

Arctic and North. 2024. No. 56. Pp. 136–158.

Original article

UDC 316.334.55(470.11)(045)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37482/issn2221-2698.2024.56.162>

Factors of Social Resilience of Arctic Rural Communities in Modern Russia (On the Materials of Coastal and Island Territories of the Arkhangelsk Oblast)

Anton M. Maksimov¹✉, Cand. Sci. (Polit.), Associate Professor

¹ Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov, Naberezhnaya Severnoy Dviny, 17, Arkhangelsk, Russia

¹ Laverov Federal Center for Integrated Arctic Research of the Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, pr. Nikolskiy, 20, Arkhangelsk, Russia

¹ amm15nov@yandex.ru ✉, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0959-2949>

Abstract. The article focuses on the problem of factors ensuring social resilience of Arctic rural communities. Using the materials of island and coastal territories of the Primorskiy district of the Arkhangelsk Oblast, the author studies how the features of social organization and life activities of specific communities ensure their reproduction as local social systems, help them to remain resilient to external challenges of economic, environmental and other types, and allow them to adapt to the changes in the region. In order to solve these problems, the author took part in a field study on the territory of 14 rural settlements in three rural municipalities in the period from July to early September 2022. The main method of obtaining empirical data is in-depth interview. The analysis of the interviews made it possible to identify a set of key factors of resilience of the rural communities under consideration. The first factor is the ability of local residents to reorient to subsistence farming and traditional crafts in the conditions of degradation of those sectors of the local economy that imply permanent formal labor employment. The second factor is the high level of social capital of communities, which determines the normalization of mutual assistance practices. The third factor is the involvement of a part of the local population in grassroots activities: social and cultural initiatives of local residents make it possible to attract external resources to solve the problems of territorial development, as well as support the collective identity of rural community members and increase its cohesion. The fourth factor is the return of retired local natives who previously migrated from rural to urban areas.

Keywords: *rural community, Russian Arctic, social resilience, community reproduction, in-depth interview*

Acknowledgments and funding


The work was carried out at the expense of the grant of the Russian Science Foundation No. 22-28-20286, <https://rscf.ru/project/22-28-20286>.

Introduction

One of the pioneers of Russian peasantry studies, T. Shanin, referring to the experience of studying peasant communities in Europe and the New World, points out that the rural community is characterized by a clear localization (bound to the territory), united by ties of interdependence and interaction, has autonomy, a high degree of common norms and values, as well as a pronounced local identity. The traditional peasant community as a particular example of rural community was characterized by close interpersonal ties, conformism, intra-group solidarity and a

* © Maksimov A.M., 2024

For citation: Maksimov A.M. Factors of Social Resilience of Arctic Rural Communities in Modern Russia (On the Materials of Coastal and Island Territories of the Arkhangelsk Oblast). *Arktika i Sever* [Arctic and North], 2024, no. 56, pp. 162–189. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37482/issn2221-2698.2024.56.162>

 This work is licensed under a CC BY-SA License

tendency towards egalitarianism [1, Shanin T., p. 67]. Obviously, the realities of the first half of the 20th century, which Shanin describes, were significantly transformed under the influence of Soviet agrarian policy, modernization of Soviet society, and market reforms of the first post-Soviet decade. Some features previously inherent in Russian rural communities in the places of their historical settlement have been lost. At the same time, under the influence of the above-mentioned processes, these rural communities acquired new characteristic features. Such changes became the subject of special study in the works of Russian social researchers [2, Vinogradskiy V.G.; 3, Toshchenko Zh.T.].

However, it seems obvious that along with works based on the generalizing approach, empirical studies aimed at identifying the local specifics of rural communities are of great importance, since there are radical differences in the structure of the local economy, infrastructure development, lifestyle of the population, demographic situation and natural and climatic conditions between the rural territories of Stavropol Krai, Yaroslavl Oblast and the Republic of Sakha. As a consequence, the difference in conditions determines the difference in the possibilities and mechanisms of adaptation of rural communities to the socio-economic and political-managerial transformations taking place at a larger level in modern Russia.

This article contains the results of such a locally oriented research. Its main goal is to identify such features of the life of rural communities of island and coastal territories of the Russian Arctic, which act as internal factors of adaptation of these communities to external challenges, which allows them to successfully reproduce as social systems. This view of Arctic rural communities is based on the theoretical optics used by the author, which is based on the concept of social resilience.

Rural communities of the Russian Arctic through the prism of the concept of resilience

The concept of social resilience has been introduced into scientific circulation since the beginning of the 21st century. K. Foster notes that the concept of resilience emerged at the intersection of approaches from several fields of applied science: ecology, management theory, urban studies and social anthropology. The interdisciplinary nature of this concept allows researchers to consider the activities of social agents¹ on risk management, economic resources of the territory and their use by people and organizations, infrastructure, human capital and means of internal and external communication within a single dynamic system² [4, pp. 6–9].

Michel Bruneau and his colleagues, studying how communities organized as territorial systems respond to external challenges (using the example of communities facing the consequences of earthquakes), identify 4 criteria that form the basis for a comprehensive assessment of their resilience: robustness — the ability of the system and its elements to withstand external shocks³ with minimal loss of functionality; redundancy — the degree to which the system is able to com-

¹ These include officials, business, civil activists, technical specialists, etc.

² Broadly speaking, both means of communication and means of transport communication.

³ From natural disasters and economic crises to socio-political instability and mass migration.

compensate for the costs generated by external shocks; resourcefulness — the ability of social agents within the system to find effective solutions to emerging problems; rapidity [5, Bruneau M. et al.].

In the Russian context, the theoretical development of the problem of “resilience” is being carried out, in particular, by economists from the Russian Presidential Academy of the National Economy and Public Administration under the leadership of V.V. Klimanov. Focusing on the economic sustainability of regional systems, researchers analyze foreign approaches in search of one that would most adequately model the real processes of responding to external challenges, as they are observed in regional systems in modern Russia. Noting the advantages of the adaptive cycle model of J. Simmie and R. Martin [6], V. Klimanov points out the importance of innovations, institutions, infrastructure and capital (including human one) as factors of simultaneous resilience and dynamism of a region [7, pp. 177–179]. M.V. Nenasheva’s work analyzes the history of the emergence and development of the concept of “social resilience” in foreign scientific literature and the reception of this concept in domestic science, and summarizes ideas about the main components of resilience, which include the geographical environment, economic resources and social capital [8, pp. 264–268, 270].

In general, it can be stated that social resilience is understood as the ability of social systems to successfully cope with external challenges and maintain functionality in conditions of uncertainty and risks, as well as the process of their adaptation to changed conditions. As a rule, either territorial objects with their resource potential, infrastructure, institutions (see above) or communities living in a certain territory with their collective agency, internal network communication, strategies for using available resources to ensure adaptation to challenges that disrupt normal life are studied as such social systems. In the latter case, researchers use the term “community resilience” [9, Norris F.N. et al., pp. 129, 131]. In this article, we will mainly mean “community resilience” by resilience.

