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This is Svalbard

What the figures say

Revised edition 2012



215⁵



What the figures say

Through the publication of 'This is Svalbard', Statistics Norway aims to present a wide-ranging and readily comprehensible picture of life and society on Svalbard, based on available statistics. Statistics Norway has previously published four editions of Svalbard Statistics in the Official Statistics of Norway series (http://www.ssb.no/emner/00/00/20/nos_svalbard/). Statistics from many different sources have been used in order to present a full picture of life in the archipelago. As of 1.1.2007, the Norwegian Statistics Act applies to Svalbard, and Statistics Norway will accordingly be publishing more statistics relating to Svalbard. These will be available at www.ssb.no/svalbard/

Oslo/Kongvinger, April 2012



Hans Henrik Scheel
Director General

Sources: Unless stated otherwise, the source is Statistics Norway.

Cover: Photograph of John M. Longyear loaned by Store Norske Spitsbergen Grubekompani AS.
Illustration photography: Colorbox/Crestock.

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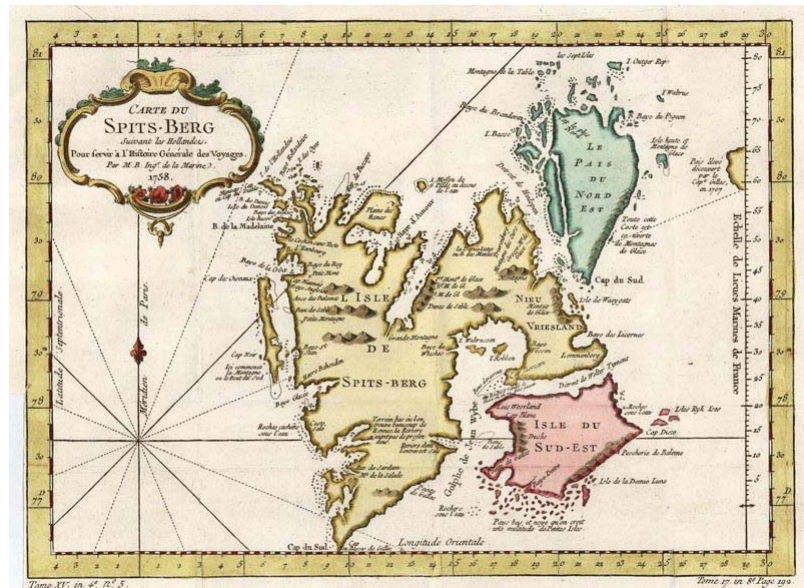
Hunting, research and mining

A Dutchman and jagged mountains

In 1596, the Dutch explorer Willem Barents discovered the largest of the Svalbard islands while searching for the North-East Passage. He named his discovery Spitsbergen, after its jagged mountains. The name Svalbard is mentioned in Icelandic sources dating back to 1194, but it is not certain this refers to what we know as Svalbard. The name means 'chill' (sval) 'edge or rim' (bard).

Early hunting activity

In 1607, the English explorer Henry Hudson saw the potential in the rich natural resources of Svalbard. Although Denmark-Norway asserted its claim to Svalbard, little happened in the way of actual activities. Over time, whalers and hunters from many European countries began to turn up. Russian trappers wintered on Svalbard in the period 1715-1850. The first Norwegian hunting expedition to Svalbard took place in 1790, but annual hunts did not begin until 1840. Over time, the animal populations were severely reduced and commercial hunting ceased.



Map of Svalbard from 1738.

Exploration and research

In 1827, the archipelago was explored by an expedition led by the Norwegian geologist B.M. Keilhau, and there were subsequently several Swedish and other expeditions to the islands. In 1920, the polar explorers Roald Amundsen and Umberto Nobile used Ny-Ålesund as their base for a number of their North Pole expeditions. More recently, Svalbard has been the arena for various international research projects. In 2008, the Svalbard Global Seed Vault was established, as a measure in safeguarding the earth's plant life.

Norwegian sovereignty

Svalbard was long considered a so-called terra nullius by many nations – literally a ‘no man’s land’ over which no single state held sovereignty. The Spitsbergen Treaty was signed in Paris in 1920 as a result of the peace conference after the First World War. This confirms that Norway holds sovereignty of Svalbard, and in 1925 the islands were officially brought under the Kingdom of Norway.

This is why Norway lays down and enforces legal statutes and rules on Svalbard. However, the Spitsbergen Treaty requires Norway to grant any person or company from the 40 signatory states the equal right to engage in hunting, fishing and various forms of commercial activity in the archipelago and its territorial waters.

Coal mining starts up

One of the reasons that all the signatories to the Spitsbergen Treaty were so keen to secure equal right of access to various types of commercial activity for their citizens and companies was that the islands had once again become economically attractive with the post-1900 boom in commercial coal mining in the archipelago. The polar seafarer Søren Zachariassen sold the first cargo of coal in Tromsø in 1899, but it was American interests that first started mining on a large scale. In 1916, some private Norwegian companies bought into the mining operation and created Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani and Kings Bay Kull Company.

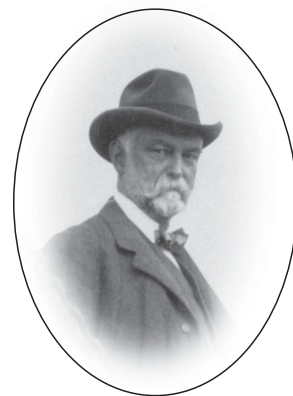
Evacuated during the Second World War

After Germany attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, everyone on Svalbard was evacuated, either to the USSR or the UK. In 1942, a Norwegian force was dispatched to prevent the establishment of German bases. The Germans raided Svalbard in 1943 and all settlements on the islands were destroyed during the war. Reconstruction of the local communities on Svalbard began in 1948.

No longer so isolated

Svalbard was for a long time an extremely isolated society. In 1911, the Norwegian authorities had established Spitsbergen Radio and for many years all regular contact between Svalbard and the rest of the world was by radio wave or ship. The civil airport, Svalbard Airport, Longyear, only became operational in 1975, after Soviet protests had blocked plans for an airport in the 1950s. Longyearbyen is the northernmost place in the world to have regular scheduled air services.

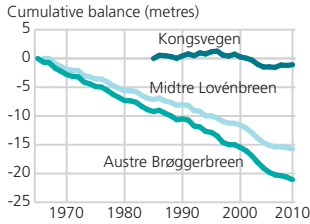
In 1978, Svalbard was connected to the phone network via three channels on a satellite connection, and in 1984, the archipelago received direct TV broadcasts from the Norwegian state broadcaster (NRK), for the first time. Prior to this, inhabitants of Longyearbyen were only able to view two-week-old programmes supplied on video tape. In 2003, Svalbard was connected to the Norwegian mainland via two fibre-optic submarine cables which provide broadband and other telecommunications services. Almost all households (96 per cent) now have a broadband internet connection, compared with just 75 per cent in mainland Norway.



John Munroe Longyear (1850-1922) came to Svalbard on a cruise in 1901 and became interested in the coal-mining prospects. In 1906, through The Arctic Coal Company, he acquired mining rights from a Norwegian company and Longyear City was founded. In 1915, the mining operation was wound up, and in 1916 sold on to the newly founded Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani AS. Extract of a photo loaned by SNSK.

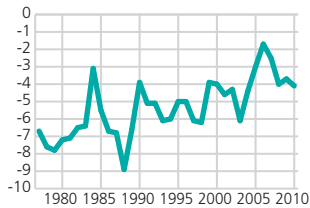
Protected wilderness

Annual increase/melt of snow and ice on three glaciers



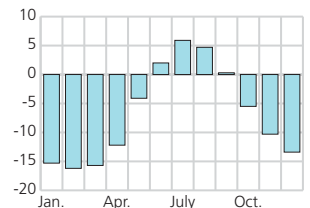
Source: Norwegian Polar Institute.

Annual average temperature, Svalbard Airport. Centigrade



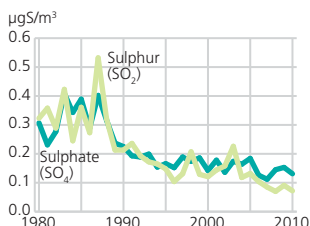
Source: Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

Monthly normal temperatures in Longyearbyen (1961-1990). Centigrade



Source: Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

Annual mean concentration values of atmospheric sulphur compounds



¹ 1990 the measurements were done in Ny-Ålesund, and subsequently on Zeppelin Mountain. Source: Norwegian Institute for Air Research and Norwegian Pollution Control Authority.

Plenty of space

Svalbard is an archipelago in the Arctic Ocean which is part of the Kingdom of Norway, but without the status of county or municipality. The largest of the islands is Spitsbergen (37 814 km²) which is also where most human activity takes place. The total land area is 61 022 km², corresponding to some 16 per cent of the entire Kingdom of Norway.

Whereas there are 16 inhabitants per km² in mainland Norway, Svalbard's 2 400 inhabitants (at 1 January 2009) live in one of the most sparsely populated areas on earth, with 0.04 inhabitants per km². Population density on Svalbard is however slightly higher than in some other Arctic regions, such as Greenland (0.03 per km²) and Nunavut in Canada (0.01 per km²).

