

Svalbard

Overview:

The Svalbard archipelago in the Arctic Ocean was first discovered by the Norwegians in the 12th century. The islands served as an international whaling base during the 17th and 18th centuries. Norway's sovereignty was recognized in 1920; five years later it officially took over the territory.

Territory:

The Svalbard archipelago includes the islands of Spitsbergen, Nordaustlandet, Barentsøya, Edgeøya, Kong Karls Land, Hopen, Prins Karls Forland and Bjørnøya, and all other islands, islets and skerries between 74 and 81 N and between 10 and 35 E. Sixty percent of the land is covered in glacier. Coastline: 3,587 km. Highest Point: Newtontoppen 1,717 m.

Location:

In the Arctic Ocean north of Norway in the Barents Sea. Svalbard is located in the Central European Time (CET) +1 GMT.

Latitude and Longitude:

Between 74 and 81 N and between 10 and 35 E.

Time Zone:

GMT +1

Total Land Area:

62049

EEZ:

200

Climate:

Frequent low-pressure passages and the warm Atlantic Ocean water make the climate on Svalbard milder than in other areas at the same latitude. The annual average temperature in Longyearbyen is -4 C, but the climatic differences in the archipelago are greater. The highest measured temperature in Svalbard is 21.3 C, and the lowest is -46.3 C. Stiff breezes are common in the winter half-year, while fog is a typical summer phenomenon. There is little rainfall; in Longyearbyen there is less than in the driest areas on the mainland. Longyearbyen has the Midnight Sun from 20 April until 23 August, and the Polar Night from 26 October until 15 February.

Natural Resources:

coal, iron ore, copper, zinc, phosphate, wildlife, fish

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:

Per Capita GDP:

% of GDP per Sector:		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

% of Population Employed by Sector		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:

(1998): \$8.2 million from Norway

Growth:

Labour Force:	
2001	1,069

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)

Industry:

Mining (coal, iron, copper, zinc, phosphate), fishing, hunting, tourism

Niche Industry:

Mining, tourism, scientific research (climate change, meteorological, etc)

Tourism:

Towards the end of the 19th century the first tourists began visiting Svalbard. Organized tourism was already established here by the turn of the century. The media attention created by the many dramatic attempts at reaching the North Pole from Svalbard no doubt contributed to the growing interest in visiting Svalbard as a tourist. Today tourism is one of Svalbard's main economic pillars, with visitor numbers now reaching several tens-of-thousands annually.



Imports and Exports:	
There is no data available for this category.	
Tot. Value of Imports	0.00 ()
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	There is no data available for this category.
Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	
Tot. Value of Exports	()
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	
Main Exports:	

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports: 1

Svalbard has one airport in Longyearbyen that has regular flights to mainland Norway on a daily basis, which connect to international flights.

Number of Main Ports:

There are several cruise ship companies that do tours of Svalbard, offering several nights accommodation onboard.

Internal:

Air

Road:

There are very few roads in Svalbard and there is no car ferry to or from Svalbard. Snowmobile is the most popular and most practical choice of transport in Svalbard.

Sea:

Other Forms of Transportation:

Economic Zones:

Energy Policy:

Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Type			Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Sector				
		Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)		Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)

Official Currency:

Norwegian Krone (NOK)

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

There is only one bank in Svalbard, the Sparebank 1 Nord Norge, which is a mainland bank with ties to international banking institutions.

Financial Services:

Communications/E-Commerce:

Public Ownership:

Law protects over half of the total land area of Svalbard, and over 60% of the total land area is glacier covered, therefore, settlement is limited to just a few small areas, Longyearbyen, Ny-Å...lesund, Pyraminden, Berentsburg, and Sveagrauva.

Land Use:

arable: 0; permanent 0; other 100.

Agriculture/Forestry:



n/a

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

12 nm territorial limit, 200 nm EEZ. note: Russia and Norway dispute their maritime limits in the Barents Sea and Russia's fishing rights beyond Svalbard's territorial limits within the Svalbard Treaty zone.