The parameters and factors of resilience of different communities are fundamentally influenced by the specifics of the territory in which they exist. In this regard, the search for a methodology that can take into account the specific conditions of resilience in the Arctic with its inherent extreme climatic conditions, infrastructural and logistical problems, as well as the unique way of life and psychology of the indigenous/old-timer population is of interest. Thus, in foreign publications, there are attempts to improve the methods for assessing the adaptive potential of local communities through the study of Arctic cases [10, Berman M. et al.]. In Russia, there is a great experience in studying the problems of development of the Arctic territories due to their vastness and economic importance. Therefore, it is not surprising that the mass of studies on Arctic issues includes those that are based on the “resilience approach”. In particular, it is actively applied in Arctic urban studies [11, Zamyatina N.Yu. et al.; 12, Nikitin B.V.; 13, Pilyasov A.N., Molodtsova V.A.]. In contrast to the interest in the topic of the resilience of Arctic cities, there is a lack of scientific works that focus on the rural areas of the Russian Arctic. Although there are works specifically devoted to the problems of rural areas in the North and the Arctic, they are largely economically

centric and focus on external factors of development rather than on the resilience potential of the Arctic communities themselves [14, Ivanov V.A.; 15, Nikulina Yu.N.; 16, Smirnova V.V.].

A more comprehensive approach to the study of rural communities from the perspective of the concept of social resilience is reflected in a number of works by foreign authors. Thus, K. Flood (University of Galway) and her colleagues, using the materials of several rural communities in Ireland, revealed the mechanisms by which communities maintain their stability in the face of environmental threats. In particular, she shows the importance of collective grassroots activity of community members in combination with the efficient use of resources, including human capital, and functioning institutions of local self-government [17, pp. 319–320]. R. McAreavey, referring to the study of rural communities in Britain during the Covid-19 pandemic, focuses on the role of “anchor” institutions⁴ in ensuring their resilience — specifically, she notes the role of the church organization, cultural institutions, local businesses, local press, fairs and network of civically active local residents [18, McAreavey R., p. 232].

At the same time, examples of empirical studies of Arctic rural communities based on the concept of social resilience, especially in the modern Russian context, are currently insufficient. This article is considered by the author as a step towards compensating for the lack of such studies.

Methodology and geography of the research

Rural communities of coastal and island territories of the Primorskiy District of the Arkhangelsk Oblast were the object of the empirical research. In practice, they are represented by specific residents of the respective settlements who are included in the networks of acquaintances and relations within a specific local community at three levels — kinship, neighborhood, professional teams.

The geography of the study includes 6 rural settlements of the municipal formation (hereinafter — MF) “Ostrovnoe”, located in “clusters” on separate islands (1st island — the villages of Pustosh, Odinochka, Vyselki; 2nd island — the villages of Lastola, Konetsdvorye; 3rd island — the village of Voznesenye, the administrative center of the MF “Ostrovnoe”); “Patrakeevka cluster” of villages adjacent to the Winter Coast of the White Sea on the territory of the MF “Talazhskoe” (Patrakeevka and the surrounding Navolok, Gorka, Kushkushara); 4 relatively isolated settlements of the MF “Pertominskoe” located on the Summer Coast of the White Sea (the villages of Letnyaya Zolotitsa, Lopshenga, Yarenga and the settlement of Pertominsk — the administrative center of the municipality). Each of them was considered as an autonomous local community due to their remoteness from each other, reduced transport connectivity and occasional character of communication of residents from different settlements. As a result, in the case of the MF “Pertominskoe”, it was decided to increase the number of planned interviews to 4-5 for each settlement.

⁴ “Anchor” institutions refer to formal and informal organisations that are economically and culturally significant for the life of the local community — in terms of employment, leisure time, access to public goods and social services, etc.

The field research work was carried out in the period from July to early September 2022 (including short-term expeditionary work of the project manager and 2 executors in August 2022). The method of empirical data collection was in-depth interviews; the type of data was qualitative, weakly structured. To conduct the interviews, a “soft” guide was developed, including the following main thematic blocks: 1) biographical block; 2) household and daily life of the informant/his family; 3) relations with neighbors; involvement in community life; 4) connections with the city; relations with city residents; 5) changes in the life of the community in the post-Soviet period of history; 6) current problems in the life of the community.

When selecting informants, the following criteria were taken into account: compliance of the composition of informants with the gender, age and stratification structure of the local community — the desire, if possible, to interview representatives of all its main socio-demographic and professional strata; ensuring the maximum possible heterogeneity of the composition of informants in order to obtain the greatest qualitative diversity of statements on the issues of interest to us; readiness for long-term communication with the researcher; potential awareness of the local resident on most of the topics covered in the guide. The need to combine these criteria inevitably created certain difficulties, and therefore strict adherence to all of them at once was not always possible in practice, which required field interviewers to be flexible and oriented, first of all, to the content of the interviews themselves instead of strictly following the formal requirements for the sample, which are common in quantitative research (quotas).

The number of interviews conducted in each settlement (a group of closely located and socially connected settlements) was determined by the principle of decreasing growth of new qualitative data: as soon as a tendency that each subsequent informant gives an increasingly smaller volume of original information was noted (in comparison with all the previous ones), the series of interviews in this settlement was interrupted.

By the time the field stage of the study was completed, a total of 35 in-depth interviews had been conducted. Table 1 presents their distribution by territory and gender. The average duration of the interview was slightly more than an hour.

Table 1

Summary of the in-depth interviews conducted

Municipal formation	Settlement	Number of interviews, total	Number of informants, by gender (M — male; F — female)
Ostrovnoe	Pustosh and surrounding villages	3, including 1 in pairs	F — 3; M — 1
	Lastola, Konetsdvorye	3, including 1 in pairs	F — 4
	Voznesenye	3	F — 2; M — 1
Talazhskoe	Patrakeevka and surrounding villages	7, including 1 in pairs	F — 6; M — 2
Pertominskoe	Letnyaya Zolotitsa	4	F — 3; M — 1
	Lopshenga	4	F — 3; M — 1
	Yarenga	7, including 1 in pairs	F — 6; M — 2
	Pertominsk	4	F — 3; M — 1

“Social portrait” of rural coastal and island territories of the White Sea

1. The specificity of rural communities of the MF “Pertominskoe” is determined by two key circumstances: a) remoteness and transport inaccessibility — not only in relation to the regional center or Severodvinsk (the nearest large city on the way from the Summer Coast towards Arkhangelsk), but also between the settlements of the White Sea coast; b) the traditional fishing profile of the local economic activity, which for generations determined the way of life of the indigenous (Pomor) population, their everyday life and professional specialization, and caused in the Soviet period the emergence of large fishing collective farms, which replaced the former fishing artels. Currently, two fishing collective farms are functioning, uniting fishermen from Letnyaya Zolotitsa (“Belomor”), Pertominsk and nearby villages (“Fishing collective farm named after M.I. Kalinin”). Some of the surveyed villages are adjacent to the territories of the Onega Pomorye National Park (managed by the Kenozerskiy National Park Directorate). There are national park offices in Letnyaya Zolotitsa and Lopshenga, where inspectors and eco-education specialists work.

Remoteness and transport inaccessibility of the villages of the Summer Coast determine relative isolation and household autonomy of rural settlements spread along the coast over a large distance, the episodic nature of contacts between residents of different villages (despite the presence of numerous family ties), as well as the lack of formation of a common economic space. The latter is caused by the radically reduced scale of activities of fishing collective farms, a decrease in the number of fishermen within them, and the closure of the fish processing plant in Pertominsk. Under the influence of the established economic and domestic autonomy of individual territories within the municipality, denser and more stable networks of relations between residents at the local level are also formed. Previously, such natural territorial and social isolation was also secured administratively — until 2015, there were three separate rural municipalities on the territory of the MF “Pertominskoe” (along with Pertominskoe — Letne-Zolotitskoe and Lopshengskoe).

