is not always as passable and permeable as it is for networks that represent viewpoints, beliefs, and values rooted in a mutual culture, mutual history and traditions, and mutual ideas and surroundings. Several theoreticians have developed models of learning that encompass both of these categories and that show that radical and innovative change requires learning new and different knowledge and understanding (see, for example, Bateson 1972 [2000]; Argyris and Schön 1978). However, other contextual properties of the BCS are also relevant in the description of how learning and renewal occurs within the network. This applies particularly to an aspect of decision-making behavior that is well described by James March (1979) in his text on "the technology of foolishness", where he demonstrates how people often act before something has happened and that the action, therefore, involves a sort of experimental aspect that must be given as much weight as the analysis and evaluation. March highlights five central points as properties of this technology, which may also be viewed as characteristic of the BCS. The first is that goals are not set and given, but need to be tried and tested. The other is that intuition is considered essential and true. Third, no correlation between values and action is required, since values eliminate a long line of alternative actions. The fourth point has to do with suppressing memory in order not to repeat prior alternatives. The fifth is to consider experience as a theory that always need to be tested.

For the BCS, the lack of stability and predictability means that goals must be continually evaluated in relation to possibilities that exist, resources that can be found and what may be considered desirable for students and the individual HEIs as well as what academic staff perceives as important and correct. If many things have been tired, most things are untried, and with a lack of true knowledge, intuition often constitutes the bulk of the basis for decision-making out of pure necessity. Furthermore, the consensus as actors reaches are often characterized by pragmatic abstractions where details, contradictory values and disturbing factual information is undercommunicated in order to come to any type of agreement and be ready to act. Therefore, it also happens that the values do not always guide the actions. Nonetheless, no ethical guidelines are broken, although the ends can justify the means in some cases. In contrast to the individual self-experienced reality, as a rule, the collective memory means that one party has no more right than the other to define the experiences. On the contrary, as a community, it is possible to form a hindsight that better suits what one wants to do than what one should do. If this reminds a bit of opportunism, that may be because it can be mistaken for the ability to find a way out of unlucky situations that trusting our experience gets us mixed up in.

To the degree that the “technology of foolishness” may describe learning within the BCS network, it is not the result of a chosen strategy. The choice is taken underway during a constant stream of new conditions that the participants cannot control. These shifting circumstances provide new opportunities all the time. Sometimes the network members have to take what they get. Other times we have time and space to both research and choose alternatives. However, one property of learning is that the obvious is revealed only when something is finally understood. Afterwards, the obvious has two characteristics. One is that it quickly becomes trivial. The other is that it is obvious only until reality has changed. The “technology of foolishness” is perhaps descriptive of the BCS because the network’s infrastructure, consisting of an administrative order and a web of meaning, is comprised of loosely connected systems – attached at a few points like a spider’s web in the wind – without the safeguarding properties of the formal organization. When reality hits with new requirements for action, the imperative for participants is the same as for the spider: to start spinning new threads. However, while the spider has his set routines, the BCS network also takes its form and structure from what is opportune and desirable rather than just by following tradition. And while that spider’s threads are always made of the same quality, the BCS may spin strong as well as weak, and thin as well as thick, bonds. Another important distinction is tied to learning and renewal; The BCS network is woven together by many spiders. It requires a discursive type of cooperation, as I have presented here, to provide input and regulation and to explain how the relations in the network should be developed and maintained; how opinions, ambitions and objectives are formed and how the network as a method of work is developed and changed.

4.4 Output

Although the focus of this chapter is directed towards how internationalization of higher education occurs within a widely dispersed regional network, it is certainly not unimportant to look at the results of this cooperation as well. The network's legitimacy depends on the fact that all involved parties and affected interests benefit from its operation.

The main mission is to offer students an educational program that is unique while also being something they would have a difficult time accessing from their home countries. Since 2004, the BCS has welcomed approximately 1500 students. The cultural capital they have taken home with them is not only reflected in the certified knowledge they have gained. Through both net-based studies and on-campus teaching, these students have gotten acquainted with another culture and have learned or become proficient in other languages. They have gotten to know foreign educational institutions and have earned social capital in the form of a contact network that may be extremely useful in the future. Additionally, the formal expertise will perhaps contribute to further development in the Barents Region, in that most of the students are from the region and have plans to remain after completing their education.

All of the HEIs involved naturally have an altruistic motivation for their engagement in the BCS; their societal mission is to offer high quality education to young people. However, individual interests are essential for the simple reason that such study programs also need to generate money and symbolic capital. The funds that the Norwegian HEI receives from the state are based on the number of credits it produces each year, among other things. Additionally, internationalization is a "watch word" and a sign that an institution is worthy and interesting to HEIs in other countries, which is naturally counted as an attribute among the Russian HEIs as well. They have the additional benefit of getting to know the Western educational systems and, in particular, how the Bologna principles should be implemented. This is among the spin-off effects in that they can offer relatively inexpensive studies similar to a Norwegian HEI without requiring extra study fees for foreigners. As I have previously mentioned, the motives of the individual BCS network member are not always apparent. Most use words like exciting and challenging, educational and meaningful to explain their participation (see also Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume; Forstorp and Kriulia, Chap. 9 in this volume). They also point to the desire to build a contact network and gain useful experience connected to both learning and broadening their careers.

In other words, the BCS has a broad and diverse value, with the student's diploma being the most important factor. However, that is just one of many reasons for running this type of study program. Nevertheless, there are aspects of international educational cooperation that make such network-based operations quite fragile and that seldom receive much attention. In concluding, I will therefore point out some questions that may shed light on some challenges and dilemmas facing the BCS.

4.5 Concluding Considerations

The first question that may be asked is whether the BCS represents an effective way of organizing international higher education. Until now I have described how this network may reasonably be characterized as a problem-solving community that has managed to resolve challenges relatively well over the years. Therefore, the answer to the question could easily be an unconditional “yes”; it has contributed to a reputable yielding of candidates in ways that it would be difficult to find alternatives to. The drawback, however, is that the BCS is an exterior project that dangles loosely between the participating HEIs. To use the spider web metaphor again, its points of attachment are made up of protein molecules that are stronger than steel per unit of weight. The strength of the BCS network’s attachments is based on individual and institutional properties, both of which are fickle. The individual properties are dependent on personal characteristics and private affairs that are not open for discussion here. There is good reason, on the other hand, to bring out the institutional properties when the very core of internationalization is being tested.

Traditionally, faculty meet their students in auditoriums inside the physical premises of the HEIs. However, the BCS students not only exist outside the HEIs’ premises but are also spread out over enormous distances with up to 3000 km lying between teacher and student. This is not only a factual circumstance but also a picture of how academics who are strongly engaged in the BCS have the status of being externally connected; they are involved in something outside the HEI that is not perceived as an integrated part of the institution’s inner life. Additionally, the more these academics are perceived as being rooted in such external business, the stronger the chances that both they and the project will be marginalized. As Haunschild and Chandler (2008, p. 632) say, common sense tells us that the more marginal the actor, the lower the level of legitimacy, formal authority and social capital is likely to be, which would imply a relative ineffectiveness as an agent of change. They refer to DiMaggio (1988) who makes a distinction between an entrepreneur, who is more likely to be a peripheral actor, and entrepreneurial action which implies an innovation that has an institutionalized grounding. The professor who initiated the BCS program at the Norwegian HEI may be described as an entrepreneur. But this new establishment was no entrepreneurial action, since it was not the result of a desired development and institutional strategy facilitated through rigorous internal processes. The logic is that the educational program that has come into existence through entrepreneurial action will far more likely persevere as the support walls of the institutionalized program structure than a program that was developed from the inside, as the BCS was applied to both the Norwegian and the Russian HEIs. The question of organizational method must, therefore, be stretched beyond just the core of operations. It must also include the operation's institutional rooting in the HEIs that are involved in the cooperation.

The organization and degree of institutionalization revolves not just around how vulnerable and little the educational program has been integrated into the general management of the HEI. My other question refers to another aspect of the same case, and deals with what learning remains at the individual HEIs concerning internationalization. Naturally, it is not possible to give a clear answer to such a question. Nonetheless, the lack of institutional rooting suggests that the learning remains primarily with the individuals who have participated in the network. Without them, a new and similar educational program at the Norwegian HEI, for example, would have to accumulate experience in most areas all over again. There would obviously be traces of administrative procedures and ways of dealing with matters that remain, but, as a rule, those are merely of a formal nature. First and foremost, internationalization of higher education has to do with completely different types of knowledge and competence than just sorting formalities into the right stacks. Without institutional rooting of such competence, it will easily perish.

Does a network like the BCS have any function from a people-to-people perspective? This third and final question refers back to one of the priorities of the Barents cooperation and perhaps the most important reason for this international educational cooperation. If we look at the number of students who have been educated by the BCS, the answer must undoubtedly be affirmative. These students hopefully take with them knowledge and experience that may contribute to a closer and peaceful coexistence between people of the Barents Region. As long as the BCS exists, the relations between the HEIs, and particularly between the individuals how are involved in the network, also create and sustain bridges across borders. But again – with only a superficial institutional rooting for this cooperation, these relations will fall apart if the BCS is dismantled. In a dramatically short period of time, both the strong and weak bonds will disintegrate. If that should happen, comfort may be found in a statement from one of the network's longstanding partners: What we learn and receive from one another stays with us forever. Such is the nature of our attitudes and opinions. And that is something we bring with us wherever we go.

The HEIs' failure to integrate the BCS seems to be tied to a practice that reflects an equally exterior understanding of internationalization as it does the program's need for institutional rooting. Internationalization is not a substantive and does not refer to something concrete or abstract. The term contains meaning only when it is filled with tangible content and is supplemented with a procedural dimension in which maintenance and developmental resources are a must.

Viewed from the outside, it may seem obvious. From the inside, however, one learns more than just what seems to be evident. It is as Mark Twain observed: a cat who has sat on a warm stove once does not sit on a warm stove again. Not on a cold stove either.

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Chapter 5
Educational Collaboration in the Barents Region: An Island of Peace?

Sander Goes

5.1 Introduction

International collaboration in the Barents region is most extensive between Norway and the Russian Federation (Hønneland 2009, p. 36). Furthermore, educational cooperation is among those sectors in which collaboration has increased intensively since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The growing number of Russian students attending Norwegian institutions (NIFU 2015, p. 14), discussed in more detail in other chapters in this book (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume) may be viewed as a clear indicator of this development. Although the number of student exchanges between Norway and Russia has increased over time (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 82), cooperation between the countries throughout the years has presumably been influenced by conflicting interests with regard to political developments and cultural differences.[1] This chapter is an attempt to analyze whether such developments have affected educational collaboration between the states, being one key area of focus for people-to-people cooperation in the Barents regional cooperation.

In this study I regard conflicting interests as competing informal norms. These norms, ethics or codes of conduct are considered informal since many of them are not formalized; i.e. written down in a formal agreement or discussed publicly. Informal norms are not always expressed in statements, regulations, organization charts or written agreements, but nonetheless have an influence on the formal decision-making process. One example of this is the above-mentioned people-to-people cooperation. One of its main objectives, although not specifically addressed,

[1] In this study I follow Nye's (2005, p. 12) definition of culture as "the set of values and practices that create meaning for a society."

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is to ensure positive neighborly relations. Analyzing formal institutions is therefore insufficient, as they only make up a small part of our interaction with others. North (1990), Lauth (2000) and Ledeneva (2006, 2008, 2013) examine the role of informal constraints in society, varying from our daily interactions with family and business partners to public management. The extent to which formal and informal spheres are intertwined in society determines the degree to which informal norms influence the formal-decision making process. Identifying such norms, however, is far from an easy task, as there are countless definitions and understandings found in literature surrounding the topic. Understanding these unwritten, often "hidden", norms is nonetheless important because the written word does not necessarily reflect these norms. The failure to sufficiently take into account informal norms could affect the outcome, implementation or understanding of written agreements or formal decisions and, as such, become problematic for cooperation between two or more actors. Although bilateral cooperation between Norway and Russia has received much attention in academic literature, there is a lack of knowledge in terms of whethere ducational cooperation between the states is affected by turbulence in other areas (not necessarily related to the dispute in question); and, if so, how it is affected. This chapter therefore does not examine how educational collaboration has been conducted in practice (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume; Forstorp and Kriulya, Chap. 9 in this volume), but is rather an attempt to explore whether conflicts of interest in other areas, such as environmental cooperation, fisheries or different views with regard to developments in the Ukraine, have influenced educational collaboration between the states, or whether the potential for such influence exists. By analyzing cooperation between Norway and Russia in other sectors besides education, I also hope to gain further knowledge with regard to the ways in which cooperation may be interpreted differently from both the Norwegian and Russian perspectives.

Examining the impact of informal norms on international educational cooperation in a satisfactory manner, however, is challenging. Although informal norms in society at large are discussed in applicable literature (see North 1990; Lauth 2000; Ledeneva 2006), the impact of such practices with regard to internationalisation of higher education is minimally addressed and, when so, it is often limited to certain phrases without further explanation (e.g. Sokolov 2014, p. 10). Furthermore, the hidden nature of these practices leaves no track record to be examined (Sanders et al. 1998, p. 105; Lauth 2000, p. 24; Ledeneva 2013, p. 16). It can, therefore, be challenging to establish a satisfactory causal link between conflicts of interest in one area of cross-border cooperation – e.g. the clean-up of nuclear waste – and cooperation in other areas such as higher education; there is always a certain degree of speculation in relation to such questions. The studies outlined by Ledeneva, however, suggest that a violation of interests in one area could potentially have an impact on cooperation in areas not directly related to the issue in question. For instance, when conflicts around the political situation in the Ukraine arise between Russia and the West, the result is economic sanctions and import bans – two measures that have a limited impact on the situation in the disputed area but which, nonetheless, have an impact on cooperation between both actors in other fields. Furthermore, during my career, I have been fortunate to be employed by both a Russian and a Norwegian HEI in the Barents region and, as such, have been able to observe or witness how informal – i.e. unwritten or hidden – practices or interests have influenced decisions at the formal level. Living in both countries for various periods of time – employed as a teacher/researcher – was not only a personal experience but also an inspiration for writing this chapter. Hence, in addition to the documents analyzed for the purpose of this study, I draw on observations from several years of fieldwork, as well as life, in northwest Russia and northern Norway.

This study does not manifest itself in simple, clear-cut choices of affirmative or negative answers, nor is it meant to value the fairness or unfairness of particular norms. Moreover, informal norms of conduct or ethics are not uniquely Norwegian or Russian, as communication between most partners is frequently a fusion between formal and informal practices, spheres and techniques. Educational collaboration between Norway and Russia, however, has been conducted in the context of the unique cultural and political values, economic development, and knowledge traditions of both countries, while also presumably being shaped by discourses such as the "Barents euphoria" (Hønneland 2003, p. 100) or, more recently, "Russian aggression."

Hence, this chapter should be seen as a first modest attempt to elaborate on the relationship between internationalisation of educational cooperation and interests in other fields of bilateral cooperation. The aim is not to search for or emphasize obstacles or constrains regarding educational cooperation in the Barents region but rather to gain further knowledge in terms of how "people-to-people" cooperation between states in the region may be conducted; i.e. how interests, objectives or practices are (under)communicated on the other side of the border. Before examining how informal norms may affect cooperation between actors, this chapter begins by presenting a background that emphasizes the uniqueness of the Barents region as the scenery for bilateral cooperation.

5.2 Identifying the Cultural Playground

International relations between higher education institutions were established after World War II and, as Trilokekar (2010, p. 132) claims, had "a clearly political and cultural mandate to increase international understanding and collaboration." Currently regarded as "one of the most promising areas in the world in terms of business activities" (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 73), cooperation in the Barents region was first initiated by regional authorities such as Nordland county and Leningrad oblast in the end of the 1980s, after Mikhail Gorbachev's Murmansk speech opening the door to further reconciliation in the North. Today, international collaboration in this region is not only conducted by states but also through institutions, such as the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume).[2]

To a large extent, government support, in terms of creating and shaping the boundaries for internationalisation of higher education, defines the educational policy of HEIs. Clark (in Meek et al. 1991, p. 455) defines this as the "superstructure"; i.e. the regulatory framework provided by the government. Traditionally, the Norwegian government played an important role with respect to higher eduction policy (Meek et al. 1991, p. 452). The break-up of the Soviet Union created new opportunities for the Norwegian government to take a more prominent role in terms of cross-border cooperation in higher education. The primary intention of educational collaboration in the Barents region, however, was to ensure good neighbourly relations, economic and social development, and stability (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 86) in a world where the eastern neighbor for a variety of reasons by the Norwegian authorities has been regarded as a "major power" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 74).

As of 2016, two HEIs have been located in the Norwegian part of the Barents region: Nord University and UIT – The Arctic University of Norway. Both institutions have several campus locations throughout northern Norway. Although the economic crisis of the 1990s had a big impact on the institutional development of Russian universities (Androushchak 2014, p. 10), the significant improvement of the economic situation 10 years later – in addition to the country's ambition to preserve its role as a leading actor in the Artic – led to the establishment of new HEIs and the strengthening of existing universities. Since 2010, for instance, the city of Arkhangelsk has had a federal university. As in Norway, this institution was established as a response to the increasing demand for research in the Arctic (Russian Federation Policy for the Artcic to 2020 2008). In order to be able to compete with foreign institutions and improve the quality of higher education, internationalisation is a key policy area in both Russia and Norway. As such, internationalisation is facilitated by contacts with incoming international students, outgoing students, teachers and researchers. In Norway, for example, Russia is emphasized as a key area for international cooperation (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2015, p. 26).

One of the main objectives for exchange programs from the Norwegian perspective (e.g. the bachelor program in circumpolar studies) is to spread knowledge on Norwegian culture, democratic values, language and academic practices in addition to creating possibilities for higher education institutions to receive international students and conduct joint-research programs with Russian researchers (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). An explanation for such a strategy is found in Nye's (2005) perspective regarding "soft power". "Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coericion or payments and arises from

[2] The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) was established in 1993 as a framework for cooperation between the Nordic countries Norway, Finland, Sweden and the Russian Federation. Its primary objective is to provide stability and prosperity in the region by linking states, regions, business and people together.

the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideas, and foreign and domestic policies (Nye 2005, p. 11). Soft power may be determined by the way in which academic practices should be applied. Nye (2005, p. 12) argues that the probability of achieving politically desired outcomes increases when a particular state promotes values and interests that are shared by others or taken in by what Nye calls "visitors". While "soft" power seems to be the primary motivation for Norway's commitment to international educational collaboration in the Barents region, Soviet Russia's cultural attractiveness – in Nye's (2005, p. 12, quoting Joffe) perspective – "stopped exactly at their military borders". Domestic or foreign policies that are seen as hypocritical or arrogant may also undermine "soft power" (Nye 2005, p. 13). The attractiveness of contemporary Russian culture and political values on Norwegian students remains unexplored. However, the relatively low number of Norwegian students studying in Russia (see Table 7.1 in Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 82) suggests a low level of attractiveness as compared to Russian students' interest in studying in Norway.

The force of "soft" power should not be underestimated. As Nye (2005, p. 14) notes, "The Cold War was fought with a combination of hard and soft power. Academic and cultural exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union played a significant role in enhancing American soft power" and soft power, as such, became an important element of higher education policy. Hence, besides mutual interests, states may have competing interests in terms of internationalisation of higher education. Moreover, the internationalisation of higher education in the Barents region is not primarily oriented towards making a profit as is the case with many universities in the United Kingdom, for example. Rather, it is seen as a tool to secure "soft" security policies, whether they be good neighborliness, gain understanding for each other's perspectives or preserving the status as an international player in the Arctic.

The opening up of the Russian economy and society, as well as economic growth and exchange programs with Norwegian HEIs, made it easier for Russian students to study abroad. Unfortunately, few Norwegian students pursue educational careers in Russia and there is the risk of "brain drain" if higher education institutions in Russia cannot attract Norwegian students while more Russian students search for education and remain abroad (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume). The gap between both states in terms of gross national product (GNP) and standard of living is likely to pull students to the Norwegian side of the border (Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume). It is, therefore, more than likely that Russian decision-makers will consider the risk of brain drain when putting internationalisation into practice.

Attracting foreign academic experts and international students and researchers to institutions should improve the quality of teaching, research and higher education, as a whole, by linking domestic research environments to international knowledge networks. Internationalisation of higher education in Russia is, therefore, considered one of the main objectives of Russian HE-policy (Kukarenko and Zashikina, Chap. 2 in this volume). Understanding Norway's "soft power" and Russia's need for internationalisation is valuable when seeking to understand the motivations for educational cooperation as well as the occasionally competing interests in terms of educational collaboration.

To sum up, with the fall of the Iron Curtain in the end of the 1980s, internationalisation became one of the key policy areas for higher education in both Russia and Norway, resulting in a flow of students and researchers across the border and agreements in areas of higher education and research.[3] Educational collaboration was prioritized by individual institutions, resulting in joint research projects, twinning programs, cross-border cooperation and, above all, the flow of international students. However, the arena in which Russian and Norwegian HEIs meet, cooperate and discuss their interests, referred to here as the cultural playground of the Barents region, not only provides opportunities but also creates limitations when different norms prevail, either in terms of competing interests in higher education practices, or as a result of international events. In the following section, I explore how such norms could affect formal decisions with regard to internationalisation or whether different norms related to cooperation in other areas (e.g. nuclear waste and fisheries) can have a cross-sectorial impact on educational collaboration.

5.3 Distinguishing Informal Norms from the Formal Rules of Society

Meek et al. (1991, p. 457) raise the question of "whether higher education is so unique that specific 'academic models' are necessary to analyze processes of change and non-change." In line with Bess (1988, pp. 12–13), they argue that concepts from political, organizational and social theory do have relevance when it comes to higher education institutions, even when they are not specifically addressed. As Bess (1988, pp. 12–13) notes "[i]nstead of viewing organizational structures and decision-making processes in higher education institutions as aberrant and unique adaptions to the special needs of academia, they can be perceived as standard accommodations to normal organizational conditions".

Informal norms are not limited to the public or private sector or to a particular kind of industry or geographical area. Earlier, I concluded that society is an amalgamation of formal and informal norms, ethical codes and unwritten rules. According to North (1990, pp. 36–37), informal constraints are part of our culture and, as such, are embedded in our daily interactions with others; from family relationships to business activities. Analyzing informal institutions is important because formal institutions only make up a small part of our interaction with others. Consequently, a single focus on formal institutions is insufficeint, according to Lauth (2000, p. 22), if we seek to understand behavior.

A number of studies, including the work of Alena Ledeneva (2006, 2008, 2013) in particular, address how informal norms can prevail in Russian society. Ledeneva

[3] Such as the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2010 by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the Russian Ministry of Education.

illustrates how informal codes, ethics and rules – as opposed to public laws, organization charts and policy documents – can be dominant when compared to the formal ones and, as such, can have an impact on formal decision-making processes. As a result, a violation of, or lack of consideration for, informal norms may well have an impact on areas that are not directly related to the dispute in question; i.e. on other fields of cooperation across sectors.

Once again, the purpose of this study is to examine the cross-sectorial impact of the violation of informal norms. Ledeneva (2006, p. 17) identifies informal norms as "customs, codes and ethics that are by-products of various forms of social organization such as personal networks and kinship". These personal – or informal – networks are sometimes necessary to tackle, as Krackhardt and Hanson (1993, p. 104) describe, "unexpected complex or highly variable tasks". Non-compliance with these informal norms might influence the outcome of formal decisions or written agreements. The extent to which informal networks are able to successfully influence formal decisions depends on the role these networks play in society. Personal networks based on trust, for instance, are considered essential in an environment where the needs of individuals are insufficiently embedded in formal networks (Ledeneva 2013, p. 249). Furthermore, informal structures are not limited to the public or private sector but include all arenas where human beings bring their personalities, problems and interests to the table.

Lauth and North's work, later addressed by Ledeneva, illustrates the discrepancy between actual behavior and behavior that is expected, based on formal institutions. In fact, informal practices have become widespread and have been recognized and reported upon in every region of Russia (Ledeneva 2006, p. 1). These practices are important and necessary, according to Ledeneva (2006, pp. 12–13), because they compensate for the imperfections of the formal system that existed first during Soviet times and, later, in contemporary Russian society. As such, they are defined by Ledeneva (2006, p. 22) as "a regular sets of players' strategies that infringe on, manipulate, or exploit formal rules and that make use of informal norms for pursuing goals outside the personal domain".

To clarify the concept of informal norms, one can take informal networks as an example. Krackhardt and Hanson (1993) describe informal networks as "the company behind the chart." Their definition is only one of many attempts to grasp the relation between real-life processes embedded in such hidden networks and formal hierarchical positions. In many classic works (especially the positional tradition), networks or their outcomes are often studied by analyzing organizational charts and studying the relation between different peoples and groups based on their formal positions or roles. The positional tradition, however, has been criticized for neglecting individual contributions and failing to grasp the ongoing organizational process (Tichy et al. 1979, p. 511; Krackhardt and Hanson 1993, p. 111). Formal networks fail to grasp the ongoing process in organizations because power and influence are not necessarily exercised through these networks (Tichy et al. 1979, p. 511). Influential "hidden" networks are not visible on the organizational chart despite the fact that studies explaining how the work actually gets done within an organization emphasize the importance of such networks (Flap et al. 1998, p. 131) in addition to highlighting how power and/or influence are frequently channelled through such networks (Tichy et al. 1979, p. 511; Groat 1997, p. 41). Personal networks can occur as a result of shortcomings in the formal framework (Groat 1997, p. 40; Ledeneva 2013, p. 253) and are considered part of society or, as Ledeneva (2013, p. 50) describes, part of Russia's *sistema*. With regard to the latter, Ledeneva (2013, p. 81–83) describes such networks as channels of informal governance for allocating resources. In these personalized networks "useful friends" or "core contacts" gain benefits such as access to particular resources (Ledeneva 2013, p. 82). According to Ledeneva, informal networks are characterized by their unwritten rules and informal codes and are channelled by a power concentrated at the top; i.e. by a patron or gatekeeper (Ledeneva 2013, p. 83). Ledeneva (2013, p. 39) argues that such networks are frequently based on personal loyalty towards the patron and can have their own system of checks and balances in relation to responsibility and sanctions. Ironically, informal relationships, as such, provide more "stability", "protection" and "predictability" than the formal institutions because the latter are underdeveloped or insufficiently capable of fulfilling these needs (Ledeneva 2013, p. 83). It is the patron, rather than the formal structure, who can provide "useful friends" or "core contacts" with stability and protection while also offering a helping hand to deal with the complicated formal structure.

In this section, the role of informal norms in society – and personal networks, in particular – has been discussed. The next section illustrates whether competing norms have had an impact on international cooperation in the Barents region and, if so, how such impact has manifested. The following section is also an attempt to clarify the point that informal norms are considered an important part of cooperation even when such norms are not specifically addressed, for instance, in signed agreements in which cooperation on a particular field of interest is formalized. Formal rules need to be followed, otherwise sanctions will follow. A failure to comply with the informal rules does not automatically result in a sanction but can, nonetheless, influence the relationship between actors, as illustrated below. The purpose is not to downplay the achievements of cooperation in the Barents region by focusing on different perspectives or competing norms, but rather to illustrate whether educational collaboration in this region has been or could be affected by violations of informal norms in other fields of cooperation such as the clean-up of nuclear waste and fisheries cooperation.

5.4 Experiences from Bilateral Cooperation in the Barents Region

Taking into account the political tension during the Cold War, it is somewhat remarkable that bilateral cooperation in this region has achieved so much (Sandersen, Chap. 6 in this volume). The current exchange of students between Norway and

Russia, with the numbers discussed above, would have been unthinkable 25 years ago. However, different interests loom in the background when cooperation occurs in practice; and such interests are able to influence the result or implementation of cooperation in this region. The examples outlined below illustrate how insufficient the formal structure is when it comes to consideration of informal norms.

Cooperation between Norway and Russia, especially in the Barents region, has been outlined in detail in several studies by Hønneland (2003, 2009, 2010). Many of the projects conducted between Russian and Norwegian actors originated within the framework of BEAR (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). The initial focus of the BEAR project was to promote cooperation between business actors; however, it ended in failure, according to Hønneland (2009, p. 37), because the Russians "pressed their western counterparts out when their joint project started to run a profit". As a result, the contemporary focus seems to be directed more towards people-to-people cooperation (including cooperation in the field of higher education, such as student exchange).

Environmental cooperation, specifically in relation to cleaning up spent nuclear fuel and increasing nuclear power plant safety, has been influenced by competing interests from both the Russian and Norwegian sides. With financial support from the Norwegian government, safety at the nuclear power plant in the city of Polyarnye Zori (Kola Peninsula) was increased. Afraid of the impact of a possible meltdown, the Norwegians sought to close down the power plant. The Russians, in turn, argued that the power plant could remain open as it was now regarded secure after implementation of the safety measures (Riksrevisjonen 2000–2001). Closing down the plant, however, would lead to increased unemployment in a region with few other job opportunities. As noted earlier, the Kola Peninsula was and still is a highly secured area. It is, therefore, not surprising that many Russian decision-makers wondered whether the objective of the Norwegians was to support their Russian partners by increasing the safety of the plant or whether the aim was to destabilize society on the Kola Peninsula (Hønneland 2003, pp. 110–111).

Another example of Russian-Norwegian cooperation following the break-up of the Soveit Union may be found in the opposing interests related to fisheries management. In Hønneland's (2009, p. 46) view, there was a growing acknowledgment in Russia during the 1990s that the written regulatory agreements and/or Norwegian proposals during negotiations mainly affected the Russian fisheries in the Barents Sea, since they used harvesting methods that were considered inappropriate by international scientific institutions. The methods and quotas proposed by the Norwegians to prevent overfishing were based on research done by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). Whereas Norwegians viewed this institute as an independent scientific organization, the Russians questioned the impartiality of the ICES during quota negotiations (Hønneland 2009, p. 47). Some of them even accused the scientific body of being under the "influence of western intelligence services" (Hønneland 2009, p. 46). The changing discourses on the Norwegian side, as outlined above, reflect the relationship between the West and Russia, to a certain degree, since the break-up of the Soviet Union; beginning with a profound intention to reform the former Soviet state into a democratic and transparent society and leading up to the current anxiety over the country's "aggressive" role in international events.

5.5 Conclusion

According to Hønneland (2009, p. 45), different norms with regard to the management of natural resources and nuclear safety are a reflection of the relationship between the two states. Hønneland characterizes this relationship as the "Cold Peace discourse" (Hønneland 2003, pp. 74–77, 108–109). It is more than likely that Norwegian and Russian interests in higher education policy-making and, in particular, international academic relations, have changed over time as policy directives have shifted in response to these and/or (recent) international developments. The objective here is not to determine whether environmental or fisheries cooperation is or was a success. Instead, the question that this chapter has tried to address is whether competing norms related to bilateral cooperation in these areas have had an impact on educational collaboration in the Barents region. Bilateral cooperation in this region seems to reflect the sometimes bumpy road from Cold War relations, through what Russians experienced as a turbulent post-Cold War period in the 1990s, which ironically enough was framed as "Barents euphoria discourse" on the Norwegian side (Hønneland 2003, p. 100), and up to the current differing views on developments in the Ukraine and Syria. This, combined with the more recent migration of refugees from Russia to Norway and vice versa, has challenged the relationship between the two states. Moreover, as we have seen, interests differ from state to state. A good example of this is the fact that Russian HEIs question the benefits of bilateral educational cooperation when relatively few Norwegian students decide to pursue their education at Russian universities, for a variety of reasons, whereas large numbers of Russian students start or continue their education in Norway.

As stated earlier the arguments for educational collaboration in the Barents region go beyond economic profits or quality improvement of higher education. Instead, a sense of security and safety in the region (Ministry of Foreign Affiars 2011, p. 91) seems to be the overall goal of educational cooperation. Internationalisation of higher education "at home" is claimed to be an important area for exercising what Nye calls "soft power" (Nye 2005). Education, as such, becomes more than an increase in the availability of courses taught in English. Education is rather seen as a method to promote political ideals and cultural diplomacy with the aim of gaining a more balanced understanding of international events (or a country's domestic policy in a particular field) and, last but not least, providing contacts and gaining trust on the other side of the border. Hence, Norway's soft power is strengthened through what many Russian students find attractive in

Norway; i.e., its culture, political values such as "democracy and humanities" and the possibility of acquiring a "western diploma" (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume).

As this chapter has illustrated, the clean-up of nuclear waste and fishing quota negotiations are often based on different norms or interests. Whereas mutual interests are one way to understand the objectives of bilateral cooperation, an alternative explanation is offered by the theory of "realizm". This normative view regards states as rational actors making decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis in addition to expecting others to do the same. The normative core of realizm is national security and survival of the state (Jackson and Sørensen 2003, p. 69). Realizts and, to a certain extent, neo-realizts argue that relations between states are characterized by conflict and that states, therefore, primarily act in their own interests (Jackson and Sørensen 2003, p. 69). States consciously weigh their own gains (or losses) against one others' gains (or losses); a so-called "zero-sum" approach, whereby the maximization of one's own gains is the overall objective. References to this approach are offered by former Murmansk Oblast Governor, Yuriy Yedvokimov, as quoted by Hønneland (2010, p. 847): "It is always like this: when one state is temporarily weakened, its neighbors will try to take an advantage", and a Russian-based fisheries researcher quoted by the same source: "Of course, it's in Norway's interest to ruin Russia. This is simple economic theory." (Hønneland 2010, p. 847).

It is therefore reasonable to question whether these or other events, such as the "unlawful annexation of Crimea" (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2015, p. 26), have had an impact on educational collaboration between Russia and Norway.

Unfortunately, however, it is difficult to conclude whether conflicts of interest over international political issues or competing views with regard to nuclear safety may be seen as a violation of an informal norm and, whether they have had an impact on educational collaboration. So far, different academic practices and competing interests regarding internationalisation have seemingly not been able to affect bilateral educational cooperation between the two states. Competing interests, not to mention conflicts over visa regulations, for example, as frequently reported by business actors (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011, p. 74) seem to be less relevant for students and researchers participating in cross-border educational cooperation. While it is perhaps too early to determine the impact of "Crimea" with regard to educational collaboration, the analysis above suggests that cooperation in the Barents region is not limited to one particular field such as nuclear safety, higher education or fisheries. The risk of cross-sectorial impact, therefore, always looms in the background. Cooperation in one field could positively or negatively affect cooperation in other fields, depending on whether the informal norm is respected or not. More research is thus required to determine whether concerns about "political developments in Russia such as freedom of expression and other barriers to unfettered academic cooperation" (Ministry of Education and Research (2015, p. 26) may hinder future cooperation surrounding higher education and research. Alternatively, one has to wonder if educational collaboration may be considered an "island of peace" where ensuring good relations with neighbors is not overshadowed by competing interests at the highest political level.

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Part III
Institutions

Chapter 6
Success by Necessity? Educational Partnerships Between Individual Initiatives and Institutional Frameworks

Håkan T. Sandersen

6.1 Introduction

Increased normative pressure, policy directives and insufficient public support for higher education have made most higher education institutions (HEIs) embark on the internationalization track (Egron-Polak 2014). Initially HEIs were founded to serve their nations, regions and communities; however, to an increasing extent, academic benefits, national command and financial or status-building motives have made them look beyond the national borders for cooperation. Nonetheless, the state is still the most important player in higher education and internationalization always takes place within a national context and regulatory framework. Internationalization in higher education is, thus, closely tied to such issues as policy, management and funding, which contributes to making it a rather fuzzy and multi-dimensional thematic area (Kehm and Teichler 2007).

As Knight (2012) observes, international education has gradually shifted from a developmental cooperation model to a partnership model and, more recently, to a commercial and competitiveness model as well (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). In this chapter we adopt a partnership perspective as our point of departure for analyzing the collaborative efforts; both their establishment and how they play out within the institutional frameworks. A partnership can generally be defined here as a formal, lasting cooperation that is beneficial to both parties, but where the parties often have different interests and pursue different goals and outputs from the cooperation (Røiseland and Vabo 2012).

The Bologna process has structured and established a higher education area, and can be seen as a European model for regional integration (Figueroa 2010). It exerts its strong normative pressure towards standardization and cooperation even in the northern outskirts of Europe, such as the Barents Region, which comprises the

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northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the far northwest of Russia. These countries have different histories, sizes, cultures, capabilities, political systems, interests and policies. Thus, educational collaboration between these states is not only about economic and academic development, but also about people-to-people relations, foreign policy, diplomacy and soft power. It is within the ramifications provided by the combination of international, national and local contexts and pressures that internationalization and practical collaboration are invented, developed and maintained (Luijten-Lub et al. 2005). In this chapter we see educational partnerships as the channels that create and maintain the geographical student movement pattern that makes it relevant to talk about an emerging Barents eduscape (Forstorp and Mellström 2013).

The chapter limits its scope to the relationship between HEIs in northern Norway and northwest Russia. Until the demise of the USSR, educational cooperation between these two countries was rather limited due to marginal border areas, trade barriers and travel restrictions, and to other rifts created by the Cold War. Educational collaboration between the East and the West during the Cold War was certainly not prioritized, and often outright forbidden. Only after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 did the internationalization of higher education increase at high speed; even faster than in most other regions[1] (Altbach and de Wit 2015; Maximova-Mentzoni 2013).

Generally, education is one of the most context-related and nationally-oriented academic activities. Furthermore, big differences in culture, academic traditions, political and economic systems, and rather limited knowledge among students and academic staff about partner countries, makes cooperation harder and more burdensome. Nonetheless, there are similarities and other considerations that make educational collaboration meaningful; such as soft security and peaceful neighbor relations, improved knowledge about each other's societies, as well as knowledge exchange and cooperation on Arctic and Barents affairs[2] in general, and oil & gas, fisheries and environmental issues in particular. Given the huge differences in size, history, educational and political frameworks, and academic traditions, collaboration between Norwegian and Russian HEIs should be almost impossible; nevertheless, a number of successful partnerships exist, as this volume illustrates.

Our aim in this chapter is to shed light on this mystery by focusing on the incentive structures provided by parts of the institutional systems (institutional structure, normative pressure, policy directives, funding) within which the educational partnerships are embedded. The institutional context provides an arena where motivations and actions are shaped and that facilitates as well as confines the actions of individuals and groups. The question addressed is what role the institutional context

[1] Vladimir Putin's aim is to have five Russian universities in the global top by 2020. Currently only Moscow State University and St. Petersburg State University are on the Shanghai Ranking of World Universities (Kastouéva-Jean 2013).

[2] Both countries also mention educational cooperation in their respective Arctic strategies (NMFA 2006; RMFA 2009).

has played and how important it has been for the development and continuation of these presumably unlikely partnerships.

The study covers four educational partnerships between Norwegian and Russian institutions:

- *The Public Health Program* between UiT – The Arctic University, Tromsø, and Northern State Medical University, Archangelsk;
- *Bachelor in Circumpolar Studies* between University of Nordland,[3] Bodø, and mainly Northern (Arctic) Federal University, Archangelsk;
- *Bachelor in Northern Studies* between Finnmark University College,[4] Alta and mainly Murmansk State Humanities University, Murmansk, and finally;
- *Master in Business and Engineering* between University of Nordland, Bodø, and Baltic State Technical University, St. Petersburg.

The study is not comparative in the classic sense, although differences and similarities between the two countries will be addressed. The objects of study are rather the collaborative partnerships and cross-border programs and the institutional context in which the collaboration and programs are embedded on each side, as well as how they influence each other.

The methods applied in this study are primarily interviews with representatives from HEIs involved in educational partnerships. Altogether 20 representatives from eight HEIs[5] on both sides of the border were interviewed; however, the focus of the chapter is predominantly on the Norwegian side, which is also reflected in the selection of informants. In addition, document analysis and reviews of scientific literature were carried out. The partnerships take place between rather different institutions, both in the number of students and staff represented as well as in the academic profiles; however, since the focus is more on the partnerships rather than on the institutions themselves, these differences are of less significance. The main criteria for selecting the four partnerships is that they are successful and different, and that all the north Norwegian universities that are oriented towards Russia are represented.

[3] After the merger in 2016 with Nord-Trøndelag University College, Nordland University (UIN) was renamed Nord University. Since this work was commenced prior to the change we for reasons of simplicity choose to use the former name University of Nordland (UiN) in this article.

[4] After the merger in 2013 with University of Tromsø Finnmark University College (FUC) was renamed the Finnmark Faculty and then again in 2016 to Faculty of Sports, Tourism and Social Work. Since this work was commenced prior to the change we for reasons of simplicity choose to use the former name Finnmark University College (FUC) in this article.

[5] University of Tromsø – The Arctic University, University of Nordland (since 2016 Nord University), Finnmark University College (in 2013 merged with University of Tromsø), Murmansk State Technical University, Murmansk State Humanitarian University, International Institute of Business Education (MIBO in Murmansk, Northern Arctic Federal University in Archangelsk (NArFU). There were no interviews made with representatives from Baltic State Technical University and Northern State Medical University.

6.2 Internationalization and Educational Partnerships

Internationalization is "the process of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the goals, primary functions and delivery of higher education at the institutional and national levels" (Knight 2004). This definition presents *internationalization as a means* to an end, not as an end in itself (Knight 2012). When it comes to the motivation or rationale for internationalization, Knight (1997) divides this into four not mutually exclusive categories; political, economic, academic and cultural/social (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). The *political rationale* for internationalization relates to national concerns about geopolitical position and the role of being a state, covering such issues as security, stability, peace, diplomacy, ideology, and so on. Exchange of students and researchers is also a way to develop geopolitical ties and economic relationships, particularly so at the regional level when neighboring countries strive towards more cooperation and mutual understanding, which certainly is the case in the Barents Region. Scholarships for foreign students can be seen as diplomatic investment in future political and economic relations through fostering understanding of and affinity for the sponsoring country (Knight 1997; Qiang 2003).

The *economic rationale* refers to expected long-term national economic effects of educational internationalization in terms of human resources and competitiveness of the country. Development of academic quality and domestic competencies can be detrimental to a country's plans for securing economic rationales through increased effectiveness and competitiveness (Knight 2004). On the institutional level internationalization can contribute to income generation through student vouchers or tuition fees from incoming students. Nonetheless, "traditional internationalization is rarely a profit-making activity, though it may enhance the competitiveness, prestige, and strategic alliances of the college" (Altbach and Knight 2007, p. 293). Descamps and Lee (2015) apply the distinction between acquisitions and mergers in their study of strategies and activities in educational internationalization. They define *acquisition* as activities focused on the acquiring of resources from abroad, whereas *mergers* refer to programs that simultaneously benefit both partner institutions or countries (Descamps and Lee 2015).

The *academic rationale* is accomplished through internationalization by increasing educational quality and approaching international academic standards for teaching, research and service. Internationalization is frequently understood as an inherent dimension of scholarship and that the best scientific discourses are global in scope. It is also likely that internationalization may be used by universities as a lever for reorganization and increased autonomy, which are difficult to achieve without reference to internationalization processes.

The *cultural and social rationale* emphasizes the recognition, role and place of the country's own culture and language. Internationalization of the nation's educational system, and the following improved intercultural understanding, are believed to be supportive to the preservation and promotion of the national culture (Knight 1997, 2004). Intercultural understanding can be particularly important and challenging when there are huge differences in culture and language between the countries in question.

Further, it is common and useful to distinguish between "internationalization at home" and "internationalization abroad" (or "crossborder education") (Knight 2012). In the first case, internationalization means the internal on-campus and curriculum-based transformation of the home university so that students may develop international understanding and intercultural skills without ever having to leave the campus. In the second case, there is a geographic extension of an institution beyond its home border, involving the movement of people, programs, providers, policies, knowledge, ideas and services across national borders (Brookes and Becket 2011; Knight 2012). The two elements or pillars are closely linked and interdependent (Knight 2012) and, particularly when it comes to online programs and virtual mobility, this distinction becomes somewhat unclear.

In this chapter we approach practical internationalization efforts by focusing on established educational partnerships across the Norwegian-Russian border in the High North. Collaboration may take many forms and have many different rationales and motivations. This means that we can talk about horizontal cooperation where the partners are on the same level, although not necessarily having access to the same resources, autonomy and action space. Collaboration can generally be defined as "working across organizational boundaries towards some positive end" (Huxham and Vangen 2005, p. 3) or "working in association with others for some form of mutual benefit" (Huxham 1996, p. 1). Collaboration provides collaborative advantages and makes things possible because one is no longer limited by one's own resources and expertise (Huxham and Vangen 2005).

According to Huxham and Vangen (2005), the foundations for collaborative advantages are six-fold. Firstly, organizations collaborate in order to gain *access to resources* that are otherwise not easily attainable. This can simply mean pooling of resources, but also bringing together different types of resources, such as technology or expertise. Secondly, cooperation can be relevant in order to reduce or *share the risk*. Thirdly, cooperation can improve *efficiency*. Collaboration with an organization that performs better, cheaper, or faster than one's own organization manages to do can be advantageous. Fourthly, *coordination and seamlessness* can be an argument for cooperation as a shared interface can facilitate and structure the meeting point between organizations and customers. Fifthly, cooperation is sometimes established with the aim of *mutual learning*. Organizations in the same sector, or in related sectors, often benefit from learning from a partner organization that is regarded as being "ahead of the game" in some ways. Learning can also be one way to reduce resource dependency by acquiring the resource (knowledge). Lastly, Huxham and Vangen (2005) also see *moral imperatives* as one of the rationales for cooperation, as most or all important issues require collaboration in order to be solved.

Cooperation can take on various forms and time horizons. A *partnership* is a formal, lasting cooperation that is beneficial to both parties but where the parties often have varied interests and pursue different goals from the cooperation (Røiseland and Vabo 2012). Partnerships will generally have to fulfill three requirements to be acknowledged as such: first, the parties have to be *mutually dependent/interdependent* on each other; second, the parties have to engage in some sort of *deliberation or negotiations*; and third, the governance effort or partnership has to be *deliberately established* to achieve certain ends (Røiseland and Vabo 2012). If an actor does not need to collaborate, it makes little sense to do so. Networks, as a contrast, are less formal but still involve rather ambitious joint efforts with shared goals and interests. As the cooperation takes place between autonomous institutions in different countries, the management has to be based more on facilitation, framing, information and deliberations rather than on hierarchy (Ansell and Gash 2012). If the costs exceed the benefits, or if one party engages in illegitimate use of power, the other party may easily opt for an exit strategy and end the cooperation.

Hertting (2007) views partnerships, networks and other such arrangements as institutional frameworks for more efficient negotiations and as institutional strategies for a group of formal, interdependent organizations to solve problems through communication, information, opportunism and transaction in complex negotiations. He states that "(i)f the actors perceive interdependencies as quite stable and find a repeated need for negotiations we should expect them to invest in institutions that make the single negotiations or deliberative activity more efficient" (Hertting 2007, p. 50). Further, "(a)ctors that perceive a highly asymmetrical interdependence will probably prefer more formalized forms of cooperation" (Hertting 2007, p. 58); i.e., partnerships rather than networks. Interdependency is essential when networks and partnerships are formed. More asymmetry increases the chances for formal partnership, while less asymmetry enhances opportunities for informal networks.

6.3 Four Norwegian-Russian Educational Partnerships

6.3.1 Public Health Program (UiT[6] – Northern State Medical University)

In the 1980s public health researchers at the Department of Community Medicine, UiT, carried out a population study on Svalbard and, after being contacted by representatives from Northern State Medical University (NSMU) in Archangelsk, they decided to carry out a similar study on the Russian population on Svalbard in cooperation with the Russian university. During this work the Norwegian researchers discovered that the knowledge on the Russian side about epidemiological surveys and biostatistics was limited. Furthermore, their laboratory facilities limited the possibilities to carry out extensive studies. The collaboration developed and by the late 1990s the so-called Archangelsk Study was conducted, with Professor Odd

[6] University of Tromsø changed name in 2013 after a merger to UiT – The Arctic University, and also acquired further national responsibility for Arctic and Northern affairs. In the following we use the short version UiT.

Nilssen and associates at the Department of Community Medicine playing a key role.

The joint Archangelsk Study was a population study, sponsored by the Norwegian Health Ministry, that also included exchange of medical students between the two universities. Again, it became clear that the Russians lacked competence in epidemiology and biostatics and that they offered few, if any, courses or programs on these topics. In order to increase the competence enough to facilitate further research cooperation, the idea of an educational program in public health developed and a partnership was established. In 2006 they received a 5-year grant from the Barents Health Program, and the work to establish an institute with a master's program in public health commenced.

