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## Media Image of the Arctic: Towards Qualified Human Resources

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the relevant topic — the Russian Arctic labor resources. The potential labor force of the Arctic today includes representatives of generation Z, graduates of Russian universities. The strategic issue of attracting labor resources to the Arctic has a target audience of young people. The governmental policy agent is mass media. The media provide public narratives of social constructs. The media are used to represent such an important social construct for the state as the Russian Arctic. The established media image of the Arctic includes characteristics related to the harsh weather conditions, the region's resource endowment, its military potential, and environmental problems. The traditional components of the media image of the Arctic have little significance in terms of highlighting the region's human resource potential. The existing media image of the Arctic is uninformative for potential Arctic labor force due to the features of public information consumption and processing by young people. The content of the media image has a specific pragmatic component that is directly related to the issue of labor vacancies, living conditions, work and lifestyle in the location of the vacancy. The aim of the study is to determine the media image of the Arctic corresponding to the Russian government's strategy for the development of the area. As a result, recommendations are made to adjust the media image of the Arctic to solve the problem of staffing the Arctic. The scientific novelty of the study is in the data obtained through surveys of Arctic university students. This data allows us to assess the degree of young people's awareness of the possibilities for applying professional competencies in the development of the Arctic. The study of the modern youth features, including the character of media consumption, also constitutes scientific novelty in the study of tools for the formation of Arctic workforce. Practical significance is represented by the possibilities that will provide a new media image of the Arctic for the creation of human resources potential of the AZRF.

**Keywords:** *Arctic labor resources, youth, media image of the Arctic, digital media, bloggers*


### Introduction

Russia has a policy of managing the socio-economic development of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation (AZRF)<sup>1</sup>. Innovative modernization in territorial management implies a balanced and thoughtful approach to the distribution of any resources aimed at the development of the country. The times of extensive social development are gone due to increasing environmental risks and the spread of intellectual forms of management and computer software

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<sup>1</sup> Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of April 15, 2021 No. 996-r “On approval of a unified action plan for the implementation of the Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Arctic for the period until 2035 and the Strategy for the Development of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation and Ensuring National Security for the Period until 2035”. URL: <https://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/400560856/?ysclid=lr0ba7xbzf849734262> (accessed 05 February 2024).

technologies. Competent development of the AZRF includes synergetic consolidation of efforts on the part of the government, business, education, research institutions and public sphere [1, Zaikov K.S., Kondratov N.A., p. 126].

Development of the AZRF is impossible without human presence in harsh Arctic conditions, despite the widespread use of ICT and robotics in engineering and technological processes. The task of forming the human capital of the Russian Arctic, “receptive to innovations, ready for inclusion in scientific and production processes in the conditions of rapidly updating technologies” is proclaimed [2, Lipkin A.V., p. 13]. At the same time, experts note the imbalance of supply and demand in the labor market of the AZRF. Graduates are not employed in their professions. This situation has consequences both in the form of a decrease in the professional level of graduates and in the form of a reduction in the intellectual potential of the AZRF [3, Korchak E.A., p. 1626]. Against the background of increasingly frequent statements about the need to increase qualified labor force in the Arctic, researchers talk about the low rates of development of human capital in this zone [4, Karginova-Gubinova V.V., p. 8]. High rates of youth migration from the North are recorded.

The problems identified by experts indicate that the social policy of creating human resource potential in the Arctic needs to be improved. It is necessary to think about the mechanism of creating conditions for retaining and attracting young people to the AZRF. One of the means of social policy is traditionally the creation of a narrative approved by society [5, Boughton M.]. The narrative, or representation of a particular object, is created by the means of mass culture: cinema, literature, and fine art. The media make a huge contribution to the creation of a public narrative, generating a media image of a social construct. Due to the volume of information and the constant broadcast of a particular point of view, the media is able to form the attitude of the public to the issue under discussion [6, Terskikh M.V., p. 200].

The media image of the Soviet Arctic was associated with the life of polar explorers and included a significant share of romance, heroism, and courage, which was shown by a few eccentrics who dared to go to harsh lands. The image of the Arctic created by modern media has somewhat expanded the understanding of the northern territories, adding such pragmatic components as the potential and resourcefulness of the region. Despite the changes in the media image, studies show that today the Arctic is presented as a distant and difficult region to live in [7, Zhigunov A.Yu.]. It should be noted that the existing media image has not made the Arctic more understandable and attractive for living. When considering the media image of the Arctic as a part of public policy, there is an understanding of its inferiority within the framework of the state strategy for the development of the AZRF.

The fact that young people are the basis for the formation of the human resource potential that develops the Arctic raises questions:

- What information about the Arctic does a modern consumer of media content have?
- How does the knowledge about the Arctic obtained by a reader/viewer of the media

determine the public attitude to the issue of modern development of the AZRF?