The fishing profile of the local economy determines the fact that employment in the surveyed settlements is provided not only by budgetary institutions, which is typical for the municipalities we studied, but also by private enterprises represented by fishing collective farms and consumer cooperatives. Although the scale of their activities is not as significant as in Soviet times, their existence contributes to retain a certain number of men of working age.

An additional factor influencing the life of rural communities of the Summer Coast is the inclusion of the adjacent forest area and water areas in the Onega Pomorye National Park, managed by the Kenozerskiy National Park. Thus, the national park acts as an employer for a certain number of local residents (in particular, in the villages of Letnyaya Zolotitsa and Lopshenga). The main effect of the park’s activities for the local population is manifested, firstly, in certain restrictions on traditional trades (fishing outside the collective farm plot, hunting, logging); secondly, in the development of work with tourists, who settle in guest houses on the territory of the villages and, thus, “infiltrate” the daily life of local communities. This circumstance, regardless of the subjective attitudes and nature of the relationship of local residents with the National Park and

tourists, simply due to the physical presence of “others” — city dwellers and an external (state) authority — helps to strengthen the local identity and group cohesion of the long-time population of the Summer Coast.

In conclusion of the brief overview of the rural areas of the MF “Pertominskoe”, a few words about the demographic situation should be said. In general, the surveyed villages are generally sparsely populated, not excluding the administrative center.

“Some people come here just for a summer holiday. If you look at our population, there are probably 400 people registered here, and maybe 150 people live here permanently. The rest are just registered here” (Woman, 39 years old, Pertominsk).

In the other surveyed villages, the number of residents and households is either comparable or significantly smaller.

Interviewer: And how many people live here permanently?

Informant: Well, 60 people permanently. Actually, 180–200, in summer... In the summer, of course, there are a lot (Woman, 55 years old, Yarenga village).

2. The territory of the MF “Talazhskoe” is relatively large, but outside the Talagi settlement and the adjacent gardening communities, which are close to the regional center, the population density is extremely low. Within the boundaries of this municipality, the object of our interest was the rural communities of the Winter Coast, in particular the “cluster” of villages around the Patrakeevka settlement. Some specific characteristics of Patrakeevka and the villages adjacent to it make it similar to the villages of the Summer Coast. Thus, in the Soviet period, the most important enterprise for the Winter Coast territories was the fishing collective farm “Krasnoe Znamya” — currently operating, but on a much smaller scale than before. Similarly to the rural settlements of the MF “Pertominskoe”, an important part of the daily life of the population of Patrakeevka is crafts, including fishing (for their own consumption), gathering wild plants, etc.

Transport problems in the villages of the “Patrakeevka” cluster, according to informants, are perceived as noticeably more acute compared to the villages of the Summer Coast — probably due to the availability of air transport for residents of the latter, the services of which have been subsidized from the regional budget in recent years. Based on the statements of the residents of Patrakeevka, it can be concluded that in addition to the winter road, during the corresponding period of time, they only have access to communication by sea (during the summer navigation period). At the same time, cheap transport (barges) runs extremely rarely, hiring a boat is very expensive, and not every family has their own water transport. In addition, the problem of shallowing and the need for dredging are acute.

Local residents also note that the presence of the National Park in the villages of the Summer Coast (MF “Pertominskoe”), from their point of view, plays a positive role in the development of these territories, attracting additional budget funds, an influx of tourists as a source of income for locals, and creating new jobs. The absence of such an organization in the territories of the Winter Coast is perceived as a factor of “stagnation”.

The consequence of these circumstances is the outflow of young people and the working population from these territories, their inevitable ageing, which is typical for coastal villages of the entire Primorskiy District: *“Ten years ago, there were still 350 local people. And today ... I counted them by myself, house by house. I thought: how many people do we have? 170 people! That’s very few. Half of them are gone. Someone is dying, someone has left”* (Woman, 65 years old, Patrakeevka village).

Nevertheless, the proximity to each other (within walking distance) of the villages in the Mudyuga River basin, a fairly large number of households on their territory, an extensive network of family and neighborly relations, the existence of “social activists” among local residents; active participation in organizing the cultural life of the local intellectuals (from school teachers and museum workers to Orthodox activists) — all this contributes to maintaining solidarity within the community, and intensive communication outside the everyday routine, for example, in connection with festive and concert events, educational projects. In addition, on the initiative of Arkhangelsk social activists, tourist routes have been organized in this part of the Winter Coast and religious pilgrimages are carried out. Thus, the grassroots initiatives of urban NGOs functionally replace the activities aimed at forming a tourist cluster, which are carried out by the National Park on the territories of the Summer Coast. As the head of the MF “Talazhskoe” notes, all these grassroots public initiatives distinguish the “Patrakeevka” cluster of villages from the area of Verkhnyaya and Nizhnyaya Zolotitsa: in comparison with them, the atomization of the community and mutual alienation are not so evident in Patrakeevka.

3. The surveyed settlements of the MF “Ostrovnoe” are located on several islands in the delta of the Northern Dvina. The city of Arkhangelsk is located on the opposite bank of the river. The proximity of the regional center provides conditions for regular traffic of the local population between the islands and the city — almost all year round, with the exception of several weeks during the autumn and spring “rasputa” (local name for the slush spring thaws), and transport communication between the nearest islands and Arkhangelsk is sometimes possible even during these periods. Such geographical location both reduces the costs of supplying the island villages (in comparison with more remote territories of the Primorskiy District) and creates the prerequisites for circular labor migration.

The proximity to the urban agglomeration and the involvement of many able-bodied residents of the villages of the MF “Ostrovnoe” in circular migration, on the one hand, allows the local population to live in their native villages on a permanent basis and at the same time provide themselves with income in the city (jobs in island villages are naturally in deficit). On the other hand, a long stay outside the native village, daily communication with city residents (colleagues, clients, etc.) blurs the networks of “weak” ties (according to M. Granovetter), formed in the rural environment. This not only reduces the involvement of villagers working in cities in the routine life of the local community, but also reorients them from the reproduction of weak ties within this community to building a similar network of acquaintances and support in the urban environment.

In case of successful building of such networks, villagers have strong incentives and at the same time real opportunities to move to the city. This is especially true for graduates of local schools, who enroll in city colleges or universities and, receiving a place in a dormitory or renting a room in a private city apartment, quickly acquire the identity, habits and lifestyle of an urban dweller, integrating into a new environment. The same applies to young professionals from island villages, most of whom do not want or are not ready to re-emigrate to their native villages after receiving vocational education. Especially since the number of vacancies offered to them is not very large, not diverse and not so well-paid as to compensate for the increased costs of living in rural areas on the islands.

As a result, we find the same tendency towards the gradual “extinction” of villages on the territory of the MF “Ostrovnoe” as in the rural municipalities described above.

Interviewer: And here, if we consider all the villages in general: Pustosh, Vyselki, Peski, Odi-nochka — how many people live here?

Informant: Well, 380 are listed. But there are very few native [people] living here, they are mostly summer residents.

Interviewer: And those who live here all year round, how many are there?

Informant: Well, 300-something people... there are fewer and fewer of them. It used to be that if one house was sold — oh! a whole bunch of people wanted to buy this house. Now there is a whole bunch of houses — no one wants to buy. So, I even sell mine, but there is no one [willing to buy]” (Woman, 65, Pustosh village).

