



# This is Svalbard 2016

What the figures say



## What do the figures tell us?

Through the publication of *This is Svalbard*, Statistics Norway aims to present a wide-ranging and readily comprehensible picture of society, nature and the environment on Svalbard, based on available statistics and analyses. In addition to our own statistics we have used statistics and information from external sources to provide a comprehensive picture. The Statistics Act was made applicable to Svalbard in 2007, and since then Statistics Norway has increasingly published statistics encompassing the archipelago, available at [www.ssb.no/svalbard/](http://www.ssb.no/svalbard/).

Statistics Norway, December 2016

Christine Meyer  
Director General

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This publication was prepared by Fride Eeg-Henriksen and Erik Sjømæling.  
Cover photo: Birger Amundsen, Eva Therese Jenssen/UNIS, Colorbox, Wikipedia

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|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| <b>Svalbard's history:</b>              | <b>Hunting, research and mining</b>                             | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Nature and the environment:</b>      | <b>Protection and vulnerability</b>                             | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Animal and plant life:</b>           | <b>Protected and preserved, vulnerable and at risk</b>          | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Mining:</b>                          | <b>Svalbard's breaking heart</b>                                | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Population:</b>                      | <b>An increasingly multinational community</b>                  | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Svalbard maps</b>                    | <b>History, geology, settlements, protected areas</b>           | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Employment and living condition:</b> | <b>In new industries, with growing living expenses</b>          | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Tourism:</b>                         | <b>The Arctic – increasingly popular with tourists</b>          | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Research and higher education:</b>   | <b>More research, more students</b>                             | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Law and order</b>                    | <b>The cold arm of the law</b>                                  | <b>20</b> |
| <b>State welfare provision:</b>         | <b>Much for research, little for health and social benefits</b> | <b>22</b> |
| <b>More statistics and analysis:</b>    | <b>Svalbard statistics, This is Norway</b>                      | <b>24</b> |

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# Hunting, research and mining

Historic map from 1758, page 12.



*John Munroe Longyear (1850-1922) came to Svalbard on a cruise in 1901 and became interested in its coal deposits. In 1906 he acquired mining rights from a Norwegian company through the Arctic Coal Company, and Longyear City was founded. In 1915 the mining operations were discontinued and in 1916 sold to the newly established Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani AS.*

*Section of a photo loaned by Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani.*

Geological map with mineral resources, activities and deposits, page 12.

## A Dutchman and craggy peaks

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 craggy peaks. The name Svalbard is mentioned in Icelandic sources dating back to 1194, but whether this refers to what we know as Svalbard is uncertain. The name means 'chilly' (sval) 'edge' or 'rim' (bard).

## Early hunting activity

In 1607, the British explorer Henry Hudson saw the potential in Svalbard's wealth of natural resources. Denmark-Norway asserted her claim to Svalbard, but little happened in terms of concrete activities. Over time, whalers and trappers from many European countries began to turn up. Russian trappers stayed on Svalbard during the winter in the period 1704–1850. The first Norwegian hunting expedition to Svalbard took place in 1795, but annual expeditions did not start until 1822. Over time, the animal populations were severely reduced, and commercial hunting stopped when the polar bear was made a protected species in 1973.

## Exploration and research

In 1827, the geologist B.M. Keilhau participated in an expedition to Svalbard, and the French 'La Recherche' expedition studied the west coast of Spitsbergen in 1838 and 1839. Research and expeditions to the archipelago grew in importance, with numerous nations participating. This produced knowledge on global issues such as oceanic currents, geological history, the shape of the Earth, Arctic animals and plants, the northern lights, climate, glaciers and land forms. Svalbard was also used as a base for expeditions attempting to reach the North Pole, including the two attempts by Roald Amundsen in 1925 and 1926 that set off from Ny-Ålesund. Today, Ny-Ålesund is a centre for comprehensive international research. In 1962, the Soviet Union facilitated research in Barentsburg, and Russia is currently taking these efforts further.

## Norwegian sovereignty

Svalbard was long considered a so-called terra nullius – a 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 World War I. It confirms that Norway holds sovereignty over Svalbard, and in 1925 the islands were officially incorporated into the Kingdom of Norway. It is therefore Norway that lays down and enforces laws and regulations on Svalbard. International treaties of which Norway is a part encompass Svalbard, unless specifically exempted. According to the Svalbard Treaty, citizens of the more than forty signatory states enjoy equal rights to engage in hunting, fishing and certain forms of commercial activity in the archipelago and its territorial waters.

## Coal fever

When coal mining started in the archipelago after 1900, Svalbard attracted renewed economic interest, and the signatories of the Svalbard Treaty were keen to ensure equal access to various types of commercial activity for their citizens and enterprises. 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, private Norwegian enterprises bought into the mining operations and established Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani and the Kings Bay Kull Compani, with operations in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund respectively.

The Soviet Union's engagement in coal mining started in Barentsburg, Grumant and Pyramiden around 1930 through the state-owned Trust Arktikugol.

### Evacuation and re-establishment during World War II

After the German attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, virtually everybody on Svalbard was evacuated, either to the USSR or the UK. Coal stores were set on fire to prevent them from being used by the Germans. In 1942, a Norwegian force was dispatched on two ships with British support to prevent the mines from falling into disrepair and to forestall the establishment of German bases and stations. The ships were bombed, resulting in numerous casualties, but the Norwegian troops received reinforcements and gradually established a garrison in the Isfjord region. Large parts of Longyearbyen, Barentsburg and Grumant were destroyed by the Germans in 1943, followed by the Sveagrava in 1944. Some German weather stations remained in operation in isolated locations of the archipelago throughout the war. Planning for reconstruction of the Norwegian mines started immediately after the end of the war, and the first steps were taken as early as 1945.