Dark winters – light summers

The polar night in Longyearbyen lasts from 14 November to 29 January, while there is midnight sun from 20 April to 22 August.

Low-lying wilderness

The highest mountain on Svalbard is Newtontoppen (Newton Peak) at 1 713 metres above sea-level, but 43 per cent of the land area lies below 300 metres above sea-level. On the Norwegian mainland, the corresponding figure is 32 per cent.

98 per cent of the land area of Svalbard is natural wilderness. This compares with just 12 per cent on the Norwegian mainland.

65 per cent is protected

There are seven national parks on Svalbard (out of 40 in Norway as a whole), six nature reserves, 15 bird sanctuaries and one geotope (geological protection area). The first three national parks were created in 1973, the next three in 2003 and the last in 2005. In all, they comprise close to 14 500 km² (24 per cent) of Svalbard's land area. In addition, in excess of 20 000 km² of marine areas are included in the national parks.

In total, 65 per cent of the land area of Svalbard is protected in one way or another in order to conserve its unique nature, landscape and cultural heritage. In comparison, areas with various types of protection constitute just 16 per cent of mainland Norway, of which 9 per cent are national parks.

The glaciers are melting

Around 60 per cent of Svalbard's land area is covered by innumerable small and large glaciers. The two largest glaciers on Svalbard, the Austfonna and Vegafonna ice cap (8 492 km²) and Olav V Land (4 150 km²), are also the two largest glaciers in the Kingdom of Norway. But the Svalbard glaciers are shrinking and new land is appearing. Annual measurements of three glaciers close to Ny-Ålesund show evident melting and reduction in size.

Less cold ...

The melting of glaciers is linked to increased summer temperatures and less precipitation in winter. The annual average temperature in Longyearbyen has risen in recent decades. The norm (1961-1990) is from -16 °C in winter to +6 °C in summer.

The annual average temperature in Longyearbyen over the last century has been between -8 and -2°C, while in Oslo it has been between +4 and +8°C and in Tromsø between +1 and +4°C. Due to the Gulf Stream, however, Svalbard has a relatively mild climate compared with other places at the same latitude.

Weather stations on Svalbard typically record 200 to 400 mm of precipitation annually. Areas around Longyearbyen are some of the driest zones with annual precipitation usually ranging between 150 and 230 mm, less than the driest areas of the Norwegian mainland.

... and less acid rain

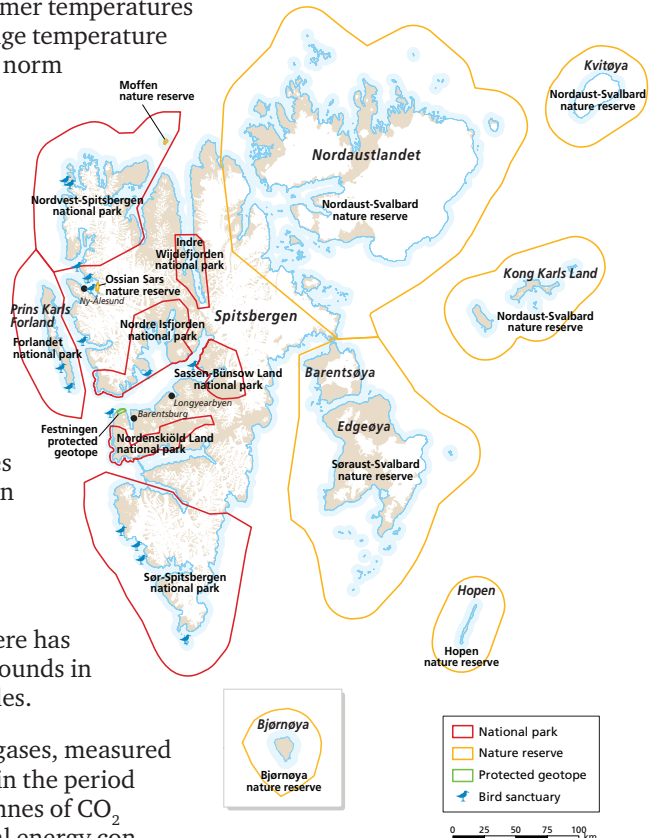
Measurements taken in Ny-Ålesund show that there has been a considerable reduction in acidifying compounds in the air and in rainfall on Svalbard in recent decades.

Calculations also show that emissions of climate gases, measured in CO₂ equivalents, fell by more than 40 per cent in the period 1991 to 2009. At the same time, more than 68 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents were produced per capita, due to local energy consumption being based on coal and mining, while on the mainland the figure was 11 tonnes per capita.

More waste

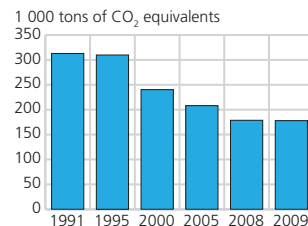
The volume of waste on Svalbard has increased in recent years. 4 000 tonnes of waste were produced in 2010, of which nearly 85 per cent was from commercial activities. Previously, much of it was disposed of in landfills, but it is now shipped to the mainland.

On average, each inhabitant of Longyearbyen produces 200 kg of waste. This is far less than on the Norwegian mainland, where annual per capita household waste production is 424 kg; this may be because consumption on Svalbard is more oriented towards services.

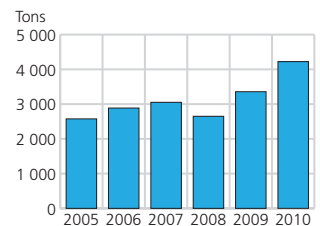


Map data and cartography: Norwegian Polar Institute

Svalbard: Atmospheric emissions, climate gases (CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O)



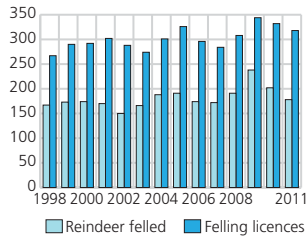
Waste



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

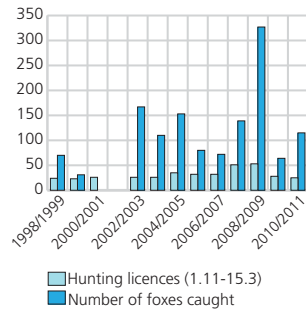
Protected, but also hunted

Hunting of Svalbard reindeer



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Catches of arctic fox



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Hardy creatures

Svalbard is covered in permafrost and only the top metre of soil thaws in the summer. Only 6-7 per cent of the land area of Svalbard is covered by vegetation, and plant life is marked by a short growing season. There are no trees or shrubs. Animal and bird life on Svalbard is especially adapted to the harsh Arctic living conditions and is generally under a protection order, although hunting and fishing for individual species is allowed.

Rugged Rudolph

The Svalbard reindeer is found only on Svalbard and is the largest of the three land mammals in the archipelago. Studies indicate that the population is subject to major fluctuations and that spells of mild rainy weather in winter affect living conditions due to ice formation. The animal was protected from 1925 to 1983, since when there have been regular hunts in some areas. 150-200 Svalbard reindeer are culled annually in ordinary hunts and 20-60 for research purposes.

Opportunistic scavenger

One animal that profits from the Svalbard reindeer is the Arctic fox, whose diet includes seal and reindeer carrion, as well as baby seals, seabirds, eggs and more. It is estimated that there is a sizeable population of Arctic foxes on Svalbard, whereas they are threatened with extinction in mainland Norway. On average, 140 of these small foxes have been killed for fur annually over the last year.

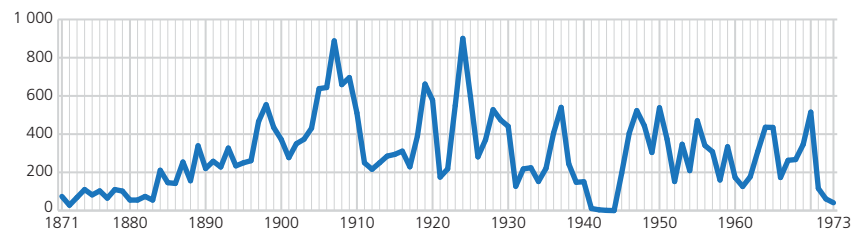
There are also small numbers of sibling voles on Svalbard. This rodent is not a native of Svalbard, but is assumed to have arrived on ships from Russia.

Threatened polar bear

Svalbard is also home to marine mammals. The polar bear was hunted intensively until it came under total protection in 1973. Since then, the population is likely to have increased slowly, and estimates indicate that there are now around 3 000 polar bears in the Barents Sea region.

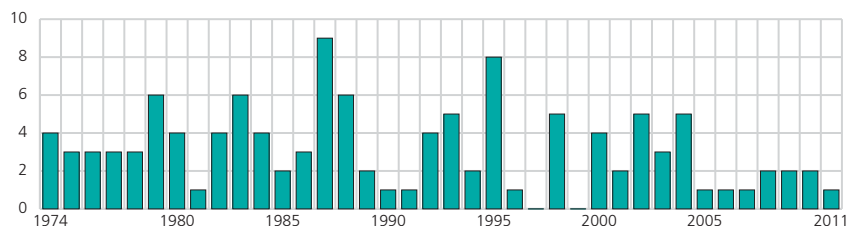
Since the conservation order came into force, 3-4 polar bears per year on average have been killed on Svalbard during alleged self-defence or because the animal was sick or injured.