The partner on the Russian side was the Northern State Medical University (NSMU) in Archangelsk. Archangelsk International School of Public Health (ISPHA) was founded in 2006, under the supervision of UiT, and offered a Bologna-adapted Master's Degree in Public Health. Although UiT and NSMU have been the main partners in the collaboration, four other universities have been involved in the program as well.[7] For NSMU the program represented a welcome opportunity to develop a new field that opened possibilities for both education and research.

There were some initial disagreements about admission requirements and decisions on whether a given course should be compulsory or elective. For example, it was suggested that the Russian students could receive extra points if they had a recommendation from the rector or dean; however, UiT rejected that idea, emphasizing education, English skills, geography and health work experience. In the beginning the Norwegian Health Department wanted a Nordic network of teachers to contribute to the program, but ended up primarily using lecturers from UiT.[8] The study program began in January 2007, and UiT provided the entire program (120 ECTS). The duration of program funding was limited and, in order to secure continuity, the UiT team had to train future Russian teachers as well. They therefore established a "training the trainee" course, where the best students were further trained to fill future positions.

A major problem was that the students were not full-time; most did not want to quit their jobs in order to study, as they would risk not getting the job back after completing their studies. Another challenge was to get the program and the "public health" discipline accepted as a profession. In Russia each course and degree has a number that corresponds to a work position. They had no such number or position related to public health, and it required a lot of effort to get approval, accreditation and a number for the program. Despite the fact that Russia had signed the Bologna Agreement in 2003, the departments knew very little about master's degrees and

[7] Nordic School of Public Health (Gothenburg, Sweden), Umeå International School of Public Health (Umeå, Sweden), Mid-Sweden University (Sundsvall, Sweden), Tampere School of Public Health (Tampere, Finland), National Institute of Public Health (Oslo, Norway).

[8] During the 5 year project more than 20 teachers from UiT participated voluntarily. To save money the lecturers agreed to receive no salary for their contributions, only reimbursement for the expenses. This gives a good indication of the enthusiasm that surrounded the project.

how to place them in the system. Furthermore, the students were insecure in the beginning, as there were no jobs related to their education.

Accreditation of “public health” as a discipline was finally granted in 2011.[9] In the meantime, this delay caused problems for administrators, while 35 students were about to finalize a program that was not yet accredited. After some initial problems and wrangling with the bureaucracy the crisis was resolved when the UiT agreed to admit all of the students, provide them with exams and present them with diplomas. During the 5 years about 50 of the 75–80 students enrolled received their Master’s Degree in Public Health, and some of the remaining students finalized their degree in the years to come. Since 2014 the courses have been taught by NSMU using both Russian and English; UiT does not have any responsibility anymore.

The partnership is thriving and the research collaboration now comprises environmental medical studies, medical birth registries, and a cancer registry. The collaboration has also been extended to institutions in Murmansk and Siberia. The establishment of a PhD program with NSMU has been high on the agenda at UiT. So far Russian students have been enrolled in the PhD program in Tromsø and a number of Russian students have already completed their degrees. One problem has been that very few of the PhD candidates return to Russia, which reduces the competence-building effect on the Russian side. Norwegian authorities have thus been reluctant to finance the program. However, some support has been received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This educational collaboration program between UiT and NSMU has been characterized by then former Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre as the flagship of the cooperation between the two countries. The enthusiastic individuals who are directly involved in the cooperation and the acknowledgement by NSMU representatives of the need for and significance of this “new” medical discipline, as well the generous support from UiT, the Barents cooperation and Norwegian ministries, are the main factors behind the success of this partnership.

6.3.2 Bachelor in Circumpolar Studies (Nordland University – NArFU)

One of the important steps in the Norwegian-Russian educational collaboration was the establishment of the Norwegian Pomor University Center at the Pomor State University in 1993. The Center was established and administered by UiT with Norwegian funding, and aimed at developing and coordinating academic exchange programs and educational and research projects between Russian and Scandinavian universities. Furthermore, the other HEIs in northern Norway could use the center if they contributed funds to help run it. The universities and colleges in Archangelsk

[9] It received the Russian federal standard of higher professional education no. 060400 “Public Health”.

have been amalgamated in several stages gradually developing into the present-day NArFU. After the merger into NArFU the center formed the basis for the section for internationalization of studies[10] and has been vital for the establishment of the partnerships.

In the 1990s, the Faculty of Social Sciences at University of Nordland (UiN)[11] cooperated with universities in Archangelsk on social welfare issues. Parallel to this, Associate Professor Bjørn Sagdahl was instrumental in developing a half-year unit in Norwegian Politics and Society in 1998, in order to establish an on-campus course delivered in English. While visiting Aberdeen he rather accidentally attended a network meeting on establishing the University of the Arctic (UArctic).[12] Upon returning to Bodø he applied for membership on behalf of UiN. Sagdahl – and UiN – became increasingly involved in the University of the Arctic, which was focused on providing standardized undergraduate course material that the member institutions could use, adapt or further develop free of charge. Sagdahl established a 1-year study program based on an adaptation of the core courses provided by UArctic; this program was run for first time in the fall of 2002. He then received financial support through the UArctic and proceeded to develop a Bachelor in Circumpolar Studies (BCS) by using an existing Northern Scandinavian Politics and Society course, and two newly-developed courses, to form an additional half-year advanced emphasis unit. In the spring of 2004 the BCS program was up and running on a double-degree basis, with 90 ECTS in the BCS program and additional 90 ECTS provided by other/home universities.

The program was interdisciplinary and comparative, with a strong northern focus, and provided students with knowledge about nature, resources, environment, politics and culture in the Circumpolar North. The whole program was delivered online, however, the advanced emphasis courses were also taught with live lectures and seminars on-campus in Bodø each fall. Based on previous contacts with the forerunners of NArFU in Archangelsk, and mutual interests in collaboration, agreements were signed. Additionally, partnerships with Murmansk State Technical University, Murmansk State Humanitarian University, and the International Institute of Business Education (MIBO) in Murmansk were established.

Initial financial support, as well as the curriculum for the core courses, was provided by UArctic, however, UiN also received a number of North to North fellowships targeting Russian students at collaborating universities in Murmansk and

[10] In 2011 also a UArctic research office was established at NArFU.

[11] University of Nordland (since 2016 reorganized into Nord University, in 2011 Nordland University College was reorganized into the University of Nordland) has some 6000 students and 50% of the foreign students are from Russia.

[12] UArctic is a large and complex organization that originally started as a conference – Circumpolar University Association – who altered between the Arctic states. When UArctic came into existence as a permanent organization in 2001 the head office was located to Rovaniemi, Finland. Developing courses is a main task for UArctic, and a number of thematic networks have a central role in this. As stated by Hesseln et al. (2013, p. 205), "UArctic is neither a university nor strictly focused on the Arctic. Rather, it is a network of higher learning and research institutions committed to serving the North."

Archangelsk. Later the program received fellowships from Nordland County and The Barents Secretariat as well. The fellowships resulted in excellent student recruitment, and the program was subsequently promoted to the directors as a lucrative money-making program for UiN.

From both the Norwegian and Russian perspectives, it was regarded as rather unusual to use curriculum largely developed by other institutions. However, this was a core point in the UArctic's strategy and was very effective for the cooperation at that point – in terms of both time and resources. The UArctic's Pan-Arctic character also fit well into the Arctic and Barents euphoria of the time. The established Norwegian Pomor Centre facilitated the cooperation and served as an important door-opener.

In 2006 the first BA students graduated while UiN also arranged the first UArctic Council meeting, resulting in praise for being an important achievement for both UArctic and UiN. In 2008 UiN became a UArctic regional office, holding responsibility for Scandinavia and Russia with Sagdahl as Vice Dean.

In the beginning internationalization work related to the BCS was characterized by improvisation and "trial-and-error" and was often poorly grounded in the institutional structure of UiN. However, it has become increasingly formalized and integrated into the formal structure and is now one of the responsibilities of the International Office. The BCS program has now been offered for more than 13 years and, in terms of numbers of students, has been a successful part of the internationalization efforts at UiN.

The BCS is offered and administered entirely by UiN, but NArFU has integrated the BCS program into their BA program at the Institute of Philology and Cross-Cultural Communication. From the beginning, NArFU has been the main partner on the Russian side. The three HEIs in Murmansk have also been involved, but have experienced a decreasing volume of students and reduced activity in the partnerships. A collaboration with universities in Syktyvkar and St. Petersburg has provided some additional students. Although the students are encouraged to take the third semester in Bodø, there are not enough scholarships for everybody who wants to attend, and, in fact, quite a few of the students have received their BCS degrees in Norway without ever leaving Russia.

NArFU has been inspired by the BCS program and has developed several new Arctic courses in English under the Barents Cross Border University (BCBU) collaborative platform. Several of these are now offered as an integral part of the study program at NArFU targeting both Russian and foreign students. At UiN a new Master's in Northern Development (MIND) was launched in 2015, in collaboration with University of Northern British Colombia. This makes it possible for students that hold the BCS, or similar qualifications, to continue with a social science master's program in northern studies.

This partnership was formed to boost internationalization on both sides of the border and quickly became successful in terms of the number of students. The rapid success was largely due to entusiastic individuals, the almost ready-made course package provided by the UArctic and the well-developed international office at NArFU, as well as the scholarships and travel grants provided by the Norwegian government.

6.3.3 Bachelor in Northern Studies (FUC – Murmansk State Humanities University)

In 2010 a Bachelor in Northern Studies was launched at Finnmark University College (FUC) in Alta. The main driver behind this was Associate Professor Bjørn Sagdahl from University of Nordland (UiN) in Bodø. As vice dean at University of the Arctic (UArctic) and leader of the regional office, Sagdahl wanted to introduce the program to other institutions in the region; he therefore visited both Harstad and Tromsø in order to market the UArctic program and concept, although without much success.[13] However, enthusiastic individuals at FUC saw the potential of UArctic; in particular, Associate Professor Per M. Møller. In close cooperation with Sagdahl, a Bachelor program was established at FUC, largely based on the courses and programs developed at UiN in Bodø and UArctic, but with different advanced emphasis courses.[14]

The program and cooperation were seen as a timely follow-up to the university college's High North strategy and received goodwill and support from the management. FUC also has a campus in the border town of Kirkenes and thus saw collaboration with Russia, in general, and Murmansk in particular, as a part of the university college's regional mission, providing another pillar for the university to lean on. FUC also aspired to play a role in regional development in the border areas. For a while, FUC had administered the national North-to-North and Barents Plus exchange programs; therefore, a bachelor's program with a northern or Arctic focus fit well into the college's profile and ambitions in this field. For a rather small university college located close to the Russian border, it was also clear that internationalization primarily meant cooperation with Russian institutions. The program was marketed as a lucrative new program as FUC would receive funding from the state for each exam taken as well as for each enrolled foreign student (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume).

The program was named Bachelor in Northern Studies (BNS) and, for the first 3 years, was led by Sagdahl, who was affiliated with both UiN and FUC at the time. The collaboration has primarily been with Murmansk State Humanities University (MSHU),[15] however Murmansk State Technical University (MSTU[16]) and other

[13] As a member of the University of the Arctic the University of Tromsø also coordinates the Go North project which is a joint effort to market the HEIs in the Arctic region, as well as the North2north fellowships, a program which offers students from all over the world opportunities to study at a northern higher education institution and experience life in the Arctic. They also administer the national UArctic fund. UiT also participates in several of the thematic UArctic networks, but have nevertheless showed little interest in the UArctic course program.

[14] Whereas the advanced emphasis program at UiN focused on Scandinavian societies and politics and Arctic natural resource management, the program at FUC addressed issues such as innovation and entrepreneurship, local and regional development and North American studies and intercultural communication.

[15] Some elements of the BNS is approved in the university's educational program.

[16] MSTU has also included the BNS program in some of their ordinary local programs.

university departments located in Murmansk, Apatity, Yakutsk and Syktyvkar have also sent students to the program. For a while there was competition between the BCS at UiN and the BNS at FUC for Russian students in Murmansk, but gradually a kind of division of labor developed and, currently, UiN mainly recruits from Archangelsk while FUC focuses on Murmansk. FUC was also pressured by Finnmark county to increase the collaboration with Murmansk.

As at UiN, the program at FUC led to frictions between the faculty and the administration due to the numerous adaptations and improvising that had to be done. Similarly, as in Bodø, the BA program in Alta has not been relevant for, or related to, research collaboration.[17] After the 2013 merger with UiT the overall responsibility for the BNS program was taken over by UiT, however, it is still operated from Alta by what is now called the Faculty of Sports, Tourism and Social Work.

This partnership was also formed in an effort to launch internationalization processes on both sides of the border and, as at UiN, this bachelor is also highly successful in terms of the number of students. The adoption of the UArctic course package that had already been used in Bodø, as well as the engagement of UiN's UArctic education entrepreneur, made the establishment of this partnership go more quickly and smoothly. Here as well, the scholarships and travel grants provided by the Norwegian government were necessary along with enthusiastic entrepreneurs.

6.3.4 Master in Business and Engineering (University of Nordland – Baltic State Technical University)

University of Nordland (UiN) has cooperated with Baltic State Technical University (BSTU) in St. Petersburg since 1991 and, for many years, about ten Russian students from BSTU have received 2-year fellowships for business studies each year through the Norwegian quota scheme. In the beginning, Bodø Graduate School of Business at UiN offered intensive 1-week and 2-week courses in economy at BSTU. Later, this one-sided transfer of knowledge was supplemented by allowing some of the BSTU students to join the existing Master of Science in Business program at UiN (Bourmistrov and Mellemvik 2002). Based on this cooperation, a Master in Business and Engineering (MBAE) was launched in 1997 and, subsequently, a joint MBA program targeting executives of Russian enterprises. Programs have also been developed to retrain redundant military officers in Murmansk and have since been used to retrain officers in Ukraine, as well.

For several decades, Professor Frode Mellemvik has been the main initiator and focal point of the cooperation between UiN and BSTU; later with MGIMO in Moscow and universities in Ukraine as well. Mellemvik was the Dean of the Bodø Graduate School of Business in the early 1990s, but was then appointed rector at

[17] One exception can be the NORRUSS-project, funded by the Norwegian Research Council, of which this book is a part.

UiN in 1997. In 2007 Mellemvik was instrumental in establishing the High North Centre for Business and Governance, where he since has served as director. The centre now receives permanent funding from the government.

The cooperation with the Baltic State Technical University (BSTU) in St. Petersburg started as a combination of personal interest, on Mellemvik's part, and opportunities created by Nordland county's cooperation with Leningrad Oblast. Mellemvik had a minor in economic history focusing on the "Eastern Block" countries, which left him with a lasting interest in the subject. Nordland county had had a friendship agreement with Leningrad Oblast (county) since 1987 and, led by Governor Sigbjørn Eriksen, this relation was strong throughout the 1990s, forming one of the elements that developed into the Barents cooperation (BEAC/BEAR) by 1993. Mellemvik and Eriksen were acquainted and a link was established. Also of importance was the fact that professors at the School of Business at UiN translated a marketing book into English, which later formed the basis of the curriculum for the first courses. Due to the national educational monopoly, the business studies program – established in 1985 – the School of Business enjoyed both solid autonomy within UiN and a strong financial situation, which provided great leeway to be creative and initiate new courses. In addition, also the succeeding UiN rector had come from the School of Business and was very supportive of collaboration with Russia.

According to Mellemvik, there was no pressure from the college or the ministries to develop these courses and programs. There was more of a personal and institutional interest on the part of Mellemvik and others at the School of Business, as well as private regional enterprises in the county, in establishing closer cooperative ties with Russia and St. Petersburg, being one of the technological hubs in Russia. However, in the early 2000s this collaboration was expected to offer a valuable strategic contribution for the Bodø University College to the process of becoming a university, as such endeavors were considered indicative of a strong educational institution. The motivation for BSTU was an improved reputation through provision of foreign courses. Additionally, though, national "overproduction" of engineers made it relevant to develop in fields relevant to the predominant technological profile – e.g. economy.

In the beginning, courses such as accounting and marketing were offered in their entirety in St. Petersburg. Both classroom instruction and exams were held there, while teacher teams from UiN were flown in for 1–2 weeks at a time. These courses were provided as a supplement to existing courses and programs; only when the MBAE was established did they become a formal part of a larger educational program.

In the early years there was a lot of improvisation. Many stories have circulated about the "carrying of books", as teachers brought used or sponsored course books in English from Norway to Russia. Additionally, one hears of financial problems due to rapid changes in the currency exchange rate and Norwegian-financed Xerox machines that were stolen, as well as the transfer of cash into Russia.

In the beginning the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Center for Cooperation in Education (SIU), Nordland county and, subsequently, some private sponsors formed the financial foundation for the endeavor, which initially provided no additional income to UiN through the ordinary educational financing system. Later on other actors like Statoil, Rosneft, Total, Innovation Norway, the Barents Secretariat, Eurasia Foundation, the Norwegian Research Council and the Department of Education participated in financing courses and programs.

The early drivers of the process where enthusiastic individuals and a supportive corporate spirit. Another crucial elements for Mellemvik's initial success was the relationship with Nordland county. The partnership probably would not have been established without this link. Furthermore, the High North Business Centre can largely be seen as an extension of the collaboration between UiN and Nordland county, supplemented by improved national and sponsor funding.

6.4 Discussion

The Barents euphoria and repair of the Cold War rifts following Gorbachev's Murmansk talk in 1987, the dismantling of the USSR, the establishment of the Barents cooperation in 1993, and national policies of détente, normalization and stabilization all contributed to an optimistic and collaborative atmosphere in the region. Another important backdrop was the Bologna process that may be seen as a European model for regional integration (Knight 2013). By facilitating exchange, collaboration and educational integration between Norway and Russia, this process has standardized and structured a higher education area. As a result, it is now possible to identify an emerging and distinct educational region, a Barents eduscape (Sundet 2016).

Along with the general institutional incentives in the HEI sector, this created windows of opportunity for a number of individuals and groups of individuals who, for various reasons, were enthusiastic about cross-border cooperation. These individuals formed the backbone of the emerging institutional collaborative structures and partnerships. In the beginning much of the internationalization work took place outside the realm of national policies and sometimes outside the policies of local universities as well.

In the research presented in this book, all of the programs being studied were started by individuals, on both sides of the border, who deliberately or accidently found their way through the thawing ice. The programs where developed in a bottom-up manner by dedicated and enthusiastic individuals or small groups with special interests and motivations. However, such bottom-up processes are not sustainable if they are not welcomed and supported by the managers at the top on both sides of the emerging partnerships. It appears that there has been a shift in the weighing between the bottom-up and top-down processes. The early phases were driven from the bottom up, however, in the later stages top-down became increasingly more important. More recent efforts have been largely initiated from the top down within the hierarchical organizational structure, often with international offices at the helm. On the Russian side the more authoritarian and centralized structure required strong elements of top-down flow in all phases; nonetheless, individuals were very important here as well.

The evolving partnerships were also spurred on by the growing number of organized arenas, conferences, networks and so on, where potential partners could meet. As the endeavors matured and became institutionalized, more staff members got involved and the novel, explorative and improvisational nature of the endeavors disappeared as the internationalization work became a part of the everyday routines and structures at the institutions. The international offices are generally gaining importance as bridgeheads, and the links between these offices establish collaborative corridors through which the cooperation is channeled to an increasing extent. This is in line with the general findings of Egron-Polak (2014).

In both countries the governments are pushing towards internationalization of the universities, but with slightly different rationales and directions (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). In Russia the national motives for cooperation and exchange with Norway are not very different in nature from that of neighboring western countries, whereas in Norway student exchange and university collaboration with Russia are deeply embedded also in a deliberate and broad soft security policy; i.e., a political rationale. Such soft security concerns largely explain the rather strong political attention to this field, the encouragement and financing of collaborative efforts, and the various scholarships available to Russian students to facilitate Russian participation in Norwegian programs and courses.

Universities are embarking on internationalization processes for many reasons as well. One of them is to improve the brand, reputation or standing of the universities, as internationalization is one of the things that recognized universities are simply expected to do as a part of their mission. The strong pressure towards internationalization and collaboration can thus be considered almost as a moral imperative. Through the interviews carried out at the institutional level we find that the most common justification for internationalization is that "it will make us better" in terms of academic quality; or the more normative response, "we are neighbors in the north and should collaborate" (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume). The Russian universities' motivation for the collaboration with Norwegian institutions seems to be more related to the opportunity it provides for internationalization and interaction with western countries (i.e., academic rationale and competency approach). It is apparently less connected to Norway or the Barents, as such,[18] even though NArFU representatives emphasize Barents and Arctic issues and regional responsibility as strong motivations for entering into these partnerships. Thus, academic goals are predominant in the partnerships; a tendency that has also been substantiated by studies in other countries (Egron-Polak 2014).

According to Egron-Polak (2014) lack of funding is generally regarded as a main barrier to internationalization. This is also true for the institutions studied here, but the partnerships give access to resources not easy attainable without such

[18] It is nevertheless noteworthy that Norway is placed among the five countries in the world that score highest on key characteristic of a developed knowledge economy (Smeby and Gornitzka 2008).

connections. Explicit economic justifications were not common during the interviews, however, interviewees on both sides expressed that the HEIs follow acquisition strategies in terms of acquiring various resources through the partnerships. On the other hand, income and revenue generation has hardly been central in the motivation for embarking on these efforts for either of the partners, and the financial costs for the institutions have generally been higher than the income. As stated by a rector: "we are certainly not doing this to make a profit". At the same time income has been used at the faculty level as a way to legitimize new programs, especially for the BCS (UiN) and the BNS (FUC). Norwegian HEIs receive a lump sum per student per completed exam (10 ECTS) and a lump sum per foreign student enrolled staying within a formalized agreement for more than 3 months. The HEIs also receive a part of their basic funding based on student enrollment. In addition, a number of fellowships are available which makes internationalization cheaper on the whole and, for some faculties, even lucrative. Thus, for the Norwegian faculties, the extra revenue from enrolling Russian students has been important in local budget allocation, but should not be seen as a for-profit endeavor. For the Russian HEIs the national funding system and incentives are more indirect. Governmental pressure towards internationalization is based on a national university monitoring and rating system, where internationalization is one of several criteria. If the requirements are not met the universities can expect reduced funding or other "sticks" from the government. This may also be the case in Norway, but here there are also "carrots" to stimulate student exchange and cooperation.

Russian HEIs are suffering from financial difficulties in addition to a substantial drop in student demography which means that the competition for students is increasing. At Russian universities, as well as at the smaller ones in Norway (UiN and FUC), the universities need the students more than the students need the universities, and international programs are thought to attract students in addition to providing the universities with status and goodwill. The channels to Norwegian HEIs and the Norwegian scholarships are thus regarded as a competitive advantage for the Russian institutions involved in the partnerships. For the HEIs involved on both sides, internationalization provides opportunities for additional services or student recruitment to compensate for constraints on the growth of "home markets". The current incentive structure gives both sides the possibility for fast and inexpensive internationalization. In both countries budget allocation is related to the number of students, and the Norwegian HEIs can finance part of their internationalization activities though the increased income provided by Russian students who take their exams at the universities. The Russian HEIs develop fast and relatively inexpensive internationalization through the Norwegian-funded programs and thereby contribute to fulfilling the government's internationalization requirements. For students from Russian and former Soviet republics, these programs represent relatively inexpensive ECTS from a western country.

The current incentive structure creates a win-win situation for all members of the partnerships and gives them access to financial, academic or other resources that would otherwise be unobtainable or more expensive. Through these partnerships quick internationalization takes place in HEIs on both sides, which clearly shows the interdependency between the parties that is created by the current institutional structure. Thus, the incentive structure provides the HEIs in the Barents with a rather efficient institutional framework for affordable low-threshold internationalization. It is quite clear, though, that the rather productive incentive structure is vulnerable to change, and if the Norwegian government decides to introduce tuition fees or to jeopardize the generous and facilitating institutional framework in other ways, most of the student exchange and the established partnerships are likely to diminish or vanish.

The internationalization processes and educational collaboration are still bilateral and are not influenced by international for-profit educational consortia and networks. The non-commercial Pan-Arctic provider of course material, University of the Arctic, has been helpful in facilitating the BA-level cooperation programs provided by UiN and FUC. The UArctic educational concept never developed at UiT. This was partly due to skepticism about the quality of the "prefab" course materials provided by the UArctic and the online concept; however, it was also related to a common attitude that master and PhD collaborations are more relevant than bachelor programs, as the former may also stimulate research cooperation. However, at UiN as well as at FUC, there were motivated individuals who saw the UArctic as their "baby" and wanted to apply and develop the concept. Thus, a notable difference was identified between those who see research cooperation as the basis for educational cooperation and those who see educational collaboration as the foundation for research cooperation. In the case of UiT, the former seemed to dominate, whereas the latter dominated at UiN and FUC; which largely reflects the identities of both institutions.

From the outset the Russian HEIs largely imported and adopted the foreign curriculum provided by the Norwegian counterpart. In Norway most BA courses offer parts of the curriculum in English, whereas this is still rare at the Russian institutions. Generally speaking, only the courses that deliberately target foreigners are taught in English. Nevertheless, all the partnerships studied here have contributed to an increasing number of English-taught programs in both countries. The Russian HEIs have a shortage of people who are proficient in English, which creates a problem when English has increasingly become the lingua franca for scientific communication.[19] Thus, the internationalization processes easily become encapsulated and dominated by the parts of the organizations that are in command of English. This is certainly the case with the BCS and BNS programs where students with a background connected to the language departments form a large bulk of the students.

Interestingly, the partnerships studied demonstrate an asymmetry between the countries when it comes to "internationalization at home" and "internationalization abroad". As the programs are provided by Norwegian HEIs, and mainly offered online or on campus in Russia, the Russian partners experience more "internationalization at home" than the Norwegians. The online BA programs in Bodø and Alta provide their institutions with additional income, as well as providing them with

[19] Until recently there was a sharp division of labor between educational institutions (HEIs) and research institutions (Russian Academy of Science institutions).

Arctic and Barents credibility. However, virtual outbound mobility reduces the academic, intercultural and social integrative elements of studying abroad. The students do not experience much of the effects of studying abroad and the online courses provide little feeling of "internationalization at home" for the institutions. However, the virtual character is an alternative for those who do not have the necessary resources to go abroad, and some of the students join later for 6 months of the campus-based section of the program (BCS/BNS). Nevertheless, online studies provide the student with some level of international academic experience and intercultural skills. The programs award credits or a degree from a western European HEI which is prestigious in Russia, in and of itself, in addition to serving as proof of qualifications in English. The "internationalization abroad" effect is accordingly stronger for the Norwegian HEIs.

The strong asymmetry in student exchange between Norway and Russia has repeatedly been framed as an area of concern for the partnerships. Russian students travel westward, but so do the Norwegians, and Norway has a corresponding imbalance with countries to the west. However, the HEIs in the partnerships studied are trading in a variety of goods and, even if an improved balance in student exchange would be beneficial, at least symbolically, the continuation of the partnerships depends mainly on the continuation of a favorable institutional win-win framework and the interdependency that makes it meaningful.

The partnerships have been very fertile and functioned as important internationalization "training camps" for the HEIs that have provided them with much knowledge about internationalization and the related challenges. In the beginning the staff on both sides had limited expertise and experience, but the Norwegian institutions have quickly and more easily adapted to the requirements of the internationalization processes. On the Norwegian side larger parts of the HEIs are involved in internationalization work, whereas the language barrier is harder to overcome in Russia, often limiting the number of people involved in the cooperation.

The experiences from these programs show that internationalization in the Barents Region clearly comprises more than student mobility. The programs have generally improved the connectivity between the institutions and countries, leading to the development of genuine and lasting partnerships. However, with the exception of short visits now and then, the partnerships have not led to much mobility of academic staff. Additionally, the mutual influences on each other's programs and teaching have been modest – regular programs continue with business as usual. Nonetheless, the partnerships have also facilitated and actualized the establishment of new programs. Furthermore, the educational collaboration has only resulted in a limited degree of research cooperation; neither research nor academic quality seems to be the main focus of the internationalization efforts. Not surprisingly, the public health program established by UiT has been the most acclaimed and successful one, as this combines educational and research collaboration on both the master's and PhD levels. Both educational and research cooperation are dependent on highly motivated and dedicated individuals; however, research cooperation generally seems to depend more on personal relations, trust and common interests in the field than it does on educational cooperation. This indicates that institutional structure and formal agreements can play a larger part in educational cooperation than in research cooperation.

The partnerships have also provided mutual knowledge about each other's educational systems and visualized the differences between the academic cultures. Mutual learning has also been apparent when it comes to gaining knowledge about each other's countries, cultures, languages and political systems. Similar to the well-known US Fulbright Programs, the British Council, the German Academic Exchange Service and Chinese Confucius Institutes, this Norwegian-Russian collaboration contains elements of public diplomacy, although on a more modest level. Many of the informants have shown deep insights and knowledge about their neighboring countries, and the cooperation has clearly had a kind of "folk diplomacy" and soft-power effect. Nonetheless, as stated by Altbach and de Wit (2015), international educational cooperation can never guarantee peace and mutual understanding, but it can certainly contribute to keeping communication and dialogue open and active, thus paving the way for further contact.

McGill Peterson (2014) regards education as an ideal vehicle for soft power. However, soft power, as coined by Joseph Nye (2004), denotes unequal relationships often based on enlightened self-interest. In these cases from the Barents, the mutual benefits from the cooperation seem to be rather balanced – at least on the partnership level – despite the predominant Norwegian initiation and funding of the collaborations. The relations are marked by their mutual interest, benefits and interdependency, not by hierarchy or dominant relations. Furthermore, security or geopolitical elements are generally side effects of the partnerships rather than being visible in the day-to-day collaboration; and are mainly used when the programs are evaluated or in need of some form of legitimacy and justification.

The partnerships – at least those that comprise the BCS and BNS programs – are generally based on interdependency. The Norwegian funding system, tuition policy and scholarships are the backbone of the partnerships. In this sense Norway is the more powerful actor and Russia is on the receiving end. However, it makes little sense to say that the Norwegian HEIs are less dependent on their Russian partners. Both parties are dependent on their counterparts to succeed with the internationalization policy. The Russian and Norwegian HEIs are not selecting each other as partners based on preferences or perceptions of prestige and excellence. Rather, they accept each other as good enough, partly because the partnerships may provide them with fast and affordable internationalization and partly because there are no better alternatives. It is likely, however, that the universities studied will become more selective in choosing their partners as the internationalization strategy develops or as changes in the institutional structure or the relations between countries occur. Nevertheless, it is likely that future educational partnerships will also be of strategic importance due to geographic proximity and the geopolitical context. Furthermore, some of them – particularly related to Arctic, Barents and other regional issues – will continue largely independent of financial and other changes, as the universities in Bodø, Tromsø, Archangelsk and Murmansk all have national responsibilities in Arctic research and education.

On the national level the Norwegian government has contributed far greater resources into the collaboration than the Russians, and it is difficult to assess the extent to which the political and "diplomatic" outcome of the collaboration justifies such spending. If Norway introduces tuition fees for students outside the EEA/EU, one of the drivers of the Barents educational cooperation system will disappear.[20] The Ministry is also considering making the incentive structures more detailed in addition to distinguishing between degrees of internationalization. At present most of the scholarships, grants and educational funding system that form the backbone of the incentive structure for these partnerships will be maintained, but scholarships will be channeled to selected partnerships. The educational partnerships in the Barents rely heavily on the present institutional and incentive structure, and removal or reduction in those support measures will most likely reduce the number of partnerships and collaborative structures. However, the present cooperation has also created many links and corridors that may prove to be robust enough to last even if the beneficial structures deteriorate.

6.5 Conclusion

The European Higher Education Area and the Bologna processes have contributed to making degrees more compatible and portable between countries as different as Norway and Russia in addition to facilitating educational collaborations even in such a remote region as the Barents. The disintegration of the USSR, and the creation of the Barents Region in the early 1990s, formed the ideological backbone for the cooperation. This, together with the national educational missions and a facilitating and supportive incentive structure, has created a fertile ground for educational cooperation in the Barents.

This emerging Barents eduscape consists of a number of institutionalized partnerships between HEIs in both countries. The partnerships have provided educational collaboration and internationalization as well as people-to-people or folk diplomacy. The establishment of the programs is based on a mixture of idealism and utilitarianism in addition to normative pressures and top-down as well as bottom-up processes. The emerging regional collaborative patterns are largely created by the participating Norwegian and Russian HEIs' adaptation to institutional frameworks. Generous Norwegian funding, tuition-free policy, as well as strong strategic political drive towards and support for collaboration with Russia, have been decisive for this process. Placed in this supportive framework, individual actors and groups have established educational partnerships as a result of the interdependency and encouraging win-win situation created by the framework.

Of the partnerships studied, the Norwegian HEIs have been the initiating and providing institutions, while the Russian institutions have largely been on the

[20] After a reform in 2013 are Norwegian universities largely autonomous to make exemptions for tuition fees.

hosting, facilitating and receiving end. However, the incentive structure has facilitated rather fast and affordable internationalization on both sides of the partnerships without creating asymmetry or imbalance of power between the HEIs. The main motives for collaboration are related to strategic academic internationalization, governmental pressure to internationalize and, to a certain degree, development of a specific regional or Barents-based educational cooperation. The "mission statements" of the northern universities urge them to collaborate with other northern universities.

The partners on both sides have experienced increased access to higher education as a result of the collaboration. The public health program in Archangelsk has also contributed to a new discipline and, thus, to enrichment of the Russian education system as well. The Russian partners have generally had a stronger effect of "internationalization at home" than the Norwegians, as the Norwegian HEIs have been the providing and exporting part of the cooperation, whereby the "internationalization abroad" activities have had a larger volume than "internationalization at home".

The educational partnerships are highly dependent on a facilitating and supportive institutional structure. Therefore, suggested reforms in the Norwegian educational system may make some of the partnerships less viable. However, the common focus on northern issues, the relative proximity between these northernmost areas of the Barents Region, and the strategic regional importance of both countries make it likely that some kind of educational collaboration will persist even if the incentive structure becomes less generous.

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Chapter 7
What We Talk About When We Talk About Internationalization

Per-Anders Forstorp

7.1 Introduction

"Internationalization" is a key concept in many contemporary policy discourses and social practices. The suggested benefits of reaching out to other nations to establish connections beyond the borders of the nation state is both desirable and highly valued. We encounter ideas about "internationalization" in almost any kind of policy discourse and social practice today, be it economic, environmental, cultural, social, political, or other. This pertains to the practices of contemporary higher education and the policy discourses surrounding advanced knowledge production and capacity building as well. Being "international" is considered to be a "perceived need" (Stier 2004); attractive, desirable and often mandatory, as exemplified below by a Norwegian HEI in the Barents Region, the University of Nordland (Bodø, Norway), and a Russian HEI, the Northern (Arctic) Federal University (NArFU, in Arkhangelsk), named after M.V. Lomonosov:

> University of Nordland will ensure regional distribution of research- based knowledge and competence within the national and international body of knowledge. The university will be a constructive societal actor and cooperation partner, both regionally, nationally, and internationally. Cooperation with Russia is to be a clear field of endeavor with regard to the university's international orientation. The High North Center is to be strengthened as a national research center for trade and trade cooperation in The High North. (University of Nordland Strategic Plan 2012–2016)

> Over the recent years the Northern (Arctic) Federal University and various European institutions have established collaborative degree initiatives at the undergraduate and graduate levels, in order to advance friendly relations and promote educational cooperation between partner institutions. Under these jointly developed international degree programs, NArFU

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> accepts a determinate number of international students each year in the areas of Social Sciences, Mathematical and IT sciences, Humanities and others. Students from partner institutions who participate in these joint international programs have to complete most of the studies at their home university and then complete an exchange part (approximately one semester) at one of the partner universities. NArFU joint international programs have been developed under the auspices of UArctic, Barents Cross Border University (BCBU) collaborative platforms as well as by creating bilateral and multilateral agreements with universities in Northern Finland, Sweden and Norway. Much more international programs are going to be set up as a ripple effect of university internationalization and transition towards Bologna framework. Studying and living in the city of Arkhangelsk to complete an academic training is a wonderful opportunity for international students. It brings many benefits, such as developing independence, increasing cultural awareness, while benefiting educationally by taking classes in a new and stimulating academic environment. (Northern (Arctic) Federal University, Arkhangelsk)

At the University of Nordland the regional dimension is emphasized along with the national and international aspects. The university wants to be regarded as a "constructive social actor and cooperation partner" across these political dimensions with a specific aim to distribute research-based knowledge and competence. Russia is identified as a key partner in the international dimension. At NArFU, Europe (Bologna) and especially Scandinavia are identified as key partners when it comes to creating joint degrees at the student level. The benefits this will bring to students are explicitly addressed.

The anticipated benefits and values of internationalization through international exchange and academic mobility are widely distributed and represented on regional, national, institutional and individual levels. Internationalization, as a key signifier, serves multiple meanings and functions, such as being a symbol of development and progress, a guide for quality criteria, and a carrier of content that often reaches far beyond the field of higher education (Cambridge and Thompson 2004; Stier 2004). Like "love" in the short story by Raymond Carver, "internationalization" (and "globalization") can be talked about with tenderness and friendship as well as with an ethos of violence.[1] Internationalization is taken for granted as a quality, but what kind of qualities does internationalization represent? And for whom? What do we do when we "do" internationalization? What do we talk about when we talk about internationalization?

The purpose of this chapter is to unpack the notion of "internationalization" in the higher education discourse between Russia and Norway. The general aim is to contribute with critical interpretations of this key concept based on an analysis of its uses in discussions about and within higher education exchange. How internationalization becomes a concept with multiple functions and meanings will be explored, thereby showing how it serves different needs and expectations at various institutional levels, often far beyond the concrete work of internationalization itself.

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[1] The title of this chapter is a paraphrase on the short story by Raymond Carver (1981), "What We Talk about When We Talk about Love", in the collection with the same title.

7.2 Approaches to Internationalization in Higher Education

There are many ways of conceptualizing exchanges of learning and education within and across national and cultural borders (Cambridge and Thompson 2004; Stier 2004, 2006, 2010; Albright and Knight 2007; Stier and Börjesson 2010; de Wit 2010). These are given many names, "internationalization" being just one along with "practices of bordering" (Parker and Vaughan-Williams 2012, p. 729) and forms of "boundary work" (Gieryn 1999). Further references include "transnational education", "borderless education", "international exposure", "cross-border education" and "intercultural education/learning", among others (see de Wit 2010, for more examples). The notion of "education" as an addendum to internationalization is often used in contexts of product and outcome. "Learning" is the concept of choice in contexts of process and transformation. Internationalization is an established term that has generally replaced international education as the preferred concept. Jane Knight offers the following definition:

> Internationalization at the national, sector and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. (Knight 2015, p. 2; cf. Knight 2004; de Wit 2010)

This definition of internationalization is continuously developed with new additions to the national, sector and institutional levels. For instance, the local-global continuum is suggested as a complement to these three levels, including the supranational (regional and global) level, and dimensions within the institution (faculty/department and teachers) (Sanderson 2008). Knight's approach is primarily organizational while Sanderson explores the humanistic and existential dimensions of the process of exchange. Internationalization is an established term for the politics, policy, management and marketing of higher education. In educational research "internationalization" is sometimes replaced by "intercultural education" or "intercultural learning", emphasizing either the organizational or the pedagogical aspects (Hofstede 1986; Otten 2003; Gill 2007; Gu et al. 2010). It is also supported by dedicated theories of learning, such as transformative learning theory (Mezirow 1991, 2000), which emphasizes the benefits of intercultural education (Stier 2006). "Cross-cultural learning" stands for learning across explicit boundaries and emphasizes differences and diversity. Intercultural learning takes place in domestic and international contexts, often in a process where contexts and people are interacting.

Despite the many differences between these concepts, which neither can nor should be minimized, there are also similarities. The development of intercultural learning or internationalization (or any other of the terms above) is supposed to foster certain desirable outcomes, in the form of intercultural knowledge and specific subjectivity, an international outlook or attitude. Whether the view of the exchange is predominantly organizational, instrumental or humanistic/existential it often comes equipped with a "salvation theme" (Popkewitz 2012), that is, a gospel and an ideology of understanding and friendship (cf. the example from NArFU above). An example of this is the notion of "cosmopolitanism" (Sanderson 2008,

p. 288f) which is a type of subjectivity and a particular set of ethics for intercultural knowledge, competence, awareness and skills, acquired through continuous exposure across cultural borders. Cosmopolitanism comes in many varieties, some of which may be seriously penetrating while others may be thoroughly "banal" (Matthews and Sidhu 2005, p. 53) and saturated with the educational counterpart to "greenshining".

Empirical work on internationalization from the perspective of students focuses on the transitional experiences (Gu et al. 2010). The notion of "sojourning" is sometimes used to highlight the typically temporary character of a student's residence in another country/culture (Murphy-Lejeune 2002). Students are involved in various developmental processes, such as maturation, human development and intercultural adaptation. These processes are not linear, universal or passive, but rather an amalgam of all of the above; including, for instance, "the presence of a complex set of shifting associations between language mastery, social interaction, personal development and academic outcomes" (Gu et al. 2010, pp. 7, 20). Students are exposed to psychological adjustment as well as to sociocultural adaptation, comprising a transformative learning process of personal growth and development. Some objectivistic and quantitative studies are primarily dedicated to predicting patterns of adaptation in order to anticipate strategies for success (see references in Gu et al. 2010, p. 11). Other studies regard the process of transition in their dimensions of richness and fragmentation, including a continuous and indeterminate negotiation and mediation with the social and cultural environment (Gu et al. 2010). According to such studies, the point is not to anticipate or predict success factors for adaptation, but to explore this process in its own right as a complex amalgam of many variables: individual, biographical, cognitive, circumstantial and previous learning and aptitude as well as motivation, attitude, anxiety, learning style and strategies, location, accommodation, and contact with native speakers (Gu et al. 2010). Intercultural learning as an example of internationalization is, thus, an extremely complex process and a combination of all the above factors in addition to the general cultural and academic contexts, including student identities, motivations and power relationships with teachers (Gu et al. 2010).

The concept of "internationalization" thrives on another key contemporary concept, namely "globalization", with which it is sometimes equaled. However, they are occasionally described as parasitic or defined in different ways (Albright and Knight 2007). Globalization is generally understood as the context, that is, "the economic, political and societal forces pushing 21st-century higher education toward greater international involvement" (Albright and Knight 2007, p. 290). Internationalization is then how institutions and individuals cope with this context: "Globalization may be unalterable, but internationalization involves many choices" (Albright and Knight 2007, p. 291). Although each idea can be defined with reference to distinctive and non-identical processes, the concepts share a number of characteristics, such as a basic outlook beyond the state, suggesting a realm of action against or between nation-states and sometimes beyond their very borders. Furthermore, both notions are very broad and imprecise. Their frames of reference can be extremely manifold and serve many different functions. This quality of semantic elasticity and multi-significance is part of the reason why these concepts maintain such an allure for many actors, apart from the very facts of migration and cross-cultural connections encountered on an everyday basis.

7.3 Method and Material

This chapter is based on interviews with administrators and coordinators of international exchange programs in Norway and Russia in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR). The interviews took place with representatives of the HEIs that are included in the project (cf. Sundet et al., Chap. 1, in this volume) who had agreed to participate during the period 2012–2014. The interviews at Russian HEIs often took place through the active presence of an interpreter. The author of this chapter, as well as the other participating interviewers, have no proficiency in Russian, so the presence of an interpreter was always necessary and premised on the condition that the interviewee(s) did not speak English. Interviews were audio recorded and rough transcriptions were made. They were organized on a semi-structured basis where we loosely followed a pre-specified thematically-oriented question guide. The questions focused on the who, how, and why of internationalization, thus bringing into the foreground the experiences of the interviewee as well as his/her opinions about the motivations and rationales of students, teachers and staff, institutions and coordinators, and nations.

Two methodological considerations are noteworthy here. First of all, the issues of language and culture in cross-cultural comparative research needs to be addressed in methodological terms (Hantrais 2008). A cross-cultural encounter is already distinguished by both differences and similarities which can vary in amplitude according to the degrees to which the horizons of expectations are shared or not. The lack of mutual language proficiency, and thereby the potential to miss opportunities for clarification of concepts, complicates the cross-cultural encounter. The mediation of translators brings an additional layer of filtering and interpretation to an already complex communicative exchange. Interviewing on "internationalization" in international contexts is not easy and should, therefore, be analyzed with care and consideration of possible misfits and interpretive traps. Although this carefulness is no final guarantee for completely avoiding misinterpretations on all sides, it certainly contributes to widening the basis for articulating how "internationalization" is discussed. A second consideration concerns the interviewing practices employed in qualitative socio-cultural research that have a comparative dimension, of which this work is a part. An interview situation is not always framed as such. Doing an interview is an accepted procedure that is taken for granted in social science, and it is generally considered acceptable to arrange face-to-face encounters for research purposes in contemporary western society (Briggs 2007). However, this is not a global standard and, by organizing face-to-face encounters with high-level administrators in Russian universities, we are introducing a routine that may be seen as strange and even somewhat controlling. Formal events, not just in Russia but also elsewhere, tend to be based on culture-specific norms of social interaction and politeness strategies based on hierarchical relationships. The research approach adopted here may run the risk of violating these norms for social interaction and run counter to politeness strategies present in formal occasions in contemporary Russian society. The methodological question concerning "how we perform interviews" is a research field in itself, as witnessed by Briggs (2007) and others. In interviews, talk is elicited by pre-specified questions and guided by a general frame of interest. Talk is interaction and a medium/genre for various forms of action, premised on different attitudes and interpretations of functions. It is a mode for being serious and authentic about certain things. But it can also be an occasion for just complying with questions. It is a genre for bringing out the most representative interpretations in addition to being a time for performing the role of a representative (for an institution, a profession, a nation, a mission, and so on). As interviewers we are always the guests carrying out a project.

In interviews, representatives of Norwegian HEIs tended to be more casual and informal, which could be explained partly by the identity and cultural familiarity of the interviewers (Norwegian and Swedish). However, it also reflects a widespread perception of a culture of informality in Scandinavian academia. Representatives of Russian HEIs, by contrast, tended to treat these interviews as official meetings with the additional aim of demonstrating friendship and mutuality with a foreign "delegation" in order to consolidate international relations. Meetings were planned well in advance and the planning was confirmed by formal routines of acceptance. There was a welcoming committee, along with prepared snacks, elegantly set tables, invited guests, gifts, agendas, and official ceremonies including hierarchically structured social interaction.

Together, the group constructed an understanding of internationalization through the selected questions and general interest. Interviewees tended to respond favorably to the questions, treating questions as an opportunity to confirm these shared values. This is both positive and negative. The positive side is that it might be treated as an ideal context for exploring a wealth of meanings and functions by taking the chance to make these explicit in the presence of a foreign interviewer. The negative side is that the interviewees may feel obliged to explore solely the positive sides of internationalization and avoid talking about the potential problems.

The levels that are represented in the material stretch from the highest echelons of the administration to the grass roots of students, faculty and staff. Those whom we talk to fall into two categories: first, the top leaders of university management who are very formal, and, second, the coordinators of internationalization who are not that formal. The coordinators also function as interpreters and mediators in the formal settings. Of particular importance are those with mediating functions; namely, the coordinators of international programs who actually work with these issues on an everyday basis. The international coordinator for academic exchange programs is precisely the person who professionally negotiates this multidimensional concept and its derivate to individual students, institutions and the political constituency.

7.4 What Is Internationalization?

The following analysis is divided into three parts. The first part briefly sketches internationalization in Norway and Russia. The second part discusses the work of internationalization – an inventory of similarities and differences. The third section, Rationales for Internationalization, concerns rationales, ideology and rhetoric, and is the most central part of the analysis. The analysis will move beyond simple assumptions about reality and transparency derived through interviews in order to discuss and critique what it means to talk about something: “what we talk about when we talk”.