### No longer as isolated

For a long time, Svalbard remained an extremely isolated community. Norwegian authorities had established Spitsbergen Radio in 1911, and for many years the regular communication between Svalbard and the rest of the world was by radio waves or ship. The civilian airport, Longyearbyen, only became operational in 1975, after Soviet protests had blocked plans for an airport since the 1950s. Today, Longyearbyen is the northernmost place in the world with regular scheduled air services.

### Space exploration and fibre-optic cables

In 1978, the archipelago was linked to the telephone network through three telephone cables connected to satellite communication, and in 1984 the population could watch live broadcasts from the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) for the first time. Previously, the inhabitants of Longyearbyen had only been able to watch two-week old programmes supplied on video tape.

Svalbard's geographical location is favourable for exploration of the atmosphere and downloading of satellite data. In 2003, Longyearbyen was therefore linked to the mainland via two fibre-optic submarine cables providing broadband and other telecommunications services. This enabled the high-speed transfer of data collected in Svalbard from satellites in space. Thereby, nearly all households in Svalbard gained access to Internet broadband in 2010.

### Not just coal

Prospecting and pilot production of other minerals, such as phosphor, gold, zinc, lead, copper, gypsum and marble have been undertaken. In the 1960s and 70s, drilling for oil and gas was attempted, but did not result in any commercially viable findings.

Drilling hole at Hopen, 1973



Section of a photo by Svein Ytreland, loaned by Svalbard Museum.

Cableway in Longyearbyen for transport of coal to Hotellneset/the coal pier, in use from 1921 to 1987



Photo loaned by Svalbard Museum

# Protection and vulnerability

**Average annual temperature, Svalbard airport. °C**



Source: Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

Geological map with mineral resources, activities and deposits, page 12.

Map of protected areas as of 2016, page 13.

## Plenty of space

Located in the Arctic Ocean, the archipelago of Svalbard is part of the Kingdom of Norway, but without a municipality or county status. The largest island is Spitsbergen (37 814 km<sup>2</sup>), which is also where most of the human activity takes place. The total land area amounts to 61 022 km<sup>2</sup>, equal to approximately 16 per cent of the total land area of the Kingdom of Norway. While mainland Norway has 16 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, Svalbard with its approximately 2 650 people is one of the most sparsely populated regions in the world, with 0.04 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>.

## Dark winters – light summers

The polar night, meaning the season of complete darkness, lasts from 11 November to 30 January in Longyearbyen. On a clear day, the darkness is often illuminated by the northern lights. The midnight sun shines from 20 April to 22 August.

## Wilderness and geological diversity

No other place in Northern Europe offers a greater diversity of geological formations and geological eras preserved in stone than Svalbard. Since the vegetation cover is sparse, the geology comes clearly to the fore. Approximately 60 per cent of the archipelago's land area is covered by countless small and large glaciers. Notwithstanding, Svalbard is one of very few places in the world that can grant direct insight into most of the chapters in the Earth's evolutionary history. The highest peak is Newtontoppen at 1 713 metres above sea level, but 43 per cent of the land area is below 300 metres above sea level. The corresponding figure for mainland Norway is 32 per cent. Altogether, 98 per cent of Svalbard's land area is natural wilderness. In comparison, wilderness areas account for no more than 12 per cent of the Norwegian mainland.

## 65 per cent is protected

Svalbard has seven national parks (out of 44 in Norway as a whole), six nature reserves, fifteen bird sanctuaries and one geotope (geological protection area). The three first national parks were established in 1973, the next three in 2003 and the last one in 2005. In all, they encompass close to 14 500 km<sup>2</sup> (24 per cent) of Svalbard's land area. In addition, somewhat less than 20 000 km<sup>2</sup> of marine areas are included in the national parks.

In all, 65 per cent of Svalbard's land area is under some form of protection to preserve the unique nature, landscape and cultural heritage. In comparison, areas under various types of protection account for only 17 per cent of mainland Norway, whereof 10 per cent is national parks.

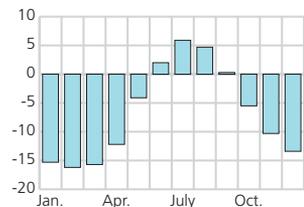
## Vulnerable nature and pollution

The Arctic nature is vulnerable. Human activity makes a definite mark on the nature, and the wounds can take a long time to heal. In Svalbard, there are many sources of local pollution through human presence and industries such as research, tourism and mining. In addition, environmental toxins are transported from afar with the air, ocean currents and ice across the Arctic Ocean.

## Beaches and oceans littered with waste

Marine pollution and microplastics in the oceans and on the beaches are increasing problems, for example in the form of plastic ropes, fishing nets and plastic bags that can kill animals who become entangled in them or eat them. Microplastics can be an additional stress factor for animals that are exposed to climate change.

**Monthly normal temperatures in Longyearbyen (1961–1990). °C**



Source: Norwegian Meteorological Institute.

## The glaciers are melting

The two largest glaciers of Austfonna with its arm Vegafonna (8 492 km<sup>2</sup>) and Olav V Land (4 150 km<sup>2</sup>) are also the largest glaciers in the Kingdom of Norway. The Svalbard glaciers are receding, however, and new land is appearing. Annual measurements of four glaciers near Ny-Ålesund show evidence that they are melting and shrinking in size. This also applies to the Austfonna glacier.

## Temperatures are rising

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

Over the last century, the annual average temperature in Longyearbyen has mainly 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. However, due to the Gulf Stream, Svalbard has a relatively mild climate compared with other areas at the same latitude.