Hunting of polar bears



The polar bear is at the top of the food chain and is sensitive to elevated levels of organic environmental toxins such as PCBs. Climate change is also a threat since changes in ice cover around Svalbard will reduce the polar bear's natural habitat.

Polar bears killed during alleged self-defence or for humane reasons



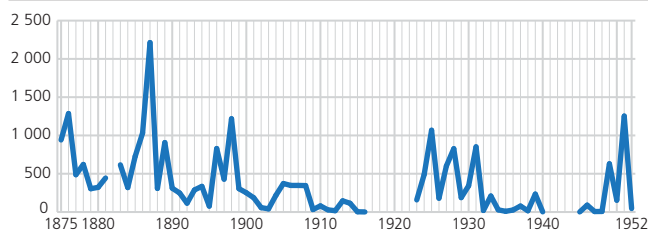
Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Hard-hit walrus

There are four species of pinniped native to Svalbard. The walrus was nearly wiped out through intensive hunting over several centuries and the population has grown slowly since their protection in 1952. Counts made in 2006 indicate that there are somewhere over 2 500 walrus on Svalbard.

The world's northernmost population of harbour seal is on Svalbard and consists of some 1 000 individuals. There are also a couple of thousand

Walrus catches



bearded seal in the Svalbard region, while the ringed seal is the commonest species of seal on Svalbard. Annually, between 30 and 70 of this species are culled. The endemic Svalbard whale species are the beluga, narwhal and Greenland right whale.

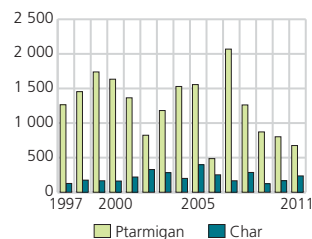
Ptarmigan and char

In all, around 36 species of bird nest on Svalbard. The Svalbard ptarmigan is the only species not to migrate from the archipelago in winter. While the ptarmigan is the only bird to pass the winter on Svalbard, the Svalbard char is the only freshwater fish on Svalbard.

Many dogs

Man's best friend is also found in large numbers on Svalbard. In 2011, there were almost 600 dogs, of which almost half were owned by tourist enterprises.

Ptarmigan hunting and catches of char



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

The heart of Svalbard society

An isolated mining community

In 1906, the American John M. Longyear founded The Arctic Coal Company. At the same time, he founded Longyearbyen in Adventdalen on the island of Spitsbergen. The American company was purchased ten years later by Store Norske Spitsbergen Kullkompani (Store Norske). Mining in Adventdalen was the life-blood of Longyearbyen until the coal reserves became almost depleted in the late 1980s. Today, Store Norske's commercial coal production takes place mainly in Svea, 60 km south of Longyearbyen, and in Mine 7 in Adventdalen.

Before Svalbard Airport became operational in 1975, the only means of transport to Spitsbergen was by ship. Because the harbours iced up, the local community was completely isolated for the long winter. Companies operating businesses from Svalbard had to plan carefully.

A company which dominates the local community

Until the late 1980s, Longyearbyen was a 'company town', a community in which Store Norske was behind most of the everyday amenities. The company ran the town's only shop, was the largest landowner and organised the miners' living quarters. Before 1980, there was no money in circulation in Svalbard society. Instead, Store Norske produced payment tokens; this 'Svalbard money' was exchanged by the Svalbard inhabitants for groceries and other goods. Store Norske, in its turn, depended on considerable state aid.

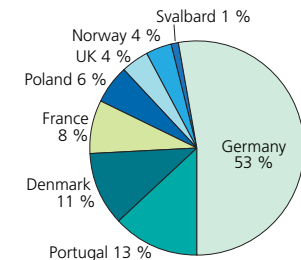
Coal production increased many times over within a century

From its modest beginnings in 1907 of 1 500 tonnes, coal production in 2007 reached a record level of 4.1 million tonnes. Subsequently it has more than halved, declining to some 1.9 million tonnes in 2010. Practically all coal is now exported, and Germany alone purchases more than half of Svalbard's coal production.

An economically dominant industry

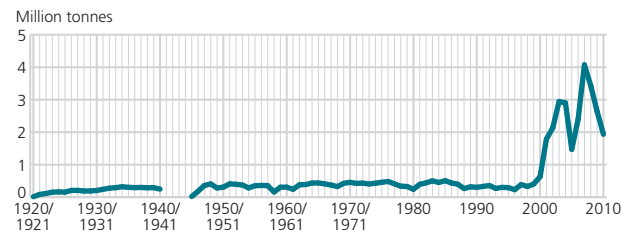
In 2010, the turnover in coal operations (mining and working) was NOK 1.5 billion. Again, this is more than a halving, from 3.4 billion in 2008. The turnover of Svalbard society as a whole, including state subsidies, was almost NOK 3.6 billion.

Store Norske coal sales. 2010



Source: SNSK.

Production of coal



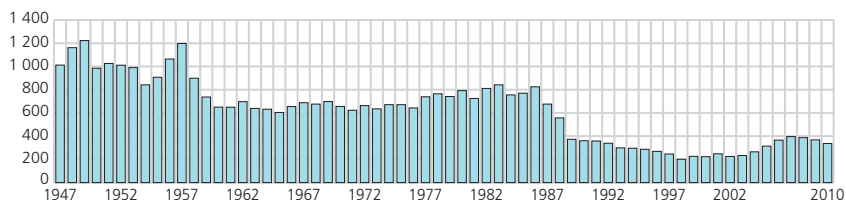
Source: SNSK.

Fewer people employed in the mines

The mining industry accounts for 26 per cent of the 1 400 or so man-years of labour currently performed on Svalbard, making it definitively the largest industry in the archipelago.

In the 1950s, around 1 000 people were employed in the Norwegian mines. Today, the Norwegian coal mining operations require

Employees in Norwegian coal-mining



around 350 man-years of labour. Many jobs are more indirectly dependent on activity in the mines, above all, in the transport sector. And some of the capacity in Longyearbyen's hotel and restaurant trade also goes to cater for guests visiting Svalbard as a result of Store Norske's activities.

Many nations take a stake

The Norwegians were the first to exploit the coal reserves on Svalbard. But in the early 20th century, companies from many nations expressed an interest in the coal fields. As the name implies, the mines at Svea were originally Swedish. The Dutch mined coal at Barentsburg, but they sold their mining rights to a Soviet company in 1932.

The Russian mines on Svalbard are now owned by the company Trust Artukogol which mines in Barentsburg. In recent years some 400 people have been living in Barentsburg, whereas there were several thousand miners in the Soviet mines in the 1950s.

Hard-working commuters

Statistics Norway's living conditions survey for Svalbard shows that people settle in the archipelago because, among other reasons, they want to earn good money. Those employed in the coal mines certainly do a lot of work; Each Store Norske employee performs on average more than 1 man-year of labour.

Nowadays, production at Adventdalen has been much reduced, to the point where coal is only mined as necessary to cover Longyearbyen's own consumption. Commercial mining now takes place primarily at Svea. This mine can only be reached from Longyearbyen by plane. Due to the great distances involved, the workers here have various shiftwork and commuting arrangements.

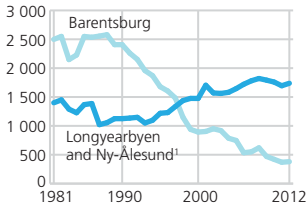
70 per cent of shiftworkers at Svea head for mainland Norway on the weeks they are not in the mine. Other miners are content to commute to and from Longyearbyen.

Coal tourism

Until 1998, Russians also extracted coal from the mines in Pyramiden, 50 km north of Longyearbyen. Today, just three people remain in this once lively community. They work at maintaining the mines and as tourist guides.

Commuters or permanent residents?

Persons in settlements on Svalbard. 1 January



¹ Includes residents registered as residing in a Norwegian municipality.
Source: Svalbard tax administration, population statistics, Statistics Norway, Governor of Svalbard and Trust Arktikugol.

Like a small Norwegian municipality

There are currently approximately 2 500 people settled on Svalbard. This approximation is due to some uncertainty in the figures. For instance, there are rather more people resident on Svalbard in the summer months than in the winter ones. ('Resident' here means all those living in the archipelago and who intend to stay for more than 6 months).

In the early 1980s, when the number of residents was at its highest, the majority consisted of some 4 000 resident Russians. From the early 1990s, the numbers of both Russians and Norwegians fell. Since then, the number of Russians has continued to fall, while the number of Norwegians has increased. Today just over 1 700 Norwegians, around 300 Ukrainians and only some 100 Russians live on Svalbard.

From near and far

The Norwegian population is largely recruited from the counties of Troms and Nordland, which contribute more than 40 per cent. There is in addition a large and increasing number of foreign residents: around 400 people from some 35 countries, the majority from Thailand, Sweden and Russia.