- How productive is the media image of the Arctic for its development?
- What should the media image of the Arctic be to correspond to the state strategy of the Russian government for the development of the AZRF?

The answer to the last question became the goal of this study. The work provides recommendations for adjusting the media image of the Arctic in order to solve the problem of developing human capital in the Arctic and its staffing. Proposals for changing the media image of the Arctic are based on research devoted to studying the views of modern youth, including data on the characteristics of media consumption by the younger generation, which is a scientific novelty in studying the tools for attracting labor force to the Arctic. In addition, the novelty of the study is represented by the data from surveys of students of an Arctic university, which allow us to assess the degree of awareness among young people of the possibilities of using their own competencies in the development of the Arctic. The practical significance of the work lies in the perspectives that will provide a new media image of the Arctic for the creation of human resources for work in the AZRF.

### **Methodology**

The basis for the study was the following fact: it was revealed that *students of the Arctic university, the purpose of which is, among other things, to train personnel for work in the Arctic, have a poor idea of how they can apply their efforts to the benefit of Arctic development*. Thus, in 2022–2023, we conducted a survey among 117 undergraduate and graduate students of the social and humanitarian cluster of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University. The following questions were asked:

- How can Arctic university students apply their professional competencies to the Arctic development?
- What do you know about the Arctic?
- Where did you get information about the Arctic?

The answers to the first question showed that:

- 67% of respondents believe that they *cannot* be useful for the Arctic development in any way,
- 28% responded that, *perhaps*, having received an education, they can be useful in one way or another,
- 3% declined to answer (Fig. 1).

How Arctic university students can apply the acquired professional competencies to explore the Arctic

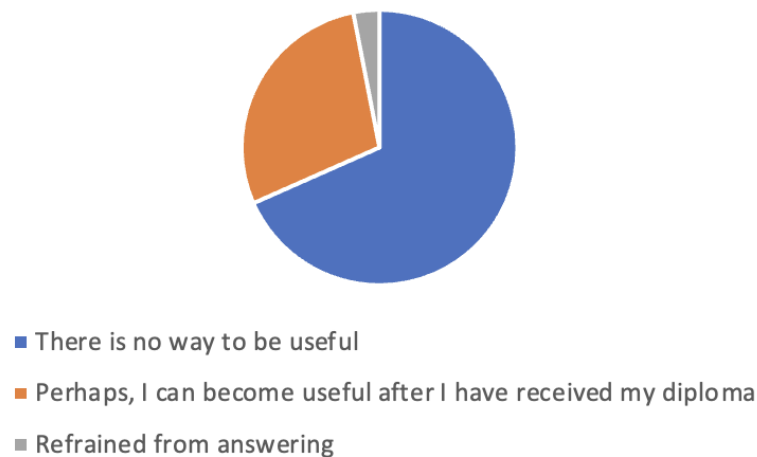


Fig. 1. How can Arctic university students apply their professional competencies to the Arctic development?

The answers to the question: “What do you know about the Arctic?” can be divided into three main groups:

- The Arctic has large natural resources (77%).
- The Arctic is a territory of critical temperatures (63%).
- I know nothing (11%).
- Other (26%) (Fig. 2).

What do the students know about the Arctic?



Fig. 2. What do students know about the Arctic?

The answers to the question “Where did you get information about the Arctic?” fall into the following groups:

- From the media (69%).
- From conversations with others (28%).
- Other (3%) (Fig. 3).

Where do the students receive information on the Arctic?

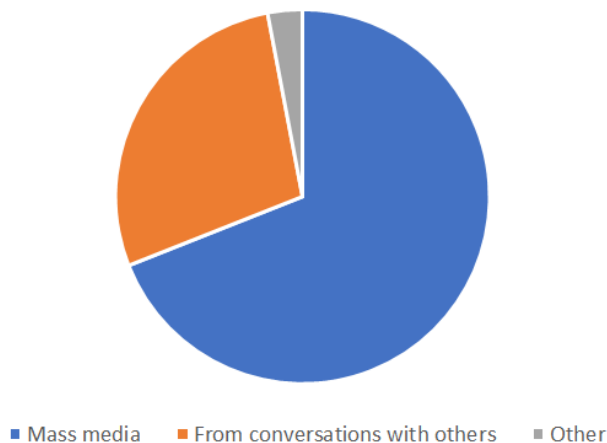


Fig. 3. Where do students get information about the Arctic?

The information received gives reason to believe that:

- young people who could potentially form the staff for developing the Arctic know little about the problems that arise in the process of developing the Arctic territories;
- the main means of obtaining information about the Arctic for the younger generation are the media and public opinion.

