



# GET TO KNOW NAFISA YEASMIN PHD

Migration in Harmony RCN Member Spotlight





# Nafisa Yeasmin

Nafisa Yeasmin PhD is a Project Manager, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, and Adjunct Faculty at the University of Lapland.

She was the Academic of the Year 2019 in Finland and has been leading the UArctic Thematic Network on Arctic Migration since 2016 and has published high-quality peer-reviewed articles and co-edited books, such as *Human Migration in the Circumpolar North: Past, Present & Future* (Palgrave 2019). ), *Immigration in the Circumpolar North: Integration and Resilience* (Routledge 2020) and *The Future of the Arctic Human Population: Migration in the North* (Routledge 2022).

Nafisa is also is a distinguished member of the Ethnic Advisory Board of the Ministry of Law and Justice and a member of the International Forum of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland.

# What currently excites you?



I'm excited about current policy-oriented research on what types of competencies and qualifications gives immigrants hope and a sensing belongingness. My research partners and I are going to submit this policy paper to the EU, which excites me!

The European Union policy documents The Lisbon Recognition Convention (1997) and the Bologna Declaration (1999) both highlight the need to acknowledge academic qualifications of immigrants that have been acquired from outside of the EU. However, putting these documents into practice in higher education institutions and the job market is not always a given. But our research shows that by acknowledging these previously acquired competencies leads to an increased sense of hope and belonging in their new home.

In order to sustain economic resilience in the North of Finland, Arctic communities need to increase immigration and empower them to feel like they belong. And recognition of previously acquired competencies will facilitate the economic integration of international students in northern societies and attract them to stay in the region. We need these policy briefs to be taken into consideration and to inform a retention policy. We had the last event of this project in Brussels on the 1st of December 2022.



# What do you enjoy most about your field?

I enjoy the research, development, and conversations with my colleagues over a cup of coffee.

What I love most about my professional field is learning from each other and from the glimpse of others' work.

Positive interventions lifted my energy level and inspired me to work intuitively. The multicultural milieu around me provides me with a feeling of respect for each others and being fair and factual.



# Who inspires you and why?

My children and their beloved father inspire me – and my extended family and their support



# What advice would you give to someone who wants to enter your field?

I am of the opinion that a researcher needs to focus on building an active connection between research and society that goes beyond academic research— one that is of considerable significance to ensure a greater understanding of the impact of science on people and society.

Science, whether it is soft or hard, is for the good of society where each of us lives. If that is the case, then we need to share our research outcomes and knowledge with policymakers and people in society.





From early career to senior researcher, we are all life-long learners!

What's one thing, professional or personal, that you learned in the last month?

I have learned that science is an addiction to many extents, and exploring science is a cure. It's that exploration that keeps me excited each year, month, days, hours, and second!



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