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

## Large emissions from coal mining

The largest greenhouse gas emissions on Svalbard include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>). Figures for these emissions, which also include Russian activities, are very uncertain, and do not include emissions from ships, aircraft and light vehicles. Until 2013, from when we have the most recent figures, the emissions as measured in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents have amounted to approximately 300 000 tonnes. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the coal-fired power plant and methane emissions associated with coal extraction have been the main sources.

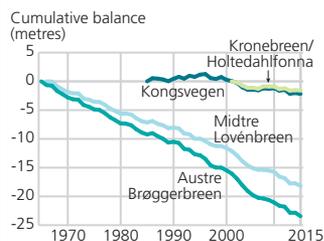
## Less registered household waste, but no cleaning of sewage

For many years, waste from Longyearbyen was buried, burned or deposited. In 2007, the local council in Longyearbyen began sending waste to the mainland for further processing. Some enterprises ship out their own waste. In addition, large volumes of waste are not collected and thus go unregistered. The decrease in the volume of industrial waste is associated with the reduction in mining operations.

In Longyearbyen and Svea, food waste from households is ground up and washed out into the sea, and is thereby not registered as waste. Waste water is not cleaned, with the exception of in Ny-Ålesund, where a sewage treatment plant was installed in 2006. Barentsburg was provided with a facility for recycling solid household waste in 2015, but the waste statistics above only include figures for Longyearbyen.

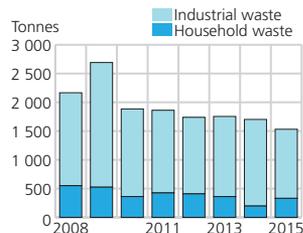
In 2015, 330 tonnes of household waste were registered in Longyearbyen in total, equal to approximately 150 kilos per person. This is almost one-third of the amount for the country as a whole. Part of the reason may be that consumption in Svalbard is more geared towards services, but also because food waste is ground up.

## Annual growth/melting of snow and ice, glaciers near Ny-Ålesund



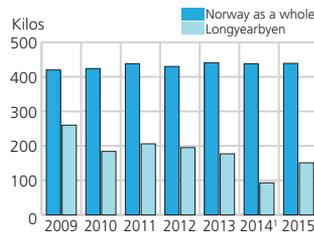
Source: Norwegian Polar Institute.

## Waste delivered to Longyearbyen Community Council<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> In 2014, some household waste was registered as industrial waste, and the figure for household waste in 2014 is therefore too low. This has been corrected in the figures for 2015.  
Source: Longyearbyen Community Council.

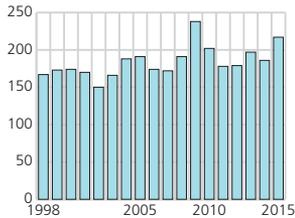
## Household waste per person



<sup>1</sup> In 2014, some household waste was registered as industrial waste, and the figure for household waste in 2014 is therefore too low. This has been corrected in the figures for 2015.  
Source: Longyearbyen Community Council and www.ssb.no/en/avfkomm

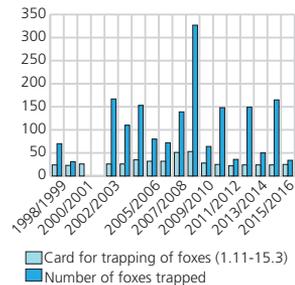
# Protected and preserved, vulnerable and at risk

## Svalbard reindeer culled



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

## Trapping of Arctic foxes



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

## Problems at the top of the food chain

Environmental toxins constitute a special problem this far north. They are transferred via food to the species, from lower to higher levels of the food chain. Species at the top of the food chain, such as the glaucous gull, thick-billed murre and polar bear accumulate high concentrations. Many toxins also bind to fatty tissue. Arctic animals accumulate fat reserves to protect themselves against the cold, and to have a store of energy in lean times. When the animals draw on their fat reserves, the environmental toxins are released into their bloodstream. Harmful effects may thus occur, despite the fact that the Arctic air and water are cleaner than further south.

Source: [www.mosj.no/en/](http://www.mosj.no/en/)

## Hardy, but vulnerable creatures

Svalbard is covered in permafrost and only the top metre of soil thaws in the summer. There are no trees or shrubs, leaving the ground vegetation highly visible. It covers 6–7 per cent of the land area. The environment and proliferation of the species are characterised by large variations in temperature, a short growth season, little availability of nutrients, wind exposure and soil movements caused by frost. Nevertheless, a total of 178 natural species of vascular plants, 380–390 species of moss, 708 species of lichen and more than 750 species of fungus had been registered as of 2015.

Animal and bird life on Svalbard is specially adapted to the harsh Arctic living conditions and is under a general protection order, although hunting and fishing of certain species is permitted. Those at the top of the food chain are particularly exposed to ingesting environmental toxins. Trends may differ according to the species studied, and this is a difficult area to study, since new substances are continuously being introduced by industry. In general, however, we can see that ‘classic’ environmental toxins, such as PCB, are showing a declining trend, whereas certain new toxins, such as organic bromide and fluoride compounds, are increasing or showing a less well-defined pattern.