Given that public opinion is largely shaped by the mass media, we wondered why the media image of the Arctic does not provide insight into the problems that need to be addressed in the course of Arctic development. Another question that naturally arose in this context was: "What should the image of the Arctic be so that young people consider this region a place to work and live?" To answer these questions, we interviewed 50 undergraduate students and 20 graduate students in various fields of study at NArFU. We asked questions about their criteria for defining their place of work and life. The answers to these questions allow us to determine to what extent the existing public image of the Arctic can be considered by modern youth as a place to work and live. In addition, an analysis of existing scientific publications on these topics was conducted. The publications reviewed address the following questions:

- What are the characteristics of modern youth starting their careers?
- How do young people receive and process public information?
- What public information does the modern media image of the Arctic provide?

As a result of analyzing the interview data and the content of modern scientific publications, proposals were made to supplement the public image of the Arctic so that this territory becomes a place of choice for modern youth for employment.

### ***Labor force for the Arctic***

The Arctic needs labor force<sup>2</sup>. The areas of work in the Arctic are related to the extraction

<sup>2</sup> Development of the Russian Arctic will require about 180 thousand new specialists. URL: <https://pravdasevera.ru/2022/11/10/636cdd6f3c903a2d8a4e4802.html?ysclid=lqzlmxi7j147122998> (accessed 05

of hydrocarbon raw materials, provision of logistics infrastructure, engineering and technological development of territories. Work in the North has features that can be considered negative: natural and climatic conditions of low temperatures, difficult transport accessibility, socio-psychological isolation of the working personnel, limited comfort, poor surrounding landscape. The listed features entail corresponding consequences for a person: health risks, including mental health, chronic diseases, high cost of living, frequent changes of working staff at enterprises. Most of the work is organized on a rotational basis. The predominant part of the labor force is male, which is explained by the fact that historically the Arctic workforces were primarily employees of the fuel and energy complex.

Great hopes in the issue of Arctic development are placed on modern youth, students of universities and institutions of secondary vocational education [8, Ivanova M.V., Zaitsev D.V., p. 47]. They are the ones who should make up the labor force for work in such a difficult macro-region for development as the Arctic. It is assumed that young people will choose the AZRF as a place to live, work, and start a family. However, according to researchers, modern youth want a comfortable life that will not require great effort and will provide an opportunity to earn good money and realize full potential [9, Dombrovskaya A. Yu., Pyrma R.V., pp. 173–174]. Does a career in the Arctic meet these requirements? Probably not, just like most other professional tracks. There is no job that would be both highly paid and low-cost, so the question of choosing a particular vacancy by young people is unlikely to be determined solely by the complexity of working conditions.

What factors influence young people's decisions in favor of a particular job position? We asked 70 students what they would like to know about a vacancy in order to form their decision about future work in extreme Arctic conditions. Both response options and the opportunity to answer in free form were given. Among the response options were those that are generally typical for an information page about any vacancy:

- salary,
- living conditions of work,
- career growth opportunities,
- health insurance,
- opportunity to take vacation at a time convenient for the employee,
- opportunity to improve skills at the expense of the enterprise,
- possibility of a preferential mortgage,
- transport accessibility of the workplace,
- recreational conditions (cultural institutions, cinema, gym, place for walks, catering).

The respondents selected the following options:

- salary — 70 people,

- living conditions — 70 people,
- career growth opportunities — 63 people,
- health insurance — 67 people,
- opportunity to take vacation at a time convenient for the employee — 59 people,
- opportunity to improve skills at the expense of the enterprise — 50 people,
- possibility of preferential mortgage — 69 people,
- transport accessibility of the workplace — 68 people,
- recreational conditions (cultural institutions, cinema, gym, place for walks, catering) — 70 people (Fig.4).