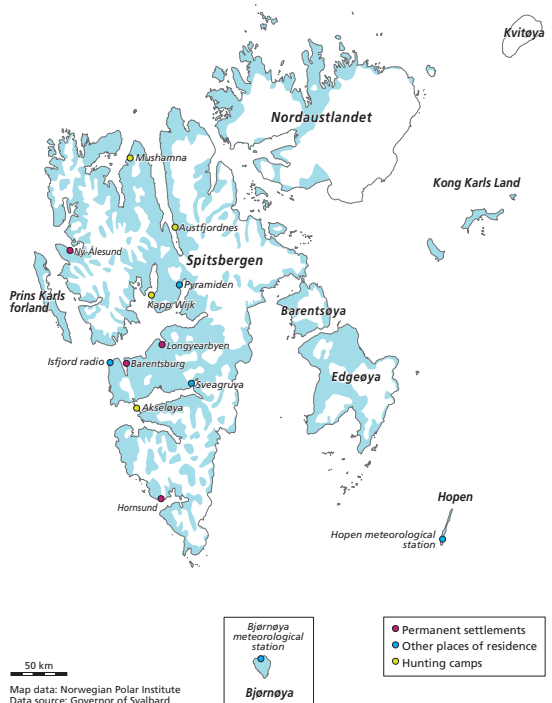
Concentrated settlement

Svalbard's population is mainly concentrated in two settlements: Norwegians in Longyearbyen and Russians in Barentsburg. And most of the other foreign citizens live in the other foreign citizenry. There are also around 25 permanent residents at Ny-Ålesund.

Still a male-dominated society

There has always been a preponderance of men among Svalbard residents, largely due to the dominant position of coal-mining in the industrial structure. As a result, Longyearbyen remains a male-dominated society. Nearly six out of ten resident adults are men, a proportion that has remained relatively stable in recent years.

Settlements, other places of residence and hunting camps



Svalbard's population is also a young one. Compared with mainland Norway, there is a clear preponderance of people in the 25-44-year age group and an almost total absence of anyone over 70 years of age. The proportion of children and young people is only slightly lower than on the mainland, but there is a major difference here between infants and teenagers. The age group of 15-19 year-olds is notably small; perhaps Svalbard is not a place to attract teenagers?

Small households

A full seven out of ten Svalbard households are single-person households, compared with just four out of ten in mainland Norway. Accordingly, the average household size is lower than on the mainland. But many of the single-person households on Svalbard have a family on the mainland and their solitary status is temporary and applies only to the situation on Svalbard.

Households on Svalbard and in mainland Norway. Per cent

	Svalbard 2012	Mainland Norway 2011
Total	100	100
1 person	53.2	39.7
2 persons	22.1	27.8
3 persons	8.5	12.6
4 persons	10.5	12.7
5 persons or more	5.7	7.1

A much large proportion of men than women live alone on Svalbard; a difference not found in mainland Norway.

Large turnover

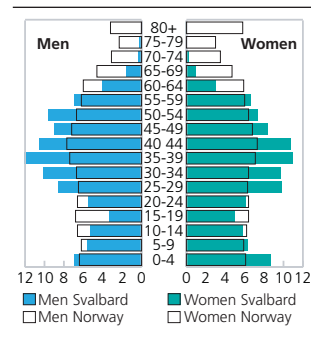
Svalbard has been characterised as a 'churn society', which has a much greater turnover than a Norwegian municipality of similar size. There are large numbers of both arrivals and departures; in 2010 just over 400 departures were recorded, corresponding to around 25 per cent of the population. The average length of residence in Longyearbyen is seven years – slightly longer for Norwegian residents and somewhat shorter for the foreign ones.

But there is of course huge variation in how long people stay here. While for some it is just for a year or two, others are to be considered more as permanent residents. At the start of 2011, for example, a good quarter had moved to Svalbard before the year 2002. It is mining employees in particular who reside in Svalbard for a long time. Also, employees in local administration stay for relatively long periods. Students, employees in higher education and the tourism industry and government employees have far shorter periods of residence.

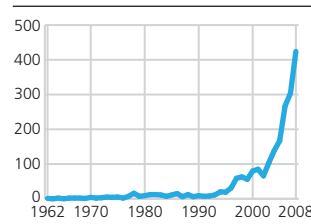
Highly educated population

The level of education is higher on Svalbard than in mainland Norway. There is a notable preponderance of people with upper secondary education; 52 per cent in Longyearbyen against 43 per cent for the rest of the country. And 33 per cent have higher education, while the proportion in the rest of the country is 28 per cent. The proportion of women with higher education is especially high on Svalbard, at 45 per cent

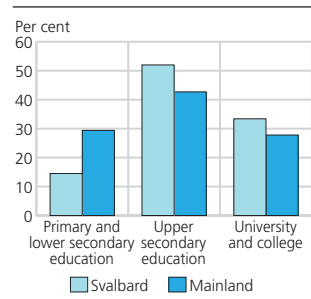
Age distribution in the Norwegian settlement on Svalbard and on the mainland. 2011. Per cent



Residents in the Norwegian settlement by year of relocation. 1.1. 2011



Educational level of people aged 16 years and over, on the mainland and on Svalbard. 2010

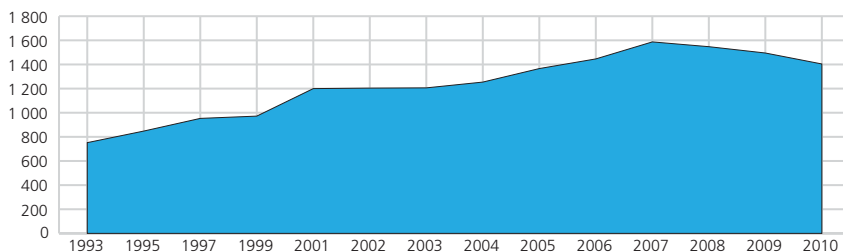


Work hard, earn well

A society of working people

Svalbard is, to a large degree, a place where people come to work. Nearly everyone who lives in Longyearbyen is working or is part of a household in which one or more people are in employment. While around 70 per cent of the adult population in mainland Norway is in employment, the corresponding figure for Svalbard is 90 per cent. Many of those who work also perform more than one man-year of labour per annum.

Man-years of labour in Longyearbyen and Svea



Source: Longyearbyen Municipal Council and Statistics Norway.

New industries make their entrance

Longyearbyen is built around coal mining, and traditionally most employees on Svalbard have been men employed in the mining industry. But since the 1990s, there have been major changes in working life on Svalbard. From 1993 to 2008, there was a doubling of the number of man-years of labour performed, from 760 to almost 1 600. Since then, the number of man-years of labour has fallen to 1 400.

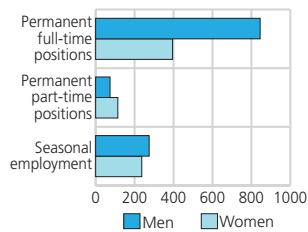
The Svalbard economy has been concentrated on two new main industries: tourism, and higher education and research. The accommodation and catering sector accounts for almost 150 man-years of labour annually. Turnover in this sector was almost NOK 210 million in 2010, with sales to visitors from mainland Norway or other countries accounting for the largest proportion of turnover.

Still mostly men

Even though growth in industries other than coal-mining has changed the gender balance among employees on Svalbard, the majority of those working in Longyearbyen are still men. 68 per cent of permanent employees are men (2010). Men also work full-time to a greater degree than women.

Just over a quarter of employees on Svalbard work seasonally.

Number of people in employment over the year, by gender and type of position. 2010



Longer working hours

Since the majority move to Svalbard because of work, not surprisingly, people tend to work more hours than in mainland Norway. On average, men work a 40-hour week; three hours more than on the mainland. The average working week for women is 35 hours, as against 31 hours on the mainland.

Lower sickness absence rate

In spite of having a longer working week, the sickness absence rate for employees in Longyearbyen is still lower than the rate on the mainland. This is presumably due to the fact that the Svalbard population is relatively young such that very few report having chronic health problems.

According to Statistics Norway's survey of living conditions 2009, 17 per cent of employees on the Norwegian mainland were on continuous sick leave of more than 14 days over the year. In Longyearbyen, the corresponding figure was 13 per cent. However, the gender difference was significant; 8 per cent of men had taken sick leave of 14 days, against 21 per cent of women.

Healthy personal finances

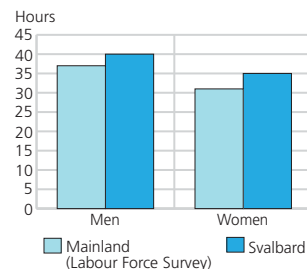
A high rate of employment, high income level and lower price levels than on the Norwegian mainland mean that that only a small minority in Longyearbyen experience financial problems. While 45 per cent of respondents on the mainland in 2008 indicated that it was 'very easy' or 'easy' to make ends meet, the proportion in Longyearbyen was far higher at no less than 70 per cent. The proportion responding that they were unable to cope with an unforeseen expense of NOK 10 000 was far higher on the mainland.