7.4.1 Internationalization in Norway and Russia

It is worth mentioning that the Barents cooperation between Norway and Russia takes place between partners of very different sizes. In northern Norway there are currently two universities and four university colleges, while in Russia’s nine northern regions there were (as of 2011) 136 HEIs, out of which 25 were flagship universities and 111 branch campuses (Sergeev and Ryzhkova 2010; Hirschberg and Petrov 2014).

In a study of internationalization of research in Norway, Trondal (2010) distinguishes two strategies of internationalization: “internationalization by hierarchy and design” and “internationalization by choice and discipline” (Trondal 2010, pp. 352, 354–8). The latter is a strategy for internationalization driven by the academic staff themselves that has deep historical roots all over the world, while the former is of more recent origin and is driven by state authorities and university management. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into the details of institutional change and the history of academic internationalization (Geuna 1998) in Norwegian (Gornitzka 2006; European Parliament 2015, pp. 137–146; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3, in this volume) and Russian (Johnson 2008; Frumina and West 2012; Kuraev 2014) traditions. We therefore tap into more recent events.

Post-Cold War Russian higher education has been exposed to neoliberal educational policies formulated by the World Bank and the OECD, emphasizing competition, cost-efficiency, accountability, commercialization of services, equity and measurement of performance (Gounko and Smale 2007, p. 534). At the end of the 1990s, many Russian universities had already (re-)established international relations. On campus, international offices and centers for international programs became a regular part of the university organization and infrastructure. This was done, Maximova-Mentzoni argues, “to reinforce the development of contacts with foreign partners, to promote academic and student mobility and the export of educational services, to commercialize research and to form a positive international image of a university, etc.” (Maximova-Mentzoni 2013, p. 45). Despite efforts to become more international, Russian universities “suffered” from a previous period of isolation from international research and education. Language barriers and bad conditions for visiting western European students added to these problems of becoming more open, along with limited financial opportunities and lack of commercial service experience (Maximova-Mentzoni 2013). Russia joined the Bologna process in 2003, aiming for structural harmonization and increased recruitment of international students, as well as trying to open the market for educational services in a commercial way.[2] Competition and internationalization are explicit goals in Russian educational policy, echoing transnational and neoliberal imperatives (Stier 2006, p. 2):

> The growth of country’s competitiveness is the primary condition for strengthening the political and economic role of Russia and for improving on its population’s quality of life. In the modern world, which is moving towards globalization, the ability to adapt to the conditions of the international competition becomes a major factor in successful and steady development. (Government of the Russian Federation 2005, p. 4; quoted in Guonko and Smale 2007, pp. 541–2)

Since 2012, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation runs the *Project 5–100* with the goal of maximizing “the competitive position of a group of Russian universities in the global research and education market” (Kukarenko and Zashikina, Chap. 2, in this volume).

7.4.2 The Work of Internationalization

Talk about internationalization in official documents and at the policy level is typically “visionary, rhetorical and void of concretization” (Stier and Börjesson 2010, p. 348). In contrast, grassroots administrators, such as international coordinators, talk about internationalization in very practical terms (Stier 2004, p. 93). It is talked about in terms of the activities that are carried out, in fact, in the name of it. Concrete examples are given of what this work consists of, who is engaged in it, and under what conditions the activities are performed. The internationalization work, in this practical sense, also includes an overview of the partners involved, with whom they are being international and from which countries they come, as well as the role of language and interpretation, the practical work of internationalization, and how all these dimensions are accounted for.

7.4.2.1 Who Is International?

As explained in other chapters of this book (cf. Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume), educational exchange between Norway and northwest Russia is largely unidirectional. Russian students make up the third largest group of foreign students

[2] See “The Bologna Process and its Implications for Russia” (RECEP 2005, p. 19) (2010 it was decided that they had to implement the BA, MA, and PHD).

in Norway. They constitute almost the total number of international students involved in the Barents Region exchange programs in which there are very few Norwegian or Scandinavian students. The exchange programs are frequently online and are almost always administered by the Norwegian institutions, usually through learning management platforms developed in the West. The frequency of exchange in the Barents Region took off around 1995, a few years after the Declaration at Kirkenes. A coordinator at NArFU says "Norwegian students don't come [to Russia], maybe they think it is a throwaway year". After 5 years in office, a manager at the Forest Institute in Syktyvkar has not yet accepted a single student coming from outside Russia, although many students from the former USSR have been admitted. Apart from the exchange with Norway, Russian universities are increasingly active in looking for students from former Soviet states such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as from Asia. The recruitment of students from foreign countries was sometimes mentioned in the interviews as a "market", demonstrating the ubiquity of market-oriented discourse in higher education in contemporary Russia.

At the time of interviewing, NArFU had 108 students at the University of Nordland[3] in Bodø (cf. Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume). The Forest Institute in Syktyvkar has had around 100 students in exchange programs during the five last years, all of which have been in either Finland or Sweden, but no one in Norway. This is explained by the disciplinary focus of the Institute (engineering, forestry) which has not matched the available disciplinary options of exchange programs in northern Norway. The Campus Finnmark (Alta) of UiT The Arctic University of Norway enrolls approximately 80–85 students in their online BNS program. Almost all of the foreign on-campus students come from Russia, although the total number is quite limited in Alta because of the large volume of exchange that takes place online. On both sides of the border, all who are involved are aware of the heavy asymmetry in the exchange. The imbalance in student exchange was not desirable, but was still not necessarily regarded as a problem. An Alta administrator explains that today many students are coming to Norway, but in the 1990s the situation was reversed and many Norwegians left, not necessarily to study in Russia but in other countries. Despite the proximity of Russia and the exciting allure of accessible admission policies for a previously closed neighbor, Russia has not yet become attractive to Norwegian students as a place for exchange.

The State Polar Academy in St. Petersburg[4] has a special mission to admit students from former Soviet republics and, in particular, members of the indigenous populations from the Russian North, Siberia and the Far East. All of these students already speak Russian and can, therefore, easily enroll in courses and programs at the academy. The former USSR counts as a dimension of internationalization as well, and the communist Soviet Union was in fact based on an interpretation of internationalist ideas. As mentioned, the State Polar Academy in St Petersburg has a multinational mission, interpreted primarily within the geopolitical frame of the former USSR. In 2013 they had students from 38 different ethnic/indigenous

[3] Since 2016 Nord University.

[4] Now part of the Russian State Hydrometerological University.

groups, representing 47 of the Russian regions.[5] During the same year their foreign students came from seven countries, although numbers and nationality were not specified. The rector of the academy commented on this situation with the following official statement: “The State Polar Academy has a long-standing history of internationalization and multi-ethnic students – we do our best to eliminate any conflicts”. In this official-sounding statement, emphasized no doubt by the translator, the rector assumes the tenor of a diplomatic representative. Although ambiguous concerning the scale of conflict avoidance, this statement places internationalization in a concrete context of the specific goal of wanting to contribute to conflict resolution, thereby conceiving of internationalization in higher education as a peace-building mission. The peace-building aspects of internationalization may very well be an important face of internationalization in other policy areas outside of higher education.

7.4.2.2 Language and Interpretation

Russian language proficiency is required for students who plan to come to Russia and this, along with the limited availability of courses in English at Russian HEIs, is the main reason behind the restricted number of foreign students in Russia. At the moment, it seems that Norwegian students lack the motivation to learn Russian in order to pursue studies there, and it seems as if the prospects for moving to English-speaking countries are greater. The development of dedicated circumpolar studies (Nord University) and northern studies programs (UiT) has not yet constituted a sufficient incentive for Norwegian students to overcome the language divide. Furthermore, the situation in Russia is such that there is a general lack of English language skills among students and staff, which presents a further barrier to cooperation (Frumina and West 2012). At Campus Finnmark they find it easier to work with Russian colleagues in the field of humanities because they already possess the language skills, whereas colleagues at the technical institutes generally lack such language skills and, therefore, appear to be more “introverted”. A Norwegian official with long experience in bilateral exchange concludes: “Russia is not a convenient country to work in with language”, although he affirms that the situation has greatly improved during the past 20 years. Language is a decisive factor in the exchange and sharing a lingua franca such as English makes cooperation possible in the first place. The Russian language functioned as a lingua franca in the Soviet Union and still does in the Russian Federation in relation to former Soviet republics. Former republics count today as a dimension of internationalization among most of the HEIs included in this study. The status of the Russian language as a shared resource is not easily replaced by another language such as English, especially for the older generation who might regard it as “the language of the enemy” (Pavlenko 2003), possibly leading to a loss of domain and constituting a challenge to

[5] In 2016 these numbers are 64 nationalities and 74 subjects of the Russian Federation plus seven foreign nationals.

perceptions of national identity. As a contrast, the younger generation embraces access to a foreign language with more ease. Along with the interlinked issue of recruitment asymmetry (cf. above), language difficulties make the exchange even more uneven and vulnerable at large.

English became a vehicle for communication during the interview as well. Some of the interviews illustrate the language difficulties particularly well. Sometimes the questions were translated into Russian and the answer in Russian was then translated back into English. As always in situations involving translation, things become even more complicated because of both language and interpretation. Communicating in English was a vehicle during the interviews, but the interview itself, and the surrounding context, nonetheless became an indicator of internationalization. While talking about exchange programs and internationalization, we as interviewers were actually participating in performing that which we talked about. Our presence could be accounted for as a form of internationalization before, during and after the meeting.

7.4.2.3 The Work of Internationalization

The practical work of internationalization includes communication and all sorts of administrative tasks as well as teaching and research. For coordinators this means initiating contact with students, following up and providing information, showing possible international connections, promoting the exchange programs to attract students, producing documents, and communicating with foreign colleagues. It means coordinating internationalization activities and organizing the exchange of students and teachers. Exchange and research agreements need to be negotiated and updated. All sorts of practical things are involved, such as resolving technical issues, handling entrance passes, diplomas, equipment and transportation, providing visa support and translation, updating websites and so on. International students are the responsibility of coordinators. Pretty much the same work is done by coordinators on both sides and some of their work also consists of meeting coordinators from the other states in order to facilitate the work. The group of coordinators is very important for maintaining the exchange programs (Sundet 2016, Chap. 4 in this volume). A primary challenge for coordinators is to make the idea of internationalization attractive to students and faculty. This may be done through various information strategies; for instance, regular round-table discussions. A variety of communicative resources and meeting options are available to the administrators.

Coordinators generally do not think of internationalization as something specific, but as something that should be an integrated part of the everyday activities at the university. This interpretation of internationalization work makes integration of an international dimension into all activities central. Talk of internationalization can be quite lofty and high-flying (cf. the rector mentioned above using a tenor of diplomacy in describing a mission of conflict resolution) in addition to being very concrete and mundane (Stier 2004, p. 93). Some coordinators doubt whether the concept of internationalization is really functional, especially when it is discussed by politicians and higher-level university administrators in relation to higher education politics. However, as will be demonstrated below, internationalization can be a conceptual vehicle for almost any desired outcome. Experienced coordinators, such as one at Campus Finnmark, claim that it is possible to identify when internationalization "works". He claims that there are reliable assessment criteria based on practical accomplishments: "it is when the cultures meet and do something together". This means that internationalization is at its best when demonstrated and performed on the practical level through concretely coordinated and shared action. This view of worthwhile internationalization places emphasis on a grassroots level and a shared performative dimension.

7.4.2.4 Internationalization Workers

The grassroots workers of internationalization – that is, coordinators – often have an explicit interest and/or background in language studies, and recruitment is often channeled through the disciplines of philology and (foreign) language studies. This disciplinary experience is often what brought the coordinators to this work in the first place and that which made them engage in exchange programs as students. A personal experience of internationalization is an additional impetus for continuing to work within this area. A Russian coordinator claims that she always admired coordinators for being role models in terms of their flexibility. This flexibility and ease of working across borders, along with plenty of opportunities to practice language and communicative skills, seemed very attractive to her. She regarded these coordinators as "untouchables"; as individuals who were elevated into attractive positions that she came to desire. Coordinators are often dedicated to their work and many seem to work a lot more than the designated hours. This is, they explain, because they find their task so important. It is like a "hobby"; as one of them says, "this kind of job can affect people". Such statements obviously need to be understood within the context of the interviews. The official character of being a loyal representative of an institution is perhaps the only available response they can provide in the context of an interview.

A coordinator in Syktyvkar explains why it seems to be a problem for some academics – i.e. students, teachers and researchers – to engage in the internationalization processes. According to this argument made by the coordinator, they sometimes say that "we are teachers and we are not meant to be international agents". At the time of the interview (2012), Russian authorities had passed a so-called "foreign agent law"(On Amendments) requiring NGOs that receive foreign donations and engage in "political activity" to register and declare themselves as "foreign agents". While internationalization was actively promoted in Russia, it was also circumscribed by another law that had originally been directed at the activities of NGOs, but which ended up being used against representatives of foreign universities who could be mistaken for representing NGOs and, thus, involved in "political activity". The coordinator actually used the word "agent", which was circulating at the time and suggesting a negative connotation of the work of coordinator. He concludes, however, that "you need to love people for this engagement, and you cannot think too much about policy". Obviously, some idealized impressions of the job come across in the interviews, showing the coordinators dedication, love and fearless attitude toward policy. Despite the importance of the job, being a coordinator is not generally well paid in Russia and, as with teaching positions, it usually has to be combined with other jobs.

Participating in the work of internationalization is almost like attending a school on how to communicate in a foreign language. It is "a never-ending development process", as an experienced coordinator in Arkhangelsk says. It is a learning process where communicative and social skills can be both challenged and sharpened; a "learning exchange" (cf. Forstorp and Kriulya, Chap. 9 in this volume). The internationalization workers become skilled in providing information and communicating both within the university/country and between states. Meeting students and other people from many cultural and political backgrounds as well as negotiating and bridging gaps are key coordinating activities.

7.4.2.5 What Is International?

Many activities are involved in the processes of internationalization work. Thus, all of these activities become international in one sense or another, though some more than others. In particular, programs of student exchange and research collaboration are prioritized international activities. Research projects in the humanities and natural sciences are examples of internationalization found throughout the HEIs in northwest Russia. Identifying and naming "the international" dimension, in addition to finding a suitable organizational location, can sometimes be very difficult, as exemplified by a Murmansk university that annually changed the name of the international office for 4 years in a row. They were struggling to find a proper name for the office that best represented the character and mission of their work and that also functioned in communication with other countries. Based on this particular experience, it seems as if international offices often become objects of transformation in connection with general structural changes within the institution. A key issue that is witnessed in both Norway and Russia is whether the international office should be centralized or distributed at the departments and among the faculty. This difference reflects the divergent views on how internationalization should best be accomplished: through central efforts or through the integrative dimensions afforded by individual faculty. NArFU established a new international office as a result of a 2010 merger between two Arkhangelsk universities and, moreover, they run a dedicated University of the Arctic research office as well.

That which is international is also determined by national politics and its international strategies. Before the Barents Region was politically constructed through the Declaration at Kirkenes in 1993, the higher educational relation between Norway and Russia was primarily understood in terms of foreign aid (Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). In general, however, security issues and business were more characteristic of pre-Kirkenes bilateral relations. Due to the process of regionalization when the Barents Region was constructed (Tunander 1994;

Elenius 2015) this is now more equally balanced, partly through financing but, most importantly, through a perception of increased self-respect and mutual respect for traditions and culture, as witnessed in the interviews. Campus Finnmark (at that time, Finnmark University College) was involved in this process early on, partly through hiring a Russian lecturer to teach Russian language and to enable cross-border cooperation. The political interest in improving educational exchange was obvious after the break-up of the Soviet Union, and this became part of Russian and Norwegian soft-security strategies and people-to-people diplomacy in an important border region.

7.4.2.6 Accounting for the "International"

HEIs in both Norway and Russia are expected to demonstrate and document their internationalization work. On both sides of the border, internationalization is required and institutions are accountable to national and/or federal authorities for this work (de Wit 2010). Russian HEIs are strongly monitored by the federal Ministry of Education. Through a Federal Law of Education, the Ministry provides criteria for various dimensions of higher education performance and internationalization is also subject to this. A Syktyvkar State University administrator reports that the Ministry demands "all Russian universities [to] educate foreign students". This particular university did not succeed too well on the government ranking lists when they reported their indications of internationalization. He continues:

> When we actually started to count the students, we were given the blame for a lack of indications of internationalization. This way it happened – step by step they were creating a distance between us and them.

The perceived distance referred to above reflects a growing gap between the concerns of the authorities to monitor things and that of the actual institution; which is less focused on numbers and more interested in engaging with people and trying to do a good job. The distance is an expression of the different frames of interpretation and assessment available to them as well as the mismatch of the outcome. A representative of the Forest Institute in Syktyvkar exemplifies how international participation and student mobility are important factors in the evaluation process by the Ministry. There is a general awareness that the institute "must be competitive in numbers" in relation to the criteria and to other institutes, but internationalization is obviously much more than what can be measured in numbers of students. Internationalization is thus an important part of what builds the reputation of a higher education institution.

Norwegian institutions are also accountable for their internationalization work. Given the general asymmetry of exchange activities, some of these HEIs in the Barents Region score high on internationalization because there are so many foreign students involved in the programs, online as well as offline. Nonetheless, institutions and authorities in Norway are aware that the major part of this internationalization takes place through online programs and that most of the so/called international students, in fact, never set foot in another country. This exemplifies what Otten (2013) calls “exchanges without encounter”.

7.4.3 Rationales and Values Attributed to Internationalization

The ideological and normative dimension of internationalization is favorably expressed in an interview context where internationalization is the focus. As indicated in the methods section, the formal framing of interview events supported the promotion of internationalization and we, therefore, accounted for the meetings in the same way. These were not just research interviews; these events were also meetings of international friendship committees and delegations where internationalization was accomplished. Under such conditions, it would be almost unthinkable to meet an interviewee who would express opposing feelings or attitudes to intercultural exchange, or take the opportunity to address problems or critique. Nevertheless, despite the ideological character of a situation promoting internationalization, it is still interesting to explore how internationalization is articulated, which values are attributed and what the benefits of internationalization and intercultural integration are. Internationalization has a history and is rooted in the present, but the main values lie in an anticipation of the future. We need to explore these future-oriented motivations, expectations, experiences, assessments and anticipations. In this section I will move away from regarding internationalization as just an unmarked quality to exploring what kind of qualities internationalization represents. A point of departure is the multidimensionality and plurality of qualities of internationalization. I will start with the personal motivations and then move to the rationales for institutions and nations.

7.4.3.1 Personal Motivations for Internationalization

In the previous section we briefly encountered the coordinators who work with internationalization on an everyday basis at the grassroots level. We learned that they often have language skills and personal experience with intercultural exchange, and that they are often very dedicated to their work. The interpersonal dimension is emphasized as a criterion for applying to and ultimately accepting this sort of work. It is reportedly valuable to meet and talk to people, to be able to advise them, and hopefully to contribute to their general development and learning. Promoting the values of internationalization is an important part of their work when they meet students and faculty representatives. They try to convince others of the value of an international experience, acting as “missionaries” or ambassadors. In a sense, these coordinators are in the business of promoting and “selling” the idea of internationalization and its associated values. Repeatedly they argue for the personal benefits of an international experience. This experience is described as bringing, among other things, “an international way of thinking”, in addition to strengthening language skills. It is argued that learning how people behave through an international way of thinking, rather than just a familiar cultural context, enables a "better understanding" of people in general. The personal benefits include intercultural skills, exposure to other forms of cultural behavior and so on. Personal motivations for promoting internationalization include an awareness of bilateral and political issues, such as fostering a cooperation with neighbors in the Barents Region for the purposes of international security. The personal is often tightly linked to the political.

Coordinators emphasize the experience of living abroad, and of temporarily living away from parents, family and friends as personal motivations for students. The motivations in terms of particular study programs and academic merits remain a bit unclear given that Russian students today cannot acknowledge foreign university credits towards their Russian diplomas. It is presented as exciting for them to experience another country and to get an extra education on top of the regular Russian diploma. Coordinators express the opinion that students mostly want the experience of living in a Scandinavian country, the opportunity to practice English, and the chance to be involved in extracurricular activities during their studies.

Addressing the internationalization interests of Russian students, however, is not always easy, as confirmed by a Syktyvkar Forest Institute coordinator who witnesses recurrent informational problems in motivating the students. During the interview, it was obvious that the assessment of this information issue as a "problem" was framed by a certain sense of self-righteous national pride, as if the Russian students really had no need to look abroad because everything they need is already available in Russia. Their particular perception was that students might be motivated to go if they had enough information, but maybe they just do not understand the opportunity at all. This difficulty is stressed by the disciplinary orientation of the institute, which focuses on engineering and forestry, two disciplines that are not prioritized in the Norwegian-Russian interchange.

The motivation for internationalization among Russian students is largely, but not exclusively, oriented to Scandinavia and the western world. For some of them this might be a platform for emigrating to the UK, Canada, the US, or elsewhere in the world. The experiences from the Norwegian quota program are a case in point, where only one out of 19 students went back to Russia after completing the program. The objective of the program was precisely the opposite of the outcome. They were expected to bring back new competence to their home country, however, the numbers show a considerable degree of "brain drain" instead. On both sides it has been noted that educational exchange for the Russian students may be the first step in a process of emigration (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume).

High-level officials also believe in students' personal benefits from learning about and experiencing higher education systems in foreign countries. Therefore, at the State Polar Academy in St Petersburg, for instance, they openly welcome all exchange programs, for both the students and the staff. It is always important, the rector argues in an official and diplomatic voice, that the leadership of these institutions maintains the motivation for international work. Another person stresses the importance of informal networks. If the budget does not really allow for internationalization or, for instance, the costs of travelling, it is important to secure the personal support from a higher official or from influential networks (Ledeneva 1998; cf. Goes, Chap. 5 in this volume; Sundet, Chap. 4 in this volume). As one anonymous coordinator says: “The vice-rector understands this and […] makes my job nicer – because […] she loves internationalization and has influence with the leadership at the institution”. Personal connections, informal networks and economy of favors are thus important for accomplishing that which the work itself does not allow.

7.4.3.2 Motivation for the University

The motivation for universities is to increase student mobility in order to meet the national or federal expectations of internationalization (cf. above). This increase in student mobility, or in international research projects, is itself regarded as a criterion of quality. On the aggregated level of the HEI, motivations tend to be expressed numerically rather than in terms of personal outcomes. Numbers constitute the measurable basis for the institutions’ accountability. Measures and good scores help to attract legitimacy and additional funding as well as new students. As indicated, internationalization is often talked about as a future-oriented activity; it is to “invest in their [students’] future” in addition to investing in the future of the institution. While many on the Russian side express a dislike for the idea of “selling” education, it is generally accepted that money helps to develop the university. In any case, internationalization is promoted and “sold” by coordinators and other actors doing the work of internationalization, thereby being part of a market-oriented discourse on internationalization.

Motivations for internationalization as a whole are often based on arguments concerning the ultimate quality of education, what Stier (2004) calls “educationalism”. It is believed that participation in international contexts in itself helps to improve educational and academic quality. Being close to an international level also means an opportunity to learn more about new technologies and equipment, as testified to by personnel at the Forest Institute in Syktyvkar. They see a convergence between the direction of world trade (to market) and the basic principles of the Bologna process: both stressing the importance of being competitive and having an international experience. The rector at the State Polar Academy goes on to say that, since Russia signed the Bologna agreement in 2003, they welcome all international cooperation.

An administrator at UiT Campus Finnmark regards the experiences that international students bring to the school as distinctively new and desirable. He believes that the presence of different nationalities adds an important dimension to teaching in addition to influencing project management: “Their social reality is brought in. Through their perspectives, teaching is enriched”. Like all Norwegian universities, Campus Finnmark maintains an explicit policy for internationalization. Some students and faculty respond to the challenge and opportunity to travel: “More people see the value in exchange and internationalization”. The explicit university policy covers many dimensions of internationalization, from personal interest (cf. above) to the value of bringing new perspectives to the disciplines as well as to the management. The active institutional politics of internationalization are considered important for Campus Finnmark due to its strategic location in a region close to the Russian border. Internationalization should take place "at home" as well, and especially in an environment like the border region of Finnmark. University management at Campus Finnmark volunteered to host the national coordination for the Barents Plus exchange program. They also took further initiatives such as implementing a program for Norwegian language in Murmansk, which they coordinated for a number of years. The Finnmark management strives to maintain an active attitude towards internationalization in the Barents Region and to play a key role in regional development, not just in education but also in social and economic development. Finnmark officials are aware that their own relation to Russia will remain vital due to their proximate location, but they are also aware that they might be regarded as "the first love", as an Arkhangelsk administrator is quoted as saying, and that future Russian internationalization strategies may instead be oriented towards more attractive universities outside the Barents Region, such as universities located in Paris or London.

HEIs also affirm the political values of internationalization, for instance in terms of international security in the Barents Region or "international sustainability", as described by a representative of a Syktyvkar HEI, where the social and cultural dimensions of sustainability are emphasized. Precisely the city of Syktyvkar identifies a special role for itself during a time of increasing promotion of internationalization and intercultural encounters. A Syktyvkar State University representative argues that the city has 100 years of experience as a center for different nationalities due to the politics of deportation and imprisonment during the Stalin era. The moral ambiguity of the Stalinist heritage offers an important contrast to the comparatively high level of tolerance that is typical for the people in Syktyvkar. Based on this interpretation of history and cultural heritage, a proposed "Centre of Tolerance" was being planned in Syktyvkar at the time of the interview (2014).

7.4.3.3 Motivations for the Nation

Institutional representatives in Russia and Norway, as well as individuals on both sides, often assume the position of official spokesperson for the nation when it comes to internationalization. They seem to feel responsible for what the nation state should accomplish in general and try to define their role in the system of higher education as a part of this grander accomplishment. Obviously this is emphasized by the formal framing and the interpretation of an event as an "interview" or as a "meeting of delegations". This is more explicit on the Russian side, where institutional representatives readily talk of a "we" (Russia and Russians) that should forward "our" (Russian) education to the internationalization arena. Especially when talking with higher officials, they maintained their role as representatives and advocates for the Ministry. There is obviously a firm pressure from the Ministry of Education to act in certain ways, and the establishment of flagship institutions such as the Northern Arctic

Federal University in Arkhangelsk (NArFU) is an important part of the federal strategy for higher education. In Norway there is also a normative pressure to contribute to internationalization as a way of supporting the development of the nation, but it is less explicit and comes with a perception of a certain distance between the state and the university, where the university should be autonomous from the state but also state-dependent. The most explicit statements in this regard come from Campus Finnmark, due to its proximity to the Russian border and its being an integral part of the Barents Region. They declared that Russia is very important for Norway as a nation, which is evident in policy work expressing a political-ideological dimension along with economic stimuli. Obviously, there are many challenges in a border region where language skills and cultural competence play a decisive role for social and economic development. Internationalization is endorsed by both the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Culture in Norway. It is clear that the Foreign Ministry is pleased with the contacts enabled by educational exchange, because it creates a sort of people-to-people diplomacy. The Ministry of Culture is less satisfied because the exchange is too asymmetrical, according to them, and too many of the "exchange" students never, in fact, come to Norway, constituting an "exchange without encounter". The interest from these ministries confirms that internationalization is related to both foreign policy and educational policy.

Educational exchange is an explicit part of international politics in the Barents Region. Early in the process after the Declaration in Kirkenes, a "people-to-people" agenda was promoted as an important step towards improving bilateral relations. The Arctic and the Northern Dimension as a "European frontier region" (Veggeland 1994) has been high on the international political agenda since the early 1990s. Both fears and hopes are expressed with regard to the future development of the region and the implications of climate change. Key issues are security, environmental politics and the extraction of natural resources. Circumpolar collaboration is increasingly important while tensions between actors are also growing due to conflicts in the Ukraine and Syria. National interests are also good for the institutions, as exemplified by a newly appointed rector at one of the Russian universities with previous experience from politics: her previous high-level political position gives her more influence in her new function and has evoked expectations for the university.

Before 1991 it was almost impossible to establish contacts in the Barents Region at the higher educational level. Most people in Russia were not even able to travel abroad before 1992. Educational exchange has therefore contributed a lot to changing this scene in a radical way, from an explicit prohibition to internationalize to the active promotion of internationalization within a period of just 30 years. Nonetheless, sentiments of hesitation and suspicion linger just below the surface, and these sentiments are easily awakened by federal measures such as the 2012 legislation concerning the "foreign agent law" or the threat of sanctions following the events in Ukraine. Increasing access to travel, together with active promotion of international relations, makes it easier to accept and understand cultural differences. However, as a Murmansk administrator says, internationalization is just a word/indicator of having contact with foreign people, and perhaps one has to wait for another generation to see if internationalization might become something more substantial.

7.5 Conclusion

Internationalization is a truly multidimensional phenomenon. It is a concern for many policy areas and these often overlap, as we have seen above. Being international in higher education is not only an issue of educational objectives but also a pawn in the game to develop sustainability, security, business and a host of other concerns. Sometimes it is hard to discern which of these aims is the most important, and it makes one wonder whether higher education is just a playing field for other, more important concerns. Internationalization is a concept with multiple functions and meanings, as indicated by Knight and de Wit 1995 (in Stier 2010, p. 340). In studies of higher education we have to acknowledge that, in practice as well as in rhetoric, internationalization moves from an academic focus to embracing a multiplicity of dimensions such as status, economy, capacity, culture, and so on. In practical terms it refers to a vast field of activities that have been listed above.

What does internationalization mean? What do we do when we "do" internationalization? What do we talk about when we talk about internationalization? These are the questions that have guided this analysis. The intersection of meaning and internationalization takes place at many semantic and practical levels. Three of these levels are stressed here. Internationalization is an activity that often serves as an instrument/metaphor (*a means*) for accomplishing something else. It is also a concept with multiple interpretations (*meanings*) and it is decisively important (*meaningful*) for the "missionaries" of internationalism of higher education institutions, whether these are coordinators of international programs or cross-border educational entrepreneurs (Sandersen, Chap. 6 in this volume). The short answer to the question in focus here, "What are we talking about when we talk about internationalization?", is that we talk of what we are supposed to talk about (internationalization in and of higher education) in a narrow sense but we also talk of many other things in a broader sense. Such encounters are not just occasions for reflecting on an activity but also a demonstration and performance of the activity which is talked about.

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Chapter 8
"Bologna Coat" for the Barents Weather: Paradoxes of Integrating Russia into an International Educational Dimension

Lidia Kriulya

8.1 Introduction

The title of this chapter is a metaphor born in Russian academic circles to joke about the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Declaration, signed by the Russian Federation and brought to the post-Soviet educational space in 2003, is compared to a special type of coat brought to the USSR from Italy in the 1960s, called "the Bologna coat". The Bologna coat is a type of outerwear associated with Italian fashion ever since Fellini's films and Italian magazines arrived in the USSR. Every fashionable Soviet person had a coat of dark blue material (Bestugina D, Pavlova N, Petrova A, Italy and Russia: cultural and political intertwination of two states. http://guap.ru/guap/nids/pdf_2012/bestugina.pdf. Accessed 23 April 2016, 2012). Although declared fashionable in the USSR, it has never been convenient to wear year-round: it is not warm enough for winter weather and too warm for summer.

In signing the Bologna Declaration in 2003, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science redefined priorities in higher education, and internationalization became one of the major tasks for HEIs (Kukarenko and Zashikina, Chap. 2 in this volume). This radical change in the whole system of higher education is compared to changing into a Bologna coat. The Bologna process is understood as an inevitable element and instrument of globalization:

(until 2015: Northern [Arctic] Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov)

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> The Bologna process … is yet another form of globalization, like the global markets, global media or global terrorism. Broadly speaking, the Bologna process is part of the larger script in which people, ideas and information are moving freely across national borders. One of the core domains of the national identity, the higher education, is being increasingly internationalized, as states are adapting their policies to this new development. (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 16)

This chapter focuses on the paradoxes of pursuing internationalization that arise as a result of the different perspectives from which the generally accepted definition of internationalization of higher education are driven. These perspectives are not definitions of the concept but ways in which the concept is filled with meaning. It depends on the level (national, institutional, personal), position and experience of those who engage in international collaboration. Moreover, representatives at the same level can take on different perspectives in understanding the term.

I will argue that the main paradox of engaging in internationalization in Russia is found in the different interpretations of one and the same concept at both the institutional (grassroots and administration) and national levels.

The second important paradox is connected to supplying the major noun (“integration”) in the official definition with the meaning of “inclusion” attributed to the grassroots actors. Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE), defined on all the levels as holistic integration into an international educational dimension and, as such, declared to be the primary goal of the state, presupposes adaptation to a hegemonic European model of higher education system. The “harmonization” of the European Higher Education Area, as defined in the Sorbonne Joint Declaration on Harmonization of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System (1998), is aimed at “forming a genuine pan-European project of integration” (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 16). However, “harmonization”, and its synonym “integration”, lead to tensions between traditional education systems and educational innovations introduced from abroad. Educational traditions face a risk of being diminished. The chapter reveals that “integration” is understood and aspired to by the grassroots participants of internationalization in the meaning of “inclusion”, which is understood as a reciprocal process of changing national educational systems and does not imply a complete adaptation from one system to another.

The arguments are based on the results of interviews with Russian academics involved in the internationalization processes in NArFU from 2012 to 2014. Their subjective opinions about IHE bring to light paradoxes accompanying the processes of internationalization at a particular stage of the Russian higher education reform.

8.2 Theory

The research consists of a critical review of processes that have internationalized university activities on the grassroots level during the period 2012–2014. It aims not to mirror reality but rather to see what processes construct the concept of internationalization of higher education. From the position of social constructionism, the concept, "internationalization of higher education", is understood as a construction that is filled with various meanings depending on the contexts in which it is used. The conceptual construction is unstable and dynamic. Transformations take place within and between the changing social contexts, and at different time periods. All meanings of the constructions, no matter how different they are, imply activities and processes aimed at bringing the international dimension into university life or taking it out.

In order to study the meanings that build the conceptual construction on the grassroots level, discourse analysis is applied. Discourse analysis focuses on the use of language in a particular context. Gee defines discourse analysis as "the language-in-use" that deals with saying, doing and being (Gee 2011). It provides a key for understanding how "we humans make and break our world, our institutions, and our relationships through how we deal with social goods … discourse analysis can illuminate problems and controversies in the world" (Gee 2011, p. 10).

Descriptions of activities and processes in which the respondents are involved, and their descriptions of benefits and obstacles to successful development, will be analyzed in order to uncover the meanings with which the interviewees build the IHE concept. The narratives about activities and processes, supplemented with subjective evaluations of obstacles and benefits, mirror the perspective or approach from which the respondents understand the concept. Therefore, analysis is based on the classification of perspectives that describe and evaluate how IHE is conceptualized and implemented. The classification of approaches to internationalization was primarily suggested by Jane Knight (1994) and further elaborated by Delgado-Marquez et al. (2011). I will interchangeably use the terms, "perspective" and "approach", in the subsequent discussion. Perspectives are not a definition of the concept but the way in which the concept is filled with meanings. According to Knight, no approach is right and they change within changing contexts. Furthermore,

> … even though different … institutions within a country may hold a common interpretation or definition of internationalization, the manner in which they address the implementation of internationalization is very different because of priorities, culture, history, politics, and resources. An approach to internationalization reflects or characterizes the values, priorities, and actions that are exhibited during the work toward implementing internationalization. (Knight 2004, p. 18)

Delgado-Marquez et al. (2011) suggest four perspectives to define IHE:

- **Activity perspective:** The focus is on activities such as curriculum, student and faculty exchange and technical cooperation. International education is being integrated into curriculum. There is an increase in cross-border cooperation with a focus on national security and economic competitiveness.
- **Competency perspective:** The focus is on the development of skills, knowledge, attitudes and values in students and academics that are important for one to compete in international and global marketplaces. The emphasis is placed entirely on outcomes of education, not on academic and organizational activities. Söderqvist claims that internationalization is:

> …a change process from a national HEI to an international HEI leading to the inclusion of an international dimension in all aspects of its holistic management in order to enhance the quality of teaching and research and to achieve the desired competences. (Söderqvist 2007, p. 29)

- From this perspective, universities improve the quality of education with better results, quality of courses according to international norms, and quality of researchers and domestic students (in Delgado-Marquez et al. 2011).
- **Organizational perspective/Ethos perspective:** The focus is on creating an intercultural and international climate at the institution. It supports international values and initiatives, and strengthens the international character of campuses. According to Knight, the organizational perspective is closely connected to the process perspective (Knight 1994, p. 4).
- **Process perspective:** The focus is on the integration or incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into education, research, and service through a wide range of activities, policies and procedures. IHE is a sustainable process of "integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution" (Knight 1994, p. 7). The process perspective implies both program and organizational strategies, where the former involves teaching and research, while the latter involves policies, procedures, and infrastructures that help to maintain an international dimension.

Secondly, the analysis applies Pursiainen and Medvedev's speculation that the key contradiction the world faces in recent years is the tension between "forces of globalization (integration, homogenization, unification) and the forces of identity represented by the nation-state's various cultural communities and identity groups" (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 24). On the one hand, Russia is internally interested in higher education modernization to meet global market standards and the Information Age by raising the competitiveness of its economy and developing social and cultural dimensions. Externally, it aims to adapt higher education to Bologna (pan-European) norms and values; to get involved in a pan-European social dialogue, to involve the transnational business community and cross-border academic community. On the other hand, internal Russian interest is to preserve the national cultural and educational identity and the traditions of Russian universities. Meanwhile, externally it aims to transfer the national educational tradition into the European dimension and gain an equal footing with the European Union and its national governments. Such a controversy of interests, according to the authors, is the result of the "inherent tension between harmonization and tradition" (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, pp. 22–25).

From the perspective of classification of internationalization, there are two key words used to define IHE: to integrate and to include. For example, from the standpoint of the competency approach, the focus should be made on inclusion, whereas the process perspective supposes an emphasis on integration. The use of different words is to be taken into consideration as the words create an understanding of an agent's role in the whole process of internationalizing. Integration immediately presupposes adaptation processes, separating the participants into those who readily fit into the model education and those who need to adapt to it. Integration means that the system of education is to be placed into the mainstream education setting (in our case, the European context) with some adaptations and resources (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, pp. 16–26). It is essential to fit into the pre-existing hegemonic system, its structures and environments. As a pan-European project, the Bologna process demands that all alternative systems adapt to its norms. Such an interaction forces the alternative system either to adapt or fail. The Salamanca Convention, 2001 (The European University Association [EUA] 2001), shows its ambivalent character: celebrating diversities, it emphasizes autonomous ways of harmonization. However, as Pursiainen and Medvedev write, these autonomous ways of harmonization supposedly exist only on the level of the institution, which in turn has to be accountable to different criteria defined by the Ministry of Education. The authors call this softly regulated internationalization from behind the borders:"autonomy with accountability". In this sense "integration" acquires a negative meaning, provoking "tension between harmonization and tradition", and invests in isolation and stagnation of the national education (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 24).

On the contrary, inclusion changes the distributive character of leading and secondary roles among the educational systems. The hegemonic system becomes flexible in order to have alternative systems fit into it. It is a process of constantly interacting and interdependent multiple practices of changing all levels of the structure. Inclusion implies reciprocity: we learn from internationalization and share our own knowledge with the world. Inclusion means what Pursiainen and Medvedev define as:

> … a two-way process of mutual accommodation, whereby Russia will not only adapt its domestic system to the Bologna standards, but will also translate its national tradition into a common language and will become an equal partner in shaping the single European Higher Education Area. (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 25)

8.3 Method

Similarly to the chapter, *What We Talk about When We Talk about Internationalization* (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume), the aim of this research is to understand what is meant by the concept, "internationalization". However, the results were taken from a different interview setting and a different target group, exhibiting different relations between the interviewer and the respondents. The discussion began with the interviewer's request to hear about the first steps into international activity within the educational sphere, and how the respondents' collaboration started; what benefits they experienced and what obstacles to successful activity they faced.

Nine semi-structured, in-depth, qualitative interviews are analyzed in the chapter. All research subjects have experience of "doing internationalization", although they are not international office coordinators: some of them studied abroad or just have years of collaborative experience, while others are in the beginning stages of this activity. By "collaboration" activities, I refer to lecturing abroad, lecturing to international students at a home university, reporting to international conferences, doing joint research, and developing joint courses and joint educational programs. Seven respondents are candidates of science in humanities and two are doctors in humanities. Seven of them combine teaching with administrative work: as head of a department (two persons) and deputy director for international relations (five persons). One respondent had already left the position of deputy director for international relations at the time of the interview.

8.3.1 Advantages and Limitations of the Research Method

Discourse analysis demands a movement from context to language and from language to context (Gee 2011). This movement makes the interviewer a crucial element in the process of interviewing. The personality of the interviewer creates a distribution of power between the interlocutors by setting the tone for the relations. Interviewees' knowledge or lack of knowledge about the interviewer influences the quantity and quality of information the interviewees are ready to share. This doesn't mean that, if the interviewee is on friendly terms or acquainted with the interviewer, the information will be more complete and trustworthy. Sometimes it might be vice versa: lack of acquaintance with the interviewer is a guarantee for more thorough and credible information.

In this study all respondents are colleagues of the interviewer. This is both an advantage and a limitation. The advantage is that the interview flows easily into an informal friendly conversation. Both interviewer and respondent see each other as belonging to the same group at the institutional level, thus creating mutual identities of academics participating in the processes of internationalization.

For an interviewer who is also a researcher, belonging to the same social group as the respondents might be regarded as a limitation: the researcher becomes too subjective, biased and attached. However, Bridget Byrne (2004) writes that sharing experience with the interviewees makes the interviewer reflexive, which is the most important requirement for a successful interview. Reflexivity refers to the ability of the interviewer to critically reflect on his/her own role in the flow of the interview. Reflexivity has nothing to do with neutrality and detachment of the researcher; on the contrary, it implies constant involvement, evaluation and analysis of the dialogue process. According to Brown and Strega, experience of similarities between researcher and research subjects is an important element of an anti-oppressive approach (Brown and Strega 2005).

During the interview, a microphone and audio recording device were used. This was a disadvantage felt by both parts, building a barrier between the interlocutors by projecting different identities; i.e., that of researcher and research subject. In situations of everyday interactions and routine work, the same issues are discussed equally more emotionally and openly. The microphone made respondents, especially those belonging to an administrative post, perform according to their position in the university structure. Some respondents asked to switch off the microphone for a while, with a hint of, "this is not for recording", and then the discussion continued in confidence.

The historical context of the interviewing process is important, since it was just one of the developmental stages of IHE at the university. All interviews were taken in the offices chosen by the interviewees.

8.4 Internationalization of Higher Education: Definitions

In this section, I will show how the concept in question is defined by the respondents and compare the definitions they provide with the formal definitions given in national and institutional documents, which mirror institutional authorities' definition of IHE.

After briefly talking about the first international activities in his/her life, respondents were asked directly how they define IHE. The majority immediately offered the widespread definition:

> *Internationalization is an integration of all university life spheres into the international educational dimension.*

A similar definition had already been used regularly in the official university discourse. For instance, a report given at a meeting of officials in Saint Petersburg was entitled "The Development Program of NArFU: Integration into the International Educational Dimension". The new discourse was constructed at the university by the fundamental document "The Organization and Development Program of NArFU named after M.V. Lomonosov for 2010–2020".

The latter document was written with the support of the Moscow School of Management "SKOLKOVO", which is a private business school founded in 2006; a joint project of Russian and international businesses. Some amendments were introduced into the program by the Federal Agency of Education, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Finance. Such a co-authorship immediately mirrors the changes that have taken place in the management system of higher education in Russia; mainly, the alliance of education and business structures (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 17).

With the aim to integrate into an international educational dimension (educational market), gaining comparability and competitiveness, the program sets the following goals and tasks for the Northern (Arctic) Federal University:

> To provide with educational programs in accordance to international requirements; …to create teaching resources, modules and programs in cooperation with the leading international universities; … to develop export of educational services, …teacher and student mobility, …organization of international conferences and seminars (Northern [Arctic] Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov 2010, p. 12)[1]

[1] The translation is by the author.

"The Organization and Development Program of Northern (Arctic) Federal University for 2010-2020" was developed almost synchronously with another national document – "Conception of Russian Federation Educational Services Export for 2010–2020" (International Organisations Research Journal 2010). Published in 2010, the document is basic for planning and realization of educational services exports. It aims to transform Russian education into competitive educational services on the global market. The text contains the following definition of IHE:

> Internationalization of higher education – is a process taking place at a national, sectorial and institutional level. Throughout this process its aims, functions and organization of educational services acquire international dimension. IHE definition includes two aspects: a) 'internal' internationalization and b) 'external' internationalization which means education abroad, cross-country education, transborder education. IHE includes personal mobility of students and professors for educational purposes; mobility of educational programs and institutional mobility; development of new international standards of educational programs; international dimension and standards' integration into educational programs; institutional partnership; creation of strategic educational alliances. (International Organisations Research Journal 2010, p. 3)

At a quick glance, the definitions provided by respondents and those prescribed by the official documents coincide. The definitions are given from the process perspective, which stresses the integration or incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into education, research, and service through a wide range of activities, policies and procedures. This perspective emphasizes holistic change of all institutional structures, activities and strategies. The official view of internationalization from the process perspective is justified by the further detailed enumeration of activities in the documents, while it is hard to justify the perspective from which the teachers understand and define the concept. In order to uncover the perspective and concept with which they operate, it is necessary to analyze how they talk about internationalization; primarily, what benefits and obstacles they enumerate in the process of integration of all university life spheres into the international educational dimension.

8.5 "Comfortable Bologna Coat" for the Academics

Contacts, meetings, searching for partners in one's professional sphere, and defining forms of collaboration and mutual gain are the practices mentioned as benefits of internationalization. These practices result in the benefits of primary importance such as <u>increasing knowledge within one's scientific interest, self-improvement and professional growth through communication</u>:

> *We are learning from internationalization.*

The statement sounds too broad by generalizing different activities, but what is meant here by the respondents is direct contacts; i.e., establishing personal bonds with both colleagues and students. The respondent gives an example of his talk with an international student in Arkhangelsk:

> *From the one hand it is good comrades. I have talked with some of the international students studying here, they are so eager to establish and support connections (bonds), and you know, the students' bonds are very strong, and they can develop into professional bonds after graduation.*

Teaching international students gives teachers a chance to develop new pedagogical and intercultural skills. The respondent goes on with his story, confessing that many Russian teachers are afraid of lecturing in English, but they try to learn:

> *We need foreign students to learn from them too.*

Teachers gain new intercultural knowledge, which they, in turn, use in classes with the Russian students. Another respondent who is teaching foreign languages underlines that he never misses a chance to tell his Russian students about any intercultural collaboration. This is evidence that an intercultural dimension is being included in the processes of education due to teacher's intercultural knowledge. The latter teacher describes his experience with a note of enthusiasm and self-respect:

> *Although doing internationalization is challenging and self-demanding for us, it is exciting!*

Intercultural and scientific knowledge is gained along with <u>critical thinking</u>. Studying and working abroad gives the possibility to view phenomena from a different perspective. For example, a respondent who took an educational program in Norway confesses:

> *I understood that there is always an element of state propaganda in every system. Somewhere it is realized quite weakly, but in Scandinavia, for example, it works quite effectively… internationalization teaches us to look at phenomena from a different perspective. This is positive. You, after all, start realizing how you are being manipulated in one country and the other country. You become more sensitive to the information. This is not only academic development but personal as well.*

There is no doubt that the acquired knowledge will be put into teaching at the home university, further developing the students' critical thinking.

It is hard not to admit to the liberalizing effects of being part of IHE processes, the benefit which is tightly connected to the development of knowledge and critical thinking. Two respondents noted that their international activities give them <u>the feeling of individual freedom</u>:

> *I've been participating [in international projects] for about 20 years, since my years as a student, and internationalization gives me a kind of personal freedom, it is a way to come out beyond the frames, it is simply one more way of developing.*

Self-development and the essential professional demand are mentioned by all of the respondents, but one of them also stresses the importance of cooperation in relation to content. In her opinion, Russian high schools need to catch up in humanities:

> *For me it is very important in relation to content, there is a gap of around 40 years in humanities. Even in my research subject one can hardly find a specialist here, and …*

nobody understands you, what you are doing [studying] here… I am lucky to work with the people specializing in my subject, they are very few, they work abroad and study Russia from a critical perspective.

