

## **Academic (un)employment and mobility in the Arctic North. A socially responsible approach. Preliminary review.**

The encompassing vision of both the preliminary review 1.12.2016-31.1.2017 (financed by Interreg Nord) and the actual programme is to improve the situation of academic employees in a vulnerable position and residing in the northernmost areas of the Nordic countries, by increasing cross-border mobility in a socially sustainable way and harnessing their innovative potential to promote well-being in the north.

At the core of the programme under preparation are four large northern universities and their gender studies teams: University of Oulu, Luleå University of Technology, University of Tromsø - and the University of Lapland, which will join the programme after it starts.

The main objective of the preliminary review is to produce, in cooperation with the Swedish and Norwegian programme partners, a preparatory review in preparation investigating the grounds for the programme application to be sent to the inter-Nordic Interreg Nord programme. The review

1) will outline the current status of the academic labour force in the northern areas by means of statistics and specialist information. It will prioritise the groups that are most vulnerable in terms of precarisation and segregation and whose status can be improved, via the actual programme, by measures that enhance crossborder academic mobility in the Nordic countries and by building cross-border contact and interaction channels between employees and employers; 2) will map the institutions and other actors that deal with academic employment and unemployment in the northernmost areas of the Nordic countries and engage key actors with the programme; 3) will outline the measures which could be taken to improve the status of vulnerable groups in the actual programme, by reducing precarisation and segregation and increasing mobility; 4) will outline the measures which could be employed to direct cross-border academic mobility at the northern areas and sectors where academic specialists are most needed. Moreover, the preliminary review will result in a programme application, jointly written alongside the programme partners, which will be sent to the Common labour market priority area of the Interreg Nord programme on February 1, 2017.

The preliminary review phase is seeking answers to questions such as the following: What are the special features and the related needs and objectives of each northern area? What measures could be employed on their basis - that is, on the basis of the individual features of each area and the development challenges that the areas share - in the actual programme in order to develop and expand the inter-Nordic academic labour market and promote mobility on the market? How does gender and intersectional segregation limit the job opportunities of academic employees and what measures could be taken as part of the actual programme to dismantle segregation?

The need for the programme is underlined by the fact that all of the Nordic countries share the problem of north-to-south migration, academic migration included. Whereas local measures are insufficient to solve this problem, Nordic cooperation is needed in order to refocus mobility towards inter-Nordic migration in a socially sustainable manner. Nordic cooperation also brings added value to efforts to reduce academic precarisation and segregation, because such problems are shared by the Nordic countries.

In the programme, cross-border synergies will be supported by the common Arctic Agenda signed by the universities of Oulu, Lapland, Luleå and Tromsø on September 8, 2016, the purpose of which is to strengthen cooperation between Arctic universities. The programme is also directly in line with other programmes such as the following: Interreg Nord 2014-2010, Interreg Europe 2020, Nordic Council of Ministers' Arctic Cooperation Programme 2015-2017 and UN Agenda 2030.

The report of the pre study will be published in this page soon.

More information:

Ilmari Leppihalme

[ilmari.leppihalme@oulu.fi](mailto:ilmari.leppihalme@oulu.fi)