Thus, proximity to a large city with its developed infrastructure, economy, labor market and leisure sphere “pulls out” from the island rural communities those who are the most mobile and easily integrated into the new environment, and also have additional material and everyday needs — young people and young families with children.

In such conditions, despite some social erosion of local communities, their homogenization by gender, age and socio-professional characteristics occurs in parallel. Their adult part is represented by two strata: 1) elderly pensioners, mainly women (due to the significant difference in life expectancy of men and women), and “young” (up to 65 years) pensioners of both genders; 2) specialists of working age employed in budgetary institutions (schools, kindergartens, cultural centers). The “core” of the community, which ensures its collective activity outside the households, is represented by “social activists” from the first stratum (often, they are retired former employees of the same schools, local community centers, museums and libraries) and current employees of local cultural and educational institutions. At the same time, the small number of the latter and the periodic “outflow” of young personnel from this environment, as well as the health risks faced by retired activists, undermine the human capital resource of local communities of island villages.

Summarizing the information on the population size, employment, income, demographic profile, sectoral structure and dynamics of local economies, it should be noted that the socio-economic situation in the surveyed territories of the Northern Dvina delta, Summer and Winter

shores of the White Sea is generally depressive. The number of permanent residents is steadily declining, its ageing is observed, there are no prerequisites for income growth and employment of the few growing youth. A temporary influx of urban relatives of local residents during the summer navigation period, ending before the beginning of the autumn thaw, briefly revives rural settlements and allows solving individual household and everyday problems (repair of residential premises, delivery of household appliances, assistance in forming food reserves and firewood for the winter period), however, does not stimulate structural changes in local socio-economic systems.

The economy of the surveyed territories in the late Soviet period was based on the activities of large agricultural enterprises — state farms and fishing collective farms. A small number of enterprises engaged in the processing of fish and agricultural raw materials also contributed to the functioning of local economies. During the transition to a market economy with a simultaneous reduction in state subsidies, increased logistics costs and the breakdown of business chains between agricultural enterprises, purchasing and sales organizations and final consumers, enterprises either went bankrupt or reduced the scale of their activities. All this naturally led to a reduction in jobs, wear and tear of production assets and an outflow of qualified personnel and rural youth.

By the time the Russian economy stabilized in the mid-2000s, these processes had become self-sustaining. The delayed interest to the peripheral territories combined with the centralising logic of development of the northern and arctic districts of the Arkhangelsk Oblast (consolidation, concentration of powers and resources in the most populous settlements close to the regional agglomeration) actually preserved the indicated negative trends.

At present, the main employers in the studied territories are not the fishing collective farms that have fallen into a state of economic decline, but various types of budgetary institutions — schools and kindergartens, cultural centers, libraries, post offices, medical and obstetric stations, administrative institutions (but only in administrative centers such as Pertominsk and Voznesenye). However, the negative demographic situation creates risks for many of these institutions, oriented in their activities towards young families with children, children and teenagers, the number of which is decreasing from year to year. The decrease in public demand for a number of budget institutions with the need to justify budget expenditures on them, as well as the fairly widespread personnel “hunger” in the studied settlements, put the issue of their closure on the agenda.

At the same time, from the point of view of collective identity and social solidarity, most of our informants position the residents of their villages precisely as communities, that is, as dense network structures of kinship, neighborhood and economic cooperation, within the framework of which their participants provide each other with mutual support and feasible assistance in a number of typical everyday situations (bringing correspondence or some small cargo from the city, giving a ride to a neighboring settlement, helping elderly women with the delivery of firewood, etc.)

“Our people — everyone knows each other. And asking someone for a place to stay overnight or a ride to the place you need is not difficult” (Woman, 39 years old, Pertominsk settlement).

“Not every family goes [to the city for goods that are not available in rural stores]. They find out that someone is going to the city — buy me this, this and that. Yes, why not” (Woman, 31 years old, Lopshenga village).

“... because, well, it’s a village, and everyone knows each other. So no one refuses [to help, to assist]. That’s how we live — in harmony” (Woman, 47 years old, Lastola village).

“We have this backbone, and we are already used to helping each other. We got together ourselves — we did it ourselves. That’s it!” (Woman, 96 years old, Lastola village).

Such judgements were not unexpected for us, as similar cohesion and mutual assistance among rural residents of the European North of Russia and the Eurasian part of the Arctic is recorded in earlier studies [19, Podoplekin A.O., p. 216; 20, Pozanenko A.A., pp. 43–45].

The flip side of the density of internal communications of local communities and the pronounced local identity is their opposition to the city and urban residents, especially those who come to these territories with consumer intentions.

From the locals’ point of view, visitors are divided into two categories: those who have left a long time ago and live in the city on a permanent basis (relatives and friends), and the “city dwellers” themselves, perceived as specific representatives of the collective image of “others”, “outsiders”. If there is mutual understanding with the first category, which is supported by the kinship of relations and the experience of long-term communication in the past, then in relation to the “city dwellers” (these can be both residents of Severodvinsk, Arkhangelsk, and tourists from other regions, from Moscow, etc.) there is ambivalence. On the one hand, there is a general attitude towards tolerance in relation to tourists who come to relax in nature and go fishing, to pilgrims or visitors of the national park. At the same time, the presence of “others”, their “bad behavior” and distance from local residents cause negative reaction — irritation and hostility.

“Interviewer: Are there any groups of city people here?”

Informant: Sometimes, especially summer residents, but they don’t ask anyone. Our children are villagers, they are kind of accustomed to the order. What is allowed, what is not allowed... And the city people don’t even ask anyone. They sing songs, there are different kinds of music, motorbikes, cars... barbeques. People don’t like all this” (Woman, 65 years old, Pustosh village).

“They [summer residents] don’t need anything. They only want their house — all this, they make it beautiful, improve it. They don’t even go to clean-up days” (Woman, 65 years old, Konetsdvorye village).

“Our people are cautious towards strangers. Well, they won’t abandon a person, they will shelter him and feed him, but they won’t offer anything by themselves. Maybe this is still ahead, when we understand that we can earn more money from this. Somehow, we haven’t “woken up” yet. Everyone has a job, everyone is busy somehow; if people weren’t busy, if people were constrained by their means of subsistence, maybe this business would go faster... They definitely won’t let strangers into their own home. Our people are very cautious” (Woman, 55 years old, Lopshenga village).

“Of course, we will always help those we know well. But strangers are treated badly [by locals]. The further north you go, how to say, the harder people are” (Woman, 40 years old, Patra-keevka village).

“For example, whenever I am asked if it is possible to buy a house in Lopshenga, I immediately ask for what purposes. It is one thing to move with the family to have a rest, another thing — to arrange a transit base for friends-fishermen, hunters. If such a thing appears, I firmly refuse and oppose it in every possible way. Maybe it is a regression, but this is how we live and we do not want to change anything, we like it” (Man, 55 years old, Lopshenga village).

City residents from among “locals” are often considered as a resource for solving their problems in the urban environment: they serve as a source of useful information and contacts, they are the people to stay with when travelling to the city, etc. At the same time, rural residents show hospitality and active care towards “their” city residents during their country vacations, organize conditions for high-quality recreation for them, share the products of their household farms with them.