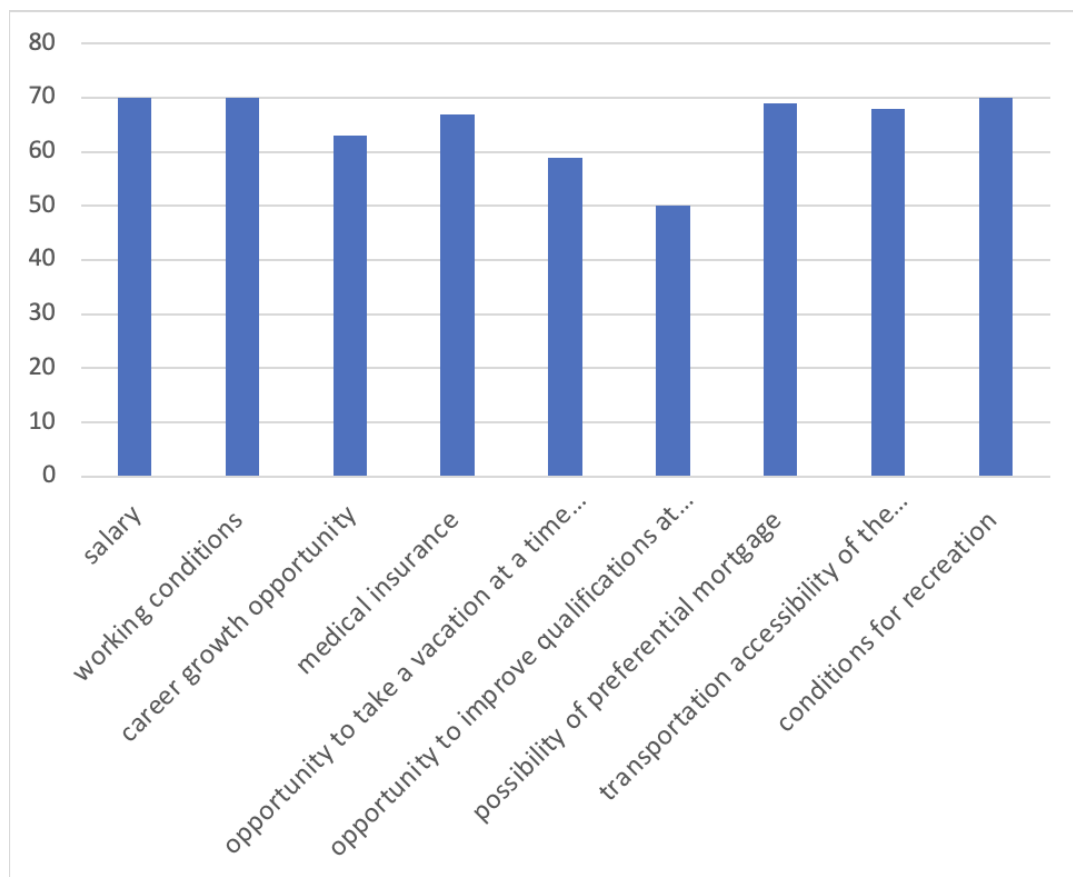


Fig. 4. Factors influencing the decision of young people when choosing a job vacancy.

It turns out that most of the information offered is necessary for young people to decide how suitable the vacancy is. The most interesting answers were those offered in free form. The following answers were given:

- *“The salary may be good, but the cost of travelling to the workplace may outweigh all the advantages”;*
- *“Even if a mortgage is given, are there many options for choosing housing in the Arctic?”;*
- *“Living conditions — indoors or outdoors? And if indoors, is it in the field?”;*
- *“I would like to know whom I will be working with. I don’t know anyone working in extreme Arctic conditions”;*



- *“Remote work is needed. Everyone works on computers now”;*
- *“I don’t know if I can work in low temperatures. Most likely, I will need to try first. Is there a trial work option?”;*
- *“I would like to know who my supervisor will be”;*
- *“They should provide a link to photos of the place of work, the company”;*
- *“What kind of work is there in extreme Arctic conditions?”;*
- *“I can’t imagine how the living conditions in the Arctic can be described. No matter what is written, you need to visit the place of work.”*

As can be seen, many answers are given in the form of questions. Of the affirmative sentences, the last answer seems to be the most indicative. Indeed, when people hear about work in the Arctic, they have questions, not answers. The reaction is natural: a person cannot make a choice in favor of something he or she does not know about. General statements like salary, mortgage, and health insurance are probably sufficient when it comes to the average job. A job in the Arctic is going beyond everyday experience. Is there much information in the public domain about real cases of work in the Arctic? Are there people we know who can share their own stories of working in the Arctic? If there are such people, how well does their story fit into the framework of a comfortable life? Where do we get enough information to make a decision about working in the Arctic?

### ***Characteristics of youth as a labor resource***

Although the category of youth includes the population from 12 to 30 years old, in this study we will focus on the characteristics of the segment of young people who are university students. This choice is justified because a number of universities today are building their educational strategy taking into account the Arctic labor market: universities of the Far East, Siberia, Yakutia, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk oblasts. University representatives are looking for tools to retain talented people and attract professional staff to the Arctic. Society and universities expect that after graduating, students will work for the economy of the Arctic region, will be employed at regional enterprises, and will work in remote areas of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation. Personnel trainings are carried out at the request of mining, shipbuilding companies, manufacturing, fuel and energy enterprises. Since the northern regions are characterized by high migration rates, we are talking about measures to retain young people in the northern regions and attract graduates from universities in neighboring regions to the North [10, Oglezneva T.N., p. 15]. It cannot be said that the stated measures are effective, since the outflow of young people from the northern territories is high and difficult to contain.