## Rugged Rudolph

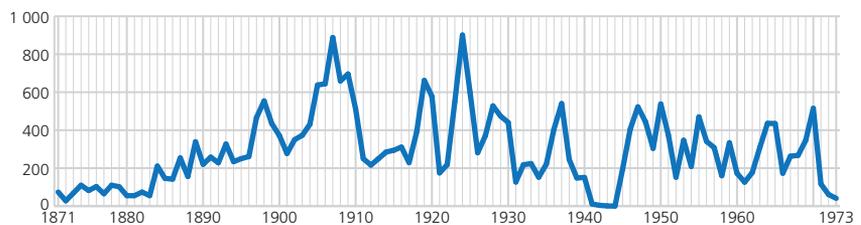
The Svalbard reindeer is found only on Svalbard and is the largest of the three land mammals in the archipelago. Studies indicate that the population is subject to major fluctuations and that spells of mild rainy weather in winter affect living conditions due to ice formation. The Svalbard reindeer was protected in the years 1925–1983, since when there has been regulated hunting in some areas. Each year, some 150–200 Svalbard reindeer are culled by regular hunting.

## 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. Over the last ten years, 120 Arctic foxes have been trapped annually on average.

There is also a small population of sibling voles on Svalbard. This rodent is not native to Svalbard and has most likely arrived by ship from Russia. The

## Trapping of polar bears



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

sibling vole is on the national black list, partly because it is an intermediate host for the small fox tapeworm parasite, which can infect people through foxes and dogs.

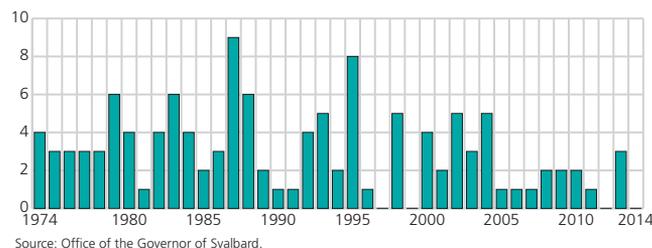
### Polar bears at risk

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

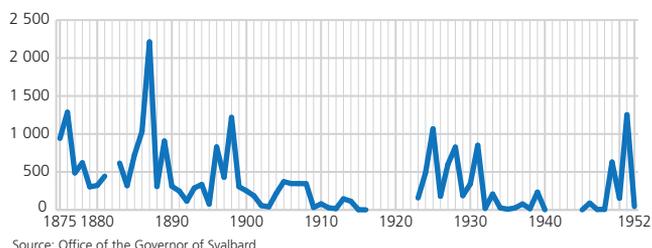
Since the conservation order came into force, two polar bears per year on average have been killed on Svalbard in cases of alleged self-defence or because the animal was sick or injured.

The polar bear is especially sensitive to environmental toxins, but climate change is also a threat, since changes in the ice cover surrounding Svalbard are reducing its natural habitat.

### Polar bears culled in alleged self-defence or for humanitarian reasons



### Trapping of walrus



### Increasing walrus population

Four species of pinnipeds are native to Svalbard. Hunted intensively for centuries, the walrus nearly became extinct, but the population has gradually grown since the protection order in 1952. Counts made in 2012 show that somewhat more than 3 800 walrus live on Svalbard, a growth of approximately 1 300 since 2006.

The world's northernmost population of harbour seals is found on Svalbard, consisting of some 2 000 individuals. The harbour seal is on the national red list and is under total protection. There are also a couple of thousand bearded seals in the Svalbard region, but the ringed seal is the most common species of seal in the archipelago. Between 20 and 60 seals of this species are culled each year. The whale species endemic to Svalbard are the beluga, narwhal and Greenland right whale.

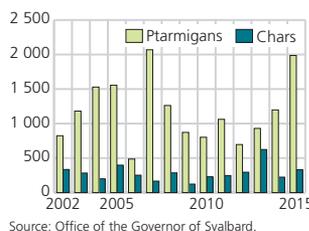
### Ptarmigan and char

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

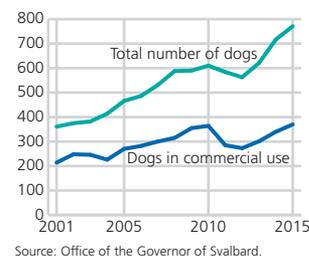
### A growing number of dogs

Even man's best friend is found in a large and growing number on Svalbard. In 2015, Svalbard was home to more than 770 dogs, whereof 370 were owned by commercial enterprises.

### Ptarmigan hunting and char fishing

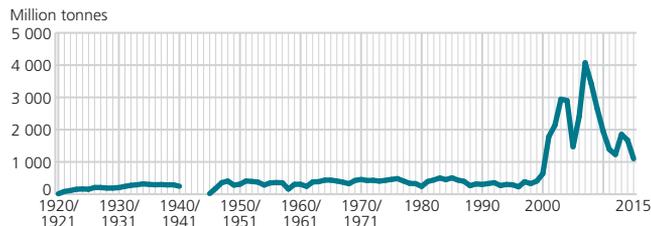


### Dogs



# Svalbard's breaking heart

## Production of coal, Norwegian enterprises



Source: Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani.

Geological map showing coal seams, activities and deposits, page 12.

### FTE= Full time equivalents

### Industrial groups for FTEs and turnover, including public subsidies

- Tourism and culture: Accommodation and food service activities and cultural activities, entertainment and recreation activities, and business services. The latter category mainly encompasses travel agencies and tour operators, but also includes other service industries unrelated to tourism and culture. This is only of relevance for statistics on turnover and subsidies.
- Research, education, etc.: Professional, scientific and technical services (mainly research) and education.

## From livelihood to suspension of operations

The mining activity in the Adventdalen valley formed the basis for life in Longyearbyen until the coal reserves had become near-depleted by the end of the 1980s. From the early 2000s, commercial mining mostly centred on Mine 7 as well as on the Svea mine, located 60 km south of Longyearbyen. The Kings Bay mine in Ny-Ålesund was closed after a major accident in 1962, and is now a research community.