Residents of remote villages on the White Sea coast, unless they are among the “summer residents” who come from the city to their home for the summer months, visit the “mainland” quite rarely — mainly in cases of extreme necessity. The purposes for which local residents visit the city can be summarized as follows:

- obtaining specialized medical services (there are no clinics in the surveyed areas, only first aid posts and pharmacies — and even not in every village);
- purchasing durable goods that are not supplied to local stores (household appliances, furniture, etc.), or small-scale wholesale purchases of consumer goods at lower prices;
- obtaining / updating documents, notarization of contracts and other legal services;
- cultural leisure activities.

The internal life of Arctic rural communities is divided into two components: private and public. The latter, being a space of collective activities of rural residents, ensures the reproduction of local identity, increases community cohesion, creates conditions for the articulation of common problems and needs, the solution/satisfaction of which is often impossible without active cooperation between local residents.

Collective activities that are significant for the reproduction of a rural community include, first of all, secular holidays — both national (Victory Day, New Year) and local (Fisherman’s Day, Village Day), ceremonial events timed to them, as well as activities on the basis of local cultural centers (interest groups/clubs, concerts with the participation of visiting city artists, amateur performances, etc.). Such activities, which function as collective rituals that produce a sense of belonging to a community, solidarity and local identity, are usually part of the systemic cultural policy of the municipal (district) administration and subordinate institutions at the local level.

“We have a community center. Yesterday there was a disco. Well, not a disco, but karaoke, we, for example, went to karaoke yesterday. Even older people come. Some over 50 and over 60

were there yesterday. Yesterday, there were probably about 30 people. There is a children's disco on Fridays. Mostly everything is there. When we have Fisherman's Day, we salt fish, cook fish soup, feed people. When we have May 9, we usually cook soldier's porridge, and residents also come to try it" (Woman, 39, Pertominsk).

"... our community center and school can be called the center of cultural life, because most of the events take place there. There are some traditional holidays. The club has groups where not only children but also adults go — they make something, prepare for concerts, and various events are held: sports and cultural. However, there are such events at school too. If some interesting people come, there are meetings with interesting people" (Woman, 55 years old, Lopshenga village).

"For example, I have a women's club "Needlewoman". And these women who do needlework, for example, they hold some club events for children. For example, something about patterns — cutting out, sewing something. And at the community center, for example, I organized women who do this... We have eight club formations [in total] here" (Woman, 32 years old, Odinochka village / Pustosh village).

There are also collective activities aimed at solving specific problems in rural development: repairing a pier or bridge, helping to restore a church, collecting garbage on the coast, self-organization to develop cultural life in the village⁵, landscaping, building playgrounds, and much more. These forms of public activity are implemented, first of all, within the framework of local council (TOS) projects with the involvement of active local residents.

"All of our TOSs were established at almost the same time. We have TOS in Lopshenga, there is one in Yarenga, in Letnyaya Zolotitsa, and in Pushlakhta. There is also TOS in Una⁶ ... They do it interestingly in Una. They have had TOS for three years now, they are strengthening bridge crossings. They are supplied with timber from Onega, and they dismantle the bridge and rebuild it with their own efforts" (Woman, 39, Pertominsk).

"The first [project of the local TOS] — a museum was created in the school, display cases were made and the premises were decorated; the second — a park was made, the third — they wanted to build a church, but something went wrong" (Woman, 45 years old, Patrakeevka village).

"So, last year, we had money allocated for a creative living room — we installed a toilet here. This is a TOS project. Then we opened a creative living room. That is, we show master classes to tourists: we make paintings from wool and offer them to tourists, and we make felt boots with tourists" (Woman, 47 years old, Lastola village).

As can be seen from the above, despite the whole range of socio-economic difficulties that Arctic rural communities face, they also have a certain potential for resilience. Below, we will con-

⁵ For example, participation of ordinary local residents in the work of a folklore ensemble in the village of Lopshenga, organisation of the Museum of Pilot Glory in the village of Pustosh by former cultural workers with the support of the local Culture Centre, organisation and participation in the annual fair in the village of Patrakeevka.

⁶ Village south of Pertominsk village.

sider in detail the main problems that hinder the development of the rural communities we surveyed, the ways in which they are solved/mitigated by local residents.

Reproduction of arctic rural communities: challenges and “support points”

The range of problems that are both challenges to the potential of local communities' resilience and a source of resource depletion is largely similar for the settlements of all three municipalities. They are mainly related to the consequences of the post-Soviet economic transformation, the negative demographic situation that has developed over the past decades, and the location of the surveyed settlements, difficult from a transport and logistics point of view.

To summarize, the main “painful” aspects of life of the rural communities we study from the perspective of their representatives are as follows.

1. Migration outflow of youth and the working-age population.

“Well, there are few young people, few... they just finished school — and then they leave, they study somewhere, then settle down... They don't come to the village. And they find work there” (Woman, 61 years old, Letnyaya Zolotitsa village).

“There is no talk at all about the revival [of the village]. Some people would like to stay because of fear of change. Many do not, because they do not see any prospects. There are no jobs” (Woman, 45 years old, Patrakeevka village).

2. Job shortage.

“... there is nowhere to work: the town-forming enterprises are only the fishing collective farm, but there are no vacancies there. There is also livestock farming on the territory — a cowshed and that's all... We have three official fisheries — there are 3-4 people there. But the men there are 50-55 years old. There are no young people there — they all finish 9th grade, go to Arkhangelsk, study and do not come back. There is nowhere, absolutely nowhere to work here! Even if some young man wanted to — there is no work” (Woman, 45 years old, Patrakeevka village).

Informant: What to do here? There is nothing to do — there is no work.

Interviewer: What does your eldest son do?

Informant: He drinks alcohol (Woman, 55 years old, Yarenga village).

The informants' statements show that the demographic problem is largely a consequence of the narrowness of local labor markets, their structural “poverty” and, in general, a strong dependence on the creation/elimination of budget jobs in the absence of any significant number of private economic agents who could perform the function of local employers.

3. Difficulties in transport communications between settlements within the municipality and with the “mainland”. The main modes of transport communications — land and water (in the case of the rural periphery) of the Primorskiy District have a number of restrictions on use. Water transport can only be used during the summer navigation period. At the same time, public water transport provides regular service only for villages at the mouth of the Northern Dvina (MF “Ostrovnoe”) due to their proximity to the Arkhangelsk agglomeration. For the villages of Summer

(MF “Pertominskoe”) and Winter (MF “Talazhskoe”) shores, the schedule of barges and motor ships is inconvenient due to the infrequency of trips and the long duration of travel along key routes. In addition, local residents note that in conditions of frequent thaws, late ice formation and other similar weather conditions, the terms of provision of public water transport services could technically be extended, but the scheme of organizing transport services does not provide for such “fine tuning”. Land transport (motor vehicles, snowmobiles) in the absence of paved roads is used mainly in the winter, when the so-called “winter road” is available.

Interviewer: And the only way to get across the river from here is by boat, right?

Informant: Only by boat. And by ford.

Interviewer: Fording. There are no bridges, right?

Informant: No. There used to be “bans”. They are like... [thoughtful] What are they called? Well, basically, they are rafts made from three or four logs. And they are fastened together with a chain or a rope. Well, from shore to shore, to the island. And from the island — to another shore” (Woman, 42 years old, Letnyaya Zolotitsa village).

Interviewer: I am just interested how do people communicate with the mainland? How do they get to the city?

Informant: Well, in the summer — only by water. Well, the boat goes four times a day in summer.