The reasons for youth migration are complex. However, an important factor is the characteristics of the age group. The socio-psychological characteristics of young people allow us to classify this group of the population as the most vulnerable and unprepared for the existing labor market. Representatives of Generation Z are described as trainable, creative and sociable [11,



Nikulina Yu.N., p. 756]. At the same time, a high level of ambition, a low level of patience, inflated expectations regarding wages and job status, and a lack of long-term plans in professional life are noted. In addition, young people strive for independence in decision-making, a life separate from their parents, and economic independence [12, Zakharova V.A., pp. 49–50]. At the same time, it is noted that young people desire to get what they want quickly and without difficulties, rapidly change goals and preferences, do not recognize authority, and highly value honesty, realism, and openness. It is important for young people to be in touch with friends and relatives; they often choose remote work, being digital natives [13, Badham M., Luoma-aho V., p. 420].

If we apply the listed characteristics to the situation of work in the Arctic zone, we can determine both pros and cons regarding the correspondence between the characteristics of potential labor force and working conditions. Thus, developed soft skills — communication, creativity — will make it easier to enter into negotiations with potential employers, as well as to become part of the work team. The desire for independence will enable you to make a decision about a workplace even if your relatives express a negative attitude towards the original choice. Independence will allow making decisions in difficult work situations that are quite real for extreme Arctic conditions. The ability to work with digital technologies will ensure the ability to easily handle high-tech equipment. Overall, the high level of trainability attributed to the young audience makes them valuable employees in any innovative production facility.

Despite the listed advantages of Generation Z, there are critical characteristics that make it less likely for young people to work in the Arctic. Ambition and low patience are bad assistants in any responsible position. Expectations of a high salary are also not always justified. The lack of prospects and long-term professional plans become a serious obstacle in the case of a region that can be classified as a developing territory. The desire for quick success and the lack of authority in the profession are undesirable where there are no obvious and established solutions. The ability to listen to the advice of experienced staff and the experience of the indigenous population is often cited as a condition for success in the critical conditions of the Arctic. The least realistic seems to be the possibility of constant communication with friends and relatives in hard-to-reach areas of the North. The need for openness, noted as a requirement of the younger generation, can also be an obstacle due to the low level of information coverage of events in hard-to-reach areas.

### ***Perception of information in public communication***

In modern society, public opinion about many social constructs is formed through the media. The media is a channel of communication between government and society. The public image of the Arctic is created via information contained in newspaper and magazine articles, TV and radio broadcasts, and popular science blogs [14, Bolsunovskaya L.M., pp. 148–149].

The youth audience has specific features in terms of receiving and processing information. Young people prefer digital media as their main source of information. The younger the contingent, the more often they view blogs and YouTube [15, Poluekhtova I.A., p. 100]. Traditional television

and print media remain practically out of young people's sight [16, Vartanov S.A., pp. 170–172]. As for the channels for receiving information, mobility is important. The number one means of receiving information is a smartphone connected to the Internet. Only a few people are familiar with the works of classical and Soviet literature. It was in Soviet culture that the first narratives of Arctic exploration appeared. However, neither fiction nor early style cinema are objects of choice for Generation Z as a whole.

Information processing also differs significantly from the ways typical for an adult audience. Standard means of attracting attention — banners, contextual advertising — are no longer perceived. Preference is given to visual means: memes, pictures, photographs. Young people practice “diagonal” reading, often concentrating solely on headlines, reading predominantly short texts and calling longer texts — either dismissively or with a sneer — longreads. Any news remains such for a short time, quickly leaving the field of vision of young people. Generation Z remembers not information, but the place where it can be found. The political agenda, traditional ideas about patriotism are not interesting. The formation of a new type of civic activity is noted [17, Dunas D.V., p. 120].

There is a problem of young people's trust in information in the public sphere. According to research, half of young users of Russian media trust the information offered, half do not trust it [18, Lapshinova K.V., p. 139]. Bloggers stand out among the most authoritative sources of information. They play the role of opinion leaders among young people. Researchers note that bloggers' leadership is associated with their ability to achieve fame, publication activity, the quality of published posts and a stable civic position [19, Osmanova A.I.]. Trust in bloggers extends from the issue of choosing a clothing brand to political choice. Often, bloggers are so authoritative that representatives of the younger generation literally begin to speak in sentences from bloggers' speech. Business is already widely taking advantage of such preferences of young people. There are few brands that do not resort to the help of famous trend-setters to build communication with a young audience. These trends should be taken into account when building communications with a young audience on issues of choosing a career path and employment. The associative word cloud represents modern communication trends in the youth environment (Fig. 6).