Many want a job, but few get a gold watch

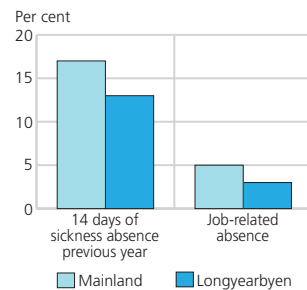
When positions on Svalbard are advertised, there are normally many applicants from mainland Norway.

There is however much greater staff turnover on Svalbard than in equivalent local communities on the mainland. Turnover in companies is high, with around a fifth of permanent employees being replaced each year.

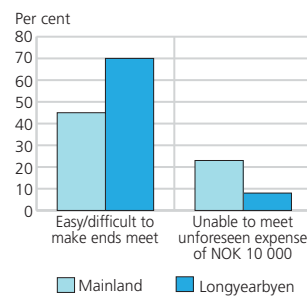
Working hours



Sickness absence

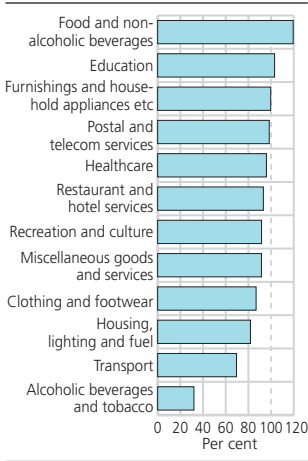


Financial problems



The good life

Price level Svalbard 2010, per consumption category. Mainland = 100



Population structure influences living conditions

In former times, residents of Svalbard lived more modestly than Norwegians on the mainland. Today, owing largely to the composition of the population, the situation is in many respects the reverse: The population is young with a high level of educational achievement, high rate of employment and high earnings, while both prices and taxes are lower than on the mainland. Not surprisingly, consumption on the islands is also higher. In 2006 (the most recent year for which we have data), the Svalbard household average spend was nearly NOK 60 000 – or 16 per cent – more than a mainland household. ‘Over-consumption’ on Svalbard applies to all households, but the difference is greatest for multi-person households.

Can count themselves lucky

Svalbard society is almost tax-free, which results in lower prices. For an average household on Svalbard, prices were generally 16 per cent lower than for a mainland household. But there are large variations between different sorts of goods. The cheapest goods are those which are most highly taxed in Norwegian shops. For example, tobacco products on Svalbard cost only a fifth of their price elsewhere in Norway. Running a car is 30 per cent cheaper on the archipelago.

Price levels for food and non-alcoholic beverages for Svalbard households were almost 20 per cent higher than on the mainland in 2010. The largest price differences were for key food groups such as fruit, dairy products, vegetables and bread.

Higher alcohol consumption than in mainland Norway

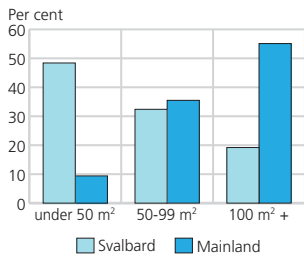
Since alcohol is cheaper on Svalbard, it is perhaps not surprising that people drink a bit more. Permanent residents of Svalbard are allowed to buy unlimited duty-free wine, while sales of duty-free beer (and spirits) are subject to quota-based restrictions. Almost three in ten Svalbardians responded in 2009 that they drank alcohol at least twice a week, men more often than women. On the mainland, the proportion is 18 per cent.

Cramped, but cheaper housing

The housing markets in Longyearbyen and in mainland Norway are worlds apart: while 80 per cent of households on the mainland are owner-occupiers, the same is true of just 13 per cent in Longyearbyen, where the vast majority (69 per cent) occupy rented housing. The remaining households have their housing subsidised by their employer.

Rented accommodation is largely in housing blocks, terraced housing and other small dwellings, while just 6 per cent are detached homes. One effect of this is that homes in Longyearbyen are smaller, and that a larger proportion of the population (14 per cent) live in cramped conditions compared with the mainland, where the figure is just 6 per cent. (Cramped conditions in this context means more individuals than living rooms in a household).

Size of housing. 2011



Against that, rent is lower on Svalbard than in the rest of the country. From 2000 to 2009, the average rent in Longyearbyen increased by NOK 1 000, but still did not exceed NOK 3 300 – against NOK 3 700 on the mainland in 2007. This difference is due partly to the fact that employer-subsidised housing is more commonly provided than elsewhere in Norway.

In good health

90 per cent of the population of Svalbard perceive their own health as ‘good’ or ‘very good’, while just 2 per cent consider that they are in ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ health. The corresponding figures for the mainland population are 80 and 6 per cent respectively. 16 per cent of Svalbardians respond that they have a long-term illness or health problem, while this is the case for more than half of the adult population on the mainland. The sickness absence rate is also lower on Svalbard than on the Norwegian mainland.

Clean living and the great outdoors

For many settlers on Svalbard, nature is the biggest attraction. One expression of the prevailing attitude is that nine in ten Svalbardians in 2009 stated that they had been on a hiking trip or out skiing within the last twelve months. One in four had been on more than 40 long-distance walking or skiing trips in the space of a year. 43 per cent of Longyearbyen inhabitants have also been hunting. This is five times as large a proportion of game hunters as on the mainland. The difference between Svalbard and mainland Norway becomes even more obvious if we look at women hunters in isolation: 30 per cent of Svalbard women went hunting over the course of a year, while this applies to only 2 per cent of women on the mainland. The islanders’ commitment to nature conservation is reflected in the fact that seven in ten would favour environmental protection measures over commercial interests in any conflict of interests.

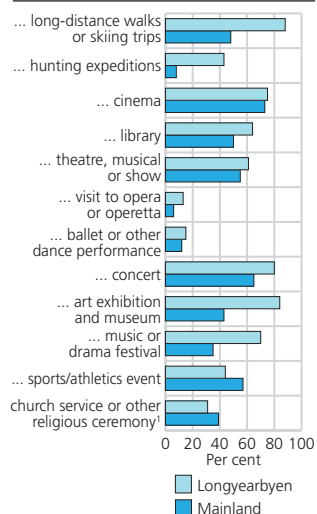
Cultural life

In 2009, three in four Longyearbyen inhabitants responded that they had been to the cinema within the last year. This equals the proportion of cinema-goers on the mainland. Eight in ten Svalbardians had also been to a concert, and an even larger proportion, 84 per cent, had been to a museum or art exhibition. The number of concert-goers has increased heavily since 2000 when only six in ten Longyearbyen inhabitants had attended a concert. This should be seen in the context of the fact that the proportion of Svalbardians who would like more concert events has gone down from 36 to 15 per cent in the same period.

Keen readers

Public library use has also seen a heavy increase. 64 per cent used the Longyearbyen library in 2009, against just 44 per cent nine years earlier, putting Longyearbyen ahead of mainland Norway in library popularity. In the rest of the country, the proportion of library users has been around 50 per cent. Svalbard residents of non-Norwegian origin are not as keen on cultural amenities as those of Norwegian origin. However, the proportion of people of non-Norwegian origin who have used the library has reached 70 per cent.

Proportion who made use of recreational and cultural amenities ...

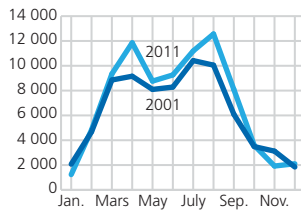


¹ Not including baptisms, confirmations, weddings or funerals.

Source: Survey of Living Conditions in Longyearbyen 2009 and Culture and Media Survey 2008, Statistics Norway.

The Arctic – increasingly popular with tourists

Monthly guest nights at hotels/boarding houses in Longyearbyen 2001 and 2011



Source: Svalbard Tourism.

An important industry

After the commercial focus on tourism in Longyearbyen started up in the early 1990s, this activity has exhibited strong growth. Precise figures are not available, but estimates indicate that more than 40 000 tourists arrived in Svalbard by plane in 2008 and around 30 000 came by sea. Tourist enterprises in Svalbard had turnover of NOK 200 million in 2010 and accounted for 150-plus of the 1 400 man-years of labour performed in the islands.

85 000 guest nights

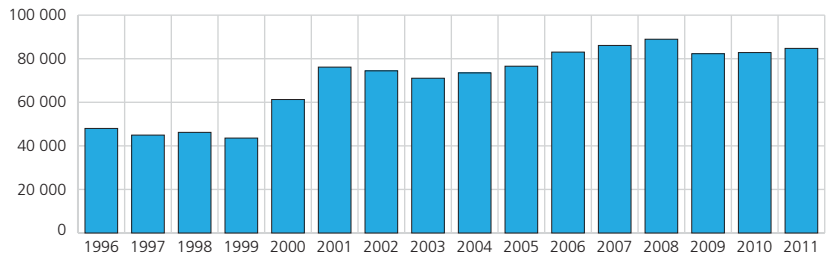
From 1999 to 2008, the number of guest nights in Longyearbyen rose from just over 43 000 to just under 89 000, subsequently falling to around 85 000.

The average guest spent 2.2 nights in hotels. Tourists account for 60 per cent of guest nights, while the remainder is shared evenly between business travellers and course and conference attendees. Tourism on Svalbard is seasonal, with the fewest visiting in the autumn and winter months and the most in spring and summer.