In recent years, prices in the coal market have remained low as a result of overcapacity and low freight rates. The mining investments have declined drastically, and only Mine 7 in the Adventdalen valley remains in operation. However, the Svea mines (Svea Nord and Lunckefjell) have been secured and the infrastructure is being maintained. In recent years, the open-pit facility in Mine 3 has been adapted for visitors.

## From a few to many enterprises

Until the end of the 1980s, Longyearbyen remained a 'company town', where Store Norske provided most of the amenities of daily life. The company operated the only local shop, was the largest landowner and owned the miners' living quarters. Nor was there any money in circulation in Svalbard society before 1980. Instead, Store Norske produced payment tokens. The local residents exchanged this 'Svalbard money' for groceries and other goods. Today, the Store Norske concern is active in mining as well as property development, leasing of houses and logistics through its subsidiaries.

In 2015, there were approximately 300 different enterprises in Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Svea representing a number of different industries, a growth of more than 70 per cent since 2007.

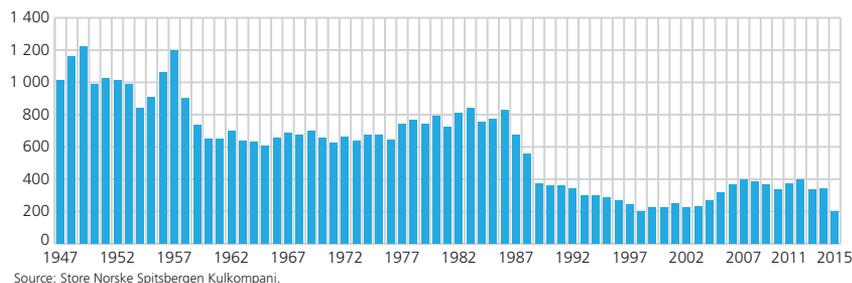
## Local consumption and decreasing export of coal

From modest beginnings in 1907 with 1 500 tonnes of coal from mines operated by Norwegian companies, production reached a record 4.1 million tonnes in 2007. Production has subsequently been substantially reduced, to 1.1 million tonnes in 2015. Of this amount, 70–80 per cent is exported for use as industrial coal in Europe, and the remainder is used for production of district heating and electricity at the coal-fired power plant in Longyearbyen.

## A downturn for an economically dominant industry

In total, Svalbard society had a turnover of approximately NOK 3.7 billion in 2015, including government subsidies. This was a considerable decline from NOK 5.8 billion in 2008. In the same period, the government grants increased from approximately NOK 380 million to NOK 650 million. Turnover in the mining and quarrying industry saw a major decline, from NOK 3.5 billion in 2008 to NOK 600 million in 2015. This industry receives little in terms of government subsidies. Turnover in the growth industries of tourism and culture overtook the turnover in the mining and quarrying industry in 2015 (NOK 30 million out of the total of NOK 83 million in public subsidies in this group of industries in 2015 went to enterprises that are unrelated to tour-

## Employees in Norwegian coal mining



ism and culture). Research and education activities are mainly government funded (72 per cent), with a turnover including subsidies of somewhat more than NOK 350 million in 2015; this is another area of growth. The turnover in other key industries, such as construction and other private service industries, has remained relatively stable in the period 2008–2015.

### More work in tourism and research

In the 1950s, the Norwegian coal mines employed 1 000 workers. Until 2014, this figure stayed around 300, but fell to approximately 200 in 2015.

Today, the mining industry accounts for just 17 per cent of the 1 650 full time equivalents (FTEs) of labour currently performed in Norwegian enterprises on Svalbard. The number of FTEs has increased slightly since 2008, despite the decline of the mining operations. The development towards a broader industrial structure has unfolded over a long period of time. Thirty per cent of the FTEs are now found in the tourism and culture industries, and 15 per cent in research and education with 240 FTEs, i.e. only slightly less than in the mining industry.

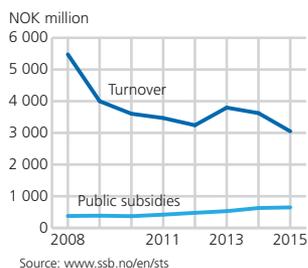
### The Russians also have a strong focus on tourism and research

The Russian mines on Svalbard are currently owned by the enterprise Trust Arktikugol, which operates mines in Barentsburg and is the landowner in Pyramiden. In the 1950s, the Russian mines employed thousands of people, including in Pyramiden, which was abandoned in 1998 when it was closed down. In recent years, nearly 500 people have been living in Barentsburg, which remains a ‘company town’. Approximately 120 000 tonnes of coal are produced there annually, but new initiatives for tourism and research are underway. Pyramiden is being cleared and upgraded for use by tourists, with a hotel that stays open for parts of the year. Here too, provisions and plans are being made to facilitate research work.

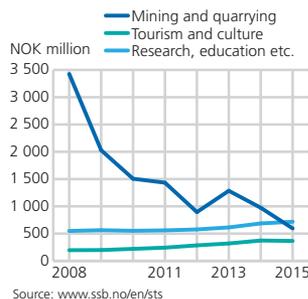
### Fewer mainland commuters

The employees of the Svea mines do not live locally, but commute to Longyearbyen by aircraft due to the lack of a road connection. Shift work and commuting arrangements mean that 70 per cent of the commuters spend their weeks off on the mainland. From 2016, not many workplaces will be left at Svea. Moreover, the shift work arrangement has been changed, so that the workers no longer have an incentive to undertake such trips to the mainland.