Interviewer: In the summer — four times a day, right?

Informant: Yes. Now, the schedule has changed, it got dark at ten o’clock. Now it goes three times. Well, then there will be two (Woman, 65 years old, Konetsdvorye village).

Interviewer: Has it ever happened that navigation is officially closed, and then because of the thaw it opens?

Informant: That’s all — the management doesn’t need it. It happened like this, on the 16th of October there was a frost, and then until the 7th of November it was still possible to go and go and go. Well, they have a contract until the 1st day, and they are not interested in anything else (Man, 55 years old, Patrakeevka village).

“It’s really bad in winter now. We used to have a man who travelled privately, but he had set days — three times a week. And now he’s retired” (Woman, 40, Patrakeevka village).

“The road is life! If there’s a road, then there’s life. If there’s no road, that’s it... The majority of people, the youth, will try to get out. And the old people will just die there. I say, we really need a road” (Woman, 65, Patrakeevka village).

Informant: Burans drive along the winter road. They make a road there and drive like that. How to make it a little straighter, a little faster.

Interviewer: And if it is autumn-spring period, when the ice hasn’t set yet or has already broken up — what kind of transport can you use to get to the village?

Informant: Then there’s no way.

Interviewer: There’s no way to get there [by land]? How do people get there then?..

Informant: Only by plane (Woman, 62 years old, Yarenga village).

In connection with the last quotation, we should once again note the uniqueness of the situation with remote villages of the MF “Pertominskoe”, between which, as well as between them, Pertominsk and Arkhangelsk, there is regular air service, the availability of which is provided by subsidies from the regional budget.

“...we have an aeroplane flying Vaskovo — Pertominsk — Lopshenga — Zolotitsa. That is, it goes to three villages, lands in three villages. But there is also Pushlakhta, and there is Yarenga, small villages from where people go to the plane. Therefore, it depends on that. Yes, winter holidays, for example, if they go through Luda, they can't get there by snowmobile, a lot of tickets, a lot of planes are needed. Sometimes they fly empty, 1–2 people” (Woman, 53 years old, Yarenga village).

Due to the difficult situation with transport accessibility, there are problems with food supply.

Informant: In autumn, there are problems with delivery [of goods] to the shops here.

Interviewer: There are still problems [with supplies], right?

Informant: Of course! We live far away, cut off from the world, from everything.

Interviewer: But some people say that there is enough of everything.

Informant: Ah... well, enough. How enough? It depends on what the person's needs are. For example, the store is constantly out of dairy products, cottage cheese, these products, there are no fruits, no vegetables... almost always (Woman, 56, Letnyaya Zolotitsa village).

“You can [deliver products] by sea, but freight costs a lot of money, as it turns out. I also naively believed that prices remained at the same levels. It used to be quite possible... In addition to food, there are also items and materials of other demand, and very popular ones: some large-sized construction materials, including household appliances, including refrigerators and freezers. Try to transporting them by plane... And a ship, yes, it is expensive. And then, if it goes straight here — it's an offshore unloading. That's something, too. That's okay, it's relatively quiet now, but the winds here change with lightning speed — the sea, the ocean is nearby” (Man, 55 years old, Lopshenga village).

“Previously, there was a collective farm — they had their own barge in Patrakeevka. The barge used to run all the time, transporting its people, delivering cargo, stockpiling coal for the school, food, and feed for the cows. But now everything is closed... The river is getting shallow, and not every ship or vessel of another class can come” (Man, 55 years old, Patrakeevka village).

4. High prices for food and industrial goods compared to city prices. This is especially noticeable for the rural population, whose income is on average lower than that of city dwellers. Higher consumer costs of the rural population are primarily due to the above-mentioned logistical difficulties, which greatly increase transport costs, which are then incorporated by store owners and cooperatives in the final prices of goods.

“The cost [of delivering goods by barge], in my opinion, is more than 150 thousand per trip. Well, accordingly, they [trading enterprises] have to somehow inflate the prices of products” (Man, 35 years old, Pertominsk village).

“Well, of course, we have more expensive products than in the city. But you can't go to the city for every loaf of bread” (Woman, 60 years old, Voznesenye village).

“Two stores are open — here and in Gorka. The prices are, of course, high. In summer, they bring it in by barge, in winter — by car” (Woman, 45, Patrakeevka village).

The hand-in-hand “curtailment” and simplification of local economies, which result in a decline in income and an outflow of the population in search of employment outside their native village, are interpreted by our informants as external processes beyond the control of the villagers, launched by the dismantling of the Soviet economic system and the transition to the market.

“Why did collective farms and fish farms, these shops, survive before? Because everything was in state [ownership], there were state investments. There were subsidies for the collective farms, there were subsidies for the fish farms. Why subsidies? Because [it was necessary] to hire transport here, to bring the cargo far. The state subsidized, issued ships, they carried the cargo. There were no such prices. Prices were constant, and not the same as when prices change with each delivery of products. Everything has gone into private hands, but everything should be state-owned” (Woman, 53, Yarenga village).

“I got a job at the library, for example, in 1976 — literally everything was working. There was a sewing workshop, they repaired shoes. They repaired watches, there was a bookstore — there was a building like that, a PSC [public services center]. So everything was in it. The state farm was working, a school, a store, a post office, a library, a club. The kindergarten was separate. Now the school and the kindergarten are together [in one building]. And the garage was working, there were mechanical workshops — well, everything was working. In the 90s, all this gradually began to disappear. Everything collapsed, and only the library, the club, and the village council remained. Well, and the post office” (Woman, 65, Pustosh village).

“Our collective farm was rich, it was a millionaire. Well, in Soviet times... We caught everything: salmon, pink salmon, herring, navaga — everything... We transported it to Arkhangelsk... Now we don't fish, because they don't take a quota. They do for salmon, for pink salmon... First you pay money, and then they just give you permission to fish... Now we don't fish... Now they catch 2.5 tons of salmon there, and they'll slowly transport it here with a small vessel. But before, in the winter, everything was transported on tractors and cars” (Man, 55, Yarenga village).

Theoretically, various forms of self-employment, rural entrepreneurship and farming could be a possible response to these challenges. However, despite the attempts of individual families to develop their peasant farms in the 2000s–2010s, they have now come to nothing. The key reasons cited are the risky nature of farming in northern latitudes, unprofitability due to high logistics and administrative costs, narrow sales markets, and a lack of capital reserves due to low turnover, which makes farm business vulnerable to crop failure, livestock death, and fire.

“There was nowhere to sell milk... In the summer, it was still possible to sell it — a lot of summer residents come to live in the village. But in the winter, everyone leaves, there is almost no one here. And milk — you can’t say that they milked less. And what was left had to be processed into cottage cheese, or, for example, butter. It’s all very difficult... I didn’t transport it to the city. I needed some documents. You can’t transport it in the slush spring thaws either, when the traffic here is so bad. Well, in winter you could transport something there on a snowmobile — with these bags, with knapsacks, with bottles, with cans. If there was some kind of distribution point somewhere — you could arrive, hand it over, and leave. But there was no such point. You would have to open your own sales point... To open such point — you need to hire a seller, organize it. To hire a seller means you need to pay him, which means expenses, which means you need to increase the number of cows to cover it somehow. And one thing leads to another, that’s how it all clings...” (Man, 55 years old, Ostrova village).