Norwegian tourists in the majority

Most tourists visiting Svalbard are Norwegians. The number of foreigners has increased but remains a small proportion. Of the 93 000 guest nights at hotels and boarding houses in Longyearbyen in 2010, more than 70 per cent were Norwegian. Visitors from Europe beyond Scandinavia have shown the most growth among foreign tourists.

Guest nights at hotels/boarding houses in Longyearbyen



Source: Svalbard Tourism.

More cruise tourists

Tourists arrive in Svalbard by air or sea. No estimates are available of how many airline passengers are tourists, but there has been a large increase in air passenger traffic. In 2010 a good 50 000 passengers travelled to and from Svalbard Airport.

Tourists who arrive by sea come either by cruise liner or in private yachts. In recent years, around 50 private yachts have visited Svalbard each year. The number of cruise liners visiting Svalbard for a day or two as part of a longer cruise has been stable at around 30 in recent years, but the number of passengers on these vessels rose from around 20 000 in 2000 to more than 30 000 in 2007. Subsequently, the number has fallen to some 26 000.

Also, many of the tourists who arrive in Svalbard by plane join 4-7 day expedition cruises around the archipelago. The number of tourists participating in this type of cruise increased from around 5 000 in 2001 to around 10 000 in 2010. The cruise tourists came ashore at around 100 different locations in 2000, while eight years later they came ashore at 160 different locations.

Organised tours are popular

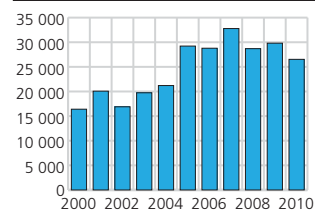
The majority of tourists visit Svalbard to experience its natural wonders. There is a wide choice of organised tours such as glacier crossing, boat trips, snowmobile safaris, kayak tours or dog sledding. Hiking, ski-touring and glacier crossing are the most popular activities, but snowmobile safaris are also in great demand. However, many people prefer their own company when seeking out Svalbard's natural environment. In recent decades, between 300 and 500 tourists annually have independently travelled out into the wilds of Svalbard for recreational purposes.

Museums of archaeology and mining

Svalbard's museums received around 37 000 visitors in 2010 against 7 500 in 1998. Svalbard museum is Longyearbyen's most popular attraction, with more than 25 000 visitors annually. In addition to this museum, there is a museum at Barentsburg, the Ny-Ålesund town and mining museum and collections on Bjørnøya (Bear Island). The majority of the collections consist of archaeological and cultural artefacts. There is also a collection of art, maps and literature, the Svalbard Collection, and a collection of photographs belonging to Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani.

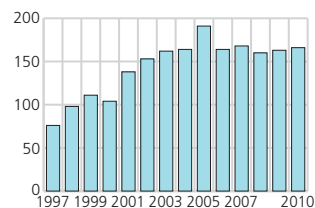
Svalbard has 1 288 cultural heritage sites, of which 68 per cent are archaeological remains, 19 per cent are buildings and the remainder are technical and industrial heritage sites, or sites under water.

Tourists on overseas cruises



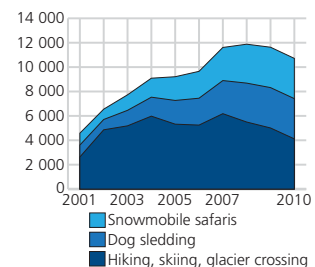
Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Number of locations where cruise passengers came ashore



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

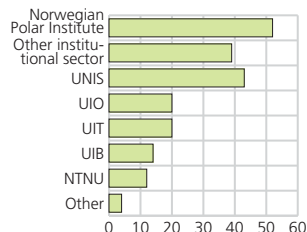
Number of days in the field on different organised activities, by activity



Source: Svalbard Tourism.

Centre for polar research

Norwegian research on/related to Svalbard. Number of full-time equivalents of research, by institution/sector. 2010



Source: Norwegian Polar Research – Research on Svalbard. NIFU Report 3/2012

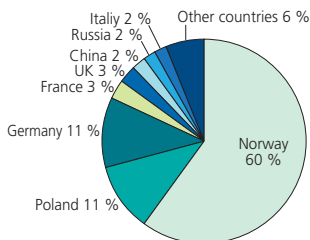
Important for permanent settlement

Research on Svalbard has long traditions. Systematic exploration of Svalbard evolved as early as in the 19th century, and today research activity makes an important contribution to maintaining a permanent settlement and activity in the archipelago. Svalbard is the world's northernmost place that is equipped for modern research and it is ideal for studying various processes in the Arctic. Scientists from many countries make Svalbard an international Arctic research community.

Norway is the largest research nation ...

Norway is the most important research nation on Svalbard. 208 Norwegian full-time equivalents of research were conducted in the archipelago in 2010, an increase from 133 full-time equivalents in 2006. These figures include both work carried out on Svalbard and work carried out on the Norwegian mainland based on material/data collected on Svalbard.

Researcher days on Svalbard. Proportions by country. 2010



Source: Norwegian Polar Research – Research on Svalbard. NIFU Report 3/2012.

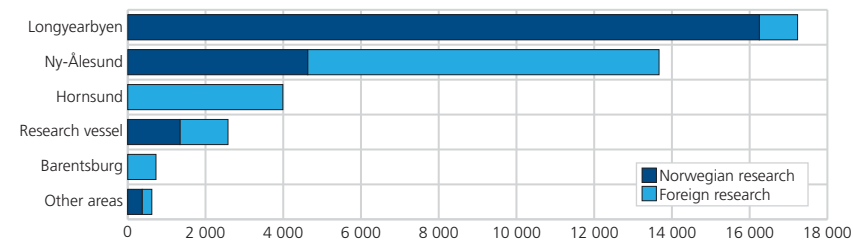
Estimates indicate that a total of NOK 350 million were spent on Svalbard research in Norway in 2010, in addition to the many years of substantial investment in infrastructure. The Norwegian Polar Institute, the Universities of Tromsø and Oslo and the University Centre in Svalbard are the most important Norwegian research institutions.

... followed by Poland and Germany

Records for 2010 show that Norwegian and foreign researchers spent nearly 39 000 days on Svalbard, an increase of 30 per cent over 2006. The total time spent on Svalbard research is however much higher, not least because fully or semi-automatic measuring stations provide the basis for much research, even if the researcher has spent but a few days on Svalbard.

A total of 20 countries are undertaking research on Svalbard. Norwegians account for 60 per cent of researcher days, followed by Poland and Germany. In all, these three countries make up 82 per cent of research activity.

Number of Norwegian and foreign research days. 2010



Source: Norwegian Polar Research – Research on Svalbard. NIFU Report 3/2012.

Most research in Ny-Ålesund and Longyearbyen

Most of the research takes place in Ny-Ålesund and in Longyearbyen. These two places account for around a third of researcher days each. Barentsburg and Hornsund are also important research centres, in addition to the fact that a substantial amount of research also takes place in the field or on research vessels. The majority of the research in Longyearbyen is Norwegian, while foreign research generally takes place in Ny-Ålesund or in other parts of the archipelago.

Earth-science publications predominate

The number of scientific publications dealing with Svalbard doubled in the period 1991-2010. In the 1990s, around 100 publications were issued annually; in recent years, production has been just over 200. Nearly half of the publications have dealt with topics within the earth sciences. In recent years, Norwegian researchers have been responsible for around a third of the publications.

Foreign students attracted by Arctic subjects

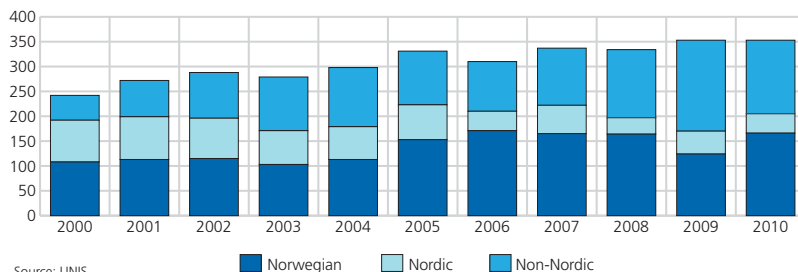
The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) was founded as an institution in 1994 by the four oldest universities in Norway. UNIS offers a range of courses at master's and doctoral degree levels. The courses deal with Arctic biology, geology, geophysics and technology.

Short stays

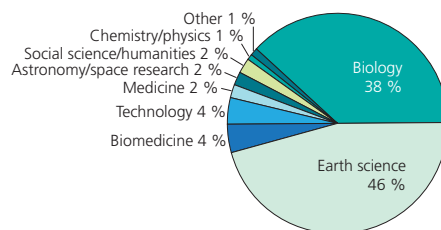
Around 350 students from some 25 different countries are attached to UNIS. The proportion of Norwegian students is around 50 per cent. There are roughly as many female as male students. Many of the foreign students are from the Nordic countries, but the proportion of non-Nordic students is increasing.