This piece of narrative provokes more discussion about the obstacles rather than the benefits. The academic world has been forcefully and formally re-dressed into the Bologna coat. The given task is to integrate into an international educational dimension. But being able to integrate abroad on the personal level can create a risk of dropping out at home. The problem, however, is articulated in the public discourse by a limited number of scientists specializing in humanities. According to Alexander Filippov, the gap has its roots in the Soviet taboo on "western" science and knowledge. Ideological control separated people in Soviet academia from the rest of the world by creating an ideology based on "Soviet science" (Filippov 1993). Poor knowledge of foreign languages was an instrument of such kind of separation. Foreign language instruction focused on grammar and translation but it hardly succeeded in developing communicative skills (Pavlenko 2003, p. 325). As a result, even now, universities in Russia have a very limited number of people with sufficient command of foreign languages, which results in limited access to modern scientific thinking around the world. This is why Russian academics with a good command of English and knowledge of modern research results often have more fruitful and free discussions within academic communities abroad rather than at their home faculties. Internationalization provides the opportunity to get in touch with the scientific community of one's research field abroad and to escape the feeling of being misunderstood by colleagues in Russia. It is an opportunity to speak from the point of view of a similar scientific paradigm.

The "Bologna coat" has an important academic benefit for the immaterial good of the teachers. Internationalization is seen as an important tool to develop competencies among both students and staff. At the time of interviewing, the respondents seemed enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the processes of internationalization at the university, however, half of them emphasized that such devotion and enthusiasm for the idea of integration might soon fade due to a set of obstacles that will be discussed below.

8.6 "Uncomfortable Bologna Coat" or Obstacles for the Academics

The data reveals that the crucial obstacle to successful internationalization is <u>the lack of similar understandings of IHE by the grassroots actors and the authorities</u>. A former deputy director for international relations considers that internationalization is being turned into mythology in the official discourse. She notices that almost every international contact is portrayed on the university's website as part of the ongoing internationalization: any visit by authorities abroad, any visit by a foreign guest to the university. At the same time, she notices no integration of international components into Russian education or research, let alone Russian integration into the international educational market. This is the situation that was described by De Wit already in 2002:

> …as the international dimension of higher education gains more attention and recognition, people tend to use it in the way that best suits for their purpose. While one can understand this happening, it is not helpful for internationalization to become a catchall phrase for everything and anything international. (De Wit 2002 in Delgado-Marquez et al. 2011, p. 279)

The respondent expresses skepticism about ongoing activities, which are officially called "international collaboration". Another respondent, a deputy director, gives an understanding of IHE that is very similar to the definition proposed by Jane Knight: "The process of integrating international and intercultural dimensions into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution" (Knight 2004, p. 9). This definition resembles the process perspective. She states that the activities of the university's managers are far from planning and organizing the necessary internationalization processes; it is a mere simulation, despite the large amount of money invested:

> *what is going on here is far from the ideal, it is the aim which we must strive for*

One more understanding of IHE is worth mentioning. One deputy director feels that internationalization should be aimed at developing knowledge and skills; competences that would make a graduate able to move and compete in the global market. That is exactly the aim set in "The Concept for Exporting Educational Services of the Russian Federation for the period 2011–2020" (International Organisations Research Journal 2010). Yet, according to her view of Russian realities, this aim can hardly be reached in the near future due to different demands of industry and markets, and in order to reach this aim we should focus on developing long-term academic objectives and benefits.

The accepted NArFU definition of IHE coincides with the one given through the process perspective. But according to the opinions of interviewees, internationalization is implemented in accordance with Arum and van der Water's definition, "the multiple activities, programs and services that fall within international studies, international educational exchange and technical cooperation" (in Knight 2004, p. 9). The paradox is that, despite the updated definition accepted for official documents and, thus, constituting the fundamental brick in the whole process on the national level, the understanding and "doing" of internationalization at the national and institutional levels resembles the activity perspective. This paradox is reflected through one of the respondents' critique of national internationalization policies:

> *Unfortunately, our governors have very poor knowledge of the Russian realities, there is little qualitative analysis that might show the effectiveness of investments into internationalization. I think these huge investments that are currently being made are not very well calculated and predicted.*

This critique appears in the context of discussing the university officials' rush for ratings, which makes university activities more transparent while also being viewed by the interviewees as an obstacle.

In any case, the ambition to integrate into an international educational dimension requires proof of such integration by increasing institutional international activity ratings. Academics have to increase numbers of:

> …educational programs in accordance to international requirements; teaching resources, modules and programs competitive on the international educational level; foreign students (due to academics' high professional level); courses taught in a foreign language following international requirements to quality standards; joint master programs and teaching plans; publications of teaching materials in foreign languages (texts of the lectures, textbooks, materials for practical and laboratory classes, seminars and business-games) etc. (Northern [Arctic] Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov 2010, pp. 11–12)[2]

One of the respondents mentions that, in order to reach and increase the criteria demanded, instruments for realization of such criteria have to be defined in accordance with real situations and resources at the universities. However, in her opinion, the government gives complete autonomy to universities on how plans might be realized, and the same position is taken by universities in relation to those who must put all the processes into practice: institutional authorities provide no instruments for the grassroots actors. As a result the respondent predicts alienation from internationalization processes and, in particular, the aim to increase the ratings.

"*But soon ratings will mean nothing for academics*", predicts the respondent. She states that academics become more and more skeptical and alienated from the government's needs:

> *In the end, we will behave in a typically Russian way: we will soon say "goodbye" to ratings, without remorse, and we'll forget them for good and do nothing. Everything changes so quickly!*

Such a critical attitude of the grassroots actors can be evaluated as the outcome of "autonomy with accountability", i.e. softly regulated internationalization from behind the borders. The hegemonic educational system is not flexible in its demands for the national systems to adapt to the pan-European project. Adaptation, however, is to be done autonomously. This is reasonable because there are a number of country-participants with diverse educational systems and there might not be any universal tool for implementing internationalization. However, on the national level, it is important to consider all components of the educational system that have to be adapted to the project and become useful tools in executing internationalization at the grassroots level. This adaptation means, first and foremost, an autonomous transformation of the regulatory acts and laws in addition to creating the necessary conditions for being able to follow the new laws. According to the interviewee, internationalization in Russia can succeed only when realities of all educational dimensions are taken into consideration by those who demand to increase ratings on the national level. The respondent perceives that, in the case of Russia, the

[2] The translation is by the author.

government takes the position of the international inspector: it demands that universities autonomously find a way to satisfy the requirements of the assessment criteria and does not provide the necessary transformations of the national acts in order to create the necessary conditions.

The interviewee's narrative about ratings brings to light the perspective from which she understands the officially accepted definition of IHE. The term is discussed from the point of view of Knight's definition of the process approach:

> …internationalization as a process which integrates an international dimension or perspective into the major functions of the institution. Terms such as infuse, integrate, permeate, incorporate are used to characterize the process approach. A wide range of activities, policies and procedures are part of this process. (Knight 1994, p. 4)

Other respondents' understandings of internationalization are cognate to the competency perspective defined by Minna Söderqvist in 2002:

> …a change process from a national HEI to an international HEI leading to the inclusion of an international dimension in all aspects of its holistic management in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and to achieve the desired competencies. (Söderqvist, in Delgado-Marquez et al. 2011, p. 269)

It becomes obvious that, depending on the level (national and institutional or grassroots) and on how strategies and activities are planned, IHE takes on multiple interpretations. Knight argues that, although it is unlikely to have a true universal definition, it is of crucial importance to have a clear and common understanding of the term (Knight 2004, p. 9). Otherwise, we risk losing dialogic relations between the different levels of actors and increase the chances of resistance to obeying top-down decisions.

In our case all respondents reproduce one generally accepted definition, but they mean different things depending on their given perspective. These differences in understanding are not articulated or discussed among the participants. As a result the definition, which is accepted by all but treated differently or interpreted from a different perspective, becomes an obstacle for productive collaboration on different levels.

What is evident from the data is that the confusion surrounding the concept has led to confusion concerning its purposes and means of achievement at different levels. Differing perspectives in understanding one definition of IHE place people in conflicting situations with each other; for instance, grassroots actors admit they feel unheard by managers.

The confusion surrounding the concept at different levels has also led to confusion about autonomy in setting internationalization goals and choosing the means to achieve them. Grassroots participants do not feel independent in planning and organizing activities, although they admit that collaboration gives them personal freedom. However, these are different types of autonomy, where the latter is an immaterial, individual and unique benefit, while the former concerns the power of the academics to independently decide how they will integrate the faculty and students into an international dimension.

The data additionally shows that there are discrepancies in the interpretation of the concept not only within the group of grassroots participants but within the entire group of academics – both those who have and those who do not have international experience.

Another obstacle cited by the majority of respondents is the unreasonable waste of financial and human resources:

> *First of all, to do internationalization we have to catch up in content, and we will, for sure, but at what might be a worse cost for us, and not because of the poor state's investments into research, but the poor investment into researchers.*

The respondents assure me that the government provides money for internationalization, but that it is spent unreasonably; poor investments into researchers and teachers along with huge investments into the activities that are prioritized from the standpoint of activity and organization perspectives but which are useless to the grassroots participants, thus making them feel disconnected from the internationalization process:

> *No opportunity to meet face-to-face for researchers, not enough time to know each other better.*

During the discussion, participants showed that they enthusiastically struggle to adopt the Bologna process consequences and are eager to develop the university. They realize internationalization as the collective task. Nevertheless, they do not feel involved in the Bologna process as active participants: a lot is demanded of them but their opinions are not taken into consideration. One of the deputy directors explains his frustration over a case of poor management: *"They* [university managers] *don't hear. There is a feeling of being unheard"*.

For the researchers, face-to-face communication is not simply a desire but a professional necessity aimed at developing competencies. Thus, lagging behind in humanities requires direct discussions and comparisons of the knowledge we possess and use. This is important for educational internationalization as well. Some themes and theories are better presented in the English literature that international students have already studied at their home universities. A Russian teacher might be less competent in a particular subject than an international student due to the limited access to modern literature: *"We cannot repeat the content that is better known and studied abroad"*, the respondent argues. Lagging behind in humanities can be one of the reasons that international students choose other countries than Russia. This is the point that was not articulated but possibly meant by the Russian authorities in the interviews with Swedish and Norwegian researchers (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume, quotes a coordinator at NArFU who says "Norwegian students don't come, maybe they think it is a throw away year").

One respondent considers that we are losers, in advance, if we follow the directive of the Ministry of Education to develop courses in a foreign language that is competitive with western courses and their themes. In her opinion, it would be more fruitful to find something special of our own to fit into this niche. She feels there is no sense in playing games invented abroad:

> *it is the same as if we introduced baseball in Russia instead of hockey. It is very hard to do, I do not know how to do it, it is difficult, and then, what do they (authorities) mean by "internationally competitive course"? If we teach with their textbooks and in their words, telling about what we are doing here, we will lose for sure. Of course it is better to study all these modern theories abroad, rather than here with the secondary taste. Our authorities do not understand very often that departments here do not present an intellectual field, departments are the place where people come to lecture and go back home. In most common HEIs there is always some fuss and rush, there is always a crazy workload in the auditorium.*

It is evident for respondents that one-way learning processes, such as "learning from internationalization" and blind adaptation or mechanic harmonization**,** with its demands on curricula, methods, tasks and student assessment, will have a negative effect on every participant in the education process. Pursiainen and Medvedev write:

> The Bologna process is, as any integration process, about harmonization. The main concrete goal is greater compatibility and comparability of those major factors characterizing higher education, including, inter alia, degrees, credits, curricula, quality assurance etc. This development should lead towards greater mobility and free movement of higher education students, researchers, teachers, and ultimately also of academic labour force in many other fields than higher education. (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 18)

In all of the Bologna documents it is emphasized that harmonization must come with respect for diversity and cultural traditions. The "Salamanca Convention 2001: The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area" underlines academic freedom:

> European higher education is characterized by its diversity in terms of languages, national systems, institutional types and profiles and curricular orientation. … Higher education institutions wish to build on convergence – in particular on common denominators shared across borders in a given subject area – and to deal with diversity as an asset, rather than as a reason for non-recognition or exclusion. (The European University Association [EUA] 2001, p. 7)

Still, some respondents do not feel like autonomous actors, but rather as instruments of top-down harmonization. The lack of autonomy is shown in phrases like *"I was lucky to be chosen by the administration to go to this conference"*, *"I am administrating student mobility, but none of the research I am involved in, unfortunately", "I am required to increase this criterion but it is impossible because of the specifics of the institute"*.

The respondents may be divided into two groups in terms of autonomy:

1. those who realize the absence of autonomy and understand their roles as instruments of top-down harmonization and who have greater internationalization experience; and
2. those who are enthusiastic about doing internationalization and creating initiatives but who, nonetheless, talk about the limits of their enthusiasm.

Those grassroots actors who admit their own autonomy, or lack thereof, to my mind, demonstrate a strong connection to the contradiction between the tasks of homogenization and integration while also maintaining traditional Russian/Soviet higher education traditions. The respondents admit that the Ministry's goal is to integrate into the global educational market and, thus, to comply with its demands. This adaptation will bring about a loss of the traditional educational culture. For instance, three respondents underline that the specific Soviet educational characteristics lie in its fundamental approach, while today in Russian higher education there is a tendency to teach more applied methods rather than abstract theories. Respondents give priority to fundamental approaches in teaching and worry about the state's blind desire to harmonize everything, everywhere. As the result of such a disagreement with the state's policy, many academics in Russia show their resistance to "what is being done", i.e. to the processes of harmonization in higher education. Resistance takes the form of ignoring the given tasks and not participating in the processes of harmonization. This is quite an unpleasant situation because, as Pursiainen and Medvedev write:

> …as far the domestic sphere is concerned, resistance and opposition to the Bologna process may lead to stagnation, i.e. to the increasing regulation, bureaucratization and statism in the higher education, but also in the wider domain of reform. In the external sphere, this may result in the isolation, conservation and a closed nature of the national education system. Obviously, Russia has to steer clear of the options of isolation and stagnation. (Pursiainen and Medvedev 2005, p. 25)

On the other hand, respondents underline the possibility of positive effects by spreading knowledge about Russia, its history and culture around the world. This direction of activities might be defined as inclusion in the global educational dimension. Pursiainen and Medvedev call these ways of internationalizing "a two-way process of mutual accommodation", in which hierarchy disappears and all participants become equal agents on both sides of the borders, thus constructing new globalized societies. However, universities in Russia have to accommodate the universally set criteria of international university assessment. The respondents regard these universal requirements as an obstacle to development in a way they see as being most effective from the competency perspective.

Paradoxically, the universal system of university assessment and competition for the highest ratings challenges the possibility of inclusive internationalization. Respondents feel great pressure that goes against their free choice to implement internationalization because they have to adapt to the criteria set by the government and increase the numbers. This demand encourages the institutions to take the easiest and fastest paths to meeting criteria like student outward mobility, staff participation in conferences or visits with partner universities. Nevertheless, the criteria met by the institutions are the activities which do not guarantee progressive development of internationalization. It might be a single visit without results but it will add one point to the numbers of outward mobility, one more point to the geography of countries visited and a point for collaboration with foreign institutions. Respondents realize that there is a need for other types of collaboration in order to have inclusive internationalization. And being critical of the focus on numbers, while being pressed by the demands of administrators to increase the ratings, they take the fastest and easiest routes, which do not ensure the flow of ideas and are sometimes even unethical.

The rush for ratings sooner or later leads to a policy of "mathematical gerrymandering".[3] The situation concerning publication activity of academics provides a vivid example. It must be noted that research was conducted in 2012–2014, prior to implementation of the programs that stimulate publication activity at the universities. However, the authorities' emphasis on increasing the number of articles, especially those published in international journals, led to the fact that by 2016:

> ...some faculty members ... publish their articles in 'predatory' journals, characterized by requiring a fee for publication, an opaque system of peer review, very short time between submission and publication, and the large number and low quality of published articles. (Gorelova and Lovakov 2016, p. 25)

The situation becomes widespread not only in Russia but in Eastern Europe as well (Beall 2016, p. 8). Quantity has to be achieved immediately but at the risk of losing quality. A more important thing is that the assessment criteria are tightly interconnected and gain a good score once, but when the quality of teaching or research is lost, those scores can fall or be unattainable in the future; our ratings will be unstable and unpredictable for the participants, and very much dependent on external, political, economic and social circumstances.

Nevertheless, this opinion stands in opposition to the Ministry of Education's belief in IHE as a universal adaptation. This belief was characterized by another respondent as:

> *a myth… which has got too deep into the heads of our governors.*

A recent administrative rush for the ratings brings into light a new challenge, as stated by a deputy director: *"One more problem is to convince our teachers to learn English."* According to her experience, many <u>teachers do not see any personal benefits in learning English:</u>

> *There is a demand now that all must speak English. Well, just imagine, people must start learning English not at the age of 6, 18 or 20, but at the age of 40!!! Well, there are many difficulties, if our people knew English, the mobility would see a 70% increase. Only the lazy one wouldn't go [abroad] with his course…*

The respondent talks about his colleague with a hint of accusation, because it is his duty to increase the ratings. At the same time, he understands his colleague's lack of motivation to learn English. The competence of speaking fluent English is not paid and, as a parent, an academic would rather earn money for his/her children to learn English:

> *Well, we have in our staff a woman with good English, but she doesn't do anything, just comes, gives a lesson and goes away…*

[3] I use the concept "mathematical gerrymandering" to get a deeper insight into the essence of internationalization metrics. "Gerrymandering" is manipulation of numbers to one's advantage. The word has a negative meaning. It was coined in 1812 in the USA and means an unequal division of a voting territory into districts with an intended priority of one party over the other.

Respondents emphasize that there are misunderstandings between those who have international academic experience and those who do not. Misunderstandings arise on the grounds that academics without international experience, representing the majority at the university, do not see any benefits for themselves as professionals nor for higher education in the country, and they are thus reluctant to participate in the internationalization processes. Those who have experience constitute the minority, often combining teaching with administration, and it is their direct responsibility to increase the ratings of international activities. The individual responsibility for poor ratings is thereby reloaded onto the grassroots actors. The situation is that most of the work is left to the staff of each institution, and there is no recipe for how to do it. This is the paradox that shows that human resources at the university are not that ripe to produce the necessary harvest, and that huge investments into human resources must be made before the university sees a definite international dimension.

Changing political and economic contexts is mentioned as an obstacle. All respondents but one admit that the political and economic situation in the world is one of the main factors for maintaining and transforming internationalization practices. This is also a strong factor for choosing partners and influencing the geography of collaboration:

> *Today we have an Arctic vector, but in a few years we might have a China vector*, smiles the respondent.

Respondents see dependence on internationalization from the outside; although they agree that changing this context is not necessarily an obstacle, but may, in fact, be a benefit as well. Even in the quote above, some may interpret changing the vector to China as a benefit. To my mind, external political, economic and social circumstances can hardly be defined as obstacles or benefits. If we consider these external factors as obstacles, we fail to admit deeper roots to the problem; namely, undeveloped professional, interactional and communicational competences, poor quality and shallowness of internationalization processes (see above). If we consider the external factor benefits, they provide yet another chance to influence the geography of collaboration. It is a benefit only in the beginning and, without hard work, material and immaterial investments, such a benefit can easily turn into an obstacle.

Paradoxically, although the changes in external circumstances are regarded as obstacles by the interviewees, they are not undesirable for state policy. For example, one of the criteria for successful internationalization is student mobility. In the Russian context, this primarily means outward mobility. As stated above, many students are motivated to study abroad in order to find better living and social conditions (cf. Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume). It is, therefore, possible to conclude that the better the conditions in Russia are, the fewer the number of students wishing to study abroad:

> *Not all students now try to leave Russia, it is ok to live in Russia if one's salary is good, why change everything, why become an immigrant?*

Better social and economic conditions influence students' motivation to learn English as well. A respondent gives an example of her student's opinion on learning English:

> *Why learn English if my future well-paid job does not require this knowledge.*

There is another paradox of internationalization in Russia. Internationalization is welcomed if it helps our self-development as professionals both for students and teachers. However, according to respondents, there is a negative side of internationalization in the form of brain-drain. Historically, emigration from the Russian Empire and the USSR was considered a phenomenon with a negative connotation (Denisenko 2013). In the Russian Empire, for instance, the law prohibited changing citizenship and leaving the country for good. Russian citizens were allowed to live abroad no more than 5 years, after which time they had to appeal for renewed permission. For a long time in the USSR, emigration was considered immoral and was associated with being an "enemy of the people", i.e. betraying the Soviet Motherland. The value of fidelity to the state was strongly embedded into Soviet culture. Transformation of Soviet peoples' attitude toward emigration dates back to the 1990s and is connected to reforms by President Gorbachev (Denisenko 2013). Nonetheless, the value of fidelity to the state occasionally invokes negative reactions to cases of voluntary immigration.

For example, some respondents do not approve of voluntary student immigration as it leads both to brain drain and body drain. It is a loss for the state and does not concur with the state demographic policy. From the point of view of national policy, it is of vital importance to provide young people with good living conditions and a decent salary. It is one of the Russian government's goals. Many people consider it a positive situation when fewer students prefer to live and work abroad.

Students need to fit into the requirements of the labour market in their home countries. A paradox arises anew when Russian students come back home with a foreign diploma and do not know how to apply their knowledge due to different labour market requirements. Such an example might be found even in the story of the respondent who had a chance to work at libraries when studying abroad. She reports that there are very few researchers in Russia who are acquainted with her research topic and it is hard to find any representatives of her field at the university.

Unfortunately, the challenges of applying contemporary knowledge in the domestic labour market are not discussed in public discourse.

<u>Lack of international students</u> <u>in Russia</u> leads to a lack of workload for teachers able to develop courses in English:

> *One of the problems is that one of our teachers has a good command of English and is ready to lecture in English [pronounces proudly], he studied in Sweden for some time, and… we have a course developed in English, but we do not have students.*

Respondents outline three factors that prevent foreign students from studying in Russia. First, there is a lack of pragmatic interest in connecting one's career and life to Russia. Many students choose institutions based on quality assessment ratings;

so why choose Russia, which is hardly included in the world ratings, if it is possible to choose better quality education and a more prestigious diploma. Secondly, living conditions, the amount of stipends, and other practical issues seem rather unclear for foreign students. Third, there is a lack of scientific publications about ethnic Russians and their history, along with stereotypes and demonization of Russia in the mass media*:*

When international students come to Russia they have a completely different opinion.

Lack of time is another important obstacle. There is not only a lack of time to gain an international education or perform research that is considered extra work, but also a lack of time to combine ordinary teaching and research. Traditionally academics in Russia were focused more on education than on research and, for many, the lack of publications was the norm (Kozmina 2014; Gorelova and Lovakov 2016). Yana Kozmina writes: "According to the international research project," International Academic Profession", conducted by Carnegie Centre in 1991–1993, Russia took last place among 14 nation-participants in respect to the level of academics' preference/orientation toward scientific activity rather than teaching. An international study of the academic profession conducted in 2012, "Changing Academic Profession", revealed that Russia's position in preferences had not changed; it still placed last in relation to numbers of teachers who prefer scientific to teaching activity" (Kozmina 2014, p. 139). As a comparison, according to "Changing Academic Profession", conducted in 2012, Norway placed first among 20 countries in the amount of teachers prefering research (Kozmina 2014, p. 137).

Due to new progressive demands, academics are overloaded and teaching amounts to most of the time. Because of the academics' poor salary they choose to combine the most optimum activities to succeed in academia and ensure a decent living, including teaching and administrative duties that leave less time for doing research and writing articles:

I am administrating student mobility, but am involved in no research, unfortunately. No time for research.

Of course, the choice of activities is caused by multiple parameters, from state investments into science and higher education to time distribution of academics, to research, teaching and personal experience in research and scientific inclinations. However, there is greater financial advantage in combining teaching and administrative duties than in performing research. Being involved in international cooperation, respondents often compare working conditions for academics in Russia to those abroad, underlying better working conditions for academics abroad, and differences in salary and teaching workload. In their opinion any and all results from internationalization were only possible due to self-sacrifice and enthusiasm of the participants rather than state investments:

Bologna transformation in Russia develops the way no other country can imagine, absolutely "unclever", no other country in the world has such a crazy workload for a teacher and a student …. I also do not approve of the university position, and the country's position on the big scale, that we teachers owe them all. In fact, we do not owe them anything, it is *they who owe us for our work.... people work for some time, but they can burn out at any moment.... Overloaded. And the problem is not even in the salary, the problem is in the lack of time. Give me the time, I can earn money myself.*

What is peculiar about the interviews is that there is a reverse discourse of building internationalization on people's enthusiasm, which is at the point of extinction. One respondent concludes that she feels ashamed that everything at the university is built on enthusiasm, exploitation and unreasonable waste of resources.

Even if the university invests in international activities, some respondents feel that it is very often spent in vain:

I have a feeling that the money is given for academic tourism [in a negative sense], and not for the support of specialists. People who go abroad to work are not supported. Some people are also sent to represent an institute, while they themselves do not understand their mission, and they come back, tell us about the trip, publish the news on the web-page and everybody happily forgets everything.

Here is one more example of the respondents viewing IHE from a different (competency) perspective, comparing it to the (activity) perspective of the university administration. It comes to the surface that the main obstacle to internationalization appears to exist not between colleagues from different countries but between the authorities and academics in Russia. Increasing and often unnecessary bureaucracy spoils communication between the authorities and academics in Russia, and challenges the level of trust in further relations with academics from neighbouring countries:

Difficulties in communication appear only in solving some legal, practical and financial issues… In general, it is very easy to collaborate with Norwegian partners… We know that Norwegian teachers are principled on many issues, we predict their reactions to some peculiarities of the Russian educational context, and we try to take into consideration their opinion. Further collaboration is possible only in such a situation. If trust disappears, we simply have no other means to help continue the collaboration.

8.7 Conclusion

What are the messages shared with us by the Russian academics? First of all, the international dimension of higher education is confusing, desirable, demanding and rewarding. This is what all respondents agree upon. At the same time they feel that it is more self-demanding and self-rewarding for individuals rather than on the institutional level. Autonomy of internationalization in The Salamanca Convention 2001 (The European University Association [EUA] 2001) meant that the results that had to be accounted for by international committees are reloaded from the national to the institutional level and further to the grassroots participants. However, in celebrating and aspiring for autonomy academics do not meet autonomy in practice, but rather express a lack of autonomy in choosing what they perceive as the necessities of practicing internationalization. This paradox can be explained by the observation that academics and institutional authorities understand the generally accepted and commonly supported definition of IHE from different perspectives. Moreover, there are several perspectives used in understanding the definition within a single level.

Few academics interpret the concept from the process perspective and the majority of them prioritize competence development. Despite different benefits of internationalization, such as economic and political gains, respondents focus mainly on the academic aspects. It is the cross-cultural experience of learning about different cultures and lifestyles, meeting new people, understanding cultural heterogeneity and human resource development that count most. They underline that teachers' competences require constant improvement in professional, interactive and communicative skills. Out of all the interviews taken, only one contains a discussion on the importance of internationalizing research.

Grassroots-level understanding of IHE is not a counterpart to the administrative institutional level perception. Since there are differences in understanding the concept within one target group of grassroots workers, and the discourses on internationalization are interwoven, we can presume that there may be discrepancies of understanding the same definition among the institutional and national managers (cf. Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume).

However, all respondents interpret the administration's input into internationalization and understanding of the concept as belonging to the activity perspective, which is not aimed at future holistic development, according to them, but at a single, quick, visible result to be transformed into the universal system of university assessment. The lack of mutual understanding builds a wall between the employees and the administrative staff.

Due to this paradox the tasks given at different levels create confusion. For example, grassroots participants must be competitive with the courses they provide in English for international students, while administrators must demonstrate increasing numbers on multiple criteria in the ministerial accounts, and the Ministry needs to integrate into the world higher education ratings and gain economic benefits from being competitive on the global educational market. The contradiction between the grassroots and institutional levels arises in the context of quality of education: IHE is desirable for teachers when it focuses on quality, as they fear that focus on numbers can undermine the quality of both teaching and learning both at the home university and abroad.

Following the aim to produce products of high quality and, thus, become competitive on the national and international educational market, grassroots participants aspire for autonomy in the internationalizing processes. However, university administrations set definitive tasks that have to be realized according to the requirements of the Ministry of Education, and which do not always coincide with academics' priorities in internationalization.

Interviewees are busy providing inward and outward student mobility which leaves them no time for research. Academics' priorities aimed at developing competencies are hard to calculate; and it takes time to further invest such competencies into publications or developed teaching material.

The perspectives emphasize different ways of internationalizing: *integration* into the international dimension and *inclusion* of an international dimension.

Consequently this leads to an adaptation of the traditional educational system to a hegemonic European dimension in the first case, and a two-way accommodation of all the systems participating in the collaboration in the second case. National and institutional representatives need the grassroots participants to adapt to the necessary conditions of harmonization while academics aspire for reciprocal relations with partners in order to be active agents within the professional HE sphere.

These discrepancies must be publicly discussed in order to have results that satisfy participants of internationalization and prevent alienation at the grassroots level. According to Knight (1997) and De Wit (1995), quoted by L. Delgado-Marcuez et al., successful internationalization is achieved on the condition of interconnected initiatives in research, education and services, and initiatives aimed at helping the international dimension integrate into university life through the management system (in Delgado-Marquez et al. 2011, p. 268). To achieve this aim it might be helpful to place more emphasis on inclusion rather than integration in the discourse on IHE. The idea of inclusion will not be impossible to realize, since the grassroots participants aspire for it and, as one of the interviewees states:

> *There are more similarities between us, the two neighbors, than we used to think. Unfortunately, even in education we tend to focus more on differences, polarizing each other. We must get rid of dichotomous thinking.*

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Chapter 9
Learning Exchange and the Ethics of Textual Borrowing: Pedagogy, Mobility and Intertextuality Between Academic Cultures

Per-Anders Forstorp and Lidia Kriulya

9.1 Introduction

Today, many benefits and values are attributed to the experience of cross-cultural and international exposure, which is being endorsed on a grand scale in many socio-cultural practices, from individual movements to regional and national policies of mobility. Mobility, either through travel, trade or intercultural learning, is generally promoted. In the world of higher education these practices have become institutionalized into "international higher education", "global academic mobility" and/or "academic exchange programs". It is framed as a valuable kind of educational experience with added educational, psychological and social values, for the benefit of the individual and the collective: for education at large, the cultures and nations included in the exchange, the participating institutions and, in general, for the lofty promises of international friendship, peace and understanding. Internationalization also serves a role in maintaining the ideology and practice of the contemporary global knowledge society/economy.

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Like any intercultural or cross-cultural encounter, international academic mobility involving students, faculty, staff, specialists and institutions, is a complex sociocultural process consisting of interchanges, translations and adaptations. These processes take place in international higher education as well as in working life, generally between and within cultural and national borders. There is an exchange of people through mobility; an exchange of learning whereby students bring their experiences to new contexts. More fundamentally, there is an exchange of learning about the conditions of the exchange itself in practical contexts of application. In *learning exchange*, both "learners" and "learning" are objects of learning as well as being subjects of exchange. Exchange and mobility as processes of translation/acculturation are objects of learning, thereby contributing to affecting and transforming identities and world views. For the individuals who are involved in the processes of exchange and subject to the encounters with others, t hese learning and mobility processes are conditioned by anticipations, expectations, experiences and assessments. However, the same holds true for the institutions and institutional actors who participate in administering such exchanges.

In this chapter we will explore some of the challenges of *learning exchange,* meeting an international student during an "exchange visit" and taking examples from international student exchange between Russia and Norway. The aim of this chapter is to identify problems and tensions in *learning exchange* by unpacking these notions through the data collected (interviews with teachers and administrative staff involved in internationalization) and thereby showing how a deeper understanding of the conditions of academic cultures can shed additional light on the complex assemblage of mobility, pedagogy and, in particular, ethics of academic literacy, as demonstrated by the example of "plagiarism". Objects of learning are to be found on many levels, from the individual and the organizational/institutional to the general cultural level, all of which contribute to defining and framing an academic culture. Some of these objects of learning can be described in more detail and are the focus of this chapter, such as learning academic practices of intertextuality and principles for "plagiarism" or, in analytical terms, "textual borrowing" (cf. below), which in itself exemplifies another dimension of intertextual exchange and mobility. The norms for textual borrowing are often legitimized with reference to the alleged universality of acceptable academic conduct, yet they are contextualized differently in specific academic cultures due to a number of pragmatic conditions: economy, expectations, language problems, and learning/teaching styles. Our aim is to show how understandings of textual borrowing are rooted in these academic cultures with their different pedagogical systems, guided by the following research questions:

- What meanings exist for the term, "learning"?
- What meanings exist for "exchange"?
- What are the implications of different methods of "learning" and "exchange" for the ethics of textual borrowing ("plagiarism")?

This chapter will first address issues of method and theory relevant to the focus. Next, learning exchange in the region will be explored through an inventory of similarities and differences between academic contexts and traditions based on styles and traditions of individual, institutional and cultural learning. This inventory contributes to identifying points for potential clashes between academic cultures and provides the context for step two, consisting of a focus on the ethics of textual borrowing ("plagiarism") among international students by further discussing these dimensions as frames of interpretation.

9.2 Method and Material

This study is based on interviews with a selection of institutional representatives in Norway and Russia throughout the period 2012–2014. We have talked with coordinators of international exchange programs as well as high-level university management responsible for internationalization. The interviews took place with representatives of all the eight HEIs (seven in Russia, one in Norway as well as two additional Norwegian HEIs) that are included in the research project (cf. Sundet et al., Chap. 1 in this volume).

In the interviews with institutional representatives, we asked for their opinions on a number of matters related to student exchange programs, such as their institutional and national conditions, but they tended to express opinions about the culture on the other side of the border as well, often, though not always, based on their own first-hand experiences. As always when interviewing, the answers were conditioned by the questions. Furthermore, these persons were invited to share their own experiences and opinions, framed by their narratives. In a sense, we then invited them to make cultural generalizations based on their own subjective experiences and ideologies, resulting in the sharing and reproduction of aggregated opinions about students, organizations and cultures. These answers should thus be treated as subjective statements. If they tend to express stereotypes, this is as much a function of the questions as it is of the way in which narratives were constructed in the interviewing context. It is also a function of the qualitative character of the analysis building upon the search for perceivable patterns, recurrences and themes. Together, all of these functions synchronize into particular cultural characteristics. Despite these caveats, all of which are examples of well-known challenges in qualitative methodology and its sequential and processual character, we suggest that these respondents contribute with important information about cultural practices on both sides of the border (Sundet, Chap. 4 this volume). The key point is to use this as background information for the analytical focus on "plagiarism" or textual borrowing.

9.3 Approaches to Learning, Intercultural Exchange and Academic Literacy

In this section, we provide some theoretical ideas relevant to an analysis of pedagogy, mobility and academic literacy. From a social studies perspective the notion of “cultural translation” is important. Cultural translations are interpreted in a broad sense, far beyond but also including language issues. Translations are regarded as processes rather than products, consisting of movements of people and texts, entailing cultural hybridity. Homi Bhabha understands translation as fundamental for social and cultural interaction: “[t]ranslation is the performative nature of cultural communication” (Bhabha 1994 [2004], p. 326). Education and learning exchange are examples of cultural translation processes.

9.3.1 Learning and Intercultural Exchange

The process of intercultural adaptation is itself a process of intercultural learning, involving “both the experience of encountering two or more different cultures and the learning that occurs through such an encounter” (Gill 2007, p. 168). This dual character of intercultural learning and adaptation mirrors the approach taken in this chapter. In addition to this, we suggest that exchange and mobility are objects of intercultural learning. General problems that are encountered in this process are listed by Gill (2007), such as: language adequacy, experience of independent study and self-directed learning, access to relevant study skills, and orientation toward the local subject matter of coursework and teaching materials. Gill claims, however, that these problems are stereotypical for overseas students (2007, p. 172), especially for Chinese students in British institutions (cf. Sidhu 2006). In order to mitigate these stereotypes Gill argues that there is a lack of research in relation to understanding learning, perception of self, values and perspectives from the viewpoint of the mobile students. In the context of a post-colonial critique of the globalization of higher education, Sidhu (2006, p. 33) brings up further stereotypes of international students as being, for example, childish and intellectually inferior, passive, uncritical, instrumental, and superficial learners. She notes that studies comparing learning approaches of domestic and international students are rare, which also contributes to perpetuating these cultural stereotypes.

Moving from the level of the student to the level of the organization, Otten (2003, p. 13), referring to Knight and De Wit (1995), provides some ideas about learning in organizations and describes “internationalization [as] activities that aim to bring about changes of structure and processes of educational systems”. Cultural diversity and internationalization do not automatically lead to intercultural contacts and intercultural learning experiences. Intercultural encounters are as complex in institutional contexts as they are among students, involving rules, strategies and a multidimensional asymmetry (Otten 2003, p. 16). With reference to Hofstede, Otten argues that “all social behavior, teaching and learning is shaped through acculturation and different cultural backgrounds” (2003, p. 19).

“Learning exchange” is what we call the process of intercultural exchange through the practices of learning in higher education. The outcomes of this process can be extremely varied in attitude, quality, degree, depth and distribution. Ideologies of internationalization of higher education are based on one version or another of the desired outcomes (the so-called “salvation themes” of internationalization in Popkewitz 2012) of such learning and exchange processes. For instance, the idea and practice of “learning exchange”, according to mainstream contemporary theory and ideology, anticipates that there is something valuable to be learned from the very process of learning exchange, which might contribute to individual and institutional development and, perhaps, to altering aspects of the outlook on learning as well as the understanding of exchange represented by these. But this is just one possible assumption of an outcome, however keenly desired by official ideology. Another outcome may be a consolidation of an original position before the process of exchange began; that is, the “learning” that was the outcome of the process, more than anything else, contributed to maintaining an original position. Other possibilities exist in this complex arithmetic of “learning exchange” as well.

9.3.2 Academic Literacy, Plagiarism and International Students

The issue of textual borrowing, more commonly known as “plagiarism”, haunts the academic community as well as the public imagination. On one hand, “plagiarism” is regarded with strong negative connotations as a form of theft and as an example of the kind of academic misconduct that is eligible for sanctions. In higher education and research, committing acts of “plagiarism” often leads to containment and punishment for researchers and students alike; although such penalty is not particularly strong for the latter, it may mean lifetime expulsion and ostracism for the former. In the public sphere, the uncovering of “plagiarism” among high- ranking officials functions as a form of public “moral purification” and fuels sentiments of distrust toward politicians and other public figures. In 2011, wiki-style collaborative groups of volunteers in Germany (VroniPlag Wiki 2016) were able to pin down the former minister of defense by “outing” large chunks of plagiarism in his dissertation (Dempsey 2011). In Russia the activist group “dissernet” (Dissernet [“ДИССЕРНЕТ”] 2016) has constituted an anti-plagiarism power since 2013 by regularly exposing intellectual fraud on the part of public figures. Anti-plagiarism movements are directed at the centers of power through the claim that forgery of PhDs is an integral part of statehood and political power. The dissertations of public figures are notoriously scrutinized for their lack of proper referencing and quotation marks, often suggestive of unwarranted authorship.

International students are students in a non-native language setting. Their instruction and academic performance is conducted in a language learning and socialization context. Being an international student in the context of educational exchange means learning a language through speaking as well as learning how to accommodate norms and practices of academic literacy in writing (Scollon 1995, 1999). In research and higher education there are specific norms and rules pertaining to academic literacy, formulated in order to promote fair conduct and to police transgressions (Pinker 2014). The most common word to designate such disapproved transgressions in the context of academic writing is "plagiarism", defined as an attempt to deceive by "claiming someone else's work as your own work" (Carroll and Zetterling 2009, p. 11). Plagiarism can take different forms, where the most common is to use published sources without correct referencing or, in the context of education, copying from or even working "too closely" with other students (Carroll and Zetterling 2009, pp. 12–13). Plagiarism is strongly disapproved of and deterred in the mainstream academic community and, if detected, leads to sanctions such as containment and punishment. Academic literacy is surrounded by an ethos of authenticity and honesty, whereby originality, authorship and veracity are strongly endorsed. In a time of what Walter Ong (1982 [2002]) calls an increasing "technologization of the word", new opportunities for using the texts of others arise (Howard 2007; Porshnev 2012).

These ideas of "plagiarism" as something that should be morally condemned rest upon specific ideas about the author and the purity of the text, as well as on political distrust of elected officials. Another perspective, based on the idea of the inherently intertextual nature of academic literacy, suggests that textual borrowing always takes place but in different ways (Pennycook 1996; Chandrasoma et al. 2004; East 2006). These practices of textual borrowing cannot be discriminated against at large, but there are varieties and degrees to which criteria of ethical conduct may apply. While condemning apparent acts of textual theft and unwarranted authorial legitimacy, "plagiarism" can be rephrased as an issue of textual borrowing (Pennycook 1996). After all, borrowing text from others and learning to "write from sources" through copying and paraphrasing (Wilson n.d.) is a basic competence in the repertoire of academic literacy skills. The correct practices of referencing and acknowledgement of sources are important dimensions of this basic form of intertextuality. Without intertextuality there would be no need for referencing. Understanding academic literacy and language proficiency in this way alters our concept of intertextual practices and suggests a non-judgmental framework for interpreting "plagiarism". These intertextual practices can be either transgressive or non-transgressive (Chandrasoma et al. 2004). The former acts are condemned while the latter acts are regarded as stages in a developmental process of a student/future-researcher who is learning to master a key dimension of academic literacy, namely to "write from sources".

Students at introductory levels of higher education are all exposed to this learning process. Becoming acquainted with academic literacy is a matter of socialization into an academic and disciplinary culture (Bourdieu 1994; Becher and Trowler 2001). This culture is typically defined by its language and literacy practices.

Non-native speakers, such as international students, are particularly exposed in this respect. Studying in a cultural context where the language of socialization is non-native makes the process of learning academic literacy even more challenging (Abasi and Graves 2008; Gu and Brooks 2008; Gu et al. 2010). This is a fate that international students encounter as part of their intercultural experience. Among the many challenges of studying abroad, learning to accommodate to the local norms of academic literacy, however universal these are claimed to be, is a specific case in point.

9.4 Learning Exchange in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region: Variations in Academic Cultures and Learning

Similarities, differences and contrasts in learning styles span the dimensions of the individual, the organization and the national culture, which constitutes the underlying structure of this section. These dimensions are separated here for analytical purposes, however, in concrete practices these are interconnected and mutually dependent: there are no students without an organization and culture, and vice versa. The focus on contrasts helps to illuminate distinguishing features, but may also perpetuate the idea of differences in the first place, which helps to reproduce contrasts that run the risk of consolidating essentialist cultural stereotypes rather than breaking them down (cf. above).

9.4.1 Learning Exchange from the Perspective of the Student

On the individual level we focus on opinions about students, self-studies, individual workload, general student behavior, age and infrastructural opportunities for study. None of these aspects can be understood without the organizational and cultural dimension. This analysis provides information on an administrative and organizational level in a blend of official statements and subjective opinions about others (cf. above). The group of students that is talked about in the interviews includes mainly Russian students in their home country and Russian exchange students in Norway. To some extent we have also gained information about Norwegian students in Norway, whereas information on Norwegian students in Russia is completely lacking, simply because there are so few (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this this volume; Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume).

9.4.1.1 Theory vs. Practice

A Murmansk administrator characterizes Russian students as more theoretically interested than the Norwegians, who are perceived as more practical in their orientation to studies. Being practical, here, means being more aware of studying strategies; complying with assignments and expectations rather than being driven by theoretical interests. This theory and practice asymmetry is an echo from the classical university education in Russia. Historically there was more theory involved in the initial stages of the educational program and, after students got acquainted with the theory, they became engaged in practice. There are still debates among academics, especially after being exposed to the Bologna process, regarding what should be provided for the students in a bachelor degree: theory or practice. Based on this rather rough contrast, the Murmansk administrator questions whether Norwegian students are at all motivated, since it seems as though their impetus is more of a practical than a theoretical nature. The asymmetry between theory and practice is an example of the state of affairs in academia: all students are pragmatic and they wish to attain what they don't yet possess. Norwegian students are well supplied with contemporary theoretical literature and they can learn it on their own, either in the library or wherever they wish to study. It is evident that what is unique for students in Russia is experience and practice that they can discuss later on, based on their knowledge of theories. Another more pragmatic factor in Russias is the lack of books in English; and under such conditions of insufficient infrastructure, many Russian students are enchanted with the idea of spending the whole day reading in a nice library. The same person says that this difference between theory and practice is not general for all Russian students, half of which seem to be very "active" and theoretically conscious and half of which do not. Those students who participate in exchange programs, however, are among the active and theoretically interested ones. The general characteristic of exchange students as being more "active" is shared by many representatives in Russia, and they argue that, in order to approach an exchange program in the first place, the student needs to possess an "active" orientation. This degree of activity seems to match the level of international student's interests and aptitudes, which are described as "good" and "hard working". If we apply Freire's (1970) definition of banking pedagogy, a "good" and "hard working" student is one who skillfully reproduces given knowledge; figuratively speaking, one who is good at "copying and pasting" from a book or lecture. International studies require English language skills and an openness to intercultural learning. At several points we repeated the question of whether or not the students that participate in international exchange are the best, and we often got back a smile and an ironic comment like: "*Do you really think we send the best Russian students abroad?*" This joke shifts the agency and motivation from originating with the student herself[1] to residing with the organization or, in a vague way, the Russian culture at large, suggesting that there is a collective "we" behind every individual decision. This is, in fact, accurate and no secret because, as a rule, every application for

[1] In this chapter we use the female pronoun in an inclusive way.

exchange studies needs a letter of recommendation from the university. It is in the international office ("we") who has the power to give and sign such recommendations.

9.4.1.2 Self-Segregation

Russian students seem to stick together when they are in Norway. They do not study with Norwegian students, to any great extent, due to language barriers and a will to cultivate a sense of security in a foreign setting. This reflects a common strategy of self-segregation by exchange students that is portrayed in literature on internationalization at large (Otten 2003). Self-segregation of Russian students may also be the result of the study program they are advised to choose (held in English and for international students). Norwegian students prefer to take programs in Norwegian and there are very few of those in the international repertoire, hence there are no pragmatic conditions for Russian and Norwegian students to mix during their studies, however, more opportunities exist among extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, the international program itself requires students to improve their English skills, not their Norwegian.

9.4.1.3 Self-Studies

One recurring difference brought up by administrators on both sides is related to the student's attitudes towards self-studies. While being practical, which may sound negative in contrast to being theoretical, Norwegian students are portrayed as more used to self-studies; perhaps also perceived as being more creative, effective and open-minded. Altogether this suggests that being "practical" consists of a number of advantages that are all related to self-studies and, ultimately, to academic success. In contrast, particularly the Russian students who follow the BCS and BNS programs suffer from a lack of experience when it comes to self-studies. These programs predominantly consist of online courses, requiring students to administer and monitor their own activity and progress. Clearly, Russian students are less experienced in this study technique while, paradoxically, the courses are being mapped on the experience of Norwegian students, who are used to self-study but who do not participate in the online courses (Sandersen, Chap. 6 in this volume). We see a mismatch between the pedagogical assumptions behind the design of online courses, software and learning platforms, and the group of students who are expected to participate in them. Over time, of course, students adapt and learn to adjust to these conditions, however, not without an initial lack of self-discipline and motivation, possible disorientation, difficulty in following deadlines, slow progression and inexperience in self-administration. This comment suggests that Russian students are not used to the same degree of self-study. It also suggests that Russian students acquire motivation, respect for deadlines and stimulation to progress not through self-administration, but by being instructed on what to do. With online studies, there is no lack of instruction, however, it has to be monitored by the students themselves (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume). In effect, as explained by a Murmansk coordinator, almost half the students who enroll in online courses never receive their degree. The high dropout rate is explained not only by the inexperience of self-study but also by the fact that the BCS and BNS are taken on top of a Russian degree and are not mandatory for obtaining a degree. Many students, however, still find it attractive to be able to show double credentials. The problem of self-study and student responsibility for planning has been recognized, for instance, by NArFU, which is working to introduce and increase self-studies. This is partly based on the experience of online students in exchange programs with Norway, and partly as a means of accommodating the requirements of student responsibility in the Bologna process (Kukarenko and Zashikina, Chap. 2 in this volume). This emphasis may help to make students better prepared for participating in the online courses of exchange programs. Online courses exemplify what Otten (2003, p. 14) calls “exchange without encounter”, which is not untypical for exchange programs or intercultural learning in general.