Fig. 5. Associative word cloud of modern communication trends in the youth environment.

### ***Modern media image of the Arctic***

The public image of the Arctic formed by the media — the media image of the Arctic — attracts the attention of researchers. Studies by N.S. Avdonina and S.O. Dolgoborodova describe the media's wide attention to Arctic issues since 2001. From the beginning of its formation, the media discourse of the Arctic was characterized by competitiveness, dictated by the struggle of different countries for the Arctic shelf [20, p. 739]. Geopolitical, economic issues, and the region's resource potential were the most typical topics covered in the media in the period 2001–2007. Then, the media discourse of the Arctic became even more competitive and militaristic. The emerging public image of the Arctic also includes issues of ecology, climate change, and history.

Tracing the history of the development of the media image of the Arctic, the authors note that later the media began to be more interested in issues of oil drilling and global warming. By 2009, the competitiveness of the Arctic media discourse becomes less obvious. International cooperation events begin to be covered more widely. In general, the media image of the Arctic remains stable, and its content hardly changes. Confirmation of this fact can be found in the 2020 study by A.Yu. Zhigunov, where the author identifies three main topics of materials about the Arctic in the media: militarization and geopolitical situation in the region, economic activities of large companies, and environmental problems. Among the new components in the media image, tourism and scientific expeditionary activities stand out. In addition, the topic of regional industry and infrastructure is added. This issue is related to the need to develop the service industry. Besides, the media pay attention to the issue of investment in industrial facilities, in the development of transport infrastructure, and the problem of mining and processing minerals. It should be noted that materials related to the topic of social development of the Arctic appear in the status of “other” and [7, p. 105].

The most recent analysis of the media image of the Arctic is presented in the study by A.V.

Simakova and I.S. Stepus [21]. This material to some extent addresses the practical side of the issue of the media image of the Arctic, as it raises the question of what is the weight of the romantic and the pragmatic in the media Arctic discourse. In fact, the romanticism inherent in the Arctic theme is traditionally widely described in cinema, music and art works, painting. The authors write that, despite the obvious romanticization of the Arctic image, the modern Arctic is not only a territory of romantics, but also a strategically important object. It is noted that the official media of 2019–2021 present the Arctic in a positive light as a national priority and an area of investment attraction. The social component in the media image of the Arctic is more confident. The topic of creating infrastructure, comfortable living conditions, attracting human resources is initiated.

A.V. Simakova and I.S. Stepus study the image of the Arctic formed in the minds of people and record all the above-mentioned thematic components. However, it is important to note that the public's perceptions of the Arctic are rather romantic and connected with the beauty of nature and the theme of homeland. Although public opinion is divided, the majority of people are far from a practical understanding of the importance of the Arctic territories. There is simply no talk of the population connecting the Arctic, which is rich in resources and is a promising region for development. The issue of human resource development is being discussed more and more frequently in recent publications. At the same time, the topic concerns the difficulties associated with the problem of attracting labor force and finding a solution to this problem [22, Saburov A.A., Nikiforov A.S.]. In general, such publications can be attributed to political issues of Arctic development. For an ordinary person, such materials are of little importance due to their detachment from the life problems: life support, income, living conditions, family maintenance, raising children, health care, recreation.

### ***Life experience of Arctic labor force as part of the media image***

How does the created media image of the Arctic correlate with the task of developing human resources potential and attracting labor resources to the North? Is the information contained in the media image important for making a decision about a place of work in the Arctic? Modern youth is quite pragmatic and has no illusions about building their lives. For a reasonable young man, the romantic image of the Arctic can be attractive as part of aesthetics, art and culture, but not as a basis for determining his professional future. The knowledge that the Arctic is a territory of dialogue, polar bears, and extreme temperatures cannot have a positive impact when choosing the AZRF as a place to live and work. The informational, media image of the Arctic, aimed at attracting personnel, should provide not only grounds for objective pride, but also an understanding of the real future experience, important for planning one's own life and building a family.

The authors of recent publications on the issue of labor force in the Arctic are unanimous in their opinion: the personnel of the future must have a number of competencies that are not

only disciplinary, but also supra-professional. In the Arctic, professional skills are important, including not only expert knowledge, but also so-called “soft” competencies. Thus, during a discussion at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum 2023, rectors of leading Russian universities that train personnel for the Arctic, drew a portrait of a potential specialist working in the Arctic. Such a specialist should “love nature, country” and be “kind” and “hospitable”<sup>3</sup>. The ability to work in a team, intercultural communication skills, the ability to quickly adapt to new conditions and respond to emergency situations are important. In addition, high discipline and a desire to develop professionally are necessary [22, Saburov A.A., Nikiforov A.S.]. The prospect of developing emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and self-management should be clear to students planning their future activities in the Arctic.