The students are typically on Svalbard for two weeks to six months at a time, and many return several times. The courses vary from two weeks to two years. UNIS is aiming for students to stay on Svalbard for longer periods, and the proportion of students spending whole terms or taking full degrees on Svalbard is increasing.

Number of students at the University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS)



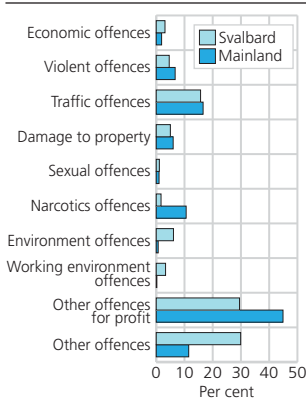
Number of 'Svalbard articles' by subject. 2008-2010



Source: Norwegian Polar Research – Research on Svalbard. NIFU Report 3/2012.

The cold arm of the law

Number of reported offences by classification of offence. 5-year average (2006-2010)



Life on the archipelago is governed by Norwegian laws and regulations. The Svalbard Act lays down the principles for Norwegian legislation for the archipelago and prescribes that Svalbard is part of the Kingdom of Norway.

Svalbard is largely subject to the same laws and regulations as the rest of the Kingdom of Norway. However, certain elements of public law are not applicable, and special provisions have also been laid down for Svalbard in both legal statutes and regulations. For instance, Svalbard is governed by a special environmental protection act and appurtenant regulations.

Administrative regulations applicable to Svalbard. 2011

Environmental regulations	13
Conservation regulations	14
Other regulations	10

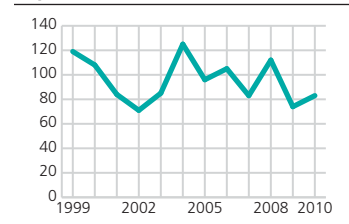
A difference in crime

Crime on Svalbard differs from that in mainland Norway. There are few serious profit-motivated offences such as burglary, and the proportion of crime for profit is lower on Svalbard than on the mainland. The proportion of narcotics cases is extremely low on Svalbard, but the archipelago has a higher proportion of reported industrial health and safety cases and breaches of environmental law. The latter are probably attributable to the stricter environmental legislation in the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act.

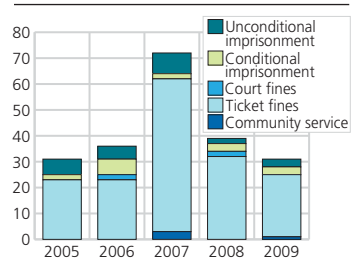
Great variation in the number of reported offences

In the last decade, the number of reported offences with Svalbard as the scene of crime has been between 70 and 130. In addition to this, some 10-15 cases a year are investigated by the Governor of Svalbard, but are not treated as criminal offences. Most reported crimes are profit-motivated or are traffic offences, as on the mainland. Even though the annual variations may be large, the level of crime on Svalbard has been relatively stable in the last 10-15 years. The figures are too low to be able to determine reported crimes per 1 000 inhabitants on Svalbard, but they are lower than on the mainland. In the majority of cases that are prosecuted, the sentence will be a fine.

Reported offences

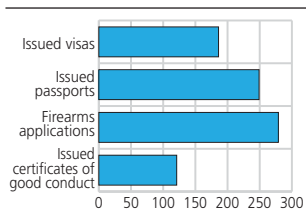


Sanctions (excluding on-the-spot ticket fines)



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Police administration matters. 2010



Source: Governor of Svalbard.

Weddings, weapons and visas

The Governor of Svalbard is the Norwegian Government's senior representative on the archipelago, and is also the Chief of Police. Beyond crime-related police work, the Governor's office processes 800-900 police administration matters annually, such as issuing certificates, visas, passports and processing firearms applications. The Governor's office is

also the local rescue station, with rescue and emergency preparedness being one of its main remits.

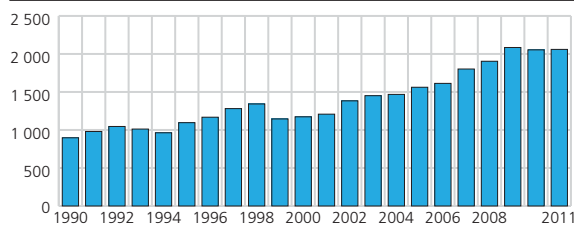
The Governor of Svalbard is vested with the same authority as a county governor on the mainland, and environmental protection and a range of administrative duties sort within the Governor's jurisdiction. For example, it is the Governor who marries people on Svalbard, and grants separations and divorces. 40 weddings were held in the archipelago in 2010, the same number as in the previous year. Many of the couples who marry on the islands are visitors.

A snow-scooter life

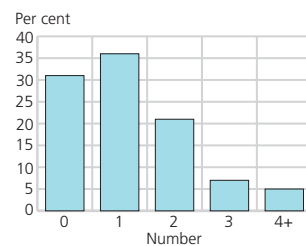
It is also the Governor who registers vehicles and regulates snow-scooter traffic on Svalbard. Although there are only some 50 km of roads in and around Longyearbyen, in 2010 there were nonetheless 1 000 registered cars and vans (i.e. vehicles bearing the Svalbard ZN licence plate) on the archipelago.

However, the snow-scooter is by far the preferred means of motorised transportation among Svalbard inhabitants. There are as many snow-scooters in Longyearbyen as there are residents (2 000 registered snow-scooters in 2011), and 69 per cent of households on Svalbard have one or more snow-scooters. In comparison, only 49 per cent of households have a car.

Number of registered snow scooters (belt-drive type)



Snow scooters per household. 2007

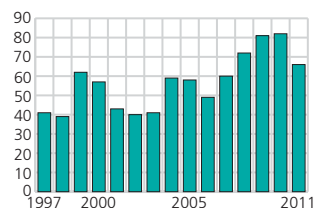


The use of snow-scooters in the national parks and other protected areas is regulated by the Governor. In recent years, between 10 and 30 exemptions have been granted annually to allow snow scooters to be driven in national parks. These exemptions cover up to 100 snow scooters. In addition, annual exemptions are granted for travelling by snow-scooter outside of Management Area 10, an area of central Spitsbergen where visitors can travel of their own accord without notifying the Governor.

Always prepared

Not all trips into Svalbard's wilderness are incident-free. The Office of the Governor of Svalbard, in its capacity as the local rescue centre, undertakes 50-80 rescue missions on Svalbard each year, more or less evenly divided between helicopter ambulance sorties and other rescue missions.

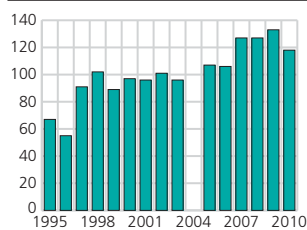
Rescue missions



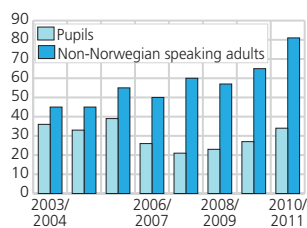
Source: Governor of Svalbard.

From the cradle, but not to the grave

Children in nursery schools



Pupils in upper secondary education



Source: Longyearbyen Municipal Council.

From Store Norske to Longyearbyen Local Municipal Council

In 1988, Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani AS created Svalbard samfunnsdrift AS, a company 'with the aim of organising and developing Norwegian local society on Svalbard'. On 1 January 2002, Longyearbyen Local Municipal Council was created, and all the shares in Svalbard samfunnsdrift AS were transferred from the State. The Local Municipal Council's responsibilities include social and area planning, commercial development and social services for children, young people and adults.

Full nursery school provision

There are approximately 120 children on Svalbard, attending three different nursery schools with 40 employees (2010). The nursery schools are financed by parental contributions (17 per cent), state aid (45 per cent) and local authority subsidies. The Norwegian Day Care Institution Act does not apply on Svalbard, but the parental contribution nonetheless adheres to the Government's maximum rate. In the autumn of 2010, Svalbard had full nursery school provision.

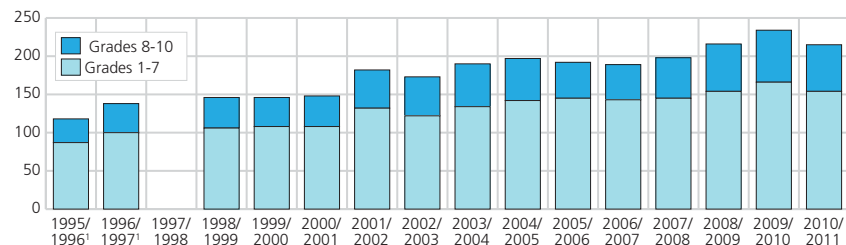
Multi-purpose school

There is only one school on Svalbard, Longyearbyen School. This fulfils the roles of primary and secondary schools, after-school centre, culture school and Norwegian-language training for foreign-language-speaking adults. Previously, the school had been run by the Norwegian State, but as of 1 January 2007, Longyearbyen Local Municipal Council took over operational responsibility. 43 employees (36 full-time equivalents) work at the school.

Arctic syllabus

The number of primary and lower secondary pupils at Longyearbyen School increased from 114 pupils in 1993 to 215 by autumn 2010. The school has devoted a lot of time to developing local curricula, which give greater emphasis to the Arctic and Svalbard's geographical location.

