

Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic: Report to the Arctic Council and Senior Arctic Officials

Background, methodology and questionnaire

SLiCA's phase I (development of an international core questionnaire to be used among Inuit, Sami and the indigenous peoples of Chukotka and the Kola Peninsula) is well documented in a number of scientific articles and conference papers. See the SLiCA web site for a number of these: www.arcticlivingconditions.org.

The report

Living Conditions in the Arctic – How to Measure Living Conditions and Individual Well-being among Inuit and Saami Peoples in the Arctic by Thomas Andersen has been handed out to the participants in the Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council, November 2004 and at the Meeting, August 2005 for the Nordic ministers responsible for co-ordinating Nordic activities.

Results

SLiCA's phase II (validation of data, data entry, processing of data and analyses) has been split into two parts (an Inuit focused analysis to be followed by a Saami focused analysis) due to the fact that interviewing was first concluded in Arctic Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Chukotka. Interviewing in Sweden was concluded in 2006/07 whereas data collection in Norway and in the Kola Peninsula has been concluded in the summer 2008. The Arctic Centre/Rovaniemi in collaboration with the Sami Council is trying to develop the preconditions to include Finland in SLiCA.

The Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council, Reykjavik, November 2004 was the first forum where SLiCA presented empirical results (from the Alaskan part of the survey). Since then SLiCA results have been presented in different fora and in March 2007 the first comprehensive report was released at a joint SLiCA- IPY event at the University of Alaska Anchorage. The report consists of a Review article; almost 600 tables and the international SLiCA questionnaire (www.arcticlivingconditions.org). Some of the key findings (as examples) will be listed below.

SLiCA International Steering Committee:

Ann Ragnhild Broderstad, Centre for Sámi Health Research, University of Tromsø, Norway

Gerard Duhaime, Université Laval, Canada

Hugh Beach, Dept. of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University, Sweden

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Birger Poppel, Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland (Research Project Chief)

Jack Kruse, ISER, University of Anchorage, Alaska, USA (Program Director)

Some key findings

Key findings are to be further developed and to be discussed in 2009 in a SAO meeting during the Danish/Greenlandic/Faeroe Islands' Arctic Council chairmanship along with a number of recommendations.

- A combination of traditional activities and cash employment is the prevailing lifestyle of Arctic indigenous peoples. It takes money to pursue traditional activities; households with higher incomes can, and do, choose to spend income on these activities. Nine in ten Inuit think traditional activities are important to their identity.
- Health conditions vary widely in the Arctic: Most of the indigenous peoples surveyed rate their own health as good or excellent —almost all respondents in Canada and Greenland and three- quarters of those in Northern Alaska. The exception is Chukotka, where more than half rated their health as only fair or poor.
- Even though most are satisfied with life in their communities, indigenous people also cite widespread social problems: unemployment, alcohol abuse, suicide, drug abuse, family violence and sexual abuse are on average considered major social problems by more than six Inuit out of ten. Most problems are reported from Chukotka as at least eight out of ten cite most of these problems.
- In the face of rapid changes in the Arctic, most indigenous peoples have maintained their traditional subsistence activities. Many also continue to speak their native languages – in addition to Western languages. More than 90% of the Greenlanders and the Inuit in Canada – young and old –are fluent in their native languages. In Northern Alaska and Chukotka, indigenous people of all ages are much less likely to speak their native languages — and those who can are more likely to be 55 or older. In Northern Alaska, just 5% of those 16 to 19 say they are fluent in a native language.
- The indigenous peoples of Chukotka, Northern Alaska and Greenland were asked about environmental concerns, if any. On average three out of four perceive climate change to be a problem in their communities and more than half of all Inuit mention local contaminated sites, pollution of local lakes and streams and pollution from industrial development as problems in the region. A significantly larger proportion of indigenous people in Chukotka are concerned with these problems. In Greenland pollution from other countries and in Chukotka and Alaska erosion of coastal areas or riverbanks are cited as problems by vast majorities.

Ongoing and future activities within the SLiCA project

The aims of SLiCA have been to:

- Measure living conditions in a way relevant to Arctic residents
- Document and compare the present state of living conditions among the indigenous peoples of the Arctic
- Improve the understanding of living conditions to the benefit of Arctic residents
- To provide local, regional, national, and international organizations an improved basis for decision-making

In developing a new research design and releasing a comprehensive collection of tables the SLiCA team has taken important steps to reach our goals, but there is still a long way to go. The near future plans of the SLiCA project can be summarized into the following activities:

- Concluding data entry and conducting analyses in Sápmi and comparing to the findings from the Inuit part of the survey
- SLiCA is part of four IPY endorsed projects:

- SLiCA - Remote Access Analysis System, RAAS IPY #386
- The Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI) #167
- The Political Economy of Northern Regional Development, POENORD #227
- SLiCA - Remote Access Analysis System, RAAS IPY #386
- Social Indicator Project (ASI) #462
- Contributing to different Arctic Council/SDWG projects:
 - Social Indicator Project (ASI)
 - The Economy of the North (ECONOR)
 - ArcticStat Project
 - The Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI)
- Executive summary of conclusions in a 'lay man's' version translated into the languages of the participants in the survey.
- Publication of a CD-ROM containing the three parts of the SLiCA Results.