9.4.1.4 Contact with Teachers

Russian students in Norway are self-segregated when it comes to peer contact but more open concerning contact with faculty and administrators. There seems to be a low threshold for them to initiate contact – and, of course, a great need to ask questions in an unfamiliar context. In contrast, Norwegian students maintain a distance to teachers despite a general culture of informality, not because they are asocial but because they are culturally familiar and used to finding information on their own, which is an aspect of the ethics of self-study. A Russian administrator working in Norway on international exchange explains this in the following way. Russian students are motivated to gain personal contact with faculty because they are not used to being responsible for finding information in the same way on their own. In addition, the exchange officer explains, Russian students search for personal contact because they want to make a good impression, perhaps in the hopes that it may ultimately affect the final result for the course. Contact can also be sought out for all sorts of mundane and minor reasons, which also reflects a lack of experience in finding things out independently. At one of the Norwegian universities, some of the faculty have expressed irritation over such matters, both because they do not want to maintain personal contact, which may be interpreted as an invitation to influence the final result, and because they are simply not used to students asking questions about mundane things. The administrator in the international office suggests that Russian students prefer to be personally instructed rather than having to find things out for themselves. It is also suggested that making a personal impression on a teacher is not an uncommon strategy used by Russian students at home. This is partly explained by the double role of a Russian teacher as both instructor and examiner, while in Norway these functions are more commonly separated. In Russia, the final result and grading for a course are less official than in Norway and, in fact, veiled in the personal relation between teacher and student. The Norwegian routine of officially announcing grades for a group of students, linked to name or social security number, would be unthinkable in Russia.

9.4.1.5 Age

Another aspect of the student population is age. Russian students begin university already at the age of 17. In contrast, university students in Norway and other western countries more commonly start when they are older, sometimes interrupted by a year or two on "sabbatical" in order to "find oneself" and gain experience through travel and adventure. The western insistence on studying is also based on the importance of personal interest and is quite different from the Russian tradition, which is more strongly influenced by family pressure. The second determining factor is financial: students in Russia need to acquire higher education as soon as possible and get a job afterwards. They have no time for "finding themselves". The search for oneself takes place during their studies and the years of university studies are historically considered to be the best period of life when young people combine studies and enjoyment. Thirdly, being a university student allows young men to postpone military service. It is therefore vital for many 17-year-old boys (and their families) that they enter university before the age of 18, according to "The Federal Law on Military Duty and Military Service", № 53 from March 1998. Young age can also negatively affect the level of motivation during the initial stage of studies.

9.4.1.6 Learning Environment

The infrastructures and physical opportunities for study are very different in the two countries. Norway, as well as many other European countries, has spent large amounts of resources on providing relevant and attractive study environments for university students. Self-study is thus supported by infrastructural measures and arrangements that help to establish a home turf for students at university. It is generally recognized that Russian universities lack this tradition of providing infrastructural space for students, however, as declared in official resources, this is currently changing, for instance, at NArFU, where a new library has recently been built with study places.

9.4.1.7 Student Workload

Russian students who participate in exchange programs, on campus and online, have a double workload. The exchange programs are not mandatory and are not currently transferable to a Russian degree. On top of ordinary studies, which often involve enormous effort and workload, an exchange degree is only an option for "active" students (cf. above). This also explains the high dropout rate previously indicated. For the individual student, the exchange program adds to an already heavy workload. This might be mitigated by a degree of liberty in choosing one's own pace for online programs. For exchange students on campus, this also means that they need to go back to Russia at the end of the semester to fulfill their regular degree requirements.

The value of a second degree is contested among Russian students and administrators. On the one hand, it provides some advantages through international exposure and language skills. It might constitute the first step in an international career outside Russia. Norwegian-Russian exchange degrees are promoted with arguments of wide international applicability and legitimacy. On the other hand, the second degree seems to be of limited value within the Russian Federation. Additionally, it is of limited value for international use if one's grades are modest, which they are for some students. Fear of getting low grades might be an additional explanation for dropout.

The processes of cultural adaptation are a key dimension of studies in cultural learning based on exchange. For Russian students everything is new. They generally do not find the studies too difficult, but rather demanding in terms of the cognitive load that comes from the double degree requirement. This is no different for Russian students in Norway, who, despite the relative geographical proximity in the Barents Region, travel a long distance in terms of language, culture and lifestyle. The challenges in this process of adaptation are well-known among administrators as well.

9.4.2 Learning Exchange from the Perspective of the Organization

We have selected some aspects of the organization that were commented upon in the interviews that illuminate cultural similarities and differences. In the concept of the university as an organization we include a wide variety of aspects such as the particular universities themselves and the systems of higher education at large, both in Norway and Russia (and sometimes elsewhere). This is not a comprehensive inventory and the main purpose is to provide a backdrop for the coming analysis of textual borrowing. The aspects overlap each other. We look at lectures, examinations, online education, teachers and the contact with them, and academic cycles.

9.4.2.1 Lectures

As mentioned above, lectures, examinations, online education, etc., are aspects that overlap; however, we need this backdrop to analyze "textual borrowing", which stands out as a stigma particularly connected to some of the international students, Russian students among them. We, therefore, start out with the aspect of lectures, which constitute the primary form of teaching at Russian universities. At classical state universities they take place in large auditoriums with 60 or more participating students, however, at the peripheral universities lectures are usually given to groups of 20–40 students. At one of the universities in Murmansk, students participate for four hours each day, five days a week, under such conditions. A system that expects students to be available with such frequency is a temporally and spatially regulated school system in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault 1979). Lectures are dominated by a teacher who is the only one talking. Traditional pedagogy, in the terminology of Freire's (1970) "banking" pedagogy, supposes that the educational aim is to distribute certain knowledge to students that they are meant to reproduce. Metaphorically, students' minds are bank accounts that are open for deposits made by teachers. This traditional approach is criticized for its oppressiveness towards both teachers and students, it's promotion of oppressive practices in society, and its manipulation and cultural invasion. Usually there is no form of interaction during the lectures, nor any room for questions. However, there is room for being personal with lecturers, though not during the lecture time. Sometimes lectures are preceded by exercises in smaller groups. Some international officers, who themselves have experience abroad (for example, in Norway and Canada), have been able to compare traditions for teaching and instruction. They generally claim that the practice of inviting questions and allowing for more interaction, typical of western-style teaching, could possibly be implemented in Russia as well. Teacher-centered rather than student-centered education in Russia emphasizes the key role of teachers as messengers of information rather than knowledge.

9.4.2.2 Examination

Examinations in the Russian system are also more formalized. In Murmansk, St. Petersburg, Arkhangelsk and Syktyvkar, examinations are mostly oral. In addition, the Russian system includes final exams where students are faced with up to six examiners. The formal character of the situation, in which the student is alone without any external support, obviously constitutes a basis for feelings of stress and anxiety. In contrast, Norwegian universities offer a wide variety of examination options, including both oral and written exams. Students are expected to work more independently or in small groups. Home exams are common. Altogether, Norwegian students are allowed more individual responsibility and are relieved of situations involving stress. Russian students generally find this a bit too relaxed until they recognize that a great deal of individual effort is expected for them to manage the studies. This assessment may be a simplification of the Norwegian system of higher education because a large volume of the Barents Region exchange Barents Regionis administered through online learning platforms.

9.4.2.3 Online Instruction and Learning

A large volume of the educational exchange with Norway consists of online programs in which students participate from a distance. Online education requires support systems, particularly for technological issues and the navigation of the interface. The BCS and BNS are both delivered online (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Sandersen, Chap. 6 in this volume). Especially on the Norwegian side, many questions are raised in connection with these programs. While Russians represent a large volume of students at the center of the intercultural exchange, the programs are also challenging, both for the students and for the administrators on the Norwegian side. Assignments are delivered in large volumes but the teachers never see any faces and are often unsure of whose text they are actually reading. Online participation and online assignment delivery is quite hard to monitor and fairly easy to manipulate. On the Norwegian side there is a degree of suspicion concerning authorship. Even if such suspicion is unwarranted, which is hard to determine, it creates a sense of insecurity and unease, which in and of itself affects the quality of the programs. Teachers generally recognize that they should have more time to follow up with students, in order to monitor individual developments. They argue that online education allows for an easy-going attitude. On the other hand, as mentioned previously, students must be active and disciplined in order for online delivery to work. This is not always the case with Russian students because they generally lack self-study experience.

9.4.2.4 Teacher Workload

We learned through the interviews that Russian students in Norway often seek contact with teachers, which creates some tension with Norwegian teachers who are not used to this level of personal engagement, despite the informal nature of Norwegian culture. A Russian teacher may or may not like you. As a student, of course, you want to be liked, however, this quite often leads to subjective assessment of students' knowledge and skills. Like students in Russia, teachers have a heavy workload; on top of the approximately 800 hours of teaching, they have extra obligations and/or research duties. Successful Russian faculty are accomplished at multi-tasking, handling both administration and teaching as well as research. Nonetheless, multi-tasking is a problem for Russian higher education. In order to have a decent salary, teachers may have up to 1200 hours of teaching in addition to research or administrative tasks. The first thing that suffers from excessive multi-tasking is quality; the quality of education, research and administration. Another obstacle to effective education is the sense of a growing bureaucracy. Very often teachers say that they do not have time for the students; instead, all of their time is spent on the papers required by the administration. A Murmansk coordinator says, "If you can trust, stick to it"; i.e., if you can trust someone, either a student or a teacher, you should count on that. Personal trust is a witnessed feature of Russian organizations outside the university mileu as well, where informal networks play an important role (Ledeneva 1998, 2006; Goes, Chap. 5 in this volume).

9.4.2.5 Academic Calendar

Academic cycles look very different on the two sides of the border. With the EHEA (Bologna) accepted in both countries (in 2003 in Russia, though implemented only from 2013), steps have been taken to increase standardization and establish measures for mutual recognition; or at least to find a positive middle of the road. Nonetheless, the Russian and Norwegian systems are still quite different. The Russian "specialization" does not exactly match the BA, MA and PhD-system prevailing in Norway and, of course, the other way around. The big ECTS-courses recommended by Bologna do not fit the many small courses in the Russian system. With different academic cycles, synchronization becomes difficult, causing a major barrier to the transference of credits between academic systems. Moreover, there is a mismatch between the academic calendars, with semesters, introductory periods and examination periods that do not coincide.

9.4.3 Learning Exchange from the Perspective of the Academic Culture

Attitudes to students and the organization are intimately linked to understandings of culture, in both a particular and a general sense. Moreover, these dimensions, students, organization and culture are interrelated. Interviewees freely move between these dimensions in their responses and generalizations are frequent. The focus here will be on perceptions of the other, learning from exchange, and ways of coping with differences.

9.4.3.1 Perceptions of the Other

Those who are involved in working with international exchange as coordinators, administrators or high-level management are obviously encouraging mobility. It is perhaps a banal observation, but it is important to recognize that those who work with internationalization express a commitment to this activity. They are often selected for their position due to personal experience of exchange, English language proficiency and general openness to intercultural learning. Therefore it is no surprise that those we talk to generally have a positive attitude towards exchange and towards the partners in the exchange. The others, that is, the partners in the exchange, are generally perceived attractively, as is the academic system (cf. above) and the cultural impact on the academy. Russians agree that the Norwegian system is different from their own but not necessarily more difficult to understand. There is a greater degree of transparency in the Norwegian system. Opinions about the Russian system are less comprehensive because it is veiled behind a screen of language barriers and an opaque bureaucracy. Norway is associated with the EU and characterized as more democratic, where dialogue and informality are encouraged. The Russian system, in contrast, is more formal and less dialogical. These comments are made on a very aggregated and generalized level and should be treated as subjective attitudes.

9.4.3.2 Learning from Exchange

In a general spirit of mutual understanding, learning from exchange is encouraged. The Russians admit that, as yet, only a limited number of faculty have been able to benefit from exchanges on a personal level. Those who have not yet been part of the exchange are mostly those who lack English language skills or belong to an older generation who are obviously less interested in such exchange and tend to be conservative in this sense. On the other hand, they also say that their western partners, in this case Norwegians, need to better understand their Russian colleagues and this, they argue, can only be possible through continuous inter-cultural immersion.

In some interviews the discussion brought up the risk that Russian students might use educational exchange as the first step in an emigration process ultimately leading to permanent exile (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume). The joke mentioned above ("Do you really think that we send the best Russian students abroad?") countered the risk of brain drain by suggesting that there is a "we" who decide who will be able to travel. Thus, as suggested, a talent management is in operation, only sending abroad those who are not in the risk zone of contributing to brain drain. Another opinion suggested that Russian students may benefit from any kind of learning, but that they will remain Russian at the core and stay committed to their home country and culture. As a high-level manager in a Syktyvkar institute said: "any knowledge might be useful, as a result of something, (but) they will not be changed by education, and they will remain Russian". This opinion is based on the recognition of the strength of cultural identity, which is not vulnerable to any foreign influence. Cooperation through education in the Barents Region, according to this manager, is not a challenge to Russian identity. Nor is it an occasion to establish new and shared identities. It is based on the confidence that Russian culture is strong and that young Russian citizens have no interest in questioning their origin and sense of belonging. The manager emphasized the importance of preparing the students with "meetings" before their exchange period. One of the things that was brought up in this context, as an example of the content of these meetings, was not Russian identity work, per se, but rather a concern for preserving the tradition of reading books. A general fear was that the culture of electronic communication was a greater threat to cultural identity than international exposure. The concern for book reading was, in the interviewing context, concretely exemplified with a beautiful and colorful book about the Russian heritage of art, architecture and iconography.

Thus, a sense of nationalist pride and concern for the Russian cultural heritage was framed through a concern about the fate of book culture in an age of electronic communication.

9.4.3.3 Coping with Differences

In Norway, the differences between academic cultures are clearly recognized. They regard Russian academic culture as more hierarchical in the sense that any exchange activity also needs to function at a top level. Alternatively, in Norway, the operative levels are based in the given disciplines and faculty with only distant support from high-level management. This difference results in a clash of ways of cooperating and coping with differences. Both sides display interest from the leaders but it is only on the Norwegian side that the exchange is firmly rooted in the faculty and disciplines as a cooperation from below (Sundet, Chap. 4 in this volume). This mismatch also includes a lack of people to cooperate with on the Russian side, which is due to the hierarchical management culture of the organization as well as the limited distribution of English language proficiency.

A manager at UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, who has been working with Russian relations for a long time, demonstrated thorough knowledge about the Russian side from many years of cooperation with Murmansk, in particular. The manager was in a position to give a perspective on cultural similarities and differences between the two countries and their prospects for future cooperation. Cultural differences in the academy and at the student level were confirmed as well as a great respect for the high quality of intellectual traditions in Russia. The manager confirmed that the student culture in Norway is based on individual responsibility, self-studies and work in small groups. In contrast, Russian students are familiar with a tradition based on the logic of the "empty bottle"; that is, students being regarded as containers that should be "filled" by the lecturers (cf. the banking metaphor above). Clearly, until they adapt to Norwegian expectations of self-studying, many Russian students still expect to be "filled up" and, if not, they feel lost. The manager emphasized that this is an initial problem for new exchange students, which is overcome through successfully accommodating to the local expectations of increased responsibility. In Norway, "learning outcomes" are the norm that guides instruction and learning. In Russia students have "pages" to read that constitute the norm. The manager affirmed the willingness to cooperate on a motivational level but also identified the numerous practical problems that are involved; for instance, the challenges of accommodating learning activities to mixed groups. He indicated not that it is impossible, or that there is lack of motivation, but that it is wearisome.

Another coordinator at the same university, with a personal background from Russia, affirmed the cultural dimensions of the exchange while also expressing an awareness of a certain blindness in regard to the Russian system, due to its intuitive familiarity. In Norway, the coordinator argued, those who work with internationalization do it in the context of their disciplinary interests. In Russia faculty are more limited in the sense that they are told to do certain things and may only act with approval from their managers. The hierarchy on the Russian side determines how initiatives get approved, often passing through several layers and dimensions of the organization, all in search of proper rooting. In Russia, cooperation is not initiated from below but from above. This is exemplified through a cooperation with a Murmansk university that started between Norwegian and Russian faculty members; no decisions could be made until the manager and even the vice chancellor were involved in the exchange. The coordinator at Tromsø firmly appreciated both systems; for instance, the formality of the Russian system allowed for higher efficiency and speedy administration. The Russian system is more determined by policy and strategy, also from the Ministry of Education in the Federation that encourages internationalization. As soon as criteria are initiated from above, the system is quickly manageable and ready for change. For instance, recent allowances for acknowledging Norwegian credits as part of a Russian degree was only made possible through high-level approval. The informality and relative autonomy of the Norwegian system assumes a higher degree of idealism and is dependent on individuals' energy and motivation, thus not always as efficient and more vulnerable to changes in staff. In Norway an attitude of "everything can always be changed" prevails, which may restrict efficiency. In Russia, the opinions of the superiors are respected and the staff conform to this will while, at the same time, they "make themselves smart but keep it to themselves". Both systems, the coordinator concludes, have their advantages and drawbacks.

The Russian-born coordinator in Norway continues to distinguish between students in both countries in relation to culture and tradition. The personal background of the coordinator helps to establish this narrative of differences. In Russia, students are generally more dependent on their parents for decisions on what to study and where, while Norwegian students tend to be more independent. In some sense, Russian youth remain children for a longer time than Norwegian youth, who aspire for adulthood earlier. A better understanding of the learning conditions, in this case, the role that family plays in determining the orientation of studies, helps to better understand how and why they learn. This different cultural framing of what it means to be a youth enables Norwegian students to exercise greater freedom but also greater responsibility for choices and actions. Russian students display a conditional respect for superiors. Norwegian students' independence and responsibility enable a critical attitude but, the coordinator explains, this critical attitude can sometimes transform into a focus that is generally negative and perhaps even too egalitarian. The Russian culture allows for a higher respect for differences within the system, which is another way to say that Russian culture is socially stratified and less egalitarian. An example is found in the process of applying for a job in Norway versus Russia. In Norway the process, at least publicly and officially, is totally transparent; a list of all applicants is distributed and the most qualified are called for an interview. In Russia such a system is unthinkable since all job-seeking processes are built not only on merits but also on personal acquaintances.

9.5 Interpreting Cultural Practices of Academic Literacy and the Ethics of Textual Borrowing

Quality issues in connection with online education are a recurring theme in the interviews. Since the programs are delivered to Russian students in Norway, it is mostly Norwegian administrators who comment on the issue of quality. While embracing all the benefits of online education there is also a general recognition that quality issues can be compromised, not because Russian students necessarily are cheaters, but because they are not used to the self-discipline of the system and a whole host of expectations explored above that surround university studies in Norway, which are implemented in the pedagogy and interactive design of online education. Another factor impinging on quality is the response by Russian institutions. Examples are given of institutions that translated formal instructions into Russian but did not properly check these translations. In this particular case, the translations were totally misleading. This is not a general feature but the existence of a few such cases of quality problems is a reminder that participating institutions may not share the same routines for quality assessment. A Norwegian coordinator says:

> *It is not that easy when you offer a course that needs to be adapted to very different educational systems, from the Russian to the Scandinavian, to that of the USA and Canada, where provinces and counties have their own routines for quality assurance. Trying to design a course that matches all these interests and needs is not without problems*

In interviews with Norwegian coordinators, they were aware of these quality issues and the fact that there is a limit to "exchange without encounters" or traveling light. As one of them said: "they travel into the screen".

Especially when it comes to the online programs administered by the Norwegians, there is great concern for quality issues in education and instruction. One of the issues that is repeatedly brought up on the Norwegian side, in particular, is "plagiarism", which is the preferred term used to talk about practices of textual borrowing (cf. above). The idea of plagiarism as a moral transgression is a widely established opinion beyond Norway and Russia as well.

A manager at UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, explores the textual dimension of academic culture. He is not judging the Russian system outright, but talks of it in a more cautious way, attempting to circumscribe any direct accusation. He says, "we have the impression" that it is possible to gain personal benefits from the system in Russia. It is possible, he suggests, to "exploit the system" by getting papers and exams in unorthodox ways. Through this general characterization of the Russian system of personalization and benefits from social connections at the academy (which is a badly veiled cultural stereotype), he moves on to talk about the problems with online programs. There are, he says, examples of students taking "short cuts" and "cheating". As an example of "plagiarism" he mentions how the norms for correct referencing and citation are quite often violated, especially in relation to project work, thus suggesting that students be brought up in front of a disciplinary committee. The manager is aware that there are cultural differences related to the norms of citation and referencing; however, in the context of the exchange program, it creates problems that nonetheless have to be dealt with. He is hopeful that better congruence will follow when the academic systems are approaching and accommodating each other.

The manager at Tromsø explores the challenges involved in academic writing. This is a problem shared by all students in both countries. The norm on "not copying from Internet" is perhaps better established in Norway, and generally in the West, than in Russia. He admits that some of the Norwegians, in addition to the Russian students, who are in the process of learning to manage a new language as well, "learn that there are good answers to be found on the Internet". He suggests that this could be explained through an understanding of cultural differences in pedagogy, where in Russia there is less emphasis placed on the independence of students than on their ability to reproduce legitimate and authoritative answers produced by others. The cultural difference concerns the students' level of independence; whereas Norwegians are encouraged to "think for themselves", Russians learn to copy answers. He does not want to come off as being "too dogmatic" on this issue, and he assures that most Russian students learn how to adapt and that they successively learn "what we want them to do". It is good development for an academic to learn to write in her own words, the manager continues, and especially for serious students they can follow good examples of this development.

The quality issue is not only raised within the context of project work or online education but also in connection with examinations. Copying another person's text for an examination is not allowed, which also pertains to those written at home, so-called "home exams". Russian students are not generally familiar with the relative informality and self-responsibility of such routines. The rules and norms for referencing and documenting apply for examinations as well. The texts that are used in one's own writing should be properly accounted for. The Tromsø manager again portrays this as a cultural phenomenon, saying that the ideal should be a "nice balance" between the original source and the report. He uses the Norwegian word "redlighet" [fairness] as the ethical norm for textual borrowing along with the habit of using one's own language. He regrets that teachers engaging in online education are not given the opportunity to establish personal contact with students and to monitor them over time. The manager frames the problem of text authenticity and the practices for "textual borrowing", a term he does not use, in the social context of Russia. With a stronger emphasis on stratification and hierarchies, the power of orality remains strong. If there is a conflict between a written word and the words of an authority, the latter always applies and can potentially overrule written recommendations. This principle obviously has its limits too. If the recommendations derive from the Ministry of Education, a leader needs to conform to this at least in an outward and official manner; however, room for individual interpretation always exists in practice. A culture that supports a belief in authority fosters an expected dependency relation to the texts of others.

A coordinator in Norway with a background in Russia frames the problem of "plagiarism" in the context of the incompatibility of academic cultures. A number of Russian students at the university have been identified for cheating and have faced the disciplinary committee. One student was expelled from the program for a full year. Another student at the master's level was found guilty of "self-plagiarism". The coordinator explains the Russian system of norms for acquiring and representing knowledge. It is based on the conditions for learning; for instance, a student takes notes during a lecture and then reproduces them on an examination. Many lecturers have the habit of providing or selling their own publications and there is an expectation that these should be used during examinations. Conformity to the original is highly encouraged and sometimes even a condition for getting higher grades, at least on the undergraduate level, while greater independence is expected at the master's level and up. There is no general focus on the practice of referring to the texts of others. What is learned is represented as general knowledge without concern for the original source. This is taken as proof that the student has learned. It is unthinkable, the coordinator says, for students at the undergraduate level in Russia to approach a problem as students are encouraged to do in Norway; i.e. by comparing different alternatives in order to form an individual opinion. The norm is to reproduce a version of what is considered as the official wisdom. The student is not supposed to question the veracity of this version. Obviously, these norms for textual reproduction in Russia are quite different from those that are cultivated in Norway. An additional explanation for this low legitimacy on being critical is that university education, at least on an introductory (BA) level, is regarded as more instrumental. Young people need to have higher education in order to get a job at a desired level. University education is primarily for acquiring this job, not for fostering a sense of critical attention, although the latter also applies for a minority of the students.

Another coordinator at the same Norwegian university brings up similar quality issues related to online education. For teachers it may be difficult to discern who the actual sender of the document is. The electronic system is firewalled by passwords and other security measures but is fairly easy to manipulate nonetheless. Teachers are perhaps more worried about the authenticity and legitimacy of a document's authorship than they are about correct citation practices.

Some of the Russian coordinators are aware that their Norwegian counterparts regard "plagiarism" as a problem. They are aware that Russian students are accused of "plagiarism". It is not clear, however, what their own opinions are about this issue and, when they say that "Russians copy and paste", it is followed by an enigmatic smile. This could mean that the accusation is correct or incorrect. Despite several attempts to clarify the issue, it proved to be quite difficult to get a straightforward answer. This can also be explained by the context of the interview. In one interview, a lady to whom the question was addressed preferred not to answer and she asked us to pass the question on to her superior. Altogether this does not necessarily mean that Russian representatives admit that the accusations are correct, however, it is perhaps an expression of the fact that they are aware that this is an issue where cultures collide and that it can be a disgrace and humiliating to admit any deviance from the dominating norms for textual borrowing in the context of the exchange program.

9.5.1 Cultural Contexts of Academic Literacy

Academic literacy and norms for textual borrowing should be understood in the context of learning exchange in the BEAR. Based on the interviews, we have indicated similarities and differences between Russia and Norway as illustrated through the dimensions of students, the organization and culture. Students from Russia who engage in online programs administered by Norway, or who actually move to a Norwegian campus, bring their experiences and expectations of being a student in higher education to a new context. In this new context they are challenged on different levels. They are inexperienced in self-study, they primarily have mostly a theoretical orientation, and they have learned the norms of reproducing knowledge derived from a teacher or a textbook. As undergraduates they are fostered to learn facts and knowledge rather than to mobilize their own creativity in a continuous process of questioning the knowledge they receive. Russian students learn to rely on authorities such as teachers and textbooks. The "good" and "hard-working" student can effectively and reliably reproduce this learning in both speech and writing. When Russian students engage in exchange programs, their study workload is doubled and academic cycles collide due to current regulations of credit accountability. Studying through online programs means the removal of both the formal and personal contact with a teacher and students, therefore, move into a space that allows for anonymity. Russian students are used to personal instruction from a teacher and are unfamiliar with the imperatives of self-management afforded by online programs. All this is done in a second language and, for campus students, in a process of acquiring "mobility capital"; "enabling individuals to enhance their skills because of the richness of the international experience gained by living abroad" (Murphy-Lejeune 2002, pp. 51–2).

These challenges primarily concern new students at introductory levels. Challenges create barriers of different kinds that lead to high dropout rates (for other explanations of dropout, see Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume). Over time, however, students who are sufficiently committed learn to accommodate to online learning and to cope with the challenges presented by unfamiliar norms and practices.

The cultural context of academic literacy varies from Russia to Norway. Russian students are less independent in relation to academic authorities, yet the focus on verbatim reproduction of knowledge does not require explicit rules for textual borrowing; at least not at introductory levels. According to the interviewees in Russia, however, there is an increasing emphasis on rules for proper quotation and referencing in Russian academic discourse. Rules are given in the form of prohibition and measures for punishment of cheating are being developed. Students learning in a second language are less secure in their own language proficiency, which might lend itself to a sense of security in reproducing texts from the second-language sources.

9.5.2 The Ethics of Textual Borrowing

Academic literacy often assumes a universal consensus through the global academic community. Although there is some truth to the idea that dominating English-language scientific journals and publishers have developed effective frameworks for establishing norms of academic conduct, academic literacies are still culture-specific. Learning to write "the US way" (Angelova and Riazantseva 1999) is an outcome of "the power of English" (Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume) in the academic community.

Academic literacy involves ethics for textual borrowing codified through norms, values and rules. "Ethics" is precisely the word that (in most cases) is missing in Russian academic discourse. Issues concerning textual borrowing or "plagiarism" are modeled on a language of prohibition and punishment, rather than by reflecting on norms of academic literacy pertaining to textual borrowing. When Russian higher education encounters other norms for academic literacy, the system is also slowly accommodating to these challenges.

Sidhu (2006) remarks critically that many studies "on the learning needs of international students share similarities in that they operate on essentialism and binary thinking" (p. 36). The context is Asian students in Australia and Sidhu shows how "study abroad"-texts have been influential in producing an image of Asian students as childish, passive, uncritical and superficial learners, which "reflects a discursive continuity with colonial ideologies and function to position the other as intellectually inferior or duplicitous" (Sidhu 2006, p. 35). In a guidebook on international students, analyzed by Sidhu, the author suggests the following:

> …that Asian students are likely to bring an uncritical and reproductive approach to learning compared with Western students. These students are preoccupied with conserving knowledge, rote learning, and the uncritical acceptance of written texts and teacher's authority. A different attitude to knowledge, authority and learning is held responsible for a disjunction between the goals of an Australian university education and the education expectations of the overseas student. (Sidhu 2006, p. 35)

Explanations for differences are sought in essentialist cultural categories and attitudes toward knowledge and learning, rather than considering the problems of second language acquisition, the dominance of English, and different pedagogical ideals and assessment criteria. Sidhu (2006, p. 36) refers to studies showing that strategies for surface learning (Marton and Säljö 1976) are as common among Australian students as they are among international students.

9.6 Conclusion

We are not arguing that essentialist cultural differences are the main reason for the problems that Russian students encounter in a new academic context. It is, instead, a matter of them being unfamiliar with the norms of academic literacy and with explicit reflections on the ethics of intertextuality. Sidhu speaks of "rewarded acculturation" (Sidhu 2006, p. 83) as the model of the other in international educational discourse, a discourse that rewards behaviors "that support white majority and support a neocolonial system". In BEAR exchange programs Russian students are rewarded with a degree partly as an outcome of successful acculturation to the western ethics of textual borrowing. The implication of this analysis is that a nonjudgmental understanding of different academic cultures, based on respect and mutual trust, is beneficial in order to avoid narrow-minded ethnocentric judgments of the quality of academic performance. We should beware of using our own understanding as the singular norm with which to evaluate others.

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Part IV
Students

Chapter 10
Russian Students in Norway – Facts and Figures

Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen

10.1 Student Mobility in Numbers

Since the turn the millennium, the number of students with foreign citizenzenship enrolled in Norwegian higher education institutions has more than tripled. As outlined by Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen (Chap. 3 in this volume), there are several reasons for this development. Globalisation, and internationalization policy initiated by the EU are important drivers, in addition to Norwegian responses to these international trends. Internationalization of higher education has obtained a very prominent position on the political agenda since the 1980s, and increasing international student mobility is a vital part of national policy as well as the strategic plans of higher education institutions (White paper no. 14 2008–2009; SIU 2013). A more active policy for internationalization of higher education has been implemented in Norwegian universities and colleges. This includes stronger emphasis on facilitating and encouraging both outgoing and incoming student mobility, as well as the central aim of more closely linking internationalization to knowledge policy in general (White paper no. 14 2008–2009). Outgoing mobility is expected to provide Norwegian students with international skills and experiences in addition to high quality education. Incoming mobility is seen as a means of *quality enhancement* of Norwegian higher education institutions and *internationalization at home.*

Norwegian policy on internationalization has a special focus on certain regions, of which cooperation with Russia and the Barents Region is one (White paper no. 14 2008–2009). Hence, the influx of Russian students is in line with policy goals. Russian students have constituted a vital part of the growth in the number of international students in Norway. Particularly since 2009, the number of Russian students has grown substantially. According to the Database for Statistics Higher Education (dbh.no) more than 1400 Russian citizens were registered as students in

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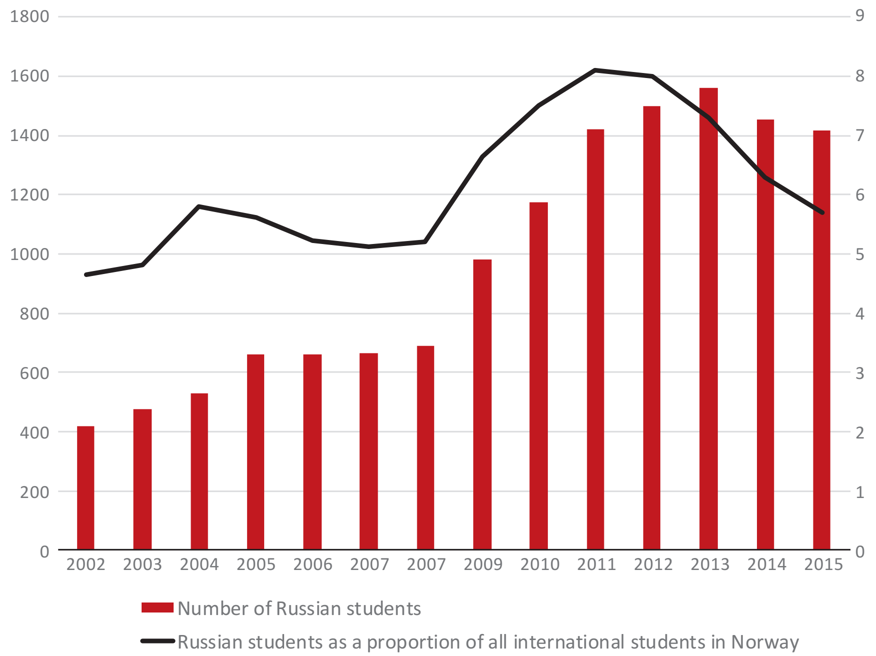

Fig. 10.1 Russian students in Norwegian higher education institutions 2002–2015 (Source: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH))

Norwegian higher education institutions in Fall 2015. This means that Russians constitute the third largest group of international students in Norway, out-numbered only by Swedish and German students.

The development in the number of students, and the relative proportion of Russian students among international students in Norway, is shown in Fig. 10.1.

In the peak years of 2011 and 2012, Russian students constituted as much as 8% of the total number of international students in Norway. Recent developments show that the relative proportion of Russians among international students is decreasing, and a small reduction in numbers has been observed since 2013.

University of Nordland (from 01.06.16 Nord University) and the Finnmark Campus of UiT – The Arctic University of Norway has established programs in circumpolar studies/northern studies partly based on distance learning (cf. Sundet, Chap. 4 in this volume; Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). These programs are mainly targeting Russian students, but the vast majority of Russians enrolled in these programs are not physically present on Norwegian campuses. Nonetheless, when it comes to national statistics such as the Database for Statistics on Higher Education, they are counted as foreign students *in* Norway, as they are enrolled in Norwegian higher education institutions. A large part of the increase in the number of Russian students since 2009 is related to the establishment of these distance-learning programs. The online students constitute somewhere between one fourth and one third of all Russian students registered in Norwegian higher education institutions. However, even if online students were not counted, Russian students would still constitute one of the leading groups of international students in Norway.

The number of Russian students at Norwegian universities and colleges has grown faster than the general Russian student export. According to statistics from UNESCO, the total number of Russian students abroad has grown by approximately 50% between 2000 and 2012 (OECD 2015). The total number of Russians in Norwegian higher education institutions more than tripled in the same period (if online students were excluded, the numbers had still more than doubled).

Russian students are over-represented in institutions in the northern part of Norway. More than 40% of Russian students are currently studying in the three northernmost counties (Nordland, Troms and Finnmark). In comparison, less than 10% of the total student population in Norway is studying in this region. The reason why Russians study in northern Norway is that higher education institutions in this region have been particularly active in regional cross-border cooperation, with a focus on northwest Russia and the Barents Region.

UiT -The Arctic University of Norway and the University of Nordland had the highest number of Russian students (256 and 252 students, respectively, in Fall 2015, according to the Database for Statistics on Higher Education). This is partly due to the online programs mentioned, however, these universities also have many other forms of cooperation with Russian universities, including student mobility (cf. Forstorp and Kriulya, Chap. 9 in this volume; Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume; Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume; Sundet, Chap. 4 in this volume). Russians are studying in other areas of Norway as well. Many students are found in what is often considered the most prestigious institution in Norway, the University of Oslo (194 students in Fall 2015), and Russian students are spread all over the country (Wiers-Jenssen 2014).

The student mobility between Russia and Norway is not balanced. There are far more Russians studying in Norway than the other way around. According to information from the State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen), the number of Norwegians studying in Russia has fluctuated between 60 and 145 students per year since the year 2000. In 2012–2013, 56 Norwegian exchange students studied in Russia (Lånekassen 2015). Many of these study the Russian language. Only about 6–8 Norwegian citizens per year are registered as full degree students in Russia. Even when taking into consideration that Norway is a much smaller nation than Russia, with a smaller (internationally mobile) student population, the imbalance is striking. The most popular host countries for Russian students are Germany, the USA, France and the UK; Norway is 11th on this list (UNESCO 2015). Nevertheless, Russian students studying in Norway constitute around 2% of internationally mobile Russian students. In comparison, less than three out of a thousand mobile Norwegian students choose to study in Russia. Hence, we have a situation where a country with stronger traditions for outgoing mobility than incoming mobility (Norway), recruits students from a country with stronger traditions for incoming rather than outgoing mobility (Russia).

There are several reasons why few Norwegians study in Russia. Language is definitely an issue, and the number of programs taught in English in Russia is smalll. Funding has also been a challenge. Norway has a quite generous public student support system for students abroad, but until 2012 it was not possible to get support for the first year of a lower degree in higher education in Russia. In general, Norwegian students who undertake a full degree abroad tend to prefer destinations where English or Nordic languages are spoken (UK, USA, Australia, Denmark) or countries where programs in English targeting foreign students are offered (such as medical programs in Poland and Hungary) (Research Council of Norway 2015). Norwegian students who undertake shorter sojourns abroad (exchange students) go to a wider range of countries, but rely upon exchange agreements and programs taught in English (Lånekassen 2014).

10.2 Survey Among Russian Students in Norway

In the spring of 2014, a survey was conducted among students with foreign citizenship studying in Norway. Results from the survey are published in three reports (SIU 2014; Wiers-Jenssen 2014, 2015). This survey had an additional sample of Russian students, and the main results reported in this chapter are based on analyzes of all Russian students in the survey. For the purpose of comparison, we also use information about other international students in the survey, as well as information from a survey of Norwegian students (Lid 2013). The response rate among Russian students was moderate. It has not been possible to define exactly, but a low estimate is between 30 and 35%. Hence, we cannot claim that the data are representative, and the results have to be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, the survey is an important exploratory work, providing new information about a group for which previous research has been scarce. For more information about data, sampling and an extensive presentation of results, see Wiers-Jenssen 2015.

The purpose of the survey was to get more information about groups of students about whom limited previous systematic knowledge existed. The main research questions that will be addressed in this chapter are:

- What is the background of Russian students in Norway?
- Why have they chosen Norway as their study destination?
- How do they assess teaching, feedback and the learning environment?
- How are they coping with different challenges associated with being an international student in Norway?
- Would they prefer to stay in Norway upon graduation?
- Are there differences between Russians studying in northern Norway (the Barents Region) and at other Norwegian universities and colleges?
- To what extent do Russian students diverge from other groups of international students in Norway?

10.2.1 Who Are the Russian Students in Norway?

Females constitute the majority of Russian students in the survey – 72%. This is in line with the proportion of females in the total student population of Russian students in Norway (Wiers-Jenssen 2013). There are more females among Russian students than among other international students. Among students from western countries, the proportion of women is 59%, while it is 42% among students from eastern and southern countries (Asia, Africa and Latin America). In the total student population in Norway, it is just over 60% (dbh.no).

Slightly more than half of the respondents are between 18 and 23 years old, one third is between 24 and 30, and 15% are over the age of 30. The age composition of Russian students is in line with the average of other international students.

The majority of students have well-educated parents; 85% have one or both parents with higher education. Corresponding proportions for other international students are below 70%. A substantial proportion of the students also have some kind of international experience in the family. Elisabeth Murphy-Lejeune (2002) has described previous experience with mobility, own experience as well as the experiences of close family members, as *mobility capital.* This phenomenon is observed among Russian students as well; 30% of them have previous experience living abroad (for more than 3 months) and 25% have parents who have lived abroad (for more than 6 months). However, Russian students have less previous international experience than the average of other international students in Norway.

Russian students are found in a wide range of study programs. Among our respondents, science and technology and business and administration are the most popular programs, followed by social sciences and law.

International students are often grouped into two main categories: *degree students*, who undertake a full degree abroad, and *exchange students*, who undertake part of a degree abroad but obtain their diploma at their home institution. Among our respondents, 71% are degree students, while the remaining 29% are exchange students. There are more exchange students among the respondents studying in northern Norway than among students in other parts of Norway (40% vs. 17). This may be explained by the fact that institutions in northern Norway have developed study programs targeting Russian students for shorter sojourns in Norway. It is assumed that degree students and exchange students are different in more ways than the time they spend abroad, and the analyzes presented in this chapter will often distinguish between these two groups.

Not all Russian students initially came to Norway for the purpose of studying. Some had already settled in Norway prior to entering higher education. One out of six respondents state that they were already living in Norway when they commenced their studies. This illustrates that not all foreign students are *incoming* students. The group who were already living in Norway are characterized by a very high proportion of females (85%) and a higher proportion of mature students (46% are over the age of 30).

10.2.2 Why Have They Chosen to Study in Norway?

Individual motives for studying abroad are complex. A line between "push" and "pull" motives is often drawn (Altbach 1998; Mazzarol and Southar 2001). Push-factors refer to (unfavourable) conditions in the home country, such as lack of relevant or high quality educational opportunities, poor career prospects, dissatisfaction with political climate and so on. Pull-factors refer to opportunities in the host country, such as perceived quality of education, improved language and cultural skills, international experience and more. The survey presented here does not ask about push motives, hence, it can only shed light on why they chose to study in Norway, but does not address any particular reasons they may have had for leaving Russia.

Students were presented a list of 18 potential reasons for studying in Norway. They were asked to indicate to what degree their decision was influenced by these factors on a scale from one to five. The reasons rated as most influential are "no tuition fees", "improve career possibilities in Norway", "peaceful and safe society", "technologically advanced society", and "English taught programs". More than two out of three students considered these factors important. Other reasons emphasized by many students are improvement of career possibilities in Russia and countries other than Norway and Russia, reputation of research and teaching, and unspoiled countryside.

In Fig. 10.2 mean scores for full degree and exchange students, respectively, are displayed. We observe that these two groups place different weight on certain motives. Degree students emphasize absence of tuition fees, improving career possibilities in Norway and possibilities for part-time work while studying more than exchange students. Exchange students put more weight on English taught programs and courses, improving career opportunities in the home country, reputation of teaching, research and student social life and unspoiled countryside than do degree students.

Students in higher education insitutions situated in northern Norway are more attracted by the improvement of career possibilities in Russia, reputation of research, teaching and student social life than others. They are less likely to have family in Norway or to have been living there before. On the other hand, we assume that some of them have quite good prior knowledge of the institution they have chosen through networks, as many Russians go from the areas of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk (northwest Russia) to study in northern Norway. Except for this, there are few differences between Russians studying in northern Norway and other parts of the country. We also looked for differences according to gender and found that women more frequently reported that gender equity, and the fact they had family, friends or a partner living in Norway, had been important (in both cases the mean score was 2.6 for women and 1.9 for men).

We also looked at whether Russian students' motives for studying in Norway are different from students of other nationalities. We found that there is one type of motivation where Russian students clearly stand out from other students: *improving career possibilities in Norway*. As much as 83% of Russians rated this important

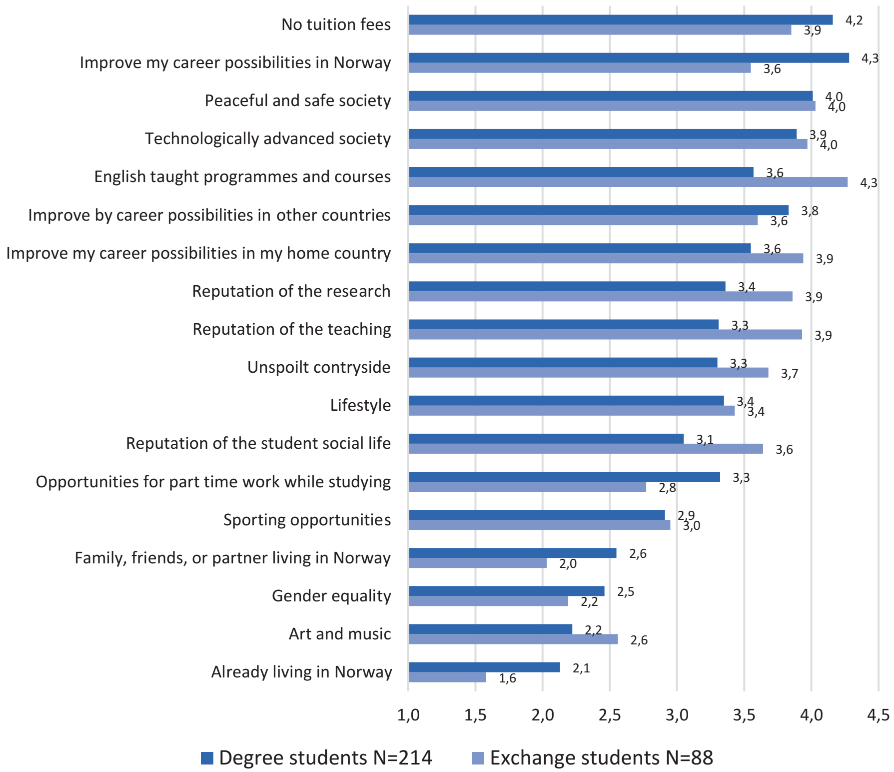

Fig. 10.2 Factors influencing the decision to study in Norway for degree and exchange students. Mean score on a scale from one (not important) to five (very important)

(score four and five), while the proportion was 70% among students from western countries and 65% among students from southern and eastern countries.

The decision to study abroad and the choice of higher education institution are often closely interrelated. Some students go abroad mainly because they find an institution that has something particular to offer. Others decide to go abroad first, then decide on the institution. Our questionnaire also contained questions about the choice of institution. Students state that the programs/courses are the most significant reason for the choice of institution. Four out of five students state that this has been important. For exchange students, cooperation agreements between home and host institution have been just as decisive. English-taught programs are also considered very important, particularly among exchange students. We also note that issues related to quality and reputation are rated somewhat more important in relation to the choice of institution as compared to the reasons for studying in Norway, in general (Wiers-Jenssen 2015).

Figure 10.3 shows how students in different places rate the various reasons for choosing a higher education institution. We have separated between students in northern Norway and students studying in other parts of Norway. Those not studying

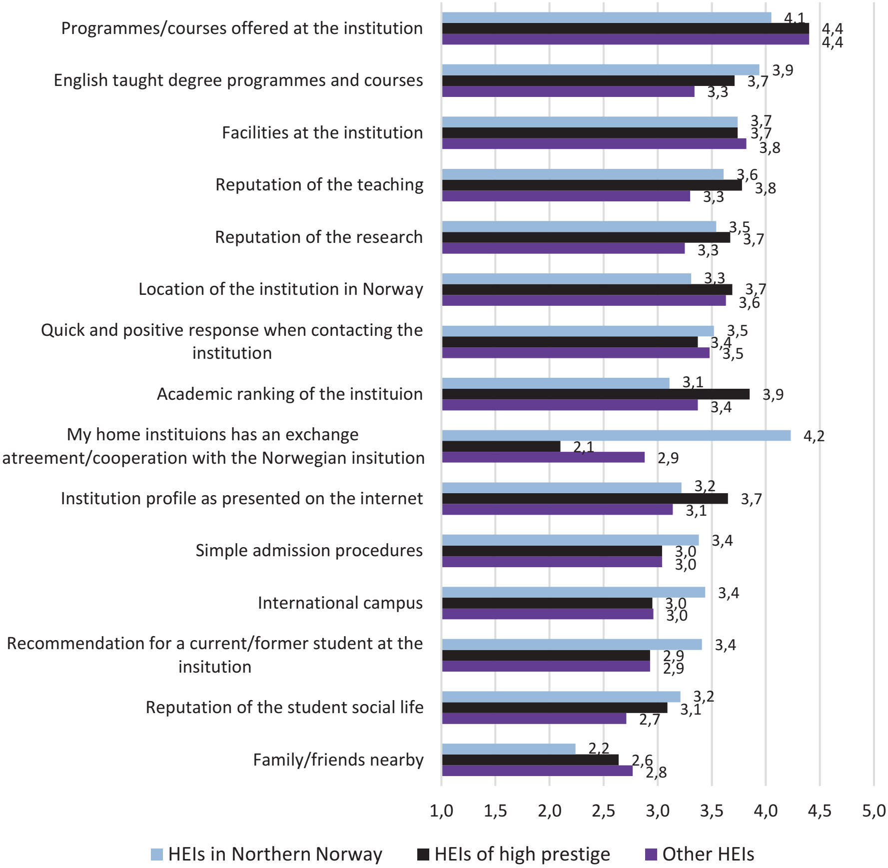

Fig. 10.3 Reasons for the choice of higher education institution. Mean score one (not important) to five (very important)

in northern Norway are divided into two groups; those studying at institutions of high prestige (traditional universities and specialized universities) and those at other institutions. The figure does not distinguish between full degree and exchange students.