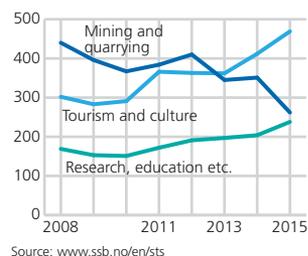
## Turnover and public subsidies, all industries



## Turnover and public subsidies in selected industry groups



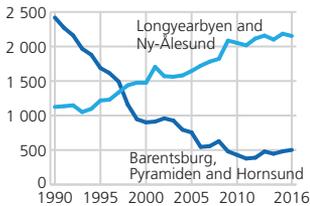
## FTEs in selected industry groups



Statistics on FTEs and turnover apply to Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Svea, unless otherwise specified.

# An increasingly multinational community

## Persons resident on Svalbard<sup>1</sup>. As of 1 January

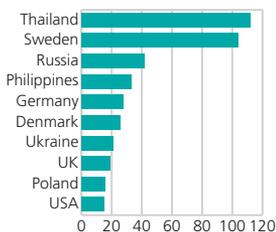


<sup>1</sup> From 2009, Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund residents who are not resident on the mainland are included in the population figures.

Source: [www.ssb.no/en/befsvvalbard](http://www.ssb.no/en/befsvvalbard)

Map of settlements, other places of residence and hunting stations, page 13.

## Non-Norwegian nationalities in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund, ten largest countries. 1 January 2016



Source: [www.ssb.no/en/befsvvalbard](http://www.ssb.no/en/befsvvalbard)

## Like a small Norwegian municipality

Today, Svalbard has approximately 2 650 registered residents. These figures are as of 1 January 2016, and the ‘resident’ category includes all those who live in the archipelago and intend to stay there for more than six months. However, the number of Svalbard residents is somewhat higher in summer than in winter.

## Concentrated settlement

In the early 1980s – when the number of residents on Svalbard as a whole was at its peak – the majority of the approximately 4 000 people lived in Pyramiden and Barentsburg. Until the early 1990s, the population decreased in these two settlements as well as in Longyearbyen. Since then, the decline in Barentsburg continued, while the population of Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund has increased.

Of today’s approximately 2 650 residents, 2 150 live in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund altogether, around 500 in Barentsburg and 10 in Hornsund. Longyearbyen and Barentsburg are the largest local communities, while the international research community of Ny-Ålesund only has very few residents (43 year-round residents as of September 2015). Hornsund is a Polish research station. Pyramiden is home to only a few people.

## From far and near

No visa or work and residence permit is required to travel to Svalbard. The Norwegian Immigration Act does not apply, and Svalbard is not part of the Schengen Area. It is a precondition, however, that those who arrive have a place to live and are self-supporting.

The Norwegian population is to a large, but declining extent recruited from the Troms and Nordland counties; 24 per cent hail from these two counties, compared to nearly 40 per cent five years ago. In addition, there is large and growing number of people of foreign origin: 537 persons from more than 46 nations, the majority of whom hail from Thailand, Sweden and Russia. The proportion of non Norwegians in the population of Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund has increased to 25 per cent from 22 in 2014.

## Less of 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. Despite the emergence of new industries and the decline of the mining industry, Longyearbyen remains a male-dominated society, although to a lesser extent than previously. Altogether, 55 per cent of all adult residents are now men, a decline from nearly 60 per cent in 2014.

Svalbard has a young population; more than half is in the age group 25–49 years. Compared to the mainland, there is a clear preponderance of people in this age group, and there are very few over the age of 70, especially women. The proportion of children and adolescents is only slightly lower than on the

mainland, but the number of children of pre-school age has fallen substantially in the last couple of years. Moreover, there is a large disparity between the number of infants and teenagers. The age group 15–19 years is especially small.

### Small households

Five out of ten Svalbard households are single-person households, compared with just four out of ten in mainland Norway. Consequently, the average household size is also slightly lower than on the mainland. However, many of the single-person households on Svalbard have a family on the mainland, and their solitary status is temporary and only applies to the situation on Svalbard.

Household size. 2016. Per cent

|              | Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund | Mainland Norway |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>100</b>                  | <b>100</b>      |
| 1 person     | 50.8                        | 37.5            |
| 2 persons    | 24.1                        | 31.3            |
| 3 persons    | 10.7                        | 13.0            |
| 4 persons    | 8.9                         | 12.0            |
| 5 persons +  | 5.6                         | 6.2             |

Source: [www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard](http://www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard) and [www.ssb.no/en/familie](http://www.ssb.no/en/familie)

Two-thirds of those who live alone are men, while in Norway as a whole there is no gender disparity.

### Large turnover

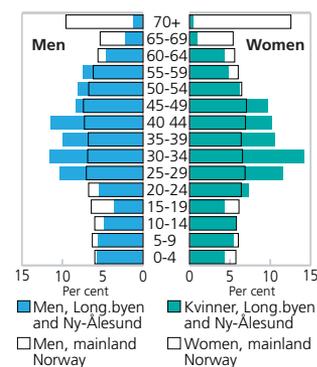
Svalbard has been characterised as a ‘revolving door society’, and Longyearbyen has a much greater turnover of people than a Norwegian municipality of a similar size. There are large numbers of both arrivals and departures: in 2015 a total of approximately 480 departures were recorded, equal to somewhat more than 20 per cent of the population. Approximately 440 people arrived. The average time of residence in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund amounts to a little more than seven years.

However, there are of course huge variations in how long people stay there. While some stay for only a year or two, others can be counted as more permanent residents. For example, at the beginning of 2016, nearly one-quarter had moved to Svalbard more than ten years ago. This is a small decline from 2014, when this proportion was somewhat higher than one-quarter. It is the mining employees in particular who stay on Svalbard for long periods, and the decline of this industry may explain the figures. However, employees in the local administration also tend to stay for longer periods. Students, employees in higher education institutions and tourism as well as government employees have far shorter periods of residence.