“This is a risky area. It’s not profitable here. Logistics simply don’t allow it. And then, in light of the recent requirements — well, they are not so recent — veterinary certificates and so on and so forth. For each type of product entering the market — where, from where? People are not fools either, they immediately got it all and understood — it’s all over” (Man, 55 years old, Lopshenga village).

Low profitability of both peasant farms and small collective farms in the regions of the Russian Arctic is confirmed by existing economic assessments [16, Smirnova V.V., pp. 137–139].

The real reaction to economic transformations in the countryside has been the expansion of seasonal informal employment, crafts and “gray” trade with summer residents and tourists.

“This year there was [winter] fishing, my husband sold 2 tons of fish... In summer, we mainly sell fish to those who come here on vacation. Last year, pink salmon was sold mainly to those who came. People come, relax. Then, when they leave, accordingly, they need to take something with them — they buy and take it away” (Woman, 39 years old, Pertominsk village)

At the same time, there is still a widespread practice of homestead farming, which back in the 1990s proved its effectiveness as an independent source of relatively cheap food.

“Those who live here — everyone has a vegetable garden. Everyone has potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, dill, radish. What else? Cabbage, strawberries, there are plenty of raspberries ... Almost everyone plants cabbage. Beets, carrots, onions. I plant two varieties ... Of course, some of us still trade, those who have a lot” (Woman, 65 years old, Pustosh village).

Vegetable gardening in conjunction with fishing (in coastal villages) significantly alleviates the problem of excessively high retail prices in private and cooperative stores, and partly eliminates the risks associated with interruptions in centralized supply during periods of slush.

Thus, one of the key “support points” for Arctic rural communities is subsistence farming and rural trades [21, Pavlov A.B., Selev S.S.] with the establishment of economic ties between traders and urban consumers.

The unsatisfactory state of public transport providing communication between rural areas and the regional center/urban agglomeration pushes the rural population to alternative mechanisms for ensuring access to the “mainland”. We have identified two such mechanisms, which are the result of the adaptation of local residents to the problem described above. The first one is to provide themselves with personal transport — small boats, snowmobiles, off-road vehicles. The second one — for people who cannot afford personal transport — is associated with private commercial services for the transportation of passengers and goods.

“As the road appears, sometimes I do it myself, sometimes I ask my son. A car is available — bring us flour, sugar and vegetable oil. And we buy what we lack from December to December, and I buy the rest in the store” (Woman, 40 years old, Patrakeevka village).

“Those who are younger and quicker have got their own boats long ago. Because it takes 2 hours by boat, and 8 minutes by boat to Tsiglomen ⁷. We have two cars ourselves. The car is here on the territory, UAZ. We have a boat, on which we got to Tsiglomen in 8 minutes. There is a second car parked there. That is, those who are quicker, well, that’s how it is for everyone” (Woman, 47 years old, Lastola village).

Interviewer: And those who, for example, do not have a snowmobile [how do they bring goods from the city]?

Informant: They hire the locals who have one.

Interviewer: So they ask them to bring it for a fee?

Informant: Yes. Both a snowmobile and a car. So, an old woman who lives alone and has relatives, for example, in the city, she hires locals here (Woman, 31 years old, Lopshenga village).

It should be emphasized that within a rural community, the provision of any services is not entirely market-based. We have previously noted that among the inhabitants of the surveyed territories, attitudes toward mutual assistance and help to “their people” are common. Giving a ride to a neighboring village, helping with home or bathhouse repairs, providing neighbors with access to your well, treating fellow villagers to the fish caught, delivering a small parcel to the city (or bringing it from it) — all of these are examples of practices of mutual support by members of rural communities. The widespread prevalence of such practices is partly due to the density of family ties between residents of the same village (or several neighboring villages), and partly due to the relatively high level of trust between neighbors and within the local community as a whole. Pragmatic considerations, concentrated in the thesis “today I help you, and tomorrow you will help me”, also make their contribution. Thus, we record that the rural community is permeated with a network of mutual support, into which almost all of its members are included. The consequence of this is a high level of “bridging” social capital ⁸, which makes the processes of cooperation and coordination beyond households and family-related groups easier [22, Putnam R., p. 20].

⁷ A microdistrict of one of the administrative districts of Arkhangelsk city.

⁸ In this context, a type of social capital that ensures sustainable social ties and communication between representatives of different strata within a territorial community.

Another support for rural communities is grassroots activism and its results. By grassroots activism we mean a wide range of activities of local residents not directly related to their work duties and housekeeping, carried out on a voluntary basis and having social and/or cultural significance for the village as a whole. Above, we have already briefly described the specific forms of such activism. Here we will indicate their main social functions: 1) providing employment in socially significant activities for unemployed villagers, including retired specialists in the cultural and educational sphere; 2) demonstration of the possibility of solving some important applied problems to improve the quality of life at the expense of the community's own resources; 3) reproduction of local identity, strengthening the sense of belonging to the place; 4) increasing solidarity within the local community; 5) development of a culture of mutual support and cooperation; 6) demonstration to agents of political power of the potential for development of the territory at the expense of event and ecotourism, stimulation on their part of symbolic and financial support of the local community.

Finally, the source of resilience of Arctic rural communities, which can be found in the statements of some of our informants, is the return to their parental homes of recently retired native residents, who had previously lived and worked in the city for many years. Leaving aside the question of the reasons for the decision to return to their native village, we note that in the context of the continuing outflow of young people and middle-aged people from the village, the return of "young" pensioners to them partially compensates for the migration loss of the rural population.

"In general, the villages will exist at the expense of pensioners. In the city, these locals, grandchildren, children — they retired, they will move here, repair the house, let's say, and will be... not all year round, but they will come, like, in the summer — and that's it. And there is nothing else to do here" (Man, 82 years old, Letnyaya Zolotitsa village).

"Not everyone can buy an apartment for their children, so young pensioners who have retired — they still have strength and health — they go, return to their parental homes. At the same time, before retirement, they try to insulate them, improve them, raise them, install sewerage, water supply to live in comfort" (Man, 50 years old, Voznesenye village).

Although this strengthens the tendency for the ageing of the rural population, the villages are protected from "natural extinction" due to this influx, and local communities retain their integrity, since people returning to their small homeland are not strangers to each other, have experience of neighborly communication in the past, and are also often connected by kinship or marriage. In this way, the described process differs from the transformation of a village into a summer cottage settlement by replacing the rooted population with newcomers from the city, who buy plots of land with old houses and build new cottages there [23, Stammler F., Sidorova L., pp. 579–584].

Conclusion

Thus, the results of our study indicate several factors that ensure the social resilience of Arctic rural communities. Firstly, it is the ability of local residents to reorient themselves to subsistence farming and traditional for the territories under consideration industries in the conditions of degradation of those sectors of the local economy that imply permanent formal employment, unprofitability of peasant farms oriented towards external markets and periodically arising problems with centralized supplies. This ability stems from the experience of a traditional way of life, which is possessed by the majority of the population of the villages we studied. The preservation of this experience is possible due to the relatively successful intergenerational transmission of traditional skills and knowledge in Pomor families until recent decades.

Secondly, sufficiently high levels of social trust, solidarity and readiness for cooperation within communities determine the normalization of practices of mutual assistance and support provided to socially vulnerable village residents. In general, the studied communities are characterized by a high indicator of social capital. Although further quantitative research is required to clarify the values of this parameter for each community, the available qualitative data clearly indicate the strength of social ties between not only relatives but also neighbors, which contrasts with the situation in the regional center [24, Maksimov A.M. et al., pp. 70–71]. In addition, most rural residents have stable ties with urban relatives, who are a source of purely material support (for example, when villagers travel to the city) and help to overcome communicative isolation and confinement within the boundaries of the rural periphery.