In a future perspective –it should be considered

- To run a “benchmark” survey like SLiCA every ten years, plus a much smaller social indicator survey to track change over time. This might be part of the Arctic Council's Arctic Social Indicator initiative

SLiCA data gains much of its meaning from the policy context from which it is viewed. Decisions affecting the well- being of Arctic indigenous peoples occur at the local, regional, national, and international levels. The Arctic Council is one of these fora, thus it is a hope that the SLiCA results will be food for thoughts and discussions in the future work of the Arctic Council.

Following the above and in conclusion:

- There will be no deliverables from SLiCA to the SAO and the upcoming Ministerial meeting under the this chairmanship;
- The Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic project is intended to continue into the next chairmanship.

SLiCA overview of activities and publications 2008

Articles and Books:

- Andersen, T. and Poppel, B. (in press). “Living Conditions in the Arctic”. In "Indicators Relevant to Indigenous Peoples, A Resource Book". Tebtebba Foundation.
- Kruse, J., Poppel, B., Abryutina, L., Duhaime, G., Martin, S., Poppel, M., Kruse, M., Ward, E., Cochran, P., Hanna, V. (2008). ***Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLiCA***. In: Møller, V., Huschka, D, and Michalos, A. C. (eds.): Barometers of Quality of Life around the Globe. Springer Social Indicators Research Series. Springer Verlag,
- Poppel, B . 2008. ***Er subsistensaktiviteter i Arktis en del af den markedsøkonomiske virkelighed eller er markedsøkonomien en del af en subsistensbaseret blandingsøkonomi?*** [Are subsistence activities in the Arctic part of the market economic reality or - is the market economy a part of a subsistence based mixed economy?]. In: Grønlandsk Kultur og Samfundsforskning 2006-07. Ilisimatusarfik/Forlaget Atuagkat. Nuuk.

- Poppel, B . 2008. ***Measuring Ways of Living and Living Conditions of Indigenous Peoples of the Arctic – The Greenlandic Inuit as an example***. In: Engell, M. and Søndergaard, J. (eds.): Menneskesjæl. Festskrift til Finn Lynge. Forlaget Atuagkat.
- Poppel, B. and Kruse, J. (in press). ***The importance of a mixed cash- and harvest herding based economy to living in the Arctic – an analysis based on Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA)***. In: Møller, V. and Huscka, D. (editors): Quality of Life in the New Millenium: Advances in Quality-of-Life Studies, Theory and Research. Social Indicators Research Series. Springer Verlag.

Arctic Council presentations:

- Poppel, Birger and Jack Kruse. 2007. ***SLiCA Results presentation***. Arctic Council, Sustainable Development Working Group meeting. Tromsø, Norway. April 10-11.
- Poppel, Birger and Jack Kruse. 2007. ***SLiCA Results presentation***. Arctic Council, Senior Arctic Officials meeting. Tromsø, Norway. April 12-13.
- **Conference, Seminar and Workshop Presentations:**
- Belisimbi, Felicity. 2008. ***The Impact of Education on Inuit Living Conditions – the Case of Nunavik***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26
- Berman, Matt. 2008. ***Moving or Staying for the Best Part of Life: Theory and Evidence for the Role of Subsistence in Migration Decisions and Well-being of Arctic Inupiat Residents***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26
- Cleveland, Victoria. 2008. ***Large Economic Development: Responsible for Cultural Erosion?*** 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26
- Koke, Paul. 2008. ***The Impact of Mining Development on Subsistence Practices of Indigenous Peoples. Lessons Learned from Northern Quebec and Alaska***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26.
- Kruse, Jack. 2008. ***Promoting Self-Determination with Cyberinfrastructure***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26
- Kruse, Jack. 2008. ***Relationships between social problems and other dimensions of living conditions: an international Arctic analysis***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26.

- Pedersen, Janemaria Mekoline, Birger Poppel, and Peter Bjerregaard 2008. ***Social epidemiology among circumpolar indigenous people Health and social inequality in Greenland***, National Institute of Public Health, Southern University, Denmark & Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***Living Conditions of Children and Youth in Greenland – a sketch of a youth profile***. World Winter Cities Association for Mayors (WWCAM) – Mayors' Conference in Nuuk. January 18-19.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***Den arktiske Levevilkårsundersøgelse, SLiCA***. ***Nordisk Statistiktræf. Nuuk. Grønland***. August 11.-14.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***Overview of the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic***. 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI). Nuuk Greenland. August 22-26.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***Grønlændernes levevilkår – nogle resultater fra Den arktiske Levevilkårsundersøgelse, SLiCA***. Lunch seminar, Institute of Criminology, University of Oslo. October 3.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***Grønland under forandring – mødet mellem subsistensøkonomi og moderne markedsøkonomi – eller hvorfor vælger mennesker at bosætte sig og blive boende i et ofte barskt klima og ugæstfrit miljø?*** Lunch seminar, Statistics Norway. October 6.
- Poppel, Birger. 2008. ***The importance of a mixed cash- and harvest herding based economy to living in the Arctic – an analysis based on the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLiCA***. Conference: Human Dimensions in the Circumpolar Arctic. Umeå University, Sweden. October 8-10.
- Poppel, MarieKathrine. 2008. ***Relationships between violence and different living conditions – An analysis based on the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, SLiCA***, 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI). Nuuk, Greenland. August 22-26.
- Roberson, Edward. 2008. ***The Equation of Inuit Well-being - Can APS-SLiCA Contribute to the Debate about Well-being and Development?*** 6th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS VI), Nuuk Greenland, August 22-26.