

Authentic Arctic explained

Even if we do not think about their special meaning every day, Northernness and Arcticness are part of our everyday life. The Authentic Arctic theme of the first 2019 LUMEN magazine has made many of us think: just what does the Arctic or Arctic region encompass and what does authenticity mean? The Arctic region can be defined, but does Arcticness refer to something more than just a region? Does it entail the inherent way of thinking that people living in the North have, or the flexibility and adaptability of these people? As a word, ‘authentic’ is easier to comprehend and also fairly easy to identify when used in connection with people and nature.

Living in the North, we have become accustomed to seasonal changes and their effect on our lives. Climate change and globalisation are also shaping our living environment, forcing us to adapt and look for new solutions in our unique, flexible ways. The quick technological development challenges us to find ways to integrate these changes into the authentic Arctic experience.

In her piece, Liisa Holmberg writes how success and well-being in the Arctic environment require multidisciplinary expertise and a solution-oriented and open operating culture. This has been the aim of the strategy of the Lapland University of Applied Sciences, and we are committed to it also in future. Liisa Holmberg is the Chair of the Council of the University of the Arctic, currently working at ISFI, the International Sámi Film Institute.

The special characteristics of people and nature in the Arctic region have inspired the article “Elävä erämaa – lupaus aidosta arktisesta” (“Living Wilderness – Promise of Authentic Arctic”) by Marja Lempiäinen, Matti Liimatta and Marko Touru. The article describes how, through co-creation, entrepreneurs in the Sompio region provide unique and authentic experiences based on local stories and the authentic cultural heritage inherent to Sompio. Anitra Arkko-Saukkonen and Juhani Mattsson take us on an expedition to the Arctic environment in the form of writings and illustrations.

According to an article by Karoliina Majuri and Kirsi Muuttoranta, the Arctic food system is one step ahead of the global food system. The selection of species and varieties, the short and bright growth period and the long and cold winter inherent to the Arctic food system bring forth unique regional challenges and benefits. Also related to Arctic food is the article by Petri Muje in which he sets out to determine whether Lappish crayfish is an opportunity lost or a future Arctic success story. Arctic animals and dogs, in particular, helping in reindeer husbandry are the topic of the article by Kirsi Muuttoranta and Sanna Vinblad.

Arja Jääskeläinen, Sanna Vinblad and Leena Välimaa write about nature, entrepreneurship and Nordic cooperation in their article about the Green Care activities. Renata Musifullina and Anzelika Krastina provide new perspectives on the meaning of cross-border cooperation now and in future. Esa Jauhola's piece describes how we use networks to create new kinds of international service ecosystems with particular focus on the Northern region.

Our operations are guided by the strategy of the Lapland University of Applied Sciences, and success in Arctic conditions and utilising the conditions are at the core of the profile of the Lapland University of Applied Sciences. The article by Helena Kangastie describes how the Lapland University of Applied Sciences promotes smart and open Arctic operating culture. In the article by Tuulikki Keskitalo, Soili Mäkimurto-Koivumaa and Outi Törmänen, arcticness brings about special features in the development of the Lapland University of Applied Sciences' Master's Degree programmes. According to the vision, all the Lapland University of Applied Sciences' Master's Degree programmes will in future be covered by one identifiable "Älykäs arktinen etäisyyksien haltija" ("Smart Arctic Distance Management") theme.

Storytelling is an essential part of authentic Arctic life, and Saila-Inkeri Puukko's article provides us with information on the application of digitalisation in creating new ways of storytelling. The article by Sini Kestilä and Petra Paloniemi focuses on the sharing economy, using peer-to-peer accommodation in Arctic tourism as an example. The Arctic circle at Rovaniemi is the target of the article by Jenni Kemi and Mari Vähäkuopus, in which they describe how co-operation between companies can add value to customer experience. Pasi Satokangas writes about the direct economic effects of tourism in Ranua. Heidi Kaihua and Petra Paloniemi tell us about experiences gained in the international EMCup competition participated by hospitality management students from the Lapland University of Applied Sciences.

Leena Inkeröinen, Jonna Löf, Anne Kautto, Laura Jokinen and Niina Riihiniemi write about educated immigrants' road to working life and the competence development of highly educated people. In his article, Kalle Santala focuses on how Northern nature can be used in promoting the integration of immigrants. The article by Jonna Löf, Päivi Holopainen and Ritva Vartiainen sheds light on the EPPA project aimed to improve the attractiveness of vocational education in Lapland through various knowledge paths and guidance methods.

Construction in the Arctic requires special expertise. Miika Poikajärvi tackles the subject in his article, describing ways to combat global warming by controlling the carbon emissions of buildings. Otto Pesonen's article "Ilmastokirja. Nyt" ("Climate Book. Now") takes a stand on climate change and provides tools with which we can continue as pioneers in the struggle to prevent climate change. Olli Kuisma has written a good, concise introduction to the "Asumisterveysopas" ("Guide of Healthy Building") guidebook. Personal experiences and challenges in mobile application development work inspired Tuomas Valtanen, Juhani Kuru, Mikko Pallas and Mikko Pajula to write about the subject.

Arcticness comes up almost daily both in the print and electronic media. Threats related to climate change have prompted us all to consider the uniqueness of our region and the future of the Arctic. It seems that Arcticness has become a buzzword elsewhere as well. Let us hope that the word will not suffer from overuse that could ruin any authenticity. Therefore, we should take care of authentic Arcticness in a deserving manner.

The articles in the online magazine provide us with a good overview of current multidisciplinary Arctic expertise in a changing environment. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the respective writers of all the theme articles, articles and pieces as well as the book presentation. Insightful reading!

Merja Koikkalainen

Theme Editor