We observe that exchange agreements have been far more important to Russians studying in northern Norway than in other parts of the country. More than three out of four degree students in this region report that this has been important, and the proportion is even higher among exchange students. Recommendation from former students has also been more important to this group of students. More than half of them (55%) report recommendations to be important, while around 40% of students from other institutions concur. Those who study at prestigious institutions put more emphasis on academic prestige and institutional profile.

The questionnaire also contained an open space where students could elaborate on the reasons why they chose to study in Norway. Students report a wide range of rationales, most of which are covered by our pre-defined alternatives. These answers may be seen as “scratching the surface” when compared to face-to-face qualitative interviews. Nevertheless, these answers provide information on what comes to students’ minds first and how different rationales interplay. Below we will give some examples of the responses.

Perceived quality and interest in particular subject fields is frequently mentioned. Some express a belief in the quality of Norwegian higher education, in general, while others underscore the reputation or uniqueness of the institution or subject field they have chosen. Some have studied Norwegian language in Russia, and going to Norway for further specialization is seen as a “natural next step”. This is how some students explain why they chose Norway as a destination for studies:

Norway offers the same high level of education as Germany and France.

Best expertise in offshore petroleum technology.

Norway is one of the best countries for studying marine biology. A lot of money for research, great facilities (modern equipment).

Because I wanted to do Ibsen studies.

Many students underscore that exchange programs and institutional agreements have been important for their decision to study in Norway, which we clearly saw from the closed question regarding choice of institution as well. The open question confirms that this has been decisive in many cases, which the statements below illustrate:

Because my home institution has an agreement with University of Tromsø, so it is easier to get a place and scholarship.

My home university and University of Bergen are in collaboration. I also talked to a few students who already took a master’s degree at University of Bergen and they gave me a positive response about being a student in Norway.

I chose Norway because I got this opportunity from University of Nordland. I have been studying there more than one year in a distance program and then I had a chance to finish one semester in Norway. I used this opportunity to see how people study in Norway, to get experience in living in another country and communicating with people from different cultures. And I have never been to Norway before. I wanted to see it.

The fact that education is free of charge is frequently brought up, in line with what we saw in Fig. 10.2. This has definitely been a prerequisite for many students:

Because it is free, and I was provided with a Quota scheme support for studying.

Free education for non-EU citizens. Good career opportunities.

Another reason, related to economic considerations, mentioned by many students, is future career prospects, including the opportunity to remain in Norway upon graduation:

I decided to study in Norway because it gives me a lot of job opportunities in the future.

Norway is an economically stable, developing country. After graduation, you can find a well-paid job. I think that I can live my life here, start a family.

There are other non-academic features of Norway that attract students as well. Some underscore prosperity or features of the Norwegian welfare state model. Others accentuate cultural aspects. Regarding the latter we note that similarities between Russia and Norway are mentioned more often than differences. Some report that a fascination for Norwegian scenery and nature has influenced the decision to study in Norway:

No. 1 in standard of living index, human development index, top in list of happiest countries. Also asked those who already study here. Replies were great.

Because it is very interesting to know new interesting facts about Norwegian culture, their position about rights of indigenous peoples of the North.

Norway has similar historical and partly cultural features to my country

Beautiful nature, safe and peaceful environment

Personal relations have been of vital importance to some of the respondents. Some had friends or relatives living in Norway. Some had a Norwegian partner. As we mentioned earlier, some were already living in Norway when they entered higher education, and to most of these individuals, studying in Norway was the most obvious option:

Most of my friends are studying in Norway.

I'm married to a Norwegian citizen and live in Norway.

Finally, many students report that the decision to study in Norway was influenced by a number of factors combined. The decision to study abroad is often complex, involving academic, cultural and economic, as well as more personal rationales. The quotations below are some examples illuminating this:

Cooperation program between my home university and University of Tromsø, Scholarship, good studying conditions, good welfare system for students (accommodation, facilities), closeness to home city in Russia.

It is a good opportunity to get a degree that is internationally recognizable, improve English skills, learn a new language, meet new people from different countries around the world and study using teaching methods.

Friendly educational atmosphere, free education, quota scholarship, possibility to find a job relative to the educational level. Friendly, kind Norwegians. Nice professors, open-minded and communicative. Beautiful nature. Wonderful country.

We have seen that there are a number of reasons why Russians study in Norway. Exchange agreements and English-taught programs facilitate mobility, and the absence of tuition fees lowers the economic threshold for studying abroad. Some want to access education they feel is unique or that has a good reputation for quality. Others are attracted to features of Norwegian society, such as a high level of development, safety, culture, scenery and so on. Future career prospects are very important, and Russian students are more likely to be tempted by career prospects in Norway than most other international students are. One methodological challenge, in relation to both open and closed questions, is that we've asked about a decision that was made some time ago, often several years, and that they may not remember exactly what they were thinking at the time the decision was made.

10.2.3 *Assessment of Teaching, Counselling and Learning Environment*

Previous studies of international students in Norway have shown that they are generally satisfied with the study sojourn in Norway (SIU 2011, 2013). However, these studies have not specifically addressed which aspects of student life they are satisfied with; thus, we do not know whether it is the teaching and learning environment or the sojourn, in general. In this section, we look at the students' assessment of teaching, counselling and study environment.

As displayed in Fig. 10.4, the vast majority of students have quite positive assessments of the aspects of teaching, counselling and learning environment listed. Few claim to be dissatisfied. Students are particularly satisfied with the teachers' ability to teach in English, and with rooms, equipment, library and ICT. The proportion that reports being "very satisfied" with other aspects of teaching and counselling,

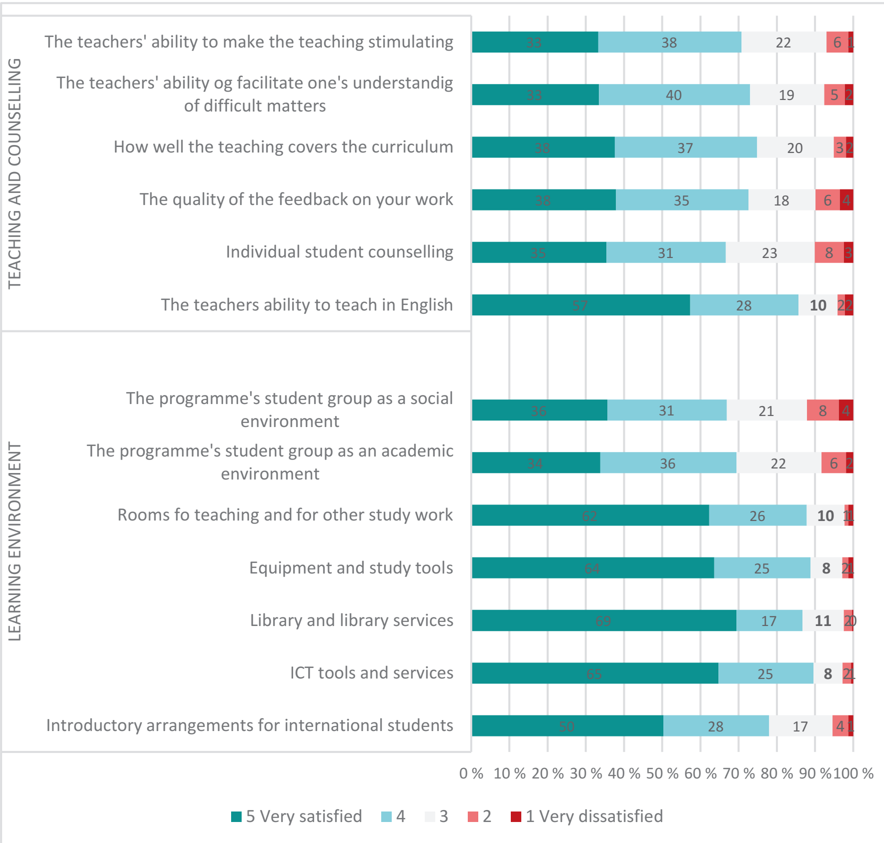

Fig. 10.4 Students' assessment of teaching, counselling and learning environment (Per cent)

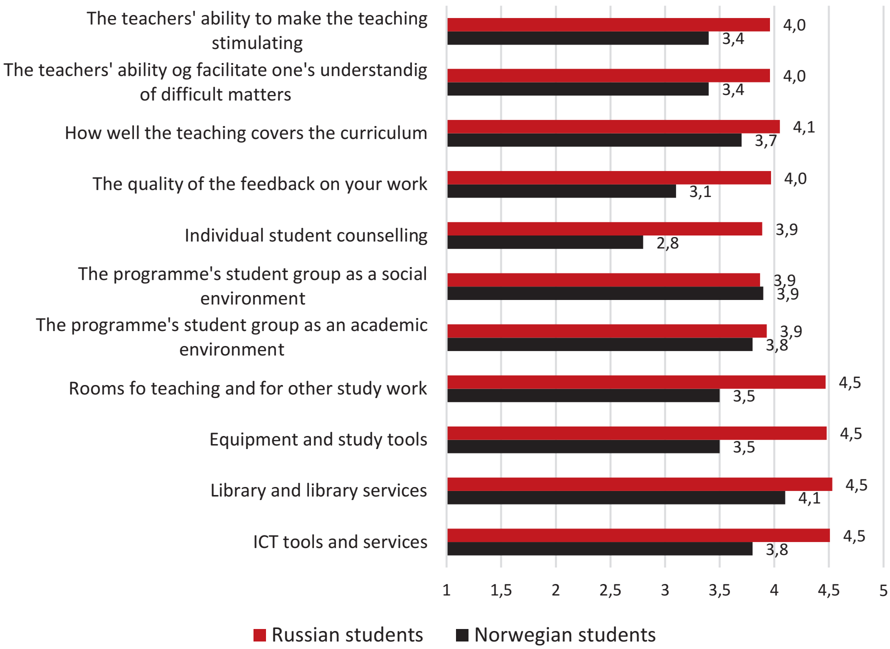

Fig. 10.5 Russian students' assessment of teaching, counselling and learning environment compared to Norwegian students. Mean score on a scale form one (dissatisfied) to five (very satisfied)

and the social and academic environment among students is lower. Nevertheless, as we will come back to, these proportions are quite high when compared to other groups of students.

Comparing Russian students to other groups of international students, we find that Russians are slightly more satisfied than others regarding all aspects listed. The general pattern is that Russians constitute the most satisfied group, followed by students from countries in the southern and eastern parts of the world. Students from western countries are less satisfied than the average, particularly students from North America (Wiers-Jenssen 2014).

We have also compared the results to a survey among Norwegian students (The Study barometer). We find that Russian students, as well as other international students, are more satisfied than Norwegian students with regard to most aspects of teaching, counselling and learning environment (Fig. 10.5). The differences are particularly striking when it comes to feedback, counselling, rooms and equipment. There are only two exceptions to a pattern of higher satisfaction among international students; social and academic environment. Regarding these aspects, the viewpoints of international and Norwegian students are quite similar. We will come back to this in the next section of this chapter.

We have seen that Russian students are more satisfied than other international students; and definitely more satisfied than Norwegian students. How can this be explained? The survey data cannot provide answers to this question. One possible explanation is that level of satisfaction may vary according to expectations and the kind of educational systems students come from. When we find that Russian students are satisfied with rooms, tools and equipment, perhaps this is because the standard is better than what they had expected. When they are more satisfied with feedback and counselling, it is perhaps because they feel teachers are more accessible and willing to provide feedback than what they are used to in Russia.

Another interpretation is that satisfaction is related to motivation. Other studies have shown that highly motivated and ambitious students tend to be more satisfied (Astin 1993; Diseth et al. 2010). Students who go abroad are likely to be more motivated, on average, than students entering a local college. This may explain why Russian and most other international students are more satisfied than Norwegian students.

10.2.4 Challenges Related to Studying in Norway

Studying in another country involves a wide range of new experiences. Teaching methods and examination forms may be quite different, and there are a lot of challenges regarding cross-cultural adaptation and practicalities, such as language, cultural codes, social networks and housing. We will now look at some of the challenges related to being an international student and investigate how Russian students cope with these.

Students were presented with a list of six potential challenges associated with studying in Norway and asked to indicate whether it had been easier or more difficult than expected to handle these tasks. As seen in Fig. 10.6, getting to know Norwegians and dealing with the cost of living are the two aspects that cause most

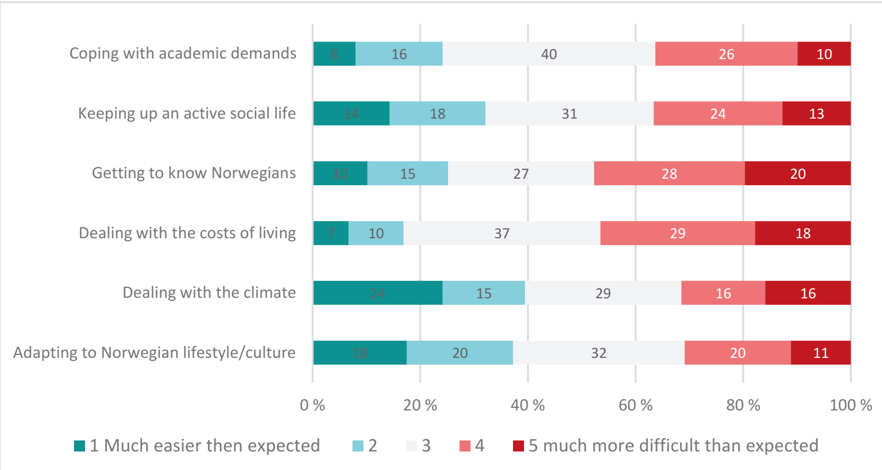

Fig. 10.6 Challenges associated with studying in Norway (Per cent)

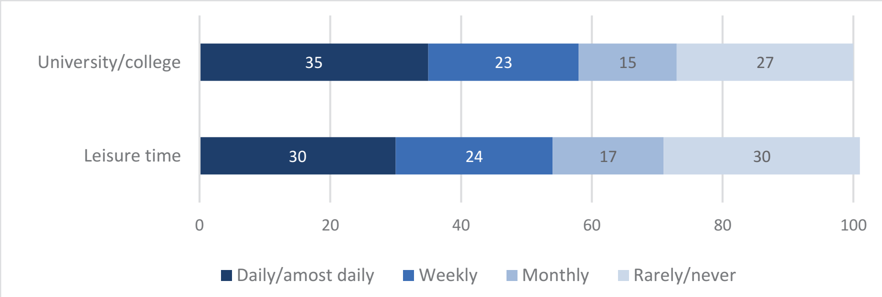

Fig. 10.7 Frequency of interaction with Norwegian students at university/college and during leisure time (Per cent)

concern; close to half of the students find these elements more challenging than expected. When it comes to climate and adapting to lifestyle, more Russian students found these aspects easier than expected rather than more difficult.

In regards to "coping with academic demands", slightly more Russians than others report this to be more challenging than expected. Russians seem to cope better than students of many other nationalities when it comes to other possible challenges. They struggle less with the cost of living and getting to know Norwegians than students from developing countries. Still, we note that there are far more Russian students who find these tasks more challenging than expected rather than easier. There is no doubt that studying in a high-cost country and forming relations with Norwegians are difficult for many students. These challenges may also be related; some of the activities and arenas in which relations can be developed with Norwegians may be financially out of reach for international students. Examples of this may include going to pubs or participating in sports activities that require expensive equipment and membership fees.

Being aware of the fact that getting to know Norwegians is challenging, we also asked students how frequently they interact with Norwegians – in study situations as well as during their leisure time. Results are shown in Fig. 10.7. We see that interaction between Russian students and Norwegians is limited. Only one in three students interact with Norwegian students at university/college on a daily basis. One in four state that they rarely or never interact with Norwegians in a studying situation. Contact with Norwegians during leisure time is even lower.

Russians report about the same level of interaction with Norwegians as most European students do. Students from Nordic countries and North America have more contact with Norwegians, while students from other parts of the world report less contact; in particular, students from African countries.

Even though the frequency of interaction varies by nationality, interaction between international and Norwegian students seems to be a general challenge. As long as international students form friendships with co-nationals and other international students (which most of them do), limited interaction with Norwegians does not necessarily lead to alienation and dissatisfaction. Two out of three international students report having developed a more positive impression of Norway during their sojourn, and this applies to Russians as well. Nonetheless, absence of interaction implies that international students are not able to make the most of the sojourn abroad. Likewise, such lack of synergy may constitute missed opportunities for Norwegian students and Norwegian higher educationinstitutions. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, and by Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen (Chap. 3 in this volume), quality enhancement and "internationalization at home" are central political aims of internationalization and student mobility. If interaction is limited, these goals are hard to fulfil.

Why is interaction limited? Part of the explanation lies in the fact that international and Norwegian students do not always take the same courses and classes. Housing arrangements may also contribute to creating "ghettos" of international students. In an open question, asking students about what institutions could do to improve the study sojourn, many students point out that common arenas for interaction are needed. A few examples are listed below:

> *More joint events for Norwegians and international students.*
>
> *To enter more Norwegian courses, such as language, culture and living in Norway, to be able to be a part of Norwegian society during the education.*
>
> *Mix the students in student houses to avoid the appearance of diasporas.*

Similar opinions are also shared by other international students. One may question if higher education institutions have been sufficiently prepared to receive as many international students as they have in recent years. On the other hand, limited contact between international and national students is not unique to Norway. Quantitative as well as qualitative studies from countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia and Ireland have shown that the amount of such contact is often low (Garret 2014; O'Reilly et al. 2013).

Still, there is no doubt room for improvement when it comes to interaction between international and Norwegian students. Among the measures that can be taken is for teachers to encourage international students to share their perspectives in class. Additionally, Norwegian students can be made more aware of the opportunities and responsibilities to interact with international students. Institutions can make sure that international and national students are in the same courses and that housing arrangements do not contribute to segregation.

10.2.5 Temporary or Permanent Migration?

Studying abroad is a form of temporary migration. However, sometimes temporary sojourns become more permanent. For some students, the idea of staying behind in the host country is in mind before going abroad. Others develop a preference for migration during the study sojourn abroad (Karlsen, Chap. 13 in this volume). Earlier in this chapter, we looked into the students' motivations for studying in Norway and found that many Russians see career opportunities as an important

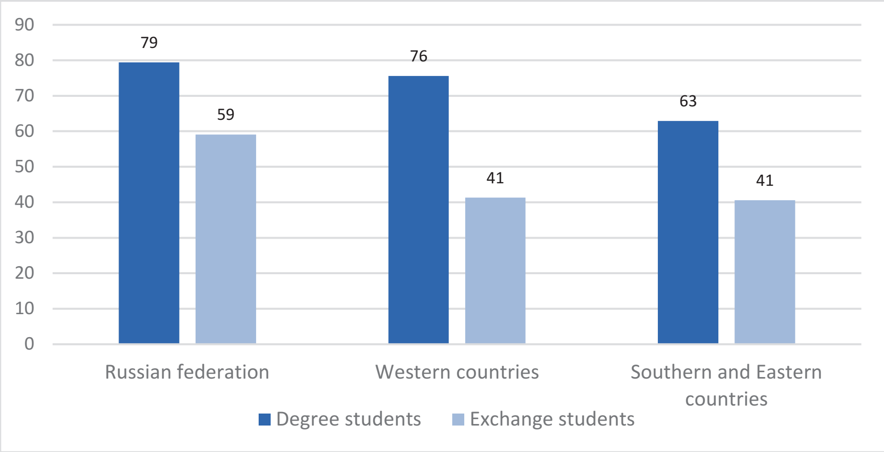

Fig. 10.8 Proportion of students from different countries considering staying in Norway after graduation

motivation. Following up on this, we will now look at the numbers of students who would like to stay in Norway upon graduation.

Eight out of ten full-degree students and six of ten exchange students report that they consider staying in Norway after completing their education. We observe that there are no statistical differences between males and females; men are just as interested in staying as women. It is more common among Russians than among most other international students to consider staying in Norway upon graduation. This is particularly true for exchange students. Figure 10.8 shows that the proportion of exchange students who would like to stay is approximately 50% higher among Russian students than among other international students.

The fact that students consider staying in Norway does not necessarily mean they will actually do so. They may find more attractive alternatives elsewhere, change their minds or face legal barriers as non-EEA citizens. Nonetheless, it is interesting to observe that Russians are more interested in staying in Norway than students of most other nationalities. Possible explanations may be good career prospects, combined with geographical and cultural proximity.

From other sources, we know that significant proportions of international students end up staying in Norway upon graduation. It is estimated that around half of the international students who undertake a master's degree in Norway remain upon completion of the degree, and the proportion is higher among bachelor students (DAMVAD 2013). Though facilitating for international students to remain in Norway is not part of official internationalization or labour market policy, this type of *skilled migration* may be seen as favourable from a Norwegian point of view. The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) is among the stakeholders who have argued that a larger proportion of international students should stay, considering they have obtained an education heavily subsidized by Norwegian public funding.

Seen from a Russian point of view, student mobility to Norway implies a high risk of brain drain. The leak of Russian students is not compensated by a similar flow of Norwegians to Russia. However, students leaving Russia can also be seen as positive. Students who stay in Norway may contribute to maintaining or improving Russian-Norwegian relations in the economic as well as the cultural sphere. Furthermore, the Russian students who go to and settle in Norway constitute a very low proportion of the total Russian student population.

10.3 Summary and Closing Discussion

We have seen that Norway has become a popular destination for Russian students. However, recent developments show that Russians constitute a lower proportion of the international student population in Norway than they did a few years ago. The reasons for this are not known. Considering that educational cooperation with Russia and the Barents Region is an area of priority in Norwegian higher education policy, this should be further investigated if the trend continues.

When it comes to background, Russian students have parents with higher education more often than other international students. The Russian student body is also special in that females constitute a very high proportion of the students. Our data do not contain information on intake scores, dropout and completion rates, but this kind of information would be interesting to obtain in future studies to investigate the extent to which Russian students are more successful than others.

The reasons Russian students report for studying in Norway are similar to other international students. Absence of tuition fees, courses in English and exchange agreements between Norwegian and Russian institutions are strongly emphasized, in addition to the fact that students consider Norway a peaceful and technologically advanced society. Quality issues are also present, though not highest on the list. Considerations regarding future career are also very important. Russians stand out from other international students in that more of them are motivated by the possibility of a career in Norway.

Russian students have very positive assessments of teaching, feedback and the learning environment in Norwegian higher education institutions. Compared to other students, they are particularly satisfied with feedback and counselling, but also rooms and equipment. International students are generally more satisfied with teaching, feedback and learning environment compared to Norwegian students, and Russians are among the most satisfied. However, both Russian and other international students are less impressed by the social and academic climate among students. In this case, their responses are at the same level as Norwegian students. Viewed in relation to other results from the survey, we interpret this as a consequence of the fact that they have limited interaction with Norwegians. Getting to know Norwegians is one feature of being an international student in Norway that half of the Russian students find more challenging than expected. They have less contact with Norwegians than the average international student – on campus as well as outside campus. Social networks are important for satisfaction and adaptation, and have an impact beyond the well-being of the individual students. If interaction between international students and students from the host country is not taking place, the possibilities for "doing internationalization" are limited. Central goals of the Norwegian policy of internationalization are quality enhancement and "internationalization at home". To obtain such goals, a high level of interaction between international and national students is necessary.

Limited interaction between international and national students is not unique to Norway, however, it may be questioned whether the rapid growth in the number of international students has caused particular challenges for institutions in relation to the integration of students. It may also be argued that some aspects of national political goals for internationalization may be perceived as buzzwords rather than achievable goals, and that higher education institutions may prioritize other rationales for student mobility than quality enhancement and cultural exchange. Capacity building in other countries, international solidarity, or regional cooperation may be seen as important aspects at the institutional level, independent of "immediate" internationalization effects. Also, some institutions may be more focused on *attracting* students than catering to them on campus. For higher education institutions with a limited pool of local students to recruit from, attracting international students may be essential for the sustainability of certain study programs. Financial rationales may definitely be a part of the institutional motivation for recruiting international students; part of the funding of Norwegian higher institutions relies on the number of credit points students take. In addition, entrepreneurial activities, such as developing new study programs targeting new groups of students, may be perceived as particularly interesting for academic staff. As mentioned, a few such programs have been very important in relation to the recruitment of Russian students to Norwegian universities and colleges.

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Chapter 11
Global Horizons and Regional Mobility: Russian Student Mobility to Northern Norway and Northern Sweden

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11.1 Introduction

In this chapter, Russian student mobility to northern Norway and Sweden is investigated. Drawing on educational biographies of Russian students at Luleå University of Technology (LTU), Umeå University in Sweden (UmU), Nord University (formerly University of Nordland (NU) and the Arctic University of Norway (AUN, formerly Finnmark University College and University of Tromsø) in Norway, and the Northern Arctic Federal University (NarFu) in Arkhangelsk, Russia, the aim of this chapter is to investigate different motivational factors behind student mobility from northern Russia to northern Norway and Sweden. This chapter will also put student mobility in this region in dialogue with comparable studies of regional mobility in addition to highlighting the particularities of the Barents Region. This chapter resonates closely with other chapters in this book while also offering the special angle of comparative national dimensions and putting this mobility in the context of earlier and ongoing studies of student mobility on a global basis (cf. Murphy-Lejeune 2002, 2008; Waters 2003, 2005, 2008; Lee and Koo 2006; Sidhu 2006; Sin 2009; Gurüz 2011; Mellström 2012; Brooks and Waters 2013; Forstorp and Mellström 2013, forthc.; Collins et al. 2014).

Russian students in the Barents Region are moving within a regional eduscape that is characterized by an existent and emerging regional infrastructure. The Barents Region is currently being consolidated as a transnational political and cultural space and a region that stretches from northern Norway through the Ice Sea to the distant forests of western Ural. The concept of a regional Barents eduscape is used here to depict the transnational movements of people and ideas with regard to

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higher education and research in this geographical space. As such, it resembles other educational regional eduscapes where historical connections and geographical proximity are used to rejuvenate old connections and ties in a globalising world that presents challenges as well as opportunities to national systems of higher education (see, for instance, Collins et al. 2014). Drawing on anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's conceptualisation of global cultural flows (1996), the concept of eduscapes (Forstorp and Mellström 2013) is generally used to conceptualise global flows of higher education. It is defined as the transnational flow of ideas and people related to research and higher education, where nodes of knowledge centres, peripheries and positional dynamics shift over time but are connected through modern communication technologies and different epistemic, ethnic and learning communities (see also Kynäslahti 2001; Ambrosius Madsen 2005, 2008; Luke 2005, 2006; Beck 2008; Carney 2008, 2010, 2012; Ambrosius Madsen and Carney 2011; Caluya et al. 2011).

I argue that the present (asymmetrical) exchange between northwest Russia, northern Norway and Sweden can be understood within such a regional eduscape in combination with a wider globalism in higher education that directs educational choices, strategies, locations and places of desirable universities. The educational mobility within this regional eduscape is understood on an individual level in relation to analytical notions and empirical categories such as transnational families, globalism, cultural capital, the welfare state, gender, sexuality and nationality. Furthermore, the different national contexts, educational policies and regulatory frameworks of Russia, Norway and Sweden provide an empirical and analytical ground for discussing how educational routes are formed and directed. I additionally tap into current arguments in studies of globalisation and higher education that refer to the state and its institutional arrangements as important mediators of global and regional influence, where the particularities of politics, history and culture at the national level help to determine how particular countries respond to discourses of a seemingly unstoppable globalisation (Sidhu 2006, p. 123; Brooks and Waters 2013, p. 37; Forstorp 2013).

11.2 Background and Context

As Wiers-Jenssen (2014) has pointed out, the number of Russian students has grown considerably since the beginning of 2000. In 2014 close to 1600 Russian students were registered in Norwegian HEIs in comparison to a little over 400 in the year 2000.[1] The overall number of international students in Norway has increased from 6000 in 2000 to more than 21,000 in 2013. Russian students constitute 8% of the international students in Norway; the third largest group, only surpassed by Swedish

[1] Wiers-Jenssen (Chap. 10 in this volume) is giving a comprehensive overview of the Russian student mobility statistics, so I will not go into elaborated statistical details but rather give a short background of the Norwegian and Swedish situation, and then move on to more qualitative data which will complement Wiers-Jenssen's aggregated approach.

and German students. Within the country, the largest receivers of Russian students are the northern universities of University of Nordland and the Arctic University of Norway, with just over 50%. The STEM-subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Medicine) are most popular with 31%, closely followed by Business Administration with 25%. Fifty seven% of the students are taking a bachelor's degree while 43% are enrolled in master's programs. Females comprise 72% of the student population, which is a higher proportion than among other nationalities. For western countries the females represent 59%, while for eastern and southern countries it is 42%. Another characteristic feature of the Russian student population in Norway is that a high proportion of the students' parents hold higher education degrees (Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume).

The Swedish situation has been similar to that of Norway in many ways. However, certain major aspects have drastically changed since 2011; the main reason being the introduction of tuition fees for non-EU students from the Autumn of 2011. This change in policy has dramatically decreased the influx of international students from non-EU countries by approximately 90–95% depending on year, university, subject area, country of origin and so on. There are no general statistics available, but individual Swedish HEIs communicate similar drops in incoming non-EU students. Numbers are slowly picking up again with different scholarship programs as incentives to attract talented students from developing countries, but they are far from the figures prior to 2011 and are never expected to reach anywhere near those numbers again. In the academic year of 2009/2010, the number of international students in Sweden was 41,907, as compared to 25,570 incoming students for the academic year 2005/2006. On average the number of international students in Sweden increased by 12–13% per year between 1999 and 2010 (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, Statistics Sweden 2011, Report UF 20 SM 1101). It is the number of freely-moving international students that has dropped since fees were introduced. In the academic year 2009/2010, Swedish universities received 27778 free movers and 14377 exchange students, with Lund University in the south of Sweden and the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm being the most popular destinations. The gender ratio of all incoming international students in the academic year of 2009/2010 was 56% men and 44% women, with a similar subject preference distribution as in Norway with regard to STEM-subjects and Business and Administration. Russian students in Sweden have been much less prevalent than in Norway. In the academic year of 2009/2010, the total number of Russian students was 498 (1.18% of all incoming students to Sweden 2009/2010), out of which 376 were women (75%) and 122 were men (25%) (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, Statistics Sweden 2011, Report UF 20 SM 1101, p 9.)

In general, the two Nordic sibling countries had experienced a very similar development of increasing numbers of incoming international student until the autumn of 2011. Reactions to the introduction of tuition fees have been mixed, however, from the university sector as well as leading Swedish politicians and industrialists, they have mainly been negative. In November 2011, three months after the fees were introduced, two leading Swedish industrialists, Bennet and

Ekholm, claimed that the reform had been a "serious mistake", that the Swedish higher educational system and Swedish industrial sector would suffer a great loss of technical competence, and that Sweden would lose out on the global labour market. Likewise, former Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson claimed that important international contacts and possibilities for bilateral cooperation would be lost in the process. In the beginning of 2015, critical public voices and debates have been less prevalent.

Nonetheless, in interviews conducted for this as well as parallel projects, we continuously hear criticisms of current educational policies concerning losing out on the global talent pool in science and engineering; not the least of which include subjects and research areas that attract few Swedish engineering students, such as mining and metallurgy. The big demand for competent engineers in these areas was largely filled by graduates from developing countries such as India and Pakistan in the mid-2000s, but the field is now characterized by a constant shortage of skilled engineers. Despite this fact in an increasingly xenophobic political climate there seem to be few politicians, educationalists, and/or industrialists who are ready to bring questions regarding engineering competence, higher education, multiculturalism, immigration and tuition fees to the forefront.

In summary, the differences between Sweden and Norway concerning these issues are likely to remain unless the Norwegian government changes their stance by introducing student fees for non-Norwegian students. This is, indeed, an issue that has been aired by different Norwegian politicians and is probably the most likely scenario if any changes of Norwegian national higher education policies may be forecasted.

11.3 Material and Method

The empirical material for this chapter draws on oral and email interviews with 35 Russian students (23 female and 12 males) at the five different universities listed in the introduction. Ten interviews were conducted in Sweden, 20 interviews in Norway and 5 interviews in Russia. The interviews were conducted between 2009 and 2013 as part of the research project, "Transforming the Northern Future through Student Exchange? Building of a Research Network on Internationalization of Education". In addition, I also use a survey conducted at NArFU. The questionnaire, "Education Abroad", was conducted among 210 students (100 females and 110 males) at the Department of Mathematics and the Department of Information and Space Technologies at NArFU in 2013 (Saburov 2014). Students at different educational levels have been interviewed: doctoral, master's and undergraduate students, including students of varying ages from 20 to the mid-30s. The oral (31) interviews were semi-structured with the guidance of an interview scheme focusing on family background, schooling and educational trajectories, and future plans. The email (4) interviews were focused on the same themes. Aside from the 210 students of mathematics and information and space technologies, 15 interviews were conducted with students in STEM-subjects and 20 interviews with students in the humanities and social sciences. Three of the interviewers spoke Russian and conducted their interviews in Russian, while the other four conducted the interviews in English.

The interviews that were conducted in English were occasionally characterized by troublesome language dilemmas in terms of missing vocabulary, overly short self-presentations and very brief accounts of diverse incidents and happenings. At the same time, they provided an opportunity to practice the language that so many of the students had listed as the prime reason for going abroad. A majority of the students we interviewed are partaking in exchange programs; particularly the students at NU in Bodø where many are in the program Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies (BCS), which is a cross-university program focusing on the circumpolar region, including the Barents Region. Concerning the general picture of the interviews, there is huge diversity in terms of length, content, substance, context, and intelligibility, but with such a fairly large set of both qualitative and quantitative data, there is also fair possibility to catch the most important themes representing different motivational factors of student mobility in the Barents Region. I begin with one of the most prominent ones.

11.4 The Power of English

In the survey conducted at NArFU over 70% of the students answered that the main reason they wanted to study abroad was to improve their proficiency in a foreign language (read English). Although none of the students or faculty at any of the investigated universities have English as a native language (with possibly one exception), this was still the predominant reason given in the NArFU survey, by far, for studying in Norway and Sweden. In Wiers-Jenssen's (2014) survey the factor "English taught programs and courses" ranks as one of the most important reasons, along with factors such as "no tuition fees", "improving my career possibilities", and "safe, and technologically advanced society". There is, thus, an interesting discrepancy between the Russian students' responses in Russia and those in Norway.

Nonetheless, the oral interviews unquestionably substantiate the orientation towards learning English as one of the primary reasons for coming to Norway and Sweden:

> Irina from Arkhangelsk: *I also would like to improve my English language skills; for example, how to write assignments correctly and learning to include several sources of information in my work.*
> Ekaterina from Arkhangelsk: *…honestly, one of my goals in going to Norway was to improve language skills, courses were less important*

In many ways, the English language is a symbolic container that represents many different things to Russian students, and that also resembles and correlates with desires, requirements, career plans, employability, and so on; factors we observe in many other studies of student mobility around the world (Lee and Koo 2006;

Sidhu 2006; Park and Bae 2009; Brooks and Waters 2013). At the same time, the English language also carries many ambivalent and particular associations that mirror the complex history of Russian-western relations. As such, the experiences of the interviewed Russian students point to the importance of contextualizing how globalisation and ideologies of globalism always take local forms and have to be interpreted in relation to space and place; that is, geopolitical dynamics and socio-cultural particularities. Without going into details of any such historical complexities and previous/current political tensions here, we are sticking to interpretations of how this affects Russian student mobility in the High North in the context of the interviewed students.

When comparing our material to that of similar studies, we can note an analogous belief in the idea that mastering the English language is seen as an indispensable requirement for success in a globalised economy (Robertson 2006; Sidhu 2006; Park and Bae 2009, p. 368; Brooks and Waters 2013, p. 62). As such, the desire and need for learning English is presented as a positional advantage in a competitive labour market that is characterized by high entry levels and anticipated individual determination. In the northwest Russian context it also seems to be accentuated as a dividing line between home-boundedness, national sentiments and international orientation. This may not seem controversial from a "western" perspective, but two of the students express concerns that their Norwegian study experiences will not be favorably viewed by Russian employers in the wake of growing anti-western sentiments and pro-Russian campaigns in Russia. On a parallel note, in an excerpt from one of the interviews, we follow ideas on how these political tensions are transplanted into everyday plans, strategic educational choices and different stances with regard to the growing pressure of increasing nationalism:

> Interviewee: *It happens sometimes that a person who has studied abroad tries to contribute something new, for example, in the humanities sphere, but he is blamed afterwards for betrayal of the motherland.*
>
> *You see, my difficulty is also in the fact that I myself don't see what might be changed here. And in the next 5–10 years, I don't think that there will be some kind of change that will lead to flourishing, to stability of our state and so on. It was totalitarism and it is still totalitarism, maybe the walls of the cage became a bit more soft. That's it, it was a cage and it is still a cage. That is why our students leave, they try to get education because they know that they wouldn't be employable with our diploma, not whether we stay here or go abroad.*

The English language is apparently becoming something much broader than just the world lingua of communication that everyone needs to master in order to move around in a global world. In the politically loaded local context, whether or not it is intended by the individual, English represents both a road to something else – a possibility to leave the country – and a possible implicit statement on domestic politics. In many cases, the individual person is supposedly interested in opening a wider window of opportunities, rather than making a statement about domestic politics. The dilemma of possibly being politically positioned due to an individual preference to study abroad is something that seems to accompany mobility decisions along with a commonly held desire to improve one's chances at a better life. The latter motivation is something that our interviewee's articulate in a number of different ways. In an interview with an administrative staff member in Arkhangelsk, the person responded to our question, "What do you think is our students motivation to live abroad?' with the following:

> Interviewee: [smiles and lowers the voice] *Honestly? To leave the country. This is the major thing that I see in our students. They do not see any future prospects in our country. They want, it is understandable, they want to live better, they don't believe in the "bright" future here [in the meaning of good welfare and state support], that is why they hope to change their lives.*

Still, in the broader context, language, mobility and migration are key components in the geography of international education and large-scale power dynamics (Brooks and Waters 2013, p. 168) where linguistic migration:

> …is driven by globally dominant ideologies of English that constitute highly specific views of language, place and social space (Park and Bae 2009, p. 368).

As in the previous quote, the same interviewee puts a similar interpretation into the context of Russian student mobility, which is very asymmetrical in the context of the Barents Region:

> *…this academic mobility that we have at our university now, now it is not academic mobility, we work for the educational system of other countries. It is not academic mobility, we don't see any profit for ourselves, there is no use for our university, only for the reports.*

As such, this interview excerpt seems to reflect the indisputable fact of an overwhelming asymmetry in the exchange relations between northern Norway, Sweden and northern Russia. If anything, this reminds us that academic and student mobility in higher education is an uneven process and that different positions can inhabit differnet locations in a stratified chain of regional, national, and global knowledge production and consumption (Forstorp and Mellström 2013, p. 20). In this uneven process of supply and demand it is important to recognize the particularity of mobility and contextualize questions surrounding location and opportunities. We also see that students in a periphery like northern Russia create certain ways of knowing and being in the periphery that feed upon regional, national and global eduscapes. So, although neither of the involved HEIs in the Barents Region could claim any sort of premier position in a global eduscape, we learn that the peripherality of a regional eduscape is by no means fixed but rather characterized by a cultural dynamic of multi-layeredness and gradual differences. Thus, as Brooks and Waters (2013, p. 115) state:

> Academic mobility is a spatial and human practice filled with social, political and cultural meaning on regional, national and transnational levels.

Consequently, in the broader cultural context, the interview excerpt above also reflects a more general sentiment expressed by several of the young Russian students we have interviewed. It is the feeling of a skewed and unfair balance that spills over into cultural stereotypes about the motivations for studying in Norway and Sweden, particularly when it comes to female students, in addition to commonly held stereotypes about excessive alcohol consumption among Russian male students general expressions of "Russophobia". The next section addresses how such emotions influence student mobility and academic exchange in the Barents Region.

11.5 The Gender Politics of Student Mobility in the Barents Region

As noted earlier, over 70% of the incoming Russian students in Norway and Sweden are female. In comparison to other international students grouped by nationality, this is an unusually high number. Correspondingly, in our interviews we find that important reasons for many of the female students to leave their country are articulated in terms of gender conservatism, gender equality and individual freedom. In an interview with Nadja (23 years), a female Russian student at Luleå University of Technology, she explains what she sees as a confined gender system for women:

> *Either you stay in your hometown, get married early, have children, and try to be the nice domesticated women you are expected to be, or you see the possibility of another life in other parts of the world. It was a reason for me to come to Sweden.*

One of Nadja's friends, Anna, also articulates that she feels very restricted in northern Russia, with a patriarchal gender regime that she feels is the very opposite of the kind of life she anticipates for herself as a young woman. These young women interviewed see few alternatives to leaving their hometowns and country. In our interpretation, there is unquestionably a deeply gendered dimension of student mobility in the Barents Region. One clearly discernable "push" factor is an articulated gender conservatism in the north Russian context, which strongly contributes to the unusually high percentage of female students. Tatjana, a student in the BCS program at NU, is another student who voices similar concerns when reflecting upon gender differences and heteronormative family patterns:

> *Your women are more independent, they are not going to suffer in a relationship, because they just go. Russian women are often suffering from beatings, but they stay. In Russia there are not enough men, maybe 60–40%, but not enough men. You will get something from a man even if he is drinking; because if you are not married, it is also about stigmatization. Especially if you are more than 30 years old, there is the traditional way of thinking and the restriction of the mind; If you are not married, you are not successful. Even now, I am 25 and not married, but I am glad that it is becoming better, because before when you were 25 and not married people thought that something was not correct with you. But now it is becoming better. But mostly all my classmates have family and they think that their success is already achieved; to have children and family. If you are not so educated and if you haven't made any goals in your life but have created a family, and if you find a man, that means that you are successful.*

As it seems this gender conservatism is working in parallel with new and changing mobility patterns in the Arctic regions, possibly furthering the impetus for young women to leave their native places:

> …there is a new pattern emerging of higher female education in the Arctic resulting in higher rates of female emigration, first from smaller to larger settlements and then out of the Arctic either to the metropoles of the Arctic states or abroad, in search of work commensurate with their skill levels. While men also migrate away, they tend to do so on a temporary basis, while women tend to leave permanently. (UArctic 2014, p. 70)

Student mobility is thus part of broader gender-imbalanced migration patterns on a local and regional level, not only in northern Russia but also in other parts of the Barents Region and the Arctic region as a whole, although more accentuated in the Russian Arctic regions (UArctic 2014, p. 93). We can thus observe how gender is a decisive dimension of an uneven geography of transnational higher education that connect social imaginaries of regional and global eduscapes in various ways. In the case of Russian students in the Nordic countries we clearly observe that educational mobility is part of larger migration flows that feed upon diverse expressions of gender and sexuality, among other things. Thus, educational mobility is closely connected to the search for identity and expression in a broader sense, where the idea of expressing oneself in terms of less normative gender and sexuality arrangements is becoming increasingly more important for many young people around the globe.

Another dimension of the gender politics of Russian student mobility to Norway and Sweden is found in everyday experiences of sexism and recurrent expressions of gender stereotypes connected to Russian women. Several of the interviewed female students have been witness to such behaviors among fellow Norwegian and Swedish students, other Swedes and Norwegians, and possibly those of other nationalities as well. Tanya, who studied the BCS program at NU, recalls a situation when she and a friend asked for directions in Bodø:

> *We asked people and they were very kind, and one couple was very interested and walked with us to the Police College, and then the man said that here you will find strong Norwegian men; you should hunt them. I was shocked! Why should I hunt them?!*
>
> *My second bad experience was in this club, "Samfunnet". There I noticed that Norwegian guys were drunk. They are usually more shy, but when they are drunk, they just go to girls, and when some came to us, they treated us like whores. You are Russian girls, you come here to find husbands, to stay here, just to become housewives and get children, and do nothing. It was humiliating. They were drunk, but when they are drunk they say what is in their head, what they really think. After this experience my attitude towards Norway has changed.*

In our interviews with female Russian students at LTU in Sweden, they reiterated several similar incidents of having to face sexism and gender stereotypes because of their nationality. Olga, a doctoral student at LTU, has developed a strategy of trying to avoid mentioning her background because as she says:

> *…it always compels people to comment on prostitution, politics, mail-order brides, vodka or whatever that they connect with Russia, and I'm not really interested in talking about these things because I'm here to do my doctorate…*

Olga speaks fluent Swedish with a hardly discernable accent. Beyond trying to avoid the ethnic and gendered stereotypes in daily conversations, she also emphasizes the importance of mastering the language to the degree that you almost pass as a native speaker. For her, this has been an empowering key to what she feels has been an overall positive migratory experience. She has been living in Luleå on a permanent basis since 2009 and is now established in her academic career at LTU. However, being cornered by "Russophobic" prejudices is something that seems to recur throughout many of the migratory experiences of the interviewed

Russian students. These students are culturally cornered with prejudice by ethnic Swedes and Norwegians and even by ethnic Russians in Russia, according to Janina, a student from NArFU on an exchange semester at NU:

> *…like some Russians, and also Norwegians, think that Russian women only want to find a man to marry, so that is the reason why I have lost some of the communication with old friends because it is about jealousy, it is about understanding, because they don't think it is about studying.*

Being "othered" by ethnic Swedes and Norwegians via gendered and ethnic prejudices, in combination with similar marginalization by fellow countrymen−women, seems to create a certain translocational space (Anthias 2002, pp. 501–502) for these students; where they do not feel comfortable in what is supposedly their designated home space nor in the receiving country. This is, of course, an experience they share with migrants of different kinds, but also something that is unique and points to the particularity of student mobility in the Barents Region. This is, in large part, a gendered particularity created by normative expectations, rules and prejudices on both the sending and receiving ends. This translocational space is characterized by degrees of liminality, a sense of in-betweenness, which may not only be seen as a cultural hindrance but also as a window of opportunity. It can turn out to be empowering, as in the case of Olga; a new possibility that develops from the particularity of the given circumstances in translocal positions and locations. As such, it refers to a complex interplay of locations and dislocations in relation to gender, ethnicity, nationality, and class (Anthias 2002, p. 502).

We can thus see that student mobility in the Barents Region is being conducted within a regional eduscape that is characterized by translocal particularity, in which English is a symbolic container and gender politics are two crucial parameters in the cultural imaginary and the everyday life experiences of the interviewed students. Beyond these preliminary conclusions, it is also important to stress the academic institutional infrastructure, welfare contexts and geographical proximity as essential parameters for channeling mobility patterns and structuring individual experiences. It is to these themes we turn in the next section.

11.6 Institutional Arrangements and "Welfare Statism"

Throughout our interviews we have come to see that institutional arrangements are emphasized as an important reason for the possibility to study abroad. To move within an institutional arrangement that provides a feeling of personal security, a sense of cultural familiarity and a safe environment is hardly something unique to Russian students; it has also been seen in previous interviews done in Sweden and Malaysia (Mellström 2003, 2012), in addition to many other studies of student mobility. In the case of student mobility in the Barents Region, these factors are also connected to the wider and presumably inviting context of the welfare state/s in

Norway and Sweden. This is what I refer to as "welfare statism" as a "pull" factor in transnational student mobility.