Pupils in primary and lower secondary education



¹ Grades 1-6 and grades 7-9.

The number of pupils at upper secondary level at Longyearbyen School has varied between 20 and 40. Each year, the school offers specialised study courses, but the programmes offered depend on the number of pupils. 50-80 adults per year attend the school's courses in Norwegian language and social studies.

Culture in the Arctic

The Culture School, run by Longyearbyen School, offers courses in music, dance, drama and art. The school has between 70 and 130 pupils per year.

Inhabitants of Longyearbyen visit the Svalbardhallen sports complex nearly 20 times a year, and the public library about 8 times a year. They each went to the cinema 1.2 times in 2010, a fall from the 2.4 times they visited in 2003.

Around a hundred ambulance call-outs

Longyearbyen residents do not only have access to public-sector education and leisure facilities. There are also basic public services for responding to accidents and emergencies. Longyearbyen fire service has a force on-call in Longyearbyen and supervises the other Norwegian settlements on Svalbard. In recent years there have been between 125 and 150 call-outs to fires per year in Longyearbyen, while the ambulance has been summoned between 80 and 120 times. The hospital in Longyearbyen is an accident and emergency unit providing health services to the populations of the Norwegian settlements and to visitors. It is a small hospital, with six beds and a staff of around 20.

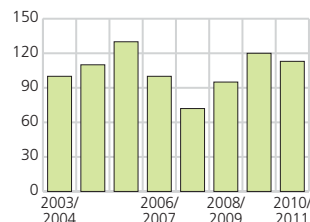
No nursing and care services

There is no provision of nursing and care services on Svalbard, and Norwegian health and social legislation does not apply to the archipelago. Norwegian residents retain health care coverage with their home municipality on the mainland, and it is these municipalities that are responsible for services within the social and health sectors and in the event that nursing and care services are required. In other words, Longyearbyen is not organised as a place where people can live their entire lives, but rather a place one comes to work.

Economic measures aimed at Svalbard society

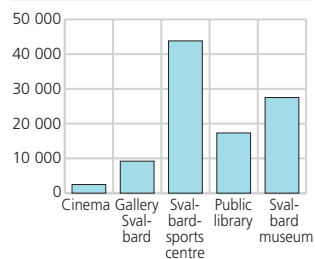
The Norwegian State's costs for administrating Svalbard, including the Governor, Longyearbyen Local Municipal Council, the church, cultural objectives and so forth, have seen a strong increase since 1995, from around NOK 73 million to around NOK 245 million in 2010. The substantial rise in 2007 was largely due to Longyearbyen Local Municipal Council taking over the provision of schooling. The Svalbard budget is covered primarily through the State's revenues from taxes and duties from Svalbard and an allocation from the national budget.

Students at Culture School



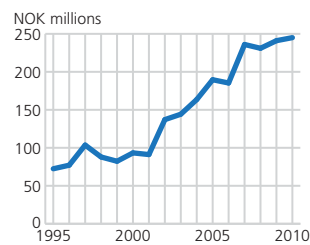
Source: Longyearbyen Municipal Council.

Number of visits, cultural institutions. 2008



Source: Longyearbyen Municipal Council.

Public administration of Svalbard, expenditure



More statistics?

ssb.no/svalbard/

This is Svalbard provides a sample of Statistics Norway's Svalbard-related statistics.

On our website, at ssb.no/svalbard/, there are current and up-to-date statistics and analyses concerning topics covered in this booklet. Comprehensive background information about the different statistics is also available there. New statistics are published at 10:00 am, and all information published on ssb.no is free of charge.

The screenshot shows the website ssb.no/svalbard/ in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser. The page features a search bar, navigation tabs (Statistics by subject, Publications, Research, Data collection, About Statistics Norway), and a main content area with several news items. A prominent chart titled 'Residents on Svalbard by age and sex, 1 January 2015' is displayed, showing a population pyramid with males on the left and females on the right, color-coded by age group. Below the chart is a table of population statistics for 2015.

Age group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	10	12	22
5-9	12	15	27
10-14	15	18	33
15-19	18	22	40
20-24	22	28	50
25-29	28	35	63
30-34	35	45	80
35-39	45	60	105
40-44	60	80	140
45-49	80	105	185
50-54	105	140	245
55-59	140	185	325
60-64	185	245	430
65-69	245	325	570
70-74	325	430	755
75-79	430	570	1000
80-84	570	755	1325
85-89	755	1000	1755
90-94	1000	1325	2325
95-99	1325	1755	3080
100+	1755	2325	4080

Below the chart, a table lists population statistics for 2015:

Category	Value
Population	2 115
Male	1 030
Female	1 085
Population aged 0-14	100
Population aged 15-64	1 000
Population aged 65+	1 015

As of 1.1.2007, the Norwegian Statistics Act applies to Svalbard, and in the years ahead, Statistics Norway will accordingly be publishing more statistics relating to Svalbard. These will be available at www.ssb.no/svalbard/

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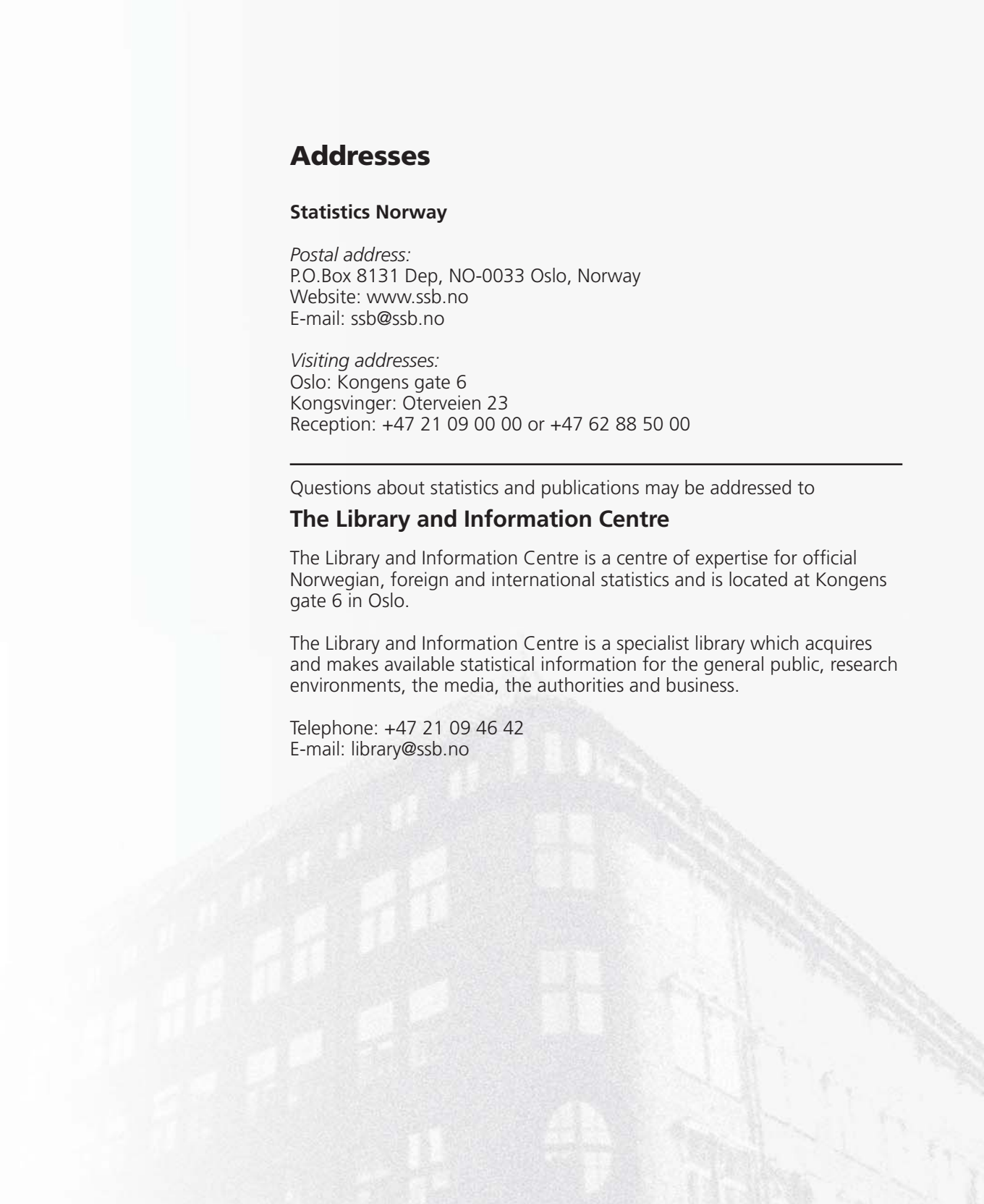
The Library and Information Centre

The Library and Information Centre is a centre of expertise for official Norwegian, foreign and international statistics and is located at Kongens gate 6 in Oslo.

The Library and Information Centre is a specialist library which acquires and makes available statistical information for the general public, research environments, the media, the authorities and business.

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