Marine Life:

Critical Issues:

Small population, unstable population base, limited jurisdictional capacity, limited and small economy.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:

Longyearbyen

Political System:

Svalbard is a territory of Norway; administered by the Polar Department of the Ministry of Justice, through a governor (sysselemann) residing in Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen; by treaty (9 February 1920) sovereignty was awarded to Norway.

Political Parties:

Labour Party, Conservative Party, Christian Democrat, TverrpolitiskFellesliste.

Important Legislation:

The Svalbard Treaty: signed in Paris on 9 February 1920. 39 countries have become party to the Treaty, which provides Norway absolute and unlimited sovereignty over Svalbard. The Treaty nevertheless secures rights in some areas for the citizens and companies of the signatory countries. Among them are equal opportunities to engage in certain types of activities on Svalbard. Norway can set regulations in these areas as well, but not rules that discriminate on the basis of nationality. Norway is also obliged to refrain from establishing naval bases or fortifications on the archipelago. Taxes, fees and charges that are levied on Svalbard, shall benefit Svalbard only. The Svalbard Act: The Svalbard Act of 17 July 1925 provides that Svalbard is a part of the Kingdom of Norway. Norwegian private, criminal and procedural laws apply as long as nothing to the contrary has been provided. Other statutory provisions only apply when this is specifically provided. In addition, the King may issue general regulations for Svalbard. The Act also includes, among others, provisions concerning the administration of Svalbard and concerning property on the archipelago The Mining Code: The Mining Code is a Royal Decree, which was laid down on 7 August 1925. It addresses legal issues concerning search and discoveries, claim patents, relations to the proprietor of the ground, mining and protection of workers. The Mining Code is managed by the Svalbard Commissioner of Mines. Tourism Regulations: The aim of the tourist regulations is to regulate tourism and other travel activities on Svalbard, especially in order to protect the natural environment and cultural relics of the archipelago, secure that other laws and regulations are being obeyed, and provide for the safety of tourists and other travellers. Svalbard Environmental Protection Act: The purpose of this Act is to preserve a virtually untouched environment in Svalbard with respect to continuous areas of wilderness, landscape elements, flora, fauna and cultural heritage. This act was implemented on June 15, 2001.

Principal Taxes:

Associated Power:

Kingdom of Norway

Citizenship:

Associated Power: The most northern part of the Kingdom of Norway. Citizenship: Norwegian, Russian. note: Under the Svalbard Treaty, other nationals can settle and live in Svalbard if they wish, however, Russia is one of the only countries to ever take advantage of this.

Paradiplomacy:

n/a

HUMAN RESOURCES

There is a very small labour force which is made up from a highly transient population.

2003			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population
Svalbard	62,049	2,701	%

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
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Migration:

Crude Birth Rate:

Life Expedctancy:

Similar to that of Norway: 79.4 years old.

Crude Death Rate:

Ethnicity:

Ethnic Mix: 2003 Norwegian 1562; Russian 818; Polish 9; Other 100; Total 2489.



Class Division:**Languages:**

Norwegian, Russian, English

Religion:

Norwegian Church (Lutheran)

Literacy:

Similar to that of Norway: 100%

Education System:

Total Pre-schools:()	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	
Second Level:	
Third Level:	
Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	
Universities:	

Number of Schools per Island:										
	Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
	Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

The University Centre Svalbard (UNIS) is a state-owned limited company. Norway's four mainland universities are represented on the board: University of Oslo, University of Bergen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Trondheim) and University of Tromsø. The objectives of UNIS are to provide university-level education in Arctic studies, to carry out high quality research, and to contribute to the development of Svalbard as an international research platform. The archipelago's geographical location in the high Arctic makes it an ideal venue for laboratory work and for the acquisition and analysis of specialist data. The UNIS is located in Longyearbyen and offers course such as Arctic Geology, Arctic Biology, and Arctic Technology.