Researchers also note the need for special training of employees for shift work [23, Korneeva Ya.A., p. 384]. Despite the problem of sparse population in the Arctic territories, which is of concern to specialists, shift work in the Arctic will remain one of the main methods. The approach to seasonal and rotational employment, which is widespread in society, does not take into account the physical and psycho-emotional overloads characteristic of this type of work. Employees work in a confined space, are isolated from the outside world, and have to leave their families for long periods of time. At the same time, shift work has its advantages: high wages and a favorable calculation of seniority. As a rule, employers provide shift workers with free medical care, clothing, and food. Publicity of scientific data on the specifics of shift work in the Arctic will increase the number of success stories among young professionals starting their career.

On the other hand, the connection between the infrastructure of the Arctic region and the availability of professional personnel for further development of the area is important for understanding society; the media space should contain information on the importance of creating a comfortable environment in the Arctic for workers. Infrastructure is needed to make an area comfortable for living. In the Arctic, the creation of infrastructure is complicated by its high cost and extreme climatic conditions. Innovative solutions are important to cope with the task of creating housing infrastructure. The state of the housing sector, the level of utilities, the availability of public transport, healthcare and education have a serious impact on the standard of living of a person and, accordingly, on the choice of the AZRF as a place of residence. For young personnel, information about the Arctic regions with the most developed infrastructure is important. In addition, it is necessary to cover projects and plans for infrastructure development. Even if a particular location currently lacks the best infrastructure, the anticipation of planned changes may be important in choosing a future job.

Understanding the benefits of the region not only to the state, but also to ordinary people is important because meeting personal and local needs is one of the basic human needs. Students expect to find a job that will feed them and their future families. Living in the Arctic region should

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<sup>3</sup> Education and work in the Arctic: what competencies and skills are needed were discussed at the SPIEF. URL: <https://rsv.ru/news/2/5500/> (accessed 05 February 2024).

not only be feasible, but also advantageous. Difficult living conditions should be compensated by the advantages that the Arctic nature provides and at the same time comply with the principles of sustainable development. Within the framework of the programs for the sustainable development of the territories of the Arctic Zone of the Russian Federation, projects are being implemented to restore Arctic stations, build ports, icebreakers, container ships for year-round navigation along the Northern Sea Route, create reserves and national parks offering tourist programs. The economically favorable characteristics of working in the Arctic should become part of the media image of the Arctic territories.

Natural, climatic and environmental issues remain determining factors in the decision to work in the AZRF. The fact of extreme air temperatures and low comfort of weather conditions is well known. However, it is important to have a clear understanding of what a future employee can expect when he or she arrives at the place of employment with regard to the climatic situation. Even more important is knowledge of how a person can cope with the difficult natural conditions of the Arctic territories. For example, in the Arctic Circle, the low water vapor content makes oxygen absorption from the atmosphere worse than in neighboring latitudes. Lack of solar radiation and specific light regime are also unfavorable factors for human health [24, Chashchin V. P., Gudkov A. B., p. 90]. A person is able to cope with these difficulties. However, this is only possible if a person has information about ways to solve the problem. Understanding of the real situation and availability of working solutions to overcome difficulties will allow potential employees to make their choice. In addition, it is important for future workers in the Arctic to know how environmental problems are being addressed and what risks exist in this regard.

The potential of modern artificial intelligence is a breakthrough for the development of Arctic territories due to a number of factors specific to this area: harsh natural conditions, environmental problems, shortage of skilled labor, remoteness from highly developed infrastructure. Where humans face difficulties in applying their physical resources, AI with its “big data” and “smart transport” turns out to be a significant force for development. Modern innovative schemes for the development of Arctic resources look like separate autonomous production platforms, where the processes of extraction and processing of natural resources are carried out using unmanned technologies and remote control of all production processes. Such development of Arctic deposits in the format of economic platforms with the effect of extreme localization requires the use of artificial intelligence [25, Pilyasov A.N., Putilova E.S., p. 28].

Employers also recognize the high importance of digital technologies in the development of Arctic territories. Automation of the labor process in the Arctic is associated with the use of geographic information systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and data collection and processing systems. Possession of digital competencies is becoming typical for modern Arctic personnel. It is noteworthy that some of the AZRF subjects have a high level of digitalization potential even in comparison with other regions of the Russian Federation [26, Babkin A.V., Egorov N.E., p. 51]. Since AI offers promising prospects for solving a number of issues, publications on this subject will

provide understanding of the options for developing Arctic territories using digital technologies. Modern youth are eager to use digital technologies and AI. Information about the application of trendy digital competencies in Arctic development will focus young people on the need to purposefully develop digital skills for future use in labor activities in the Arctic territories.