### A highly educated population

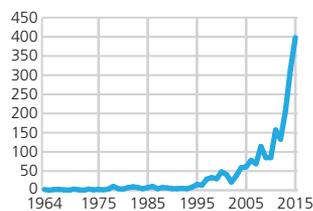
The level of education is higher on Svalbard than in mainland Norway. There is a notable preponderance of people with an upper secondary education: 45 per cent in Longyearbyen compared to 40 per cent in the country as a whole. Moreover, 40 per cent has a higher education, compared to 32 per cent in the rest of the country. The proportion of women with a higher education is especially high on Svalbard, at 52 per cent.

### Age distribution, residents. 2016



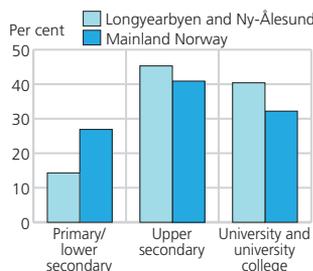
Source: [www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard](http://www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard) and [www.ssb.no/en/folkemengde](http://www.ssb.no/en/folkemengde)

### Residents in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund, by year of relocation. 1 January 2016

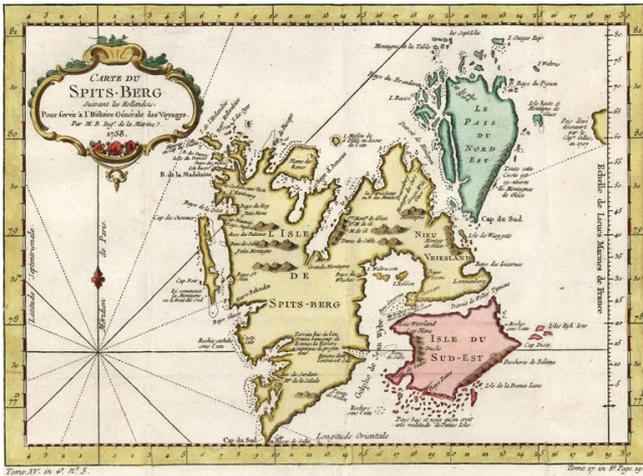


Source: [www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard](http://www.ssb.no/en/befvalsbard)

### Level of education. 2015



Source: [www.ssb.no/en/utniv](http://www.ssb.no/en/utniv)



### Historical map

Map of Svalbard (Spits-Berg) from 1758, prepared by the French hydrographer, geographer and cartographer Jacques Bellin.

Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Svalbard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Svalbard)



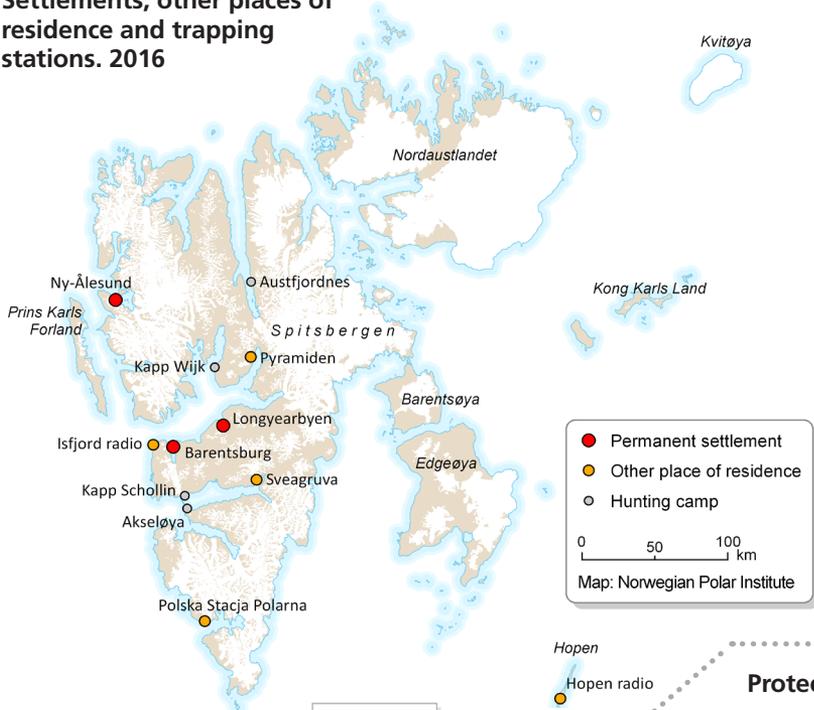
### Geological map: mineral resources, activities and deposits

The coal deposits on Svalbard date mainly from the Tertiary (Barentsburg, Grumant, Longyearbyen, Lunckefjell, Ny-Ålesund and Svea), Carbon (Pyramiden) and in smaller amounts from the Cretaceous period (Advent City). The thickest coal seams with the largest extension and best quality are found in tertiary sandstone rock.