Medical Services:

The Mining Code for Spitsbergen (Svalbard) laid down by Royal Decree of 7 August 1925 and special regulations laid down pursuant to section 4 of the Svalbard Act have formed the basis for the establishment of health service facilities for the Svalbard population. The health legislation on the mainland has not been applied to Svalbard because it is not suitable for the special conditions prevailing on the archipelago. There is one hospital in Svalbard, the Longyearbyen Hospital in Longyearbyen.

HISTORY AND CULTURE**History:**

The name Svalbard has been interpreted as meaning "The land with the cold coasts". The first time this name is registered as being mentioned is in Icelandic annals from the year 1194. Svalbard is also mentioned in the Icelandic book "Landnámsskjal" from the 13th century, but it is uncertain whether this is the same geographic area as today's Svalbard. What is certain, however, is that a Dutch expedition, with Willem Barentsz in the lead, reached Svalbard in 1596. They named the islands Spitsbergen, meaning sharp, pointed mountains. Today, Spitsbergen is the name of the largest island in the Svalbard archipelago. Starting from the mid-1800s, Norwegians began hunting actively in Svalbard, while the Pomors (Russian settlers) gradually withdrew from the Svalbard hunting grounds. Once again, the intensive hunting led to a drastic decline in the numbers of the most important prey species. The basis for the hunting thus soon disappeared. Today, law protects both the walrus and the polar bear. Throughout the 1800s numerous scientists also visited Svalbard. Particularly the Swedes were active in mapping and the natural sciences. Norway didn't enter this arena seriously until the early 1900s. In the beginning the Norwegian scientists primarily concentrated on studies of the Northern lights, geological surveys, and mapping. Today the Norwegian Polar Institute is a key institution within the Arctic scientific community. The headquarters are in Tromsø, but the institute has offices in Longyearbyen and runs an all-year research station in Ny-Ålesund. Ny-Ålesund is highly regarded internationally as a base for conducting arctic science. For a long time, ever since Barentsz's discovery of the islands in 1596, Svalbard was exploited as a type of international "commons", an area that belonged to no particular nation and where anybody, of any nationality, could come and reap the plentiful natural riches. The hunting and trapping was, for the most part, carried out on relatively peaceful terms. The need for a regulatory authority only became evident early on in the 1900's

when several conflicts arose concerning rights to mineral claims and coal deposits. Several international conferences were held – to no avail. The conflicts remained unsolved. It wasn't until the peace negotiations following World War I that these issues were finally resolved. With the signing of the Svalbard Treaty (Only in Norwegian!) on February 9th 1920 Norway was granted sovereignty over the entire archipelago. The sovereignty was formally put in effect on August 14th 1925. This latter date is when Svalbard officially became a part of the Kingdom of Norway.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

Sources:

CIA World Factbook. Available online. < <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook> > (February 2005). The Governor of Svalbard. Available online. < http://www.sysselmannen.svalbard.no/index_en.htm > (February 2005). Norwegian Ministry of Environment. 'Svalbard Environmental Protection Act.' Available online. < <http://www.odin.dep.no/md/engelsk/regelverk/lover/0220221-2000002/index-dok00-b-n-a.html> > (February 2005). Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police. Available online. < <http://www.odin.dep.no/jd/engelsk/bn.html> > (February 2005). The Norwegian Polar Affairs Department. Available online. < http://odin.dep.no/jd/engelsk/dep/om_dep/012001-150043/dok-bn.html > (February 2005). Norwegian Polar Institute. Available online. < <http://npiweb.npolar.no> > (February 2005). Statistics Norway. Available online. < <http://www.ssb.no/english> > (February 2005). Statistics Norway. 'Svalbard society constantly changing; Svalbard Statistics 2003.' Available online. < http://www.ssb.no/emner/00/00/20/nos_svalbard/nos_d253/nos_d253.pdf > (February 2005).

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