We can briefly list the main areas in which the awareness of the potential Arctic labor force needs to be raised:

- ability to psycho-adaptation;
- absence of health problems;
- developed digital competencies;
- information on the development of the AZRF infrastructure;
- information on the benefits of working and living in the AZRF.

However, it is important that the listed areas cannot simply be mentioned as workforce requirements or as job characteristics. Detailed information with illustrative examples and analysis of work situations that will demonstrate the essence of the above problems is needed. Real cases of workers, feedback from employers, examples from the life of work collectives, stories about solving difficulties — all these are important for creating a general overview of the life experience of a person working in the North. Reflecting on other people's experience, a person is able to make a decision about the extent to which such an experience is possible for him/her. The lack of understanding of what a person experiences when living in the Arctic makes the possibility of such an experience dangerous and undesirable.

It is necessary to adjust the media image of the Arctic by including an element of the life experience of a person living in the Arctic territory. The image of a strategically important region, a place rich in natural resources, a beautiful land and a new transport hub does not provide the information necessary for making a decision about life and work in the Arctic. People can make such a decision when they realize that living conditions in the North are acceptable to them. Measures of adaptation to climatic difficulties, the ability to use professional and personal competencies, an idea of the peculiarities of life in an Arctic city or village in a full calendar cycle — such knowledge is necessary for the future Arctic labor force.

### **Conclusion**

The motivation for conducting this study was the information that Arctic university students, for the most part, have no idea how they can use their professional competencies to work on the development of the Arctic territories. Despite the fact that the state has high expectations of university graduates as a labor force for the Arctic, young people do not associate the knowledge they received at the university with the prospect of applying this knowledge to work in the Arctic. Moreover, the youth audience perceives the Arctic not as a place for work and life, but as a remote territory of critical temperatures and natural resources. This image of the Arctic was formed under the influence of public opinion and media.



The survey of students showed that when looking for a job, they are interested in salary, living conditions, career opportunities, health insurance, preferential mortgages, etc. However, this information provided in relation to work in the Arctic is insufficient. The public attitude towards the Arctic suggests that simple facts about the peculiarities of working in the Arctic are not enough to make a decision to work there. The difficulty lies in the fact that the conditions of the Arctic climate and the remoteness of the territory hinder personal experience in the Polar Regions. At the same time, there is an understanding that the real living conditions in the Arctic are more than just the facts from a job advertisement. Young people lack personal experience of life in the Arctic.

Young people get their idea of the Arctic from the media. The media are the creators of the public experience of the Arctic, accessible to the average Russian citizen. The media image of the Arctic territories available to the Russian citizen has been created under the influence of events that have taken place since the early 2000s. It gives an understanding of the Arctic as a geopolitically unstable, militarized, but resource-rich region. The strategic importance of this region is associated primarily with oil drilling. The region is also known for climatic and environmental problems. In the recent media image of the Arctic, information about the tourism potential and expeditionary activities related to the scientific exploration of the Arctic is added. The image is supplemented with information about the problems of infrastructure development and the difficulties associated with attracting personnel to work in the Arctic. We conclude that the existing media image of the Arctic is not stimulating for young people. Information about events in the Arctic does not cause a desire to choose this region for work and life.

As a result of the study, recommendations are given for supplementing the media image of the Arctic in order to make it consistent with the state strategy for attracting labor force to the Arctic. First of all, the changes are related to the inclusion of the real-life experience of a person working in the Arctic in the media image. Despite the fact that work in the Arctic is associated with a number of difficulties due to critical weather conditions and inaccessibility of the region, this is not the main stumbling block in the understanding of young people. University graduates lack information about how people cope with the difficulties of work and life in the Arctic. The media image of the Arctic should include cases from the lives of workers in the Arctic territories, success stories of people who chose this region for their professional development. Student work practice would be a very expensive way for young people to get to know the northern territories. However, even if most young people do not have the opportunity to gain trial work experience in the Arctic before deciding on their employment there, virtual tours and narratives telling about real people working in the Arctic weather conditions would become the necessary link to enable self-determination.

The prospects for research involve tracking changing socio-economic conditions and their impact on living and working in the AZRF. The media image of the Arctic should be adjusted depending on the needs of the state and the development plans of society. It is important to

remember that the media user applies incoming information to own life. The population does not need abstract rhetoric, but rather the presentation of life experience situations. It is important to further study the life experiences of the Arctic labor force and share the results of this activity with the population. Pride in the Arctic is based on real human achievements.

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