In most cases, decisions to migrate, or just leave for a semester, are channeled through family, friends, kin and even clansmen/−women. In previous work (Mellström 2012; Forstorp and Mellström 2013) we have also seen that migratory experiences with higher education as the driving force do not merely concern individuals; for many of the interviewees, it is also part of their family stories. It governs their lives and has, in very many cases, governed the entire family history. Considerations and concerns about safe accommodation, travels and a non-hostile student environment, in general, are crucial aspects of these discussions. Not surprisingly, this is particularly emphasized by female students and their families. Many of the students that have taken the BCS program at NU, overwhelmingly female, mention the good relations to Norway and the known institutional arrangements as important factors in, their mobility decision. A sense of cultural familiarity, similar climate and geographical proximity are other factors mentioned by these students. Viktor, who took the BCS program, says:

> *The module I enjoyed most was focusing on security of the circumpolar world. I am interested in this theme because we – as neighbors in the Barents Region – have a lot in common. And history is important in order to avoid conflicts and ensure a life in peace together.*

One interpretation of Viktor's statement could be that, in moving between places, we are also helping to construct these places and bind them together. Transnational migration processes connect places by contributing to the construction of space and by "locating globalization" in different places and in different scale dynamics from the local to the regional and global spheres (Smith 2001; Featherstone et al. 2007; Glick Schiller and Caglar 2009; Hedberg and Carmo 2012; Hedberg et al. 2014). As such, it is important to also recognize that institutional arrangements are channeling these spatial bindings "from above" (Hedberg et al. 2014) in an interplay between different scale levels of transnational mobility. Institutional arrangements seem to be an underestimated dimension in studies of student mobility, where most studies have taken a perspective "from below":

> The agency of individual migrants, migrant communities and migrant organisations is often highlighted in transnational migration studies. (Hedberg et al. 2014, p. 515)

In the case of Russian student mobility to northern Norway and Sweden, we do observe that institutional arrangements, such as the BCS program, are truly important in combination with a general desire for "modernity" in terms of welfare state arrangements, socio-economic conditions and high-quality educational facilities.

One crucial part of the welfare state's institutional and ideological arrangements, in terms of access to higher education and social equality in the Barents Region, is the absence of tuition fees – currently in the Norwegian higher education system and previously in the Swedish system as well. In Wiers-Jenssen's study (Chap. 10 in this volume) we learn that the absence of tuition fees ranks as the second most important reason for choosing to study in Norway. To put it simply, most of the free-moving students we have interviewed would never have been able to come to

Norway, nor Sweden previously, if not for the absence of tuition fees. Irrespective of any political stance taken in this matter, there is unanimous agreement among researchers, politicians and educationalists in Sweden that a unique window of opportunity for non-EU citizens who lack resources to obtain higher education has been shut down. As a consequence, the prism of nationalities and individuals has drastically shrunk at Swedish universities since 2011. From the perspective of global eduscapes, it is an evident and straightforward hierarchization in a global political economy of higher education.

Other important "pull" dimensions, within the frame of the welfare statism argument that we are advocating here, are the presumably positive aspects of a welfare state; e.g., gender equality, social security, welfare schemes, and a peaceful and non-hostile environment. This is something that many Swedes and Norwegians may not unanimously agree upon. Nonetheless, this image of the two Nordic countries is no doubt a powerful one expressed by many international students we have interviewed; Russian students, in particular. This welfare statism cultural imaginary of Norway and Sweden is a broad palette encompassing many aspects, a few of which we will touch upon.

Throughout her interview, Maria, an exchange student of social work at AUN, contrasts her perceptions of Norway with the conditions in her Russian hometown. The narrative structure of the interview is built on a very rosy picture of Norwegian social conditions and welfare, in contrast to a rather dull picture of Russian conditions. The latter is difficult to evaluate, however, Maria's overly enthusiastic praise of the social welfare system in Norway feeds into a cultural imaginary that is often of equally great importance as the actual physical mobility. As such, it is a compelling force of imaginary in the everyday lives and prospects for future betterment in terms of social mobility and equality, and moving between social facticity, individual desire and collective imagination/s (see also Forstorp and Mellström 2013). Collins et al. (2014, p. 664) advocate an understanding of desire in this context:

> … as not only taking us to other places, literally in student mobilities, but also about transforming ourselves and the social spaces we inhabit.

The experiences of Russian students in Norway and Sweden continuously move in such a transformative terrain, and have comparative cultural contrasts at their general narrative core, which repeatedly circulate around social conditions, learning styles, pedagogical techniques, and university facilities. The experiences are also naturally conditioned by the topic areas of programs and courses. It is, therefore, no big surprise that we have a traditional gendered division of labour where Maria, who is studying social work, focuses on social conditions, while Ragnar, who is a doctoral student of metallurgy at LTU, emphasizes the importance of high-class technical equipment and research facilities. As such, Maria and Ragnar represent the standard gender division between the female-dominated areas of social and behavioral sciences and the male-dominated STEM-subjects that we see in our material.

Nevertheless, and despite this and many other forms of division in the student group, there is one topic that seems to cross the subject disciplines; namely, learning styles and pedagogical techniques (Forstorp, Chap. 7 in this volume). Informal student-teacher relations, differences in study cultures and critical reflection are the most commonly mentioned topics for observation among the students interviewed. Several of the Russian students, as well as many other international students we have previously interviewed (Mellström 2012), highlight what they see as an unusual informality between students and teachers. They mention the ease with which they can access teachers as well as the informal styles of socializing and teaching. Maria says:

> *…as if there is almost no difference between teachers and students. It was confusing in the beginning, but eventually I learned to appreciate it…*

This is something that is appreciated by students, for the most part, although there are many different views on the matter. Some students think that studies are more demanding in Russia; a view they substantiate by mentioning that Russian students often have two or even three degrees when they finish university, which is most uncommon among Scandinavian students. Irina at UiN says:

> *The first thing I noticed is that it is more difficult to study in Russia than here. You spend more time at the university and the study programs are bigger.*

Others, such as Maria at AUN, appreciate what they see as a laid-back learning style that places more responsibility on the individual student. Along the same lines, Maria and other students at NU and LTU mention that the individualized responsibility is also demanding because it often implies expectations of critical reflection on class discussions, assignments and student essays. What this actually means can be rather confusing, but is also a welcome challenge for students who are used to a more authoritarian style of learning, according to Maria. Views on the effectiveness of different learning styles vary considerably within the group of interviewed students; there is hardly a consensus with regard to the subject. However, there is apparent consensus on the fact that there are big differences in learning styles, and it seems to be a constant topic of discussion among Russian students in Norway and Sweden.

To sum up, we see that institutional arrangements are an overall crucial mediating factor for student mobility in the Barents Region. As such, they are embedded in a broader context and cultural imaginary of what I refer to as welfare statism, which includes the absence of tuition fees (until 2011 in Sweden), a safe and peaceful environment that generates a sense of personal security, relative gender equality, a sense of cultural familiarity, and geographical proximity. In the decision to migrate on a long-term basis, or just to leave for a shorter stint, these factors work parallel to the importance of the exchange programmes, good facilities and high-class technical equipment at the local universities. As we put these different incentives together we can see that:

> …international students do not necessarily desire the object of an 'overseas degree' in itself but rather what it expresses in terms of the value of overseas education socially, culturally, educationally, and in terms of future trajectories. (Collins et al. 2014, p. 664)

We now turn to future trajectories and prospective careers.

11.7 Prospective Careers and Higher Education as Cultural Capital

As previously noted, two important characteristics of the Russian student population in Norway are the high proportion of females and the high proportion of students with parents who hold higher education degrees (Wiers-Jenssen 2014, p. 821). Wiers-Jenssen (2014) also reports that these students are more likely to have lived abroad and/or have parents who have lived abroad. The qualitative interviews lend support to Wiers-Jenssen's results in different ways. I will, therefore, extend her analysis by further discussing family backgrounds and the class dimensions of student mobility in the Barents Region.

For a majority of the students we have interviewed, there has been an early orientation towards education, which is credited to parents and family background in the interviews. There are a number of solid middle-class occupations among the family backgrounds of these students, such as doctors, teachers, military personnel, lawyers, and so on. In most cases, the decision to study abroad for shorter or longer periods has been actively supported and discussed in the family circle. The advantages and disadvantages of leaving the country for higher education are presumably a topic that is currently on the agenda in many middle-class Russian families, if we are to judge from our interviews. Darya, who had been accepted to a PhD-program at the engineering faculty at LTU when interviewed in 2009, recalls her thoughts and the discussion with her family:

> *Well, my father even has two higher education degrees from Russia but he was still saying "Just go to get education abroad and have a different life than here in Russia". For my parents, they or rather we have this kind of impression that abroad everything is good, and better than back home, and that there is not that much corruption and the education is better so it's some kind of prestige to go abroad and study. So that was my parent's perspective. And also we said that I could easily give up and go back and start studying in Russia again…*

The possibility to foresee a different and "better" future for your children as the most important motivating factor is something we have come across in just about all different interviews conducted in this and parallel projects for the past 10 years. In the growing international literature on student mobility (cf. Murphy-Lejeune 2002, 2008; Waters 2003, 2005, 2008; Lee and Koo 2006; Sidhu 2006; Sin 2006, 2009; Brooks and Waters 2013), we also learn that the degree of family involvement is subject to much cultural variation, but nonetheless lies at the core of middle-class families' reproductive strategies to accumulate different forms of economic, social, and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986) around the world. In particular, studies of student mobility in East Asia have shown how the acquisition of education is:

> … fundamentally a 'family project', imbued with familial expectations and goals affecting students at all levels (Brooks and Waters 2013, p. 53)

As Brooks and Waters (2013), and many others scholars of student mobility, have argued, educational choices are a form of strategic transnationalism by which many families navigate, where accumulation strategies for academic credentials are part of a broader sense of cultural capital accumulation. Essentially, this is no different for the families of the Russian students we have interviewed; however, it may not involve the same overly enthusiastic embrace of "overseas" academic credentials as we find in studies of East Asian contexts. As previously argued in this chapter, in the Russian context, the symbols that are connoted by the words "overseas", "abroad", "western", and the like, exist in an ambivalent political landscape with the national sentiments of many pro-Russian and anti-western stances taken by the current regime, in addition to the complexity of a post-socialist society carrying a myriad of historical imprints of resolved and unresolved "east-west" tensions.

In comparison to East Asian contexts (Waters 2003, 2005, 2008; Lee and Koo 2006; Collins 2008; Sin 2009) we also trace a lesser degree of family involvement in Russia. Parents and families are unquestionably important in educational decisions, but we cannot find any evidence of extended financial dependency between parents and children, nor any relocation of entire families such as has been reported in studies from Hong Kong and South Korea (Lee and Koo 2006). On the contrary, many of the Russian students we have met seem to be rather independent and detached from close-knit extended family networks, and many manage on their own without any evidence of support from their families. The willingness and eagerness to which quite a few, like Darya and Olga, have assimilated on their own in Sweden, with astounding integrity in a relatively short time period, is possibly another sign of student mobility that reflects less centripetal cultural force than that of East Asia. We have not come across any widespread remittance system among the students either. This may, of course, occur on an individual basis and would most likely not be brought up in an interview situation, but to answer that question would require deeper ethnographic knowledge.

In some cases, the landscape of political ambivalence found in our interviews with regard to the value of "overseas" education is also a matter of skepticism related to a sense of lost pride in an empire that has seen better days, also in terms of higher education. Additionally, it is the result of imposed ideas of "globalism" being orchestrated by a discourse on an uncritical embrace of anything global with an English-language stamp on it. To discuss the degree to which this may also imply a domestic devaluation of an established educational system such as the Soviet/Russian systeme would hardly be more than speculation, however, we certainly observe a culturally implicated ambivalence throughout our interviews. Tatjana, a student of social work at NArFU, doing an exchange semester at AUN, expresses her view:

> *I don't like the system of bachelor and master. In Russia we have another system. We have 5 years and then you are a specialist. But now this kind of western system is imposed on us. I don't like it because I think the Russian system was more….it gave better quality specialists.*

The self-evident celebration of mobility that is the hallmark of neoliberal discourses on an "inevitable and unstoppable globalization" (Sidhu 2006, p. 123) of higher education, which we have often come across in the internationalization rhetoric of all the universities involved in this study, generally comes out in a much more ambivalent way when talking to the students. In the rather one-sided celebratory version of mobility, immobility tends to be forgotten; or as Floya Anthias (2012, p. 125) reminds us:

> The freedom to move to western educational institutions brings with it a visceral reminder of those who they leave behind.

Longing, nostalgia, and home-sickness are naturally individualized parts of the educational biographies. However, these emotions are also articulated in terms of the omnipresent ambivalence of existing between a state of lost glory and self-esteem and a place of uncertain but hopefully promising future possibilities. I do believe that this state of in-betweenness is characteristic of the Russian student mobility we explore here, and, as such, it reflects the current tensions of living in a circumscribed political space while also seeing few alternatives for immediate improvement, as described above by one of our interviewees. In some cases, the will to move beyond such a state of cultural nostalgia in order to search for new opportunities seemingly creates a very strong impetus to navigate in terms of a far-reaching strategic transnationalism, where the studies in Norway or Sweden are but one stop in a territorial career path to another spot in the global food chain of differently-ranked universities in an educational market. Tatjana, a student at NU, describes herself as a future-oriented polyglot with the ambition to end up at a prestigious university in an English-speaking country. She says:

> *I'm saving half of my scholarship from NU to pay for accommodation in Canada next.*

The only twist, at the time for the interview, was that her boyfriend:

> *…doesn't speak English very well, but as soon as he learns we will leave the country and go to Canada. That is the plan.*

Unfortunately, we don't know if she ended up in Canada or not, nor do we know if her boyfriend eventually learned English. In any case, a strategic transnationalism involving the planned trajectory of a territorial career, where Sweden or Norway is but one stepping stone to a longer educational journey, is by no means unique to student mobility in the Barents Region. Rather, it is something that characterizes accumulation strategies for many international students interviewed (Mellström 2012). This was the case for West African students, in particular, who came to Sweden between 2004 and 2008. The majority of the ones we could follow either continued on to the UK or the US for further studies or/and work in the low-paid service sector. In comparison, Russian students seem to strategize less and do not talk about the same extensive networks of family, friends, clan, and relatives as we have documented with West African students and among international students from other parts of the world. The strategic transnationalism among Russian students seems to be more individualized, though an elaborate longitudinal approach would be required to answer this question in more detail.

In summary, our interviews reveal a well-known pattern of strategic transnationalism for acquiring and accumulating cultural capital through higher education thatis characteristic for many middle-class families (Murphy-Lejeune 2002, 2008; Waters 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012; Lee and Koo 2006; Sidhu 2006; Sin 2006, 2009; Brooks and Waters 2013). In many cases we also see that educational decisions are part of a family project, though not to the extent reported in other parts of the world. Rather, it seems that many international Russian students in the Barents Region are educational sojourners who preferred to follow an individualistic trajectory and are proud and capable in their present positions, whether living at home, pursuing a doctorate in Sweden, or on the move to another place in a territorial career that could span multiple continents. To learn and speak English with confidence is repeatedly stressed as a requirement in order to acquire cultural capital through higher education. In this context, the English language as a symbolic container is also connected to an ambivalence expressed through cultural nostalgia, political instability and repression, and doubts about the value of "western" education when compared to that of Russia.

11.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated how Russian student mobility in the regional eduscape of the Barents Region is formed and channeled through interferences (Mellström 2012) between global discourses and national systems of higher education, geographical proximity, exchange programs, institutional arrangements at universities, and collective and individual images. In particular, politics with regard to gender and the English language have proven to be two crucial explanatory keys to understanding student mobility in this region as it relates to a broader understanding of the geopolitical conditions of academic exchange in the Barents Region. Furthermore, the importance of localizing the celebratory global discourses on internationalizing higher education is advocated in relation to an uneven distribution in the production and consumption of higher education. It is demonstrated that this asymmetrical relationship, with an overwhelming outflow of Russian students in relation to the influx of students into Russia, is closely connected to desires and aspirations that are rooted in English as a symbolic container and a requirement for anticipated success in an increasingly global labour and educational market, while also signaling "modernity" in the domestic national arena. The English language is thus a container full of dreams and hopes while also provoking considerable ambivalence in the Russian context due to its perceived role as a symbol of Anglo-globalisation and global academic capitalism that rests on English as the predominant lingua franca.

In the context of this study, such ambivalence is also related to a circumscribed political space of growing anti-western sentiments, pro-Russian values, and skepticism about the value of a "western" education in Russia. The experiences of Russian students are mediated by such contradictions and, therefore, generate a translocal space; a sense of in-betweenness that feeds upon cultural contrasts and reflections while also producing a transformative terrain and a strong impetus for individual empowerment and achievement through strong determination and integrity, demonstrated in the academic work and career of various individuals. It is in this translocal space – which is experienced, created and maintained by the students, and involves expectations, cultural stereotypes and personal encounters on both the sending and receiving ends – that the "grassroots" of academic mobility are formed in different ways. Moreover, it is through the very encounters that take place in such spaces that distinct "navigational capacities" (Collins et al. 2014) are acquired and new opportunities and structures are fostered. Furthermore, it is by acknowledging and integrating such aspects into the scalar dynamics of international higher education that we can also understand how to tackle questions of equity and access in the uneven distribution of higher education on a global scale.

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Chapter 12
Russian Students' Mobility Capital in the Field of University Internationalization

Anna Soloviova

12.1 Introduction

University internationalization involves conversion of the specific competences, skills and attitudes of students that provide them access to institutionalized mobility paths and trajectories, supporting their original motivation and developing their potential. The "mobility capital" conceptualization refers to educational mobility as driven by the inner motivation of students, rooted in their personal experiences as "travelers" and reflecting the symbolic status of their cultural competences in a higher education context. Students from the Northern Arctic Federal University (NArFU) demonstrate the content and value of mobility capital, which is activated by Russian students in the field of the Arctic region education and research. The survey, conducted among NArFU students in 2014, examines the value they place on an international educational experience, their preferences for study-abroad opportunities, and their perceptions of and attitudes toward mobility capital (competences, skills, and knowledges), valuable in the field of international cooperation in the Arctic region. The study tested the hypothesis that Russian student mobility capital (represented by the NArFU sample) demonstrates a specific combination of variables: the motivation to gain personal mobility experience, incorporation into the university-structured mobility patterns (provided by institutional organizational efforts), quantity and quality of skills, facilitation of mobility and the students' self-esteem as "mobile individuals". As a result, the international education mobility of Russian students is interpreted as including a number of resources (available in

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cultural, social, economic and symbolic contexts), in which the students invest, and which can be converted from one to another to maximize the effectiveness of one's mobility quantity and quality. The appropriate models of the survey data interpretation and analysis are provided from a theoretical perspective of "mobility capital" conceptualization and operationalization.

12.2 Mobility Capital of International Students: Theoretical Frames and Empirical Challenges

Murphy-Lejeune uses the concept of "mobile capital" as a tool to analyze the "sub-component of human capital enabling individuals to enhance their skills because of the richness of the international experience gained by living abroad" (Murphy-Lejeune 2002, p. 51). The quantitative (interview based) analysis of the Erasmus students' mobility stories, performed by Murphy-Lejeune, supports the idea that the taste for travelling precedes the actual experience in the respondents' imagination. As a result, "the urge to travel anticipates the experience so that the longer stay abroad is often expected in the end as a mandatory stage in a life story".

She comments, "The experience of foreignness does not necessarily refer to movements outside one's own national borders, but should also include experiences sustained at home between parallel linguistic or cultural systems" (Murphy-Lejeune 2002, p. 60).

The term "mobility capital" refers to the broad theoretical tradition of the "cultural capital" interpretation and description, developed by Bourdieu. Mobility capital is conceptualized as a form of capital that exists alongside other types of cultural capital, and which can be converted into and produced by these other types (Brooks and Waters 2010, p. 154). Cultural capital is defined in contemporary education studies as institutionalized; i.e., widely shared, high-status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviors, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion. P. Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital includes informal academic standards (like informal knowledge about the school, traditional humanist culture, linguistic competence and specific attitudes, or personal style) that are attributed to dominant classes and revealed as a means of facilitation for access to organizational positions. Cultural capital (as opposed to human capital) is generally converted into symbolic capital, mainly legitimacy and prestige (Bourdieu 1987).

Frequently used as a basis for exclusion from jobs, resources and high-status groups, cultural capital supports the process of reproducing disadvantage and social inequality through systems of socialization and education. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) describe the four major forms of exclusion: self-elimination, over-selection, relegation, and direct selection. In the case of self-elimination, individuals adjust their aspirations to their perceived chances of success. They also exclude themselves when they do not feel at ease in specific social settings where they are not familiar with specific cultural norms. In the case of over-selection, individuals with less-valued cultural resources are subjected to the same type of selection as those who are culturally privileged and have to perform equally well despite their cultural handicap, which in fact means that they are asked to perform more than others. In the case of relegation, individuals with less-valued cultural resources end up in less desirable positions and get less out of their educational investment. These three forms can be distinguished from direct exclusion resulting from "elective affinities" based on similarities in taste.

Along with Murphy-Lejeune's (2002) study of the Erasmus Mundus program participants, the research of Waters and Brooks (2011) applies Bourdieu's notion of "forms of capital" to the international mobile students' experience. The authors test the hypothesis that students who move to study in an international arena accumulate multiple and reinforcing forms of capital (mobility capital, human capital, social capital, cultural capital and economic capital). They say (Waters and Brooks 2011, p. 197). "The vast majority of our respondents… came from high socioeconomic groups, had attended private secondary schools and had achieved high levels of academic attainment". In addition, motivations and experiences of a small selection of British students overseas are revealed through their responses to a student questionnaire and interviews carried out by Findlay and King (2010). Gaining serious financial support from their families, such students are able to acquire the "right" credentials and other embodied life and travel experiences, which can ultimately be converted into social status and economic capital (Brown 1997). They "accidentally" accumulate various forms of cultural capital, such as "taken-for-grantedness", from the family and fellows habitus, in which "excitement" and "adventure" are merely expressions of the reproduction of privilege (Waters and Brooks 2010). As a result, British students who choose to study abroad, mainly in the English-speaking realm of top US universities, are "accidental achievers". They are not motivated by strategic concerns about career development or developing heightened intercultural awareness; instead, they seek adventure and excitement and often use the opportunity to study abroad as a way of prolonging a carefree lifestyle and delaying the onset of a career. This holds true, in particular, for undergraduates moving on to the post-graduate level of education. There is also data from other mobility surveys (highlighted by Rodrigues 2012) supporting the hypothesis that students with highly-educated parents and previous international exposure are more likely to study abroad, thus constituting a selective group.

EU,[1] British Academy-funded[2] and US[3] research projects provide data about institutional resources, academic outcomes of student mobility, and social and cultural profiles of educational mobility participants. The personality traits and motivations of mobile students, who constitute a select group of more outgoing and self-motivated individuals, are examined in these surveys that were conducted among both students and their future employers.[4] There are several studies of the main "education migration" trends of Russian students and young researchers, dating from 1995 to the early 2000s (Kirichenko 2008; Allahverdian and Agamova 2010), that provide comparative data about their international mobility motives and rationales (economical, professional, personal).[5] These studies, which help to

[1] The two related projects funded by the European Framework Programs: REFLEX (Research into Employment and professional Flexibility) and HEGESCO (Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competences) present large-scale surveys among graduates from higher education. The REFLEX project was carried out in 2005 in fourteen countries (Austria, Belgium-Flanders, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom), surveying around 70,000 graduates, who got their degree in the academic year 1999/2000. A similar project, HEGESCO, was done in 2008 in five other European countries (Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Slovenian and Turkey), with a gross sample size of 30,000 graduates, finishing ISCED 5A programs in the academic year 2002/2003. The combination of these two data sources enables a cross-country comparison of 19 European countries, represented in the EU report in 2013 (Rodrigues 2013).

[2] British Academy-funded research concentrates on individual-level student motivations for pursuing degrees abroad. Based on more qualitative research, focused on UK students who study overseas, it presents them as the bearers of privilege and class reproduction (Waters and Brooks 2011).

[3] Several comparative analysis perspectives may be derived from national (USA) student outcomes surveys, focusing on international mobility activities (NSSE 2009; WNSLAE 2009; GLOSSARI 2010). The data generally confirm the Erasmus and other mobile students' achievement profiles. However, it adds several new dimensions to the research design, methods and the key results, because it measures the learning outcomes and long-term impact of study abroad (other international learning experiences) using quantitative approaches and statistics analysis. The national studies are large in scale and encompass multiple institutions.

[4] Some studies of international exchanges among doctoral students and postdocs focus on mobility, examine postdocs as skilled migrants, or evaluate productivity of international exchanges and the impact on scientific careers (Nerad and Blumenfield 2011). Wiers-Jenssen describes personality traits and motivation of mobile students, who constitute a select group of more outgoing and having more initiative individuals (2008). In addition, there are surveys, detecting the employers' opinions about mobile students, perceived as more proactive, adaptable and problem-solvers (Bracht et al. 2006).

[5] In addition, the large-scale survey among the Russian graduate, postgraduate students and young researches focused on the forms, mechanisms and motives of their incorporation to the context of world science cooperation. These studies stressed "external" (mainly economical and institutional) demands of the mobile respondents, not mentioning their "internal" (cultural background, family support, multicultural interests) resources as the mobility drivers. The studies also show that the Russian young researches became increasingly sensitive to rapid economic or social changes and they uproot themselves with greater ease. The trend to draw the line between traditional immigrants and the contemporary mobile individuals becomes visible in the studies of international mobility of Russian students and researches. However, most of the evidence in the field demonstrates organizational, institutional and normative factors, which facilitate or limit the Russian students' mobile activities (Alekseev 2013).

resolve the contradiction between "demand/supply" approaches,[6] use the "mobility capital" operationalization to detect pre-mobility differences between students, identify the causal effect of the mobility experience on mobility motivation and demonstrate group differences that have emerged during this process.

Murphy-Lejeune detects four elements of mobility capital: family and personal history; previous experience of mobility; first experience of adaptation, which serves as an initiation; and the personality features of potential wanderers. Obtaining "mobility capital" transforms an international student into the new, more individual type of migrant who interprets mobility as a continuous and multiple process rather than a one-way ticket (Murphy-Lejeune 2002, p. 2). In addition, the high status of student mobility in the international migrants' context is explained as resulting from the institutional facilitation of their movements. Students "travel" in the context of programs and agreements, within a relatively homogeneous cultural area, for a duration fixed in advance. Various kinds of cultural brokers (mentors, teachers, roommates) gently guide the student newcomers into society via their interest in foreign people and their self-appointed patronage. It saves such students from many dramatic problems that other international migrants face.

The combination of the general but distinct features of these groups is an attempt made by Murphy-Lejeune to classify mobile students according to the major characteristics through which their mobility capital becomes apparent. She detected proficient students (with short periods of mobility, not more than 5 months, and limited experience of adaptation); experienced students (who have stayed several times in diverse places, but not more than 6 months); expert students (who have spent more than 1 year abroad in different linguistic milieus). She also admits that two other categories of potential student travelers could be added to the classification: the "neophytes" (who have no experience of travelling) and professionals (the opposite). According to Murphy-Lejeune, the groups represent diverse levels of achievement regarding mobility competence, quantitatively related to the amount of time spent abroad.

In terms of the "cultural capital" theory, mobility capital does not exist or function except in relation to certain "fields" or dimensions that supplement its effect. According to Bourdieu (1987), the field or setting in which practices take place is "a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions". Fields are spaces in which dominant and subordinate groups struggle for control over resources; each field is related to one or more types of capital. Students' mobility capital gains value in the field of institutional activity. International mobility studies (Trilokekar and Rasmi 2011) demonstrate that students at highly-active institutions (top-ranking in terms of internationalization) are more aware of study-abroad

[6] Findlay detects two general models of the international mobile students theorizations: "demand-side" (which try to explain the mobility by starting out from the students' perspective) and "supply side" (which incorporate the role of recruiting agencies, universities, government institutions and policies in directing the flows of mobile students towards certain countries). "Demand-side" studies of the mobility motivation and outcomes use "simple behavioral models of the choices made by students" (Findlay 2011).

opportunities than students who attend less active institutions. In terms of the student mobility decision-making model (HEFCE 2004; King and Findlay 2010), the institutional level often acts to reinforce students' propensity to study abroad for credit. Thus, good promotional information, institutional support, smooth credit transfer systems, preparatory language training, if necessary, easy access to mobility grants, and committed and enthusiastic staff are the main institutional-level factors that can boost a student's mobility choice.

Detection and interpretation of students' mobility capital in relation to the university education field (represented by national and international institutions) gives an opportunity to meet several research goals. First, it helps to demonstrate how the desire to be mobile is supported by the institutional and cultural "tools" necessary to do it effectively. Second, it allows for the examination of the relationship between the tendency of "potentially mobile students" to objectively detect and evaluate these tools and their subsequent positive attitude towards mobility. Third, it offers the chance to find out how non-mobile students exclude themselves by evaluating their capital as "non-efficient" and low.

12.3 Mobility Capital of Russian Students in the Barents Higher Education Field (The Case of the Northern Arctic Federal University)

There are theoretical and empirical limits to the interpretation of the "mobility capital" concept in the contemporary Russian context. First, there is no confidence of the developed high culture traditions, which reflect the actual highly class – differentiated Russian society to the extent of diverse forms of cultural capital formation. Empirical studies in this field are scarce and do not focus on the educational tastes of the Russian elite. Second, international education mobility does not have a long enough history (particularly in post-Soviet Russia) to form national traditions and become a part of "family stories" for the representative number of mobile students from the Russian Federation. In these circumstances, it may be more productive to trace the Russian students' mobility trends at the regional (horizontal) level than to describe the mobility in its vertical dimension; i.e., its role in obtaining higher social status and financial success). Research focused on particularly regional Russian cases of mobility development provides an opportunity to study how, and in which situations (professional, cultural, institutional), students activate their mobility capital to gain access to social settings or attain desired social results.

The Northern Arctic Federal University (NArFU, in Arkhangelsk) represents specific features of Russian students' international mobility development in a regional context. International cooperation of the universities in Arkhangelsk (Pomor State University, Arkhangelsk State Technical University) developed its focus on the Barents and Arctic region in the 1990s. Since that time, international student mobility has extended the field of linguistics and intercultural communication (traditional for international student exchange since Soviet times) to all the professional spheres of higher education that are presented in the university profile. After NArFU was founded (with the integration of several local universities and colleges), international cooperation in the Arctic region became one of the strategic goals of university development. Now most of the university faculties include international content in their courses. Students' motivation to engage in mobility activities is reinforced by the international office and academic advisors, facilitated by the number of programs providing financial and institutional support.

According to the actual NArFU statistics,[7] 400–460 students participate in different international mobility activities annually. Almost half (48%) of the NArFU mobile students attend universities in the Arctic region (preferably Norwegian and Finnish). In contrast, according to the international statistics (UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2016), only 6.7% of all Russian students choose countries of the Barents Region for their mobility (1.2% go to Norway, 4.3% to Finland and 0.8% to Sweden). In the case of NArFU, the BEAR and the Arctic region cooperation offer a highly effective context for international mobility development. Students from NArFU make up the group of respondents used to study the content and value of mobility capital, which is activated by Russian students in the field of Arctic education and research.

The present study, held among NArFU students during the Fall semester, 2014, had several distinct aims: (1) to examine the value that students place on an international educational experience and their awareness of its "costs and benefits"; (2) their preferences for study-abroad opportunities; (3) their perceptions of and attitudes toward mobility capital (competences, skills, knowledges), valued in the Arctic region's field of international cooperation; and how they influenced a willingness to participate in mobility programs.[8]

One hundred and fifty-five students from Northern Arctic Federal University participated in the survey. They were studying at five institutes of NArFU: the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication, the Institute of Oil and Gas, the Institute of Complex Security, the Institute of Natural sciences and Technologies, and the Institute of Social-Political Sciences and Humanities. The sample includes male and female students, undergraduate (bachelor's, specialist and master's degrees) and graduate (Russian "aspirantura"-level students).

[7] The data about NArFU students' international mobility is presented in the Northern Arctic Federal University annual reports. Data from 2014 is systemized in the NArFU report (Analiticheskaya spravka 2014).

[8] Full version of the survey results is presented in Russian language at the Final report to Ministry of Education and Science of Russian Federation (Soloviova 2015).

12.3.1 Survey Instruments

Students responded to a series of closed and open-ended questions divided into the following parts: (1) information about age, faculty, gender and year of study; (2) student experience, interests and rationales for international educational and research mobility; and (3) student evaluation of competences that facilitate integration into or exclusion from mobility experience:

1. The respondents' attitudes, purposes and preferred forms of international mobility were identified based on their answers to six questions. After we determined their experiences and intentions to participate in mobility, it was important to detect the preferred forms of it. The students were asked to choose three out of eight types of mobility programs presented in the questionnaire; such as long-term stay abroad (from one semester to several years), summer school, international conference, international expedition, internship at a foreign enterprise, research internship and international online course. To describe the students' mobility rationales we developed a 20-item instrument and asked them to choose and mark the goals that reflect their personal preferences. In a subsequent open–ended question, we asked the respondents to mention goals that they had realized during their mobility experience. Students who were unsure about future mobility activities were requested to choose from the list of their exclusion rationales.
2. The block of questions concerning competences considered important for effective integration into the international mobility process included two 2-item instruments. The students had to range each item according to its importance as a mobility facilitator, 1 being the most important and 12 being the least. Afterwards, respondents were requested to rate self-efficiency in each of the competences on a 5-point scale ranging from 5 (highly efficient) to 1 (non-efficient). The list included the following competences:

    (a) Intercultural communication (knowledge of languages, cultures and traditions);
    (b) Research (knowledge of research methods, international research standards and ethics, skills in quantitative analysis and data reporting, publication of research results, etc.);
    (c) Study skills (ability to orient oneself in international and foreign educational programs and curriculum structure, self-confidence in finding and choosing appropriate courses at foreign universities);
    (d) Skills in finding and interpreting information (ability to use international sources of information in foreign languages, to use electronic libraries and course catalogues, etc.);
    (e) Cognitive competences (analytical skills, critical thinking, problem-solving) and creativity (innovative thinking in a professional sphere);

(f) Development and planning of professional career (motivation to grow professionally, permanent development of professional skills, ability to set and realize goals);
(g) Project management (goal setting, planning, evaluation of effectiveness, knowledge of international and national research and innovation funding resources, programs for student support and requirements);
(h) Teamwork (experience working in networks, ability to work in groups, communication with team members to effectively realize goals);
(i) Organization and leadership (coordination of teamwork to reach goals);
(j) Communication (public speaking and presentation skills, effective participation in discussions); and
(k) Research promotion (implementation of research outcomes).

3. The respondents' opinions about the Arctic region's international cooperation, institutes and mobility programs were determined based on their answers to five closed and open-ended questions. We clustered student responses into thematic categories: educational programs, financial and organizational support initiatives, and prospective professional fields and areas of international mobility in the Arctic region. In addition, students had to choose the main sources of information about the Arctic region mobility programs (from a list provided) and the main types of knowledge about it that were important in contributing to their mobility effectiveness.

The terms used in the survey represent the official (institutional) conceptualization of student mobility practices at the university level. They also reflect the descriptive language of the features of international mobility used in interviews, motivational letters and other forms developed by all of the international academic mobility applicants. Characteristics of the skills, knowledge, attitudes and competences, approved in official discourse as effective tools for the improvement of international educational mobility, are used in the survey as indicators of "mobility capital".

The quantitative data was processed (by descriptive and comparative analysis) with the use of the package of applied statistical programs, IBM SPSS Statistics – Version 22.

12.3.2 Group Analysis

The following variables were used to define the subgroups (later referred to as *groups*) into which the total sample was divided (by a cross-tabulation analysis method[9]):

[9] The Chi-Square test carried out on the data was significant at the 0.05 level (p > 0.1) of significance.

- Motivation to participate in international mobility provided by university education and research programs; and
- Experience with international academic mobility.

We tested the hypothesis that student mobility capital demonstrates specific combinations of variables, distributed among the three different groups of students.

The first group (referred to as the ME – Motivated/experienced – group in the following analysis) includes students who had already participated in different international mobility programs, traveled abroad several times or demonstrated some experience with international mobility (participated in credit, non-credit and distance-learning international programs). They express permanent motivation to be integrated into international mobility programs and practices, and demonstrate positive attitudes toward their mobility experience. This group consists of 49 students. Respondents from the ME group mentioned several programs, agreements and foundations that provided support for their mobility practices ("North to North", "Erasmus Mundus", "Barents+", "KolArctic", "FIRST", DAAD, Oslo ISS), bilateral agreements between NArFU and foreign universities, and international degree programs provided by UArctic (BCS, Comparative social work).

The second group (referred to as the MNE – Motivated/non-experienced – group in the following analysis) consists of students who have not yet participated in mobility activities, but who demonstrate motivation to gain international education experience, express an intention to study abroad and positively interpret their ability to do so. They claim that they have all the resources for international mobility and plan for it as part of their future career. This group includes 49 students. Respondents from the MNE group demonstrate the basic knowledge of the same programs, agreements and foundations that provide support for international mobility practices as those mentioned by students from the ME group.

The third group (called the NMNE – Non-motivated/non-experienced – group in the following analysis) includes students who had never experienced international mobility, are not motivated for it and, therefore, exclude themselves from this practice. They perceive international mobility as generally important but remain unsure of their willingness, resources and ability to practice it. The group consists of 57 students. Their knowledge about the institutionalized forms and ways of incorporating mobility practice (international educational programs, agreements and foundations) are not focused on those that are available to students. They mix up the programs and structures that are specifically aimed at student mobility development with more general forms of research and education project support ("summer schools", "Russian fundamental research foundation", "Russian humanitarian research foundation", and "Arctic ship expedition").

The comparison of these three independent groups of university students (Motivated/experienced; Motivated/non-experienced; Non-motivated/non-experienced) provides evidence of the correlation between different variables of mobility capital.

12.4 Mobility Goals and Competences: Modes of Inclusion in International Mobility Practice

The survey provides the quantitative data on four variables (including more specific indicators demonstrating variability in mobility capital content and meaning: (1) students' description of their mobility goals; (2) students' evaluation of skills and knowledge as effective tools to mobility enhancement; (3) students' self-reflection on the level of their mobility competence development; and (4) their preferred forms of international mobility.

If the variation of these variables (described with different methods of statistical analyzes) demonstrates the differences influenced by students' motivation/experience (group factor), we may detect the following connections between:

- the motivation to gain personal mobility experience and the self-confidence in the effectiveness of this enterprise;
- students' incorporation into university-structured (and provided by institutional organizational efforts) mobility patterns and the growth of quantity and quality of the mobility capital (including not only particular skills but also their interpretation and exchange patterns and self-esteem as "mobile individuals");
- students' mobility goals and their learning, research and cultural competence evaluation as more or less valuable tools for mobility enhancement, included in the learning and research package of their education trajectories.

Opinions of the three groups concerning international mobility goals are compared using percentages of respondents' answers to the survey instrument, which provided an array of 20 possible international mobility rationales from which to choose while also allowing for respondents to indicate their own rationales. In a subsequent open–ended question, we asked respondents to mention goals that were realized during their mobility experience. The results are presented in the diagram in Fig. 12.1.

Without visible differences between groups, all respondents demonstrated that they are sophisticated in their understanding of the value and importance of international education and study abroad. The leading motives among all the groups are: "Chance to increase foreign language knowledge" (76–89%) and "Possibility to learn culture and traditions of other countries" (57–65%). The motive "To realize professional experience and expand life experience" is detected among 63% of ME group members but among less than half (37–36%) of the MNE and NMNE groups.

The motives, "understanding of another culture/country/language" and "maturity and personal development', form the largest percentage of education mobility goals in most national and international surveys (King 2003). For example, the cultural motivation "to learn about different cultures" is the third highest motivation for Erasmus students, who consistently report personal development and improvement of language skills as the most important result of such international experience. Russian students (represented by our survey participants) reflect the internationally

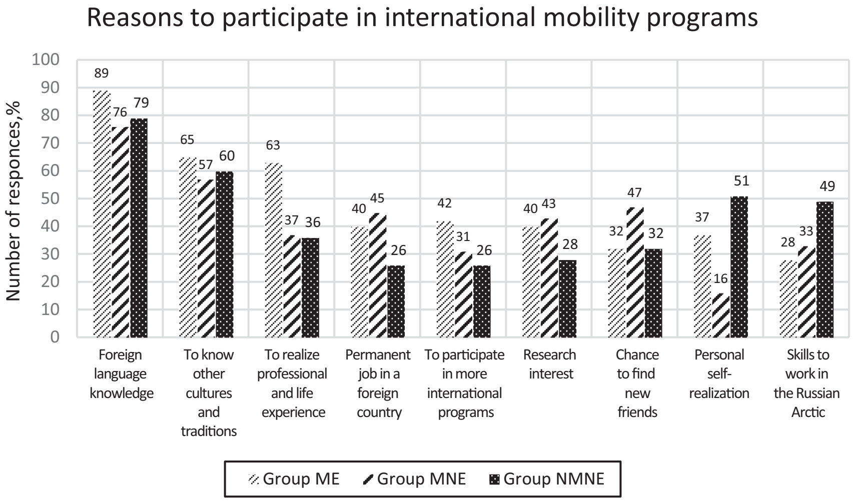

Fig. 12.1 Opinions of the respondents about their international mobility goals

universal trend in evaluating educational mobility, formed by the growth of cultural diversity in the world and other influences of the glocalization process.

"Prospects to gain a permanent job in a foreign country", "Research interest", "Possibility to learn more about and participate in more international educational programs", and "Chance to find new friends" are mentioned as mobility goals by less than half of the respondents. This is also in line with the general international tendency reflected in survey responses that underestimated the "relevance to employment prospects" as students' mobility rationale (Rodrigues 2012).

The NMNE group tends to be less motivated (26–28%) by the professional, career and employment benefits of mobility participation than the other groups (ME – 40–42%, MNE – 45–41%). In addition, this group does not stress the importance of the international experience for broadening their socialization field ("Chance to find new friends" and "Possibility to learn more about and participate in more international educational programs" are selected by just 26–32% of the NMNE group). On the contrary, the NMNE group, more often than the other groups (51–49% in comparison to 16–47% of ME and MNE group responses), stresses "Possibility of self-realization" and "Way to get skills to work in the Russian Arctic" as mobility goals. Therefore, students who are not generally motivated to practice mobility still evaluate it high in terms of their personal development and try to apply its possible outcomes to their national (Russian Arctic) career prospects. To some extent, their opinions support the hypothesis (tested in a number of international education mobility studies) that mobility has a significant effect on the nature (but not on the success) of one's future career; namely, by making it more international or by increasing the probability of working abroad.

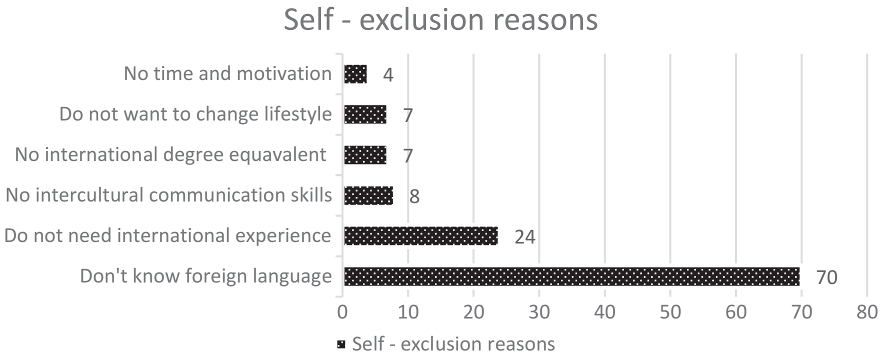

Fig. 12.2 Reasons for self-exclusion, mentioned by the respondents who are unsure about their future mobility activities

The NArFU survey participants who were unsure about their future mobility activities were asked to choose from a list of exclusion rationales. The results (percentage of responses) are presented in the diagram in Fig. 12.2.

"Absence of foreign language knowledge" (70%) and "Absence of the need for international experience" (24%) are the leading reasons for self-exclusion from the mobility process. Insufficient foreign language proficiency (along with financial constraints or fears to leave one's family and friends, not mentioned by the Russian respondents) are regarded as barriers to student mobility in many international surveys (Rodrigues 2012). "Need for international experience" may be activated by both cultural and professional factors, which do not show a significant effect for the NMNE.

To test the hypothesis, that the students' motivation and mobility experience (independent group variable) affect their evaluation of mobility competence, we analyzed the ranks that respondents attributed to competence indicators, evaluated as mobility facilitators (presented in the survey as two item instruments). The students had to rank each item according to its importance from 1 (the most) to 12 (the least). Kruskal-Wallis' one-way non-parametric ANOVA was used to detect significant differences between the samples (represented by the ME, MNE, NMNE groups). The results are presented in the diagram in Fig. 12.3.

All of the groups[10] evaluated "Intercultural communication" and "Work with information resources" as the most important mobility competences. "Research skills", "Communicative skills", "Team work", "Promotion of research results", "Learning skills" and "Creativity" were given a medium level of importance by all groups.[11] The most unimportant skills as evaluated by all respondents, regardless of group, were: "Project management", "Organization skills" and "Professional career development".

[10] There is no significant difference between the groups ($p > 0.1$).

[11] There is no significant difference between the groups ($p > 0.1$).

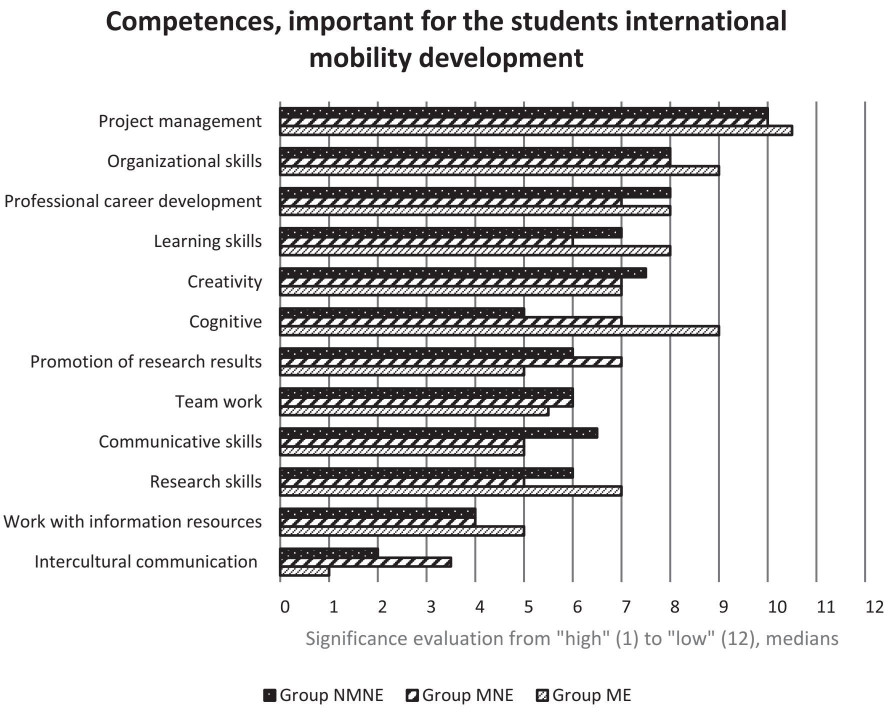

Fig. 12.3 Competences, evaluated by respondents as mobility facilitators

The survey responses show no inherent distinctions between the different student groups (motivated/experienced, motivated/non-experienced and non-motivated/non-experienced for the international mobility) in their perceptions and evaluation of mobility competences. All groups demonstrate the universal tendency (detected by the number of international surveys) to attribute higher value to the skills and knowledge provided mostly by the general experience of studying or working abroad, than to the effectiveness of the program's academic merit.

The absence of group differences in the evaluation of mobility competences may also be interpreted as a result of the common social background of the respondents (NArFu students). There are a number of mobility studies that detect and approve its strong impact on students' motivations. For example, the Erasmus Student Network Survey (Krzaklewska and Krupnik 2008) differentiated two student groups: career-oriented and experience-oriented. Career-oriented students tend to evaluate the practice of international mobility as a way to improve academic knowledge, to enhance future employment prospects and to practice foreign language. Experience – oriented students develop competences that are important to gaining new experiences; e.g., learning about different cultures, having fun, meeting new people, being independent and living in a foreign country.

