

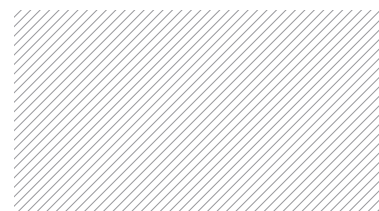


## Karolina Banul

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“My research goal is to provide data with a comparative potential that could offer some insights for urban development in selected cities in the Arctic.”

My name is Karolina Banul and I have been a doctoral student at UiT the Arctic University of Norway since August 2014.

The last five years I have been an exchange student living in different Scandinavian countries. As a part of the exchange program I spend one semester at the University of Tampere in Finland in 2010. In 2011 I had an internship at Arctic Centre, University of Lapland and at the International Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes, Norway. During that time, I was working on my thesis titled “The governance of renewable energy in the Barents Region”. In autumn 2011 I completed my MA in political science at the University of Warsaw. After graduation I came back to Rovaniemi and continued to work in Arctic Centre as a planning assistant. This work gave me valuable experience in writing funding applications for academic projects as well as being part of a research team. Being a researcher in international environment opened my eyes to new possibilities that changed my future working life.

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In 2012 I was selected for Erasmus Mundus Master of Science Course in Geo-information Science and Earth Observation for Environmental Modelling and Management (GEM). Two years scholarship allowed me to get education from Lund University and University of Iceland. In my final master thesis project – “Bathymetry of Reykjanes ridge: A methodological approach” – I analyzed time separated, multi-beam data collected along the crest of the Reykjanes ridge. I definitely enjoyed learning about cartography, GIS and mapping and I found those disciplines very useful for potential future work in both academic and commercial sectors.

My research interests include various topics that touch upon social and natural science. I have especially focus on regional and urban development, spatial planning, using GIS in planning and decision-making support, environmental impact assessment, and science – policy interface.

Currently I am a doctoral student working at The Barents Institute in Kirkenes. I am involved in a research project called Arctic Urban Sustainability in Russia project (ARCSUS) that aims at evaluating climate and socioeconomic factors related to sustainability of urban communities in the Arctic. The project analyses what kinds of urban settlements and their related infrastructure are best suited to ensure sustainability.

In my PhD project, I address questions about the urban sustainability in the Arctic cities in the context of globalization, state policies, and local conditions. In my research project, titled “The urbanization in the Arctic: socio-economic transitions and sustainability of urban systems”, I want to investigate the quality of life and well-being of the population of this region, environmental sustainability, and governance in selected urban settlements. I intend to assess urban sustainability in quantitative and qualitative terms.

While living and visiting various cities in Northern Europe: Rovaniemi, Tromsø, Kirkenes, Reykjavik, Tórshavn, Murmansk, I have observed how arctic cities differ in terms of population, socio-economic characteristic, main industries, administrative, and educational functions. At the same time, urban settlements in the Arctic are facing similar problems: migration and population change, economies dependent on primary industries and public administration, peripheral and remote locations. Therefore, my research goal is to provide data with a comparative potential that could offer some insights for urban development in selected cities in the Arctic.