

## **Conference Announcement – *Call for papers!***

### **PERSPECTIVES**

#### **The Land of the Future? Rapid Industrialisation for a Societal Transformation in Peripheral Regions – Opportunities and Impacts**

***Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden, 30 November – 1 December 2023***

##### **Background**

Northern Europe and other peripheral regions worldwide provide important conditions for a green transition. For example, in northern Sweden, access to green energy and minerals has created an industrial boom with mega investments into battery factories and fossil-free steel production plants. While this is seen as a potential solution to global challenges caused by climate change, the development also triggers social and economic changes in northern Europe. One challenge follows when energy requested by the ongoing industrial expansion exceeds current capacity. Another challenge comes when the need for further energy production and mineral resources causes competition over land use. A third challenge is the threat against Indigenous peoples' reindeer herding. However, the currently most noticeably challenge is the lack of labour needed in the new industries and the growing communities.

Another attribute for the current development is its velocity. During recent decades, northern Europe faced unemployment, population decline and a fading supply of services. Now, communities need to grow quickly to facilitate the industrialisation underway. This means qualified labour needs to be attracted, housing needs to be provided and an attractive environment needs to be built. The infrastructure as well as public and private services also need to be upscaled. At risk are instead established practices for community involvement and other values such as an intact environment. Altogether, this has presented enormous challenges but also an abundance of opportunities. A mobilisation of stakeholders within the region, but even beyond its boundaries, seems to be decisive about meeting the future needs.

In this context, universities play a pivotal role. Universities provide education and research on technological, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions of ongoing change. Northern Europe also contains important nodes for various aspects of regional development.

While this background refers to northern Europe, other peripheral regions in and outside of Europe experience similar processes and changes. In this conference, current socio-economic development in peripheral regions is in focus. Besides addressing issues related to industrialisation, infrastructure, labour supply, community change, social and political change, spatial planning and the development of the built environment, a particular focus is on the role of universities within the ongoing change and the implicit challenges and opportunities for research and education.

##### **Target group and outcomes**

The conference seeks to gather researchers and representatives of industry, government, public sector, and civil society with an interest in sharing perspectives and elaborating solutions to current challenges that can lead to development of, primarily but not exclusively, northern Europe.

The conference provides a platform for researchers and representatives of other sectors to meet. The expected outcomes of the conference are a scientific advancement of knowledge regarding societal transformation in peripheral environments and new insights into future collaboration between academia, industry and public sector.

The first day of the conference focuses on scientific debate and features scientific keynotes, paper sessions and workshop sessions. The second day offers keynotes, panel discussions (in Swedish) and short perspective notes from invited contributors.

### **Preliminary programme**

#### **Day 1 – Thursday, 30 November**

- Keynotes (scientific)
- Parallel scientific sessions on various aspects of the conference
- Interactive workshop sessions on particular topics
- Conference dinner.

#### **Day 2 – Friday, 1 December 2023**

- Keynotes – Guest speaker
- Panel: Industry and academy cooperation for advancing a green transformation
- Panel: New industrialisation benefitting communities and regions
- A cultural perspective on societal transformations in resource peripheries.

*It is possible to only participate for one day.*

### **Paper submission**

We are now welcoming contributions to day one of the conference. Paper presentations are 30 minutes including ten minutes for discussion. Contributions from all sciences on any matter relating to the current societal transformation in peripheral regions are welcome. Abstracts will be organised in thematic sessions. Please submit an abstract of up to 250 words (including name and affiliation) synopsising your proposed contribution to [per.a.nilsson@umu.se](mailto:per.a.nilsson@umu.se)

***Submission deadline: 31 October 2023***