Competences combined in variables of "Development and planning of professional career" (motivation for professional growth, permanent development of professional skills, ability to set and realize goals) and "Project management" (goal setting, planning, evaluation of effectiveness, knowledge of international and national research and innovation funding resources, programs of students support and requirements), were underestimated by all of the NArFU survey groups as tools for effective mobility development. In addition, the variables of "Research skills" (knowledge of research methods, international research standards and ethics, skills in quantitative analysis and data reporting, publication of research results…) and "Promotion of research results" (implementation of research outcomes) were ranked less than moderately (middle) in the range of mobility facilitators. It may be (with caution due to the small NArFU sample number) the indicator of the situation, when mobility competences are included in a certain educational profile that is not narrowed by specific research or professional field that would provide for a specific future international career.

The significant difference between students who are motivated/experienced, motivated/non-experienced and non-motivated/non-experienced to engage in international mobility occurs only in the variable, "cognitive skills" ($p < 0.05$). A supplementary (Post-hoc) test was carried out to investigate differences between the samples, using non-parametric Mann Whitney criteria. The ME group evaluated "cognitive skills" as less important than the NMNE group, with a significant difference ($p < 0.05$). Students experienced in international mobility seem to be more concentrated on other (more "internationally specific") skills, such as "Knowledge of foreign languages and cultures". They do not correlate their cognitive skills (analytical skills, critical thinking, problem solving approach) with the content and goals of their mobility trajectories.

In order to reveal the possible differences in the mobility competence evaluation by the motivated/experienced, motivated/non-experienced and non-motivated/non-experienced students, we asked respondents to consider competences alongside their self-confidence. The students were requested to rate self-efficiency in each of the mobility competences on a 5-point scale ranging from 5 (highly efficient) to 1 (non-efficient). The Kruskal-Wallis one-way non-parametric ANOVA was used to detect significant differences between the samples (represented by the ME, MNE, NMNE groups). A supplementary (Post-hoc) test was carried out to investigate differences between the samples using non-parametric Mann Whitney criteria. The results are presented in the diagram in Fig. 12.4.

The statistically significant differences between the groups were detected in their ranking of the following variables (self-evaluation of mobility competence development).

The ME group evaluates their competences in "Foreign language knowledge" and "Knowledge of foreign culture and habits" higher than that of the NMNE group (at the level of statistical significance, $p < 0.00001$).

The data can be compared to the Souto-Otero and McCoshan (2006) survey, aimed at detecting the competences that mobile students developed in the process of studying abroad. The first (most important) dimension of their personal development was acquiring cultural skills and knowledge. Our survey results demonstrate

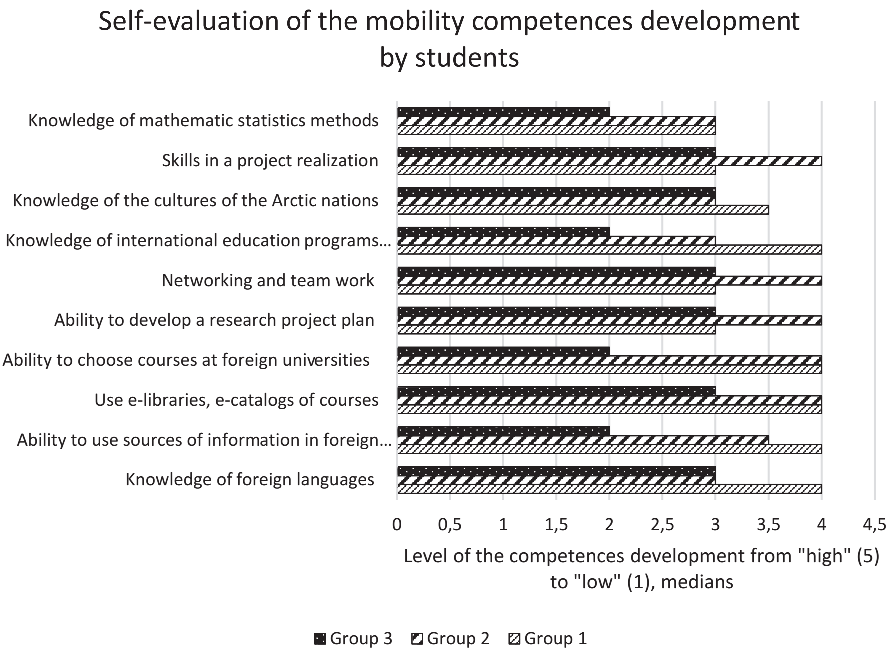

Fig. 12.4 The respondents' self-efficiency in the mobility competences

that the students motivated and experienced in mobility practice (ME group) tend to become more confident in their intercultural skills and knowledge.

The variables, "Ability to choose courses at foreign universities" and "Ability to use e-libraries and course catalogues", are evaluated (statistically significant, $p < 0.00001$) as better developed by ME and MNE group members than by NMNE respondents. The tendency (at the level of statistical significance, $p < 0.00001$) to attribute better level of development to the competences, "Orientation in foreign education structure" and "Orientation in foreign information resources", can be traced from the NMNE group (lowest level) to the ME group (highest level). These competences reflect the dimension of general academic enrichment as an important goal and result of educational mobility. They develop through adaptation to different academic systems, through the process of planning a career path due to exchange and by forming a personal and conscious view into a very different educational system. The group differences show that students' integration into to university-structured (provided by the institutional organizational efforts) mobility patterns stimulates the growth of quantity and quality of their mobility capital (including not only particular skills but also knowledge of their exchange modes in the academic field).

Group MNE demonstrates better assurance in their competences in "Project goal setting", "Project planning", "Project realization" and "Networking and interaction" than the ME and NMNE groups ($p < 0.05$). This group difference may illustrate

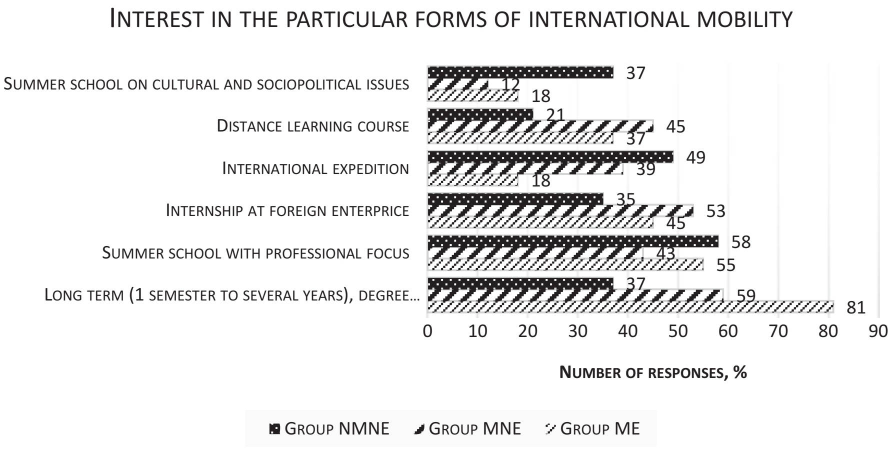

Fig. 12.5 Forms of international mobility preferred by respondents

a tendency to develop more accurate and objective self-evaluation on the part of motivated/experienced respondents who have already gotten a chance to test their organizational skills in developing their mobility activities and paths.

Professional growth, personal maturity and self-development variables do not demonstrate statistically significant differences in self-evaluation between the student samples (represented by the ME, MNE and NMNE groups). This observation supports the opinion that mobility competences are not applied by the respondents to any prospective research or professional field. It may also be proposed that the students tend to stress the importance of their mobility competences for the horizontal dimensions of their career and personal development (to work and travel abroad, to fulfil international tasks) more than for the vertical dimensions of any "narrow" professional trajectory.

To define the process of capitalization of the students' mobility goals and competences in the university context, we asked respondents to select their preferred forms of international mobility. Opinions of the three groups of students were compared using percentages of the respondents' answers to the survey instrument, either by selecting one of eight possible forms of international mobility provided or including one of their own choosing. The results are presented in the following diagram (Fig. 12.5).

ME (motivated/experienced) and MNE (motivated/non-experienced) group members were primarily interested in a long-term study period abroad, lasting from one semester to several years with full-degree obtainment (81–59%). They also prefer to participate in a summer school devoted to their professional themes (ME – 55%, MNE – 43%), an internship at a foreign enterprise (ME – 45%, MNE – 53%) and distance learning courses (ME – 37%, MNE – 45%). Both groups seem to be less interested in attending a summer school devoted to cultural and sociopolitical issues (ME – 18%, MNE – 12%). Less than a quarter of the ME group prefers international expedition as a form of international mobility (18%).

On the contrary, the NMNE group (non-motivated/ non-experienced) exhibited more interest in a summer school devoted to cultural and sociopolitical issues (37%) and international expeditions (49%). Less than half of the NMNE (non-motivated/ non-experienced) students preferred a long-term study period abroad (37%), an internship at a foreign enterprise (35%), or a distance learning course (21%).

In general, all of the respondents demonstrated good knowledge of the forms of mobility included in the learning and research package of their education trajectories. They are able to interpret the level of their mobility competence development as a more or less valuable tool for certain forms of mobility enhancement. Students with low confidence in their foreign language knowledge and intercultural skills look for more informal and generally less demanding forms of mobility (summer schools and international expeditions). The groups with more positive (inclusive) attitudes toward their capacity for mobility (based on real mobility experience or on the strong motivation for it) set the more ambitious goal of a long-term study abroad, finalized with the acquisition of a foreign degree. Internships at foreign enterprises and summer schools devoted to specific professional themes fit all the students groups. These forms of mobility meet the needs of those who use them as stepping stones in the international dimension of their professional career priorities.

12.5 Discussion

The survey results demonstrate the potentials and limitations of the student mobility analysis.

The Russian students' mobility attitudes and activities (represented by the NArFU sample) are included in the symbolic university exchange system (converting individual preferences and competences to valuable resources for gaining financial and organizational support for individual mobility). The students use the "academic mobility" language to correlate their skills and personal attitudes with organizational goals (which include internationalization). They apply it to their self-description of being potentially or actively mobile in the context of an actual educational or professional niche (institute, program or research project).

The NArFu students' mobility steps and trajectories are detected by the professional and intellectual paths provided by the university education profile, developed through international, regional and trans-border interaction, and legalized in multiple agreements, cooperation charters and so on. The respondents demonstrate a tendency to attribute higher value to the skills and knowledge provided mostly by the general experience of studying or working abroad than the effectiveness of its academic merit. It may (with caution due to the small NArFU sample) reflect the situation, when mobile students seem to be more focused on the "internationally specific" skills like "Knowledge of foreign language and cultures". In the responses provided, their research and professional skills (organizational competences, analytical skills, critical thinking, and problem solving approach) are not connected to the content and goals of their mobility trajectories.

The development of a student mobility career includes several steps of gaining intellectual and communicative (networking) capital that is organized along the levels of one's introduction to the university internationalization context. However, it is also important to mention that the university internationalization field has its limitations for students, indicated by the modes of their mobility capital exchange for other types of professional or cultural resources. The student with the sophisticated level of mobility capital needs to choose between the different (even opposite to their goals) spheres of its application. The small number of responses show that mobile students face the challenge of switching their attention to other (besides intercultural and educational) skills and knowledge development, thus providing them effective incorporation into the industrial or academic world (most likely at the national level). Mobility capital may gain an additional (applied) value as part of the professional skills configuration (as in the case of the globalization of the sciences), but then one needs to combine it with other (more important) competences, such as research methods knowledge, critical and cognitive skills, and organizational and management skills.

In addition, mobility capital may be converted to the specific lifestyle of a "professional traveler" (for example, "academic tourist" or freelance intercultural entrepreneur), revealing that the strategy of self-motivation raises in line with increased mobility experience. An incidental (even sometimes opposite) way of handling the official system provides a way for students to gain secondary "mobility profits", which don't correlate with the official aims of organization, nor even compete with them (like strategies of "academic tourism" or "informal network-building"). Sociologically, the students who comprise this group demonstrate quite hybrid and fluid characteristics, making it difficult to detect them among other academic or professional groups.

These tendencies are difficult to reveal and describe using the quantitative methods of inquiry (e.g. surveys and statistical data analyzes), so their interpretation becomes a future task for research aimed at developing new perspectives on the study of student mobility capital.

12.6 Conclusion

The survey held among the NArFU students demonstrates both universal (international) features of mobility competences and the specific dimensions appropriate for the capitalization and enhancement of the field of Russian universities. The respondents with different experiences of international mobility and diverse attitudes to its importance generally placed substantial value on an international education and revealed good awareness of its "costs and benefits". Their preferences for study-abroad opportunities correlated with their perceptions of and attitudes toward mobility capital (competences, skills, and knowledge), valuable in the international cooperation field and represented at the university level.

The mobility experience of NArFU students, supported by a positive motivation to broaden their cultural and professional horizons, is revealed through their self-description as potentially or actively mobile in the context of an actual educational or professional niche (education program). Correlation of the mobility goals, preferred forms and confidence in the appropriate competence development, which were detected through the survey data analysis, presents the students' integration into the university internationalization context as the system of gaining of the intellectual and communicative (networking) capital. The university capitalizes on the students' positive attitudes, preferences and mobility-specific competences while clarifying their perceptions about time and cost, direction and content, value and trajectory of the education and research experience abroad.

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Chapter 13
Leaving Russia? Russian Students in Norway

Eivind Karlsen

13.1 Introduction

In less than 20 years the number of Russian students has grown from almost none to becoming the third largest group of international students in Norway, only outnumbered by Swedish and German students. Currently about 1500 Russian students are registered at Norwegian higher education institutions, which is around 7% of the total number of foreign students in Norway (Wiers-Jenssen 2015).

In this chapter we ask if this is a form of migration from Russia. Is the motivation for studying abroad to leave Russia, either right away or in the longer run, and settle permanently either in Norway or another country? Or is the students' motivation rather to improve their own career choices in Russia and/or to contribute to the development of Russia by learning languages and acquiring knowledge about another country and culture? Or is it just to have the experience and fun of living abroad for a period of time?

13.2 The Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies

The study at hand is intended to provide only a partial answer to the questions above, in that it is limited to students of two programs of study at two rather small universities in Northern Norway; the Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies (BCS) at the University of Nordland/Nord University (Bodø), and, to a lesser degree, the Bachelor of Northern Studies (BNS), at the Arctic University of Norway (Tromsø), Finnmark College.

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The BCS and the BNS are, first and foremost, online programs of study, which means that it is possible to complete all courses entirely on the Internet. However, both institutions offer one semester of ordinary on-site study as well.

The students of the BCS and the BNS are mostly Russians coming from universities in Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, St. Petersburg and Syktyvkar, all of with which the two Norwegian institutions have formal cooperation. Every Fall semester around 30 Russian students from Russia come to Norway to follow the on-site courses in Bodø and Alta. However, the BCS is open to anyone who qualifies, so there are students from a number of countries, including Norway, taking these studies both online and on-site.

The respondents in this study belong to the group of Russian students in the BCS and the BNS.

The empirical material for the study stems from altogether 25 semi-structured interviews with 28 Russian students (2 group interviews), 22 females and 6 males, a gender distribution that approximately mirrors the distribution among all BCS/BNS students.

A few of the interviews were conducted as far back as 2009/2010, but the bulk of them were carried out between 2012 and 2014. The interviews were done both face-to-face in Bodø, Alta, Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, and by e-mail. We have interviews with students who have spent one semester in Bodø or Alta during their bachelor studies in addition to students who have done the BCS/BNS exclusively online from Russia.

13.3 Background

Gathering information and facts about the third largest group of international students in Norway is naturally important in itself. However, the most important reason for asking the questions we pose in this study is the issue of migration; specifically, the problems that migrating students may cause for Russia and, hence, for the rather fragile environment of cooperation that has prevailed between the Russian Federation and the West since the end of the Cold War.

13.3.1 Russian Emigration 1991–2015

Ever since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has been on the sending end of migration in relation to the West. In the period between the dissolution of the USSR up until the turn of the millennium, around 100,000 people left every year, mostly for Germany, Israel and the United States (Heleniak 2001). The following period, from around 2000 until 2011, saw a considerable fall in the number of emigrants from Russia to the West. There were still people moving out, but by the end of the first decade of the new century, the number had decreased to around 30,000 annually (Migration Policy Centre 2013; Panda 2014; Semenova 2015). Many perceived this decrease in migration, and even the return of some former emigrants, as a sign that Russia had gotten the situation under control and that both Russians, in general, and former migrants viewed the future of Russia more positively.

Now, however, the migration numbers have radically spiked again. According to Elena Holodny (2014), using statistics from the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (also known as Rosstat), there has been a formidable increase from around 30,000 emigrants in 2011 to over 120,000 in 2012 and 186,000 in 2013. Furthermore, Holodny (2014, p. 1) states that:

> The biggest bombshell of all is that since April 2014 – a month after Russia annexed Crimea – 203,659 Russians have left the country.

Nonetheless, Russian migration to the West both has been, and still is, relatively moderate. After the breakup of the Soviet Union and, hence, a loosening up of the restrictions on travel and exiting the country, many expected a mass exodus from the previously authoritarian regime. As we have seen above, this did not happen (Heleniak 2001, p. 534):

> …net emigration from Russia to far abroad (…) averaged just about 100,000 annually, far less than the flows many had predicted once the exit barriers were removed."

Furthermore, the steady decrease of emigration in the first decade of the millennium, down to around 30,000 in 2011, should probably be considered low by any standard. Today the number is higher than ever during Russia's post communist epoch; however, even 200,000 people leaving annually does not necessarily constitute a crisis for a country of nearly 150 million people.[1]

What makes the current Russian migration situation far more serious than sheer numbers is the question of who is leaving.

13.3.2 Russian Brain Drain?

Migration theory states rather unequivocally that, when migration occurs, those who leave are often precisely those people a country needs most for progress and development:

> People who migrate are favorably self-selected compared to those who remain in their place of origin. Migrants tend to be more ambitious, aggressive, and entrepreneurial and in general more able. Because migration is selective, migration streams are skewed by age, sex, education, and life cycle, with levels of migration rising along with levels of education, occupation, and income (…) Those areas losing large number of people tend to lose the younger, more educated, more able-bodied segments of their population. (Heleniak 2001, p. 532)

[1] Russia also have a considerable immigration, especially of Russians from former states in the Soviet Union that now have become independent states (Heleniak 2001; Migration Policy Centre 2013).

> Sustained outmigration thus leads to the depletion of human capital in the sending regions and its accumulation in receiving areas, enhancing the productivity of the latter while lowering that of the former. Over time, therefore, the accumulation of human capital reinforces economic growth in receiving areas while its simultaneous depletion in sending areas exacerbates their stagnation, thereby further enhancing the condition for migration. (Massey et al. 1993, p. 453)

These insights from migration theory seem to apply well to Russian emigration. In the first wave of migration after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, those who left to go abroad were primarily Jews and German descendants; and the great majority of them moved precisely to Israel and Germany. However, among these emigrants was a disproportionate number of highly-skilled people:

> The lifting of the exit restrictions did not cause the mass exodus that many had predicted, but it did allow the emigration of many highly skilled persons who could have played a role in the country's transition. (Heleniak 2001, p. 531)

Heleniak (2001) states that, of those who left during this period, about 21% had higher education, compared to around 13% in the population as a whole.

In the current second wave there are no statistics showing exactly who these people are; however, according to migration theory it is likely we will again find that a majority are "the younger, more educated, more able-bodied segments of their population" (Heleniak 2001, p. 532). In addition, among political commentators there seems to be no doubt that "the best are leaving", as Ksenia Semenova (2015) puts it in the title of her paper.

If we are to believe migration theory and different political commentators, Russia is losing some of its most able-bodied citizens and, hence, may suffer a brain drain from emigration. How serious this is for Russian society as a whole is harder to say. Russia is a nation with a well-developed educational system that, for example, ranks higher than both Great Britain and France on this topic in the OECD Better Life Index (oecdbetterlifeindex.org). However, political commentators like Ksenia Semanova and Elena Holodny (see above) give the impression that the situation is very serious.

This is the foundation on which we have performed our research on Russian students in Norway. Because while migration numbers increase, Russia is facing another situation of people leaving the country either temporarily or permanently; i.e., students going abroad. As stated above, since the turn of the millennium the number of Russian students in Norway has increased from almost none to almost 1500. Contrary to the migration situation, where numbers increased from 2012, the number of students has decreased slightly in 2014; however, Russian students are still the third largest colony of foreign students at Norwegian higher education institutions (Wiers-Jenssen 2015).

One thousand five hundred Russian students in Norway may not count for much in isolated terms, but other Western countries have also witnessed a large increase in the number of Russian students over the past 10–15 years. The percentage of Russian students compared to the total number of students is lower in other countries such as the US, Germany, France and Great Britain than it is in Norway, but given a much higher total number of students in these countries, the actual number of Russian students in these countries is, of course, much higher than in Norway. Wiers-Jenssen (2015, p. 14) refers to UNESCO statistics when stating that:

> The number of Russian students in Norwegian higher education institutions has grown faster than the general Russian student export (…) the total number of Russian students abroad increased by approximately 50% between 2002 and 2012.

Furthermore (Wiers-Jenssen 2015, p. 16):

> "…Russian students studying in Norway constitute around 2 per cent of Russian internationally mobile students."

Thus, simple mathematics tell us that there are about 75,000 Russian students in foreign universities. We don't know yet if these students plan on going back to Russia or whether they will permanently stay in the countries where they have been studying or perhaps move on to yet another country. We know, however, that both university and government policy in the West on the matter of foreign students has changed over the past 40 years. From being a form of aid to poorer and developing countries, the policy has changed in the direction of getting the best brains to the universities and countries and keeping them (cf. Wiers-Jenssen and Sandersen, Chap. 3 in this volume). In Norway this is not yet official government policy, but the employers' union (NHO) has given strong signals that we should keep at least some of the foreign students (see Wiers-Jenssen 2015).

It is this situation of general emigration, combined with the outward migration of international students, that we fear can be challenging for the Russian Federation. Emigration from a country may be considered relatively harmless, in some cases. Moreover, in some cases, such as a situation of over-population, it can even be viewed as positive for future development. However, in most cases emigration is interpreted as a sign that something is wrong in the sending country, and most governments would not be happy about it. Adding that emigration, as we have seen above, often implies that "the best" are leaving (Massey et al. 1993; Heleniak 2001), comprehensive outward migration followed by a degree of brain drain may threaten the well-functioning and stability of a nation.

Russia being one of the largest economies in the world and, not least of all, one of the greatest military powers, it seems fair to say that both Norway, as a neighboring country, and the rest of the world as well, have strong interests in the maintenance of a well-functioning and stable Russia. We are not claiming that there necessarily is any direct link between increasing outward migration and decreasing well-functioning and stability; however, this is most likely the case and this connection might, therefore, be one of several aspects threatening the rather fragile environment of cooperation that has prevailed between Russia and the West since the end of the Cold War. Hence, gaining information about the intentions and plans of Russian international students when it comes to migration may prove more important than what is evident at first sight.

So, will Russian students stay abroad after they have finished their studies?

13.4 Will Russian Students Stay Abroad?

According to migration theory there are several reasons why people decide to migrate from their home country. Migration has long been analyzed in terms of the push-pull model (cf. Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume):

> This model differentiates between push factors that drive people to leave home, from pull factors that attract migrants to a new location. Push factors occur within sending states, that is, those that send migrants abroad, while pull factors occur within receiving states, that is, states that receive immigrants from sending states abroad. Push factors are negative aspects of the sending country, while pull factors are positive aspects of the receiving country. In fact, these differentiating factors are really two sides of the same coin. In moving migrants must not only find a lack of benefits at home (push factors), but also expect a surplus of benefits abroad (pull factors); otherwise the move would not be worthwhile. (Globalization 101 2013, p. 9)

Among the most prominent push factors, we find "Lack of Jobs/Poverty", "Civil Strife/War/Religious and Political Persecution" and, in recent years, "Environmental Refugees"*;* while the categories of pull factors include "Higher Standards of Living/Higher Wages", "Labour Demand" and "Political and Religious Freedom" (Globalization 101 2013, pp. 9–15).

Worldwide, economic factors seem to provide the main motivation for migration. According to the International Labour Organization in 2008:

> …approximately half of the total population of current international migrants, or about 100 million migrant workers, have left home to find better job and lifestyle opportunities for their families abroad. (Globalization 101 2013, p. 9)

Murphy-Lejeune (2002, p. 77) puts it this way:

> …motivations of migratory individuals are multifold, but that the one unifying element in all individual trajectories which reiterate the same pattern is that everywhere individuals change location seeking more favourable life conditions.

The conclusion is then that, if there are sufficient differences in living standards between countries, chances are that at least some people will migrate from the country with the lowest living standards to the country with the highest living standards.

So what are the economic or "better life" differences between Russia and Norway and Russia and other western countries?

13.4.1 OECD Better Life Index

What does it mean to improve material or economic living conditions? The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has developed what is titled the *OECD Better Life Index.* This is meant to be a measurement of well-being in different countries concerning 11 topics the OECD has identified as essential in the areas of material living conditions and quality of life. These 11 topics are (oecdbetterlifeindex.org 2016):

1. Housing
2. Income
3. Jobs
4. Community
5. Education
6. Environment
7. Civic Engagement
8. Health
9. Life Satisfaction
10. Safety
11. Work-life Balance

Russia loses to western countries on most of these topics. On all of the topics, Norway scores higher than Russia. Putting the scores together, Norway ends up third of the 36 countries measured (the 34 members of OECD plus Russia and Brazil), while Russia is number 32 with only Greece, Chile, Turkey and Mexico behind. This means that all other western countries commonly targets for emigrants, the US (no. 7), Germany (no. 13) and the United Kingdom (no. 16), also end up in higher positions than Russia. These countries do not necessarily score higher than Russia on every topic, but, in sum, they do.

Although there may be other issues keeping people in their place of origin than material living standard, results like these make it likely that at least some people would migrate from Russia to both Norway and other western countries, as we have seen above.

13.4.2 Following the Money?

What about the students? Does migration theory, and the differences in living standards, make it likely for Russian students to move to Norway or other western countries after graduation? And are they more or less likely to move than other Russian citizens?

The first point is that students probably are like everyone else. They would be tempted to move for the same material reasons as any Russian, or any migrant for that matter.

In addition, students are the archetype migrants, in many ways, according to migration theory. As Heleniak (2001) stated above, the level of migration rises along with levels of education, occupation and income, such that areas losing people tend to lose the young, the well-educated and the able-bodied. It is also stated that people are more disposed to migrating when on the verge of a career rather than when they are more established in their home country:

> Migration rates are highest among people who have just completed their schooling and are embarking on careers. (Heleniak 2001, p. 532)

All of this applies to students studying abroad. They are young, they have higher education and, because of this, they stand a good chance of finding a good job and earning a solid income; and they are just about to take the first step into working life.

Furthermore, students abroad have already tried living in another country and, hence, they know what it takes, they know what it's like, they know the system, they know the culture, they know people, and they may even know the language. It would most likely be far easier and far less scary for a student to decide to stay or to move on than it is for people who have never lived in another country or perhaps have not even visited one. Students have what Murphy-Lejeune (2002) calls "mobility capital".

Based on this background we would expect that at least a fair share of the Russian students abroad would want to stay and thereby possibly add to the brain drain problem of the Russian Federation.

13.5 Findings from the Interviews

In Wiers-Jenssen's quantitative study about Russian students in Norway (2015, see also Wiers-Jenssen, Chap. 10 in this volume) the material shows exactly what would be expected according to migration theory; a majority of respondents cite career opportunities in Norway as an important reason for choosing to study there, in addition to the fact that they have considered staying permanently in Norway after finishing their studies:

> Eight in ten full degree students and six in ten exchange students state that they have considered staying in Norway after finishing their degree. (Wiers-Jenssen 2015, p. 43)

This does not mean that they actually will stay in Norway after graduating. As Wiers-Jenssen (2015, p. 45) suggests, they "may find more attractive alternatives, they could change their minds or they could face legal restrictions as non-EU citizens."

The study also shows that, among those who have considered staying in Norway, the majority wants to find a job upon graduation. Furthermore, the majority wants to work in Norway because of the good career opportunities and high wage level in Norway. Very few report that it will be difficult to find a job in their home country. These findings seems to be in line with migration theory, stating that migration often takes place to improve material living conditions.

The conclusion from Wiers-Jenssen's study on the question of migration is that, for a large majority of Russian students, and more for Russian students than for students from most other countries, either the plan to migrate permanently has been there from the start or an intention to do so has developed during the sojourn.

How does this picture of the plans and intentions of Russian students in Norway regarding migration compare to what we find among the BCS/BNS students? Are

Wiers-Jenssen's findings confirmed or will we see quite a different landscape by going a little deeper into students' opinions, as the qualitative interview allows for (cf. Mellström, Chap. 11 in this volume)?

In reading and analyzing the interviews, the first finding from this study is that there is no clear-cut answer to whether the BCS/BNS students intend to leave Russia or not. However, we will start a little further back.

The degree to which the stay abroad has been planned is at least somewhat related to the issue of possible migration. One would think that, if migration has been an intention before leaving and studying abroad is seen as a springboard out, the awareness surrounding where to go and which studies to choose would be rather clear.

This seems not to be the case among the BCS/BNS students. There are students who report plans to study abroad, saying they have always wanted to do so and that they have always been interested in studying the North. However, a majority states that this was one of the few chances they had, or at least the simplest one, to go abroad (through formal agreements with universities in the northern part of Norway). They most commonly became aware of the possibility either through the international office at their home university or through friends who had already started or completed the program. Furthermore, relatively few seem to have had any previous interest in or wish to study the High North.

One of the students from Arkhangelsk put it in a way that basically sums up most aspects of the answers in this part:

> *From the beginning of my studies at home university I wanted to study abroad and visit different countries. So, I chose the program "Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies" because it gives an opportunity to study abroad.*
>
> *It is really interesting and amazing to learn new things, such as ways of life, languages, educational system, architecture, food, people's habits and many, many other things. You can understand people from foreign countries only from the inside (to live there for a long time). Also, a scholarship is really high for us.*
>
> *The program "Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies" offers studying in Bodø, Norway. Of course, before, I wanted to study in Norway, because this country is famous for beautiful nature, good quality of life, friendly people, high quality of education.*
>
> *Our teachers always talk about this program, internet page of our university has some information about international programs.*

When asked why they chose Norway, three other student put it like this:

> *Norway was not my plan, but I always wanted to study abroad (…) It was more likely coincidence than choice, but it was nice. I would rather have gone to Canada.*
>
> *Norway was a concrete goal, Bodø was a happy accident. I am fully satisfied with the place I lived in, however if I had not been able to go to Norway, or I would have been offered another city, I would have agreed.*
>
> *Bodø is mandatory condition of the exchange program. I'm happy that I was in Norway. And if I would change the country probably I'd choose Sweden or Denmark. Because this is the Nordic country and they have similar weather conditions like in the northern Russia.*

These answers hardly indicate any up-front plan or intention to leave Russia. It seems more like a possibility that presented itself and which sounded like an exciting experience. It seems to be more of an accident than a plan and a case of taking what is offered more than having an intention of what to do with it and what to become.

On the other hand, there has been more structure from the Russian universities, over time, when it comes to which students are offered the possibility to go. Especially NArFU in Arkhangelsk, from which the University of Nordland/Nord University gets the bulk of their students, has focused on students from the Departments of Foreign Languages and Regional Studies. These are students who are studying either English, Norwegian (or another Nordic language) or Nordic societies. The BCS/BNS is far more suitable for these students than many of those who have registered in the past. Hence, it might nonetheless involve more of a plan.

In addition, people with plans or wishes to migrate may well be rational enough to see that a study program like this, in a country like Norway and cities like Bodø and Alta, is their best shot at going abroad and may well pursue that as a start.

The students were also asked why they wanted to study abroad generally, what their motivations were. To this open-ended question, no one answers that their intention is "to leave Russia". The top motivating factor among BCS/BNS students is reported to be "improving language skills" followed by "gaining knowledge about another culture in general or the Norwegian culture in particular". Just "getting the experience of living abroad" is often cited as a motivation as well.

Based on this information, it seems fair to conclude that there does not seem to have been much of a migration plan up front among the BCS/BNS students.

However, the plan or intention to move permanently may develop once they get here, and one of the factors influencing this is how they experience the stay. If the perception of the one's stay in a host country is positive, and the living situation is deemed better than that of Russia, in most aspects, it would be more tempting to stay after completion of one's studies.

The way in which our interviewees have evaluated Norway is, in most cases, very positive. Among the superlatives we find that everything works; buses are good, roads are good, the government is good, people are friendly, studies are good, the library and other buildings and facilities are good, the internet works and is free, the nature is beautiful, and even though living expenses are high, and some undoubtedly have a hard time making it, this is not considered a big problem either:

> *Everything works like a clock. The economics are really great, the same for the social system and social guarantees.*

> *I didn't expect that the nature is so beautiful. A lot of places are magic. Buildings are small and nice, people are simple and friendly, always smiling to everybody. I didn't expect that I would fall in love with this country. (…)*

> *I thought that Norway is a comfortable place for living and has beautiful landscapes. And I have got this Norway, like I wanted. It was true. (…) It is wonderful to be a student in Norway. You get a lot of opportunities and interesting things.*

> *There are many opportunities for students in Norway, for example, it is possible to use the library 24 hours a day. Students can get access to internet. There is free water dispenser in the university. Professors are always ready to help and build a friendly atmosphere.*

I've learned a lot, and it's almost all about the way of teaching. I was amazed how easy and unstrained this process flows here. (…) We've read a lot and we had to study mostly by ourselves. Teachers have roles as guides in the world of knowledge, but we had to go into depth by ourselves.

In going a little deeper, we find, as always, some exceptions, and sometimes a bit of inconsistency in relation to what has been said before. Some mention that it is hard to make contact with Norwegian students, and some mention bad experiences with drunken Norwegians. When it comes to the question of whether the Norwegian higher education system is better than that of Russia, the answers are not conclusive. Some of the Russian students prefer the Norwegian system, others do not know what they think is best, while still others think the Russian system is best when it comes to knowledge:

Norway is very interesting, seminars especially. Now I know theory and other things better than from Russian seminars, but in Russia exams are better for you talking to your professor and they can show better who is really prepared and who is not so good.

Can't choose which is best. I like and can criticize both.

In Norway it is better, because necessary things are accessible for students.

It is difficult to say. In Norway a student has a lot of free time, which he can spend on scientific works, hobbies, reading books and so on. In Russia a student has not so much free time because he spends it in the university. But in the university he gets a lot of information.

However, in conclusion, Norway is considered to be "heaven" in many senses. Everything works, life is good and the nature is beautiful.

What about staying here or moving back? We haven't asked the question directly, but rather more indirectly by asking them about future plans: i.e., if their plans have changed during the stay; if they want to study more and, if yes, where they would like to continue their studies; where they see themselves 5 years from now and what their dreams are.

The answers may be a little inconclusive in this instance as well, especially in the e-mail interviews where we could not ask follow-up questions. Not everybody has answered in line with our intentions (Russia or not Russia). Nonetheless, the data are good enough to provide some qualified indications of where they want to stay.

Seven of the 28 interviewees state relatively straight out that their plan is to leave Russia and move permanently to Norway or another country. The other countries mentioned are Sweden, Denmark and Canada:

When I finish my education in Russia, I am going to enter a master degree program in Norway. I see myself here in Norway. It does not matter in what city, but I want to live, study and work here.

I'm going to finish my first education. Then, or even earlier, I'm going to continue my Norwegian education, bachelor's degree, and get the master's degree in Canada, for instance, or Norway (…) I definitely understood that I don't want to stay in Russia.

Some clearly want to go back to Russia – they miss both their culture and their family and friends. Some also want to use their abilities and knowledge to help develop their own country:

> *It's nice to live in Norway (…) But the culture is very different to Russian, so it is not possible to move to Norway for me.*

> *… I miss Russia sometimes, and I was born there so it's quite natural, and I miss the culture (…) we are moving into better times, so if we don't support our country, then it is not very good. We have to understand that after the crash of the Soviet Union and everything; I think Russia is a good thing – from the state it was 20 years ago to where it is now moving.*

Among the ones who want to go back, it is often mentioned that they want to work with international relations of some sort, giving them the possibility to travel and meet people from other countries.

However, the majority of interviewees do not say directly whether they want to leave Russia or not. What they do want, however, including both those who say they have decided to leave and those who say they have decided to return, is to continue their studies abroad after they have finished their bachelor study in Norway and their studies in Russia:

> *I will try to enter a master degree program in a foreign university. I will be glad if I enter a Norwegian university.*

> *I'm going to finish my first education. Then, or even earlier, I'm going to continue my Norwegian education and get the master's degree in Canada, for instance, or Norway.*

> *I've applied for a master's program in the Faculty of Social Science, International Northern Development, at the University of Nordland (…) I am somewhere in Canada, doing research or social work connected with the Arctic, for example, working with indigenous people.*

> *I hope to have a job. I want to be a man working in the petroleum industry, a petroleum company for example. I want to create something valuable. Not for the money but for the well-being of Russia and the people working and living here. That is the aim. But maybe I will go abroad.*

The question, then, is what will they think the next time it is time to go home?

13.6 Concluding Remarks

Russia is currently experiencing a radical increase in the number of emigrants to the West. After almost a decade of decreasing numbers at the beginning of the new millennium, 2012 suddenly reported a tripling of the number from the year before, with a further increase both in 2013 and 2014 (Holodny 2014). This sudden increase has made political commentators ask if Russia is suffering a serious brain drain (Holodny 2014; Semenova 2015); a question that finds support in migration theory saying that, where migration takes place, a disproportionate number of the most abled-bodied are leaving (Heleniak 2001).

Simultaneously, the number of Russian students going abroad is increasing formidably. In Norway the number of Russian students has gone from almost none to around 1500 from 2000 to 2014, and, according to UNESCO, the total number of Russian students abroad has increased by approximately 50% between 2002 and 2012 (Wiers-Jenssen 2015).

Considering that ordinary migrants are very often overrepresented among the well-educated and most able-bodied, general migration combined with students who potentially leave after finishing their studies abroad may constitute a serious brain drain for Russia. A serious brain drain might further influence both internal development and the foreign affairs of Russia. Our primary concern here has been the influence such a brain drain may have on the environment of cooperation between Russia and the West.

Hence, the question in this paper has been whether studying abroad is part of the more general migration from Russia; are the students who go abroad planning to leave Russia permanently or do they have other motivations?

Wiers-Jenssen's (2015) research on Russian students in Norway shows that two out of every three students state that they have considered staying. That is more than for all other groups of international students in Norway.

This study *may* tell a slightly different story. Firstly, it does not seem migration is a plan or intention for many students when they apply for the BCS/BNS. It seems to be more of an opportunity that knocked, or an accident that presented itself, that they acted upon. Even though many state that they have always wanted to study abroad, they do not seem to have been very actively looking for opportunities. They got a chance at what many would think is a fairly unusual study program in a fairly remote and unknown city, and they took it.

Secondly, only 7 out of 28 students state unambiguously that they want to leave Russia to stay in Norway or to move on to yet another country. That is 1 in every 4 compared to 2 out of 3 in Wiers-Jenssen's (2015) study.

Thirdly, on the question of what their motivations for studying in Norway are, no one answers that their motivation is to leave Russia. Instead, they mostly provide what might be considered as classic motivations for studying abroad; i.e., improving language skills, learning to know another culture or just to have the experience.

At first glance, then, the results seem different. Even though our results might have been different if we had asked a question using the same formulation as Wiers-Jenssen did (if they had *considered* staying), it seems this study modifies the impression of Wiers-Jenssen's study that a large majority of Russian students want to stay in Norway upon completion of their studies.

However, these results may change over time and in both directions, depending on a whole range of aspects and situations; more students could want to return to Russia in a few years from now or even more students could want to leave Russia. Since we have been preoccupied with the possible migration from and brain drain of Russia in this chapter, we will conclude by looking at some of the aspects that might lead to more Russian students wanting to leave Russia permanently.

The first aspect of this study that may have led to lower reporting of migration wishes than in other studies is the combination of very young students who are staying for short periods of time. The BCS/BNS students are usually in their very early twenties and, though they are full-degree students, they are in Norway for only one semester. One can imagine that somewhat older students are a little more independent and mature and that having stayed for a longer period of time may influence their wishes and decisions. Hence, there might be a difference between these one-semester students and students who have stayed for a full bachelor's or master's degree.

Secondly, related to the aspect mentioned above, the assessment of the stay itself may influence what students want for the future. If the stay is considered bad, the chances that they want to go home increase, and vice versa. We have seen in our data that most of the BCS/BNS students are very positive to their stay in Norway and this may, in turn, lead to more students wanting to move permanently or at least return for more studies.

Thirdly, one way for these bachelor students to return is to apply for a master's program either in Norway or in another country. Our study shows that almost all our interviewees have a plan or want to come back for further studies at the master's level. A master's program abroad would imply a much longer stay and this, again depending on the quality of the stay, might increase the wish to become a permanent resident of the country.

Fourthly, migration theory claims that emigration is most likely to take place when a person is on the verge of starting a career. This again is more likely after a master's program than after, or in the middle of, a bachelor's. If the BCS/BNS students go abroad again for a master's program the chances of a permanent move increase.

However, this is only qualified speculation. The only way to know what these students actually do, and why, is to ask them again. A follow-up study a few years down the line would be both important and interesting.

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Erratum to: Higher Education in the High North

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Erratum to:
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Afterword

As an artist and observer of the papers presented in this symposium and, in way of conclusion, I would to take the liberty to draw some broader lines in defining the significance of internationalization of education, here, from a humanistic approach. It is only when we put a scientific analysis in a certain existential context does it achieve significance.

The emphasis here is to show the advantages of cultural diversity sharing through educational exchanges. The exchange of knowledge, teaching techniques, and the mere physical presence of foreign students contributes not only to a richer coexistence among nations but also contributes to de-escalate fear of the unknown and defuse false impressions of life behind our borders.

Visiting students, motivated by curiosity and the desire to better their lives are simply emulating what humans did when they first learned to walk and escape the jungles of Eastern Africa. Motivated by the gathering of food and by curiosity, modern *Homo sapiens* roamed from his birthplace over 50 millenniums ago. It was this transience, which brought him in contact with other species and other environments, which in time developed into we have come to call cultures. At the same time the urge for movement eventually collided with another feature inherent to the species – possession of a fixed area or the idea of *territory*. The roamer became an intruder. The basis of human activity can be defined by these two phenomena – roaming and defending. The preceding studies in this book have enumerated scientifically the chief factors of sharing cultural diversity through educational exchanges. Humanism goes beyond scientific investigation, and in the context of internationalization its parameters are less discernable. At the very time these papers were being presented, Europe was experiencing the largest mass migration since World War II – from Africa, Asia and the Mid-East, people fleeing from war, drought and poverty, seeking a new and better life. Overnight the continent was experiencing unexpected, unadulterated internationalization, the impact of which is still to be determined.

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When Neighboring Countries Reinforce Their Borders with Barbwire It Is Time to Export and Import Students in Larger Numbers

Reactions over this sudden deluge of human beings among the populations of the receiving countries were varied, ranging from spontaneous acceptance to polarization to outright hostility and will be the target for studies for generations to come. Although many of the immigrants had little or no education, many of them will soon be assimilated into our universities as students or professors and will contribute “color” and diversity to the future of internationalization. The immediate nature of this mass movement of people may fall outside the scope of a higher education analysis, but the mechanics are similar. The migrants represent a factor of the unknown, precipitating among recipient populations curiosity, indifference, fear or hostility. It is not until the newcomers and the natives intermingle, can there be any chance of stability. Studies on discrimination draw a direct correlation in the treatment of foreigners by natives – the more contact natives have to foreigners the less they tend to discriminate.

The same can be said about the Norwegian undergraduate student who finds herself sitting between a Ukrainian and a Russian student in a German history class. The Ukrainian student meets his Russian neighbor on neutral ground in a classroom in Tromsø, and the Norwegian student observes the relationship between these conflicting neighbors, while all three transport their experiences into the context of modern German history.

The Pursuit of Peace Through Student Mobility

One of the main goals in the Bologna Accord, apart from institutional parity, tolerance and diversity, was to further the concept of peace through mutual understanding and of global engagement.

During Stalin’s reign in the Soviet Union, it was a political imperative to hold the country “clean” of foreign influence. The only exchanges between the countries were on a purely cultural basis, especially in the field of music. Students and faculty were not exchanged, only performers. Musicians became the ambassadors of the superpowers. Their music, clinically “sterile” and devoid of political utterance, was a safe export item. David Oistrakh commented jokingly that, “they send us their Jewish violinists from Odessa and we send them our Jewish violinists from Odessa.”

After the Cuban Missile Crises of 1961, which nearly ended in a Nuclear War and an end to civilization, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to increase their number of student exchanges by a hundred fold. Armament was not the answer. Mutual understanding seemed the only feasible alternative. It was a reinterring of what Lloyd Georg had expressed about the defeat of Communism – it had to be achieved on the marketplace and not on the battlefield. After Cuba the need for exchange of ideas and ideologies became apparent. From a mere 17 Russian students in the U.S. per year in the years after the war, the numbers reach over 50 thousand during the decades of the 60s and 70s. The two superpowers realized that only through cultural and educational exchanges could mutual understanding and economic collaboration be achieved.

Recently, at the same time that the populations of the South have been invading the North out of desperation, the relations between Eastern and Western Europe have gradually grown sour, which many political analysts describe as the makings of a new Cold War. Ever since the dissolvement of the Soviet Union and subsequently disbanding of the Warsaw Pact, Russia has been squeezed into a corner by an expanding European Union, a monopolizing consumer society packaged in America, and, most disturbing, by an expanding NATO. The very presence of NATO, a U.S.-dominated military alliance perched in Russia's backyard, has been equated to the Treaty of Versailles, which ended one world war and sowed the seeds for the next one.

As conditions between the U.S. and its European allies have deteriorated over the Ukrainian conflict a survey shows that 85% of America's adult population and 70% of the countries college graduates cannot not correctly find the Ukraine on a map. During the Cold War such mutual ignorance among the adversaries was even greater. Myths and misgivings through hearsay had been thriving like a cancer within the two superpowers for decades. The only means of dispelling these were through real physical contact with students and cultural exchanges. As the old Russian proverb tells us, it is better to see once than hear a hundred times.

While the number of Russian students coming to Norway for studies increases year by year, the amount of Norwegian students going to Russia seems to decline. This is somewhat deplorable but also ironic. A survey of students in Norway showed that Norwegian students know the names of far more classical Russian authors, composers, scientists and athletes than they do American counterparts. More ironic is the fact that the former prime minister of Norway, Jens Stoltenberg, the very man who in his younger days opposed Norway's membership in NATO, Russia's thorn in the flesh, is now General Secretary of the organization.

The scuffle among politicians over budget priorities will always be split between hawks, who demand more funding for military defense, and doves, who argue for diplomacy through cultural and cross-border student/faculty exchanges. Under President Kennedy, by way of the National Defense Act, the number of grants for Soviet-American student exchanges increased exponentially, ironically, so did the number of intercontinental missiles with atomic warheads.

A Visual Realization of Bridges Between Nations. Culture Is Usually the Last Channel Open Between Nations in Conflict

Dr. Scott Thoe has worked as an artist and university lecturer for the past 30 years in Russia, Norway and Poland. When the CFE treaty was signed by 27 NATO and Warsaw Pact countries in 1990, whereby 40 thousand battle tanks were to be destroyed, he proposed building a "bridge" of the tanks, breaching the Polish and

German borders over the Oder/Neisse River at Eisenhüttenstadt. The bridge solution proved to be an environmentally better means to disable the tanks at half the cost of destroying them and would serve as a monument over and permanent reminder of the Cold War and the Arms Race. President Gorbachev invited him to Moscow in 1992, after which he returned to Moscow with a model of the bridge. He made a presentation of the project in the State Duma and later in the Bundestag in Berlin, the OSCE Headquarters in Vienna and finally in the United Nations. He has decorated numerous buildings in Russia with stone reliefs, symbolizing peace and mutual understanding.

Illustration A.1 Bridge of Peace

Illustration A.2 School of Culture, Kotlas, Russia

Illustration A.3 Scott Thoe with Gorbatsjov in Moscow 1992

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