Thirdly, a significant factor in the resilience of the surveyed villages and towns is the involvement of part of the local population in grassroots activism, often encouraged by rural, district, and even regional administrations. The effects of such activism have two dimensions: material — public and cultural initiatives of local residents help to attract grant funds for territorial development, increase income from tourism, etc.; socio-psychological — the involvement of a significant proportion of the village population in these initiatives, their participation in public events organized by activists, collective celebrations or socially useful activities (clean-up days, construction of a chapel, assistance in repairing a pier, etc.) supports the collective identity of the members of the rural community and increases its cohesion.

Fourthly, the reproduction and stabilization of Arctic rural communities is to some extent ensured by the return of retired local natives who had previously migrated from rural areas to the city. The return of these people to their small homeland helps to compensate for the steady outflow of youth and the working population. At the same time, being of rural origin, having socialized in a rural environment and not having lost touch with their roots, they are to a much lesser extent the transmitters of the urban culture and urban everyday habits they acquired in adulthood compared to city dwellers who come to the village for a summer vacation. As a result, the rural settlements we studied, despite the visible signs of technological progress, retain many features of

their traditional way of life. Thus, Arctic rural communities are reproduced not only physically, but also socio-culturally.

References

1. Shanin T. *The Awkward Class. Political Sociology of Peasantry in a Developing Society: Russia 1910-1925*. Moscow, "Delo" RANKhiGS Publ., 2019, 408 p. (In Russ.)
2. Vinogradsky V.G. Rural Universes: A Sociological Reconstruction. *Sociological Studies*, 2019, no. 5, pp. 3–13. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31857/S013216250004948-5>
3. Toshchenko Zh.T. *Meaning of Rural Life (Experience of Sociological Analysis)*. Moscow, Tsentr sotsial'nogo prognozirovaniya i marketinga Publ., 2016, 368 p. (In Russ.)
4. Foster K.A. *A Case Study Approach to Understanding Regional Resilience*. Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Berkeley, 2007, vol. 8, 42 p.
5. Bruneau M., Chang S.E., Eguchi R.T., Lee G.C., O'Rourke T.D., Reinhorn A.M., Shinozuka M., Tierney K., Wallace W.A., von Winterfeldt D. A Framework to Quantitatively Assess and Enhance the Seismic Resilience of Communities. *Earthquake Spectra*, 2003, no. 19 (4). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1193/1.1623497>
6. Simmie J., Martin R.L. The Economic Resilience of Regions: Towards an Evolutionary Approach. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 2009, vol. 3 (1), pp. 27–43. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjres/rsp029>
7. Klimanov V.V., Mikhaylova A.A., Kazakova S.M. Regional Resilience: Theoretical Basics of the Question. *Economic Policy*, 2018, vol. 13, no. 6, pp. 164–187. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18288/1994-5124-2018-6-164-187>
8. Nenasheva M.V. Resilience of Arctic Communities: Concept, Methodology and Research Directions. *Arktika i Sever [Arctic and North]*, 2023, no. 51, pp. 262–273. DOI: [10.37482/issn2221-2698.2023.51.262](https://doi.org/10.37482/issn2221-2698.2023.51.262)
9. Norris F.N., Stevens S.P., Pfefferbaum B., Wyche K.F., Pfefferbaum R.L. Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities, and Strategy for Disaster Readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 2008, no. 41 (1–2), pp. 127–150. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-007-9156-6>
10. Berman M., Kofinas G., BurnSilver Sh. Measuring Community Adaptive and Transformative Capacity in the Arctic Context. In: *Northern Sustainabilities: Understanding and Addressing Change in the Circumpolar World*. Switzerland, Cham Inc., Springer International Publishing, 2017, pp. 59–75. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-46150-2_6
11. Zamyatina N.Yu., Medvedkov A.A., Polyachenko A.E., Shamalo I.A. Resilience of Arctic Cities: An Analysis of the Approaches. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Earth Sciences*, 2020, no. 65 (3), pp. 481–505. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu07.2020.305>
12. Nikitin B.V. Assessing the Resilience Potential of the Russian Arctic Cities: The Factor of Economic Specialization. *Arctic: Ecology and Economy*, 2023, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 106–118. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25283/2223-4594-2023-1-106-118>
13. Pilyasov A.N., Molodtsova V.A. Resilience of Russian Arctic Cities: Methodological Approaches and Quantitative Assessments. *Proceedings of the Komi Science Centre of the Ural Division of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, 2021, no. 2 (48), pp. 5–26. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.19110/1994-5655-2021-2-5-26>
14. Ivanov V.A. The Northern and Arctic Specifics of Solving the Problem of Food Security. *The North and the Market: Forming the Economic Order*, 2022, vol. 25, no. 1 (75), pp. 58–71. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37614/2220-802X.1.2022.75.005>
15. Nikulina Yu.N. State Support for Agriculture in the Russian Arctic Regions: Current State, Compliance with Targets, Directions for Improvement. *Arctic: Ecology and Economy*, 2022, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 416–429. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25283/2223-4594-2022-3-416-429>
16. Smirnova V.V. Impact of State Support on the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas in the European North of Russia. *Arctic: Ecology and Economy*, 2021, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 135–145. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25283/2223-4594-2021-1-135-145>

17. Flood K., Mahon M., McDonagh J. Everyday Resilience: Rural Communities as Agents of Change in Peatland Social-Ecological Systems. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 2022, vol. 96, pp. 316–331. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.11.008>
18. McAreavey R. Finding Rural Community Resilience: Understanding the Role of Anchor Institutions. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 2022, no. 96 (3), pp. 227–236. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.10.014>
19. Podoplyokin A.O. Rural Residents of the Coastal Territories of the Arkhangelsk Region: A “Living Population” or a Resource for the Development of the Russian Arctic? *Bulletin of the Russian Humanitarian Science Foundation*, 2016, no. 2 (83), pp. 213–222.
20. Pozanenko A.A. “A Kinda Separate Little Republic”: Structural Specifics of Spatially Isolated Local Rural Communities. *Universe of Russia. Sociology. Ethnology*, 2018, vol. 27, no. 4, pp. 31–55. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17323/1811-038X-2018-27-4-31-55>
21. Pavlov A.B., Selev S.S. Phenomenological Description of the Modern Handicraft Activities. *Univer-sum: obshchestvennye nauki* [Universum: Social Sciences], 2015, no. 3 (13).
22. Putnam R.D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 2000, 541 p.
23. Stammler F., Sidorova L. Dachas on Permafrost: The Creation of Nature among Arctic Russian City-Dwellers. *Polar Record*, 2015, no. 51 (6), pp. 576–589. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247414000710>
24. Maksimov A.M., Malinina K.O., Blynskaya T.A. The Correlation of Social Capital, Social Trust and Population’ Entrepreneurial Activity in the Arctic Region (A Case Study of the Arkhangelsk Oblast). *Arktika i Sever* [Arctic and North], 2020, no. 40, pp. 66–81. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37482/issn2221-2698.2020.40.66>

*The article was submitted 18.10.2023; approved after reviewing 21.10.2023;
accepted for publication 23.10.2023*

The author declares no conflicts of interests