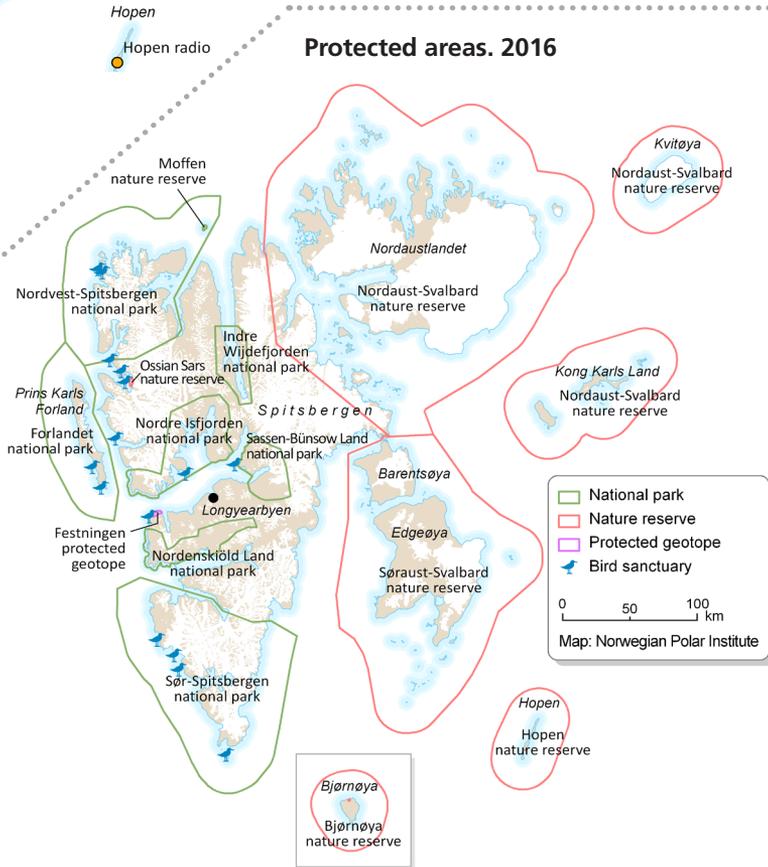
Source: Norwegian Polar Institute.

More about the geology of Svalbard: [www.npolar.no/en/themes/geology/arctic/](http://www.npolar.no/en/themes/geology/arctic/)

# Settlements, other places of residence and trapping stations. 2016

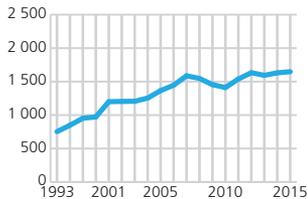


# Protected areas. 2016



# In new industries, with growing living expenses

**FTEs in Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Svea**



Source: Longyearbyen Community Council and www.ssb.no/en/sts

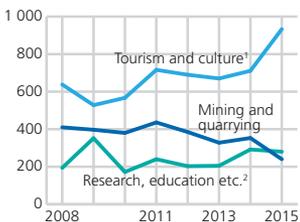
**Employment through the year** stems from counts made by employers and includes permanent employees at year-end and seasonal employees through the year, irrespective of their registration as resident on Svalbard. The same person can hold multiple jobs at the same time.

Source: www.ssb.no/en/sts

**Employment rate** shows the proportion of Svalbard/mainland residents who were gainfully employed in the 4th quarter.

Source: www.ssb.no/en/regsys and www.ssb.no/en/befsvsvalbard

**Employment in selected industry groups through the year**

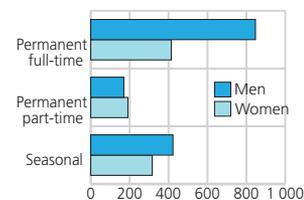


<sup>1</sup> Accommodation and food service and cultural activity, entertainment and leisure activities, and business services.

<sup>2</sup> Professional, scientific and technical services (mainly research) and education.

Source: www.ssb.no/en/sts

**Number of people employed through the year, type of position. 2015**



Source: www.ssb.no/en/sts

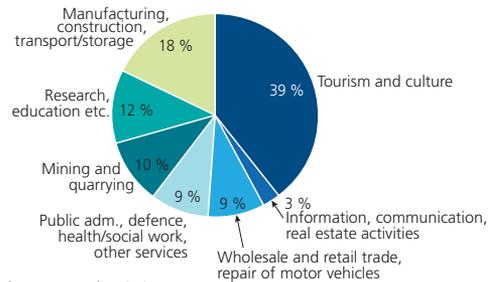
Svalbard is mainly a place where people come to work. In the fourth quarter of 2015, 80 per cent of the adult population (25–66 years) in Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund were gainfully employed. The corresponding proportion in the mainland was 77 per cent.

## From mining to tourism and research

Longyearbyen was built around coal mining, and traditionally most workers on Svalbard have

been men employed in the mining industry. Since the 1990s, total employment has grown, and people work in relatively new industries. In 2015, a total of 1 650 FTEs were performed in Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Svea, i.e. twice the 750 workers recorded in 1993. These 1 650 FTEs were performed by a total of 2 360 workers throughout the year. Forty per cent of these FTEs are performed in the growth industry of tourism and culture, and 12 per cent were in research and education. Manufacturing, construction and transport account for 18 per cent of all employed persons. Retail trade and public administration also account for a significant proportion of the employment, about the same combined. The level of employment in these industries has been more stable since 2008.

**Employment in industry groups through the year. 2015**



Source: www.ssb.no/en/sts

## Still mostly men, but more in part-time and seasonal work

Altogether, 47 per cent of all gainfully employed persons on Svalbard worked part time or on in seasonal employment in 2015, up from 36 per cent in 2010. Such work is common in the growth industries, such as accommodation and food service. Permanent full-time work is most prevalent in the mines and public administration, health care and education. In the coal mines, many work more than one FTE.

The gender balance was fairly stable. The majority (60 per cent) of those gainfully employed in Longyearbyen, Ny-Ålesund and Svea as a whole are still men. Altogether, 63 per cent of those permanently employed are men (2015). In addition, men work more frequently than women in permanent full-time jobs: 60 vs. 45 per cent.

## The population structure affects living conditions

In earlier times, people on Svalbard lived somewhat more frugally than Norwegians on the mainland. However, the situation has been reversing for a number of years now in many ways, mainly as a consequence of the composition of the population. The population is young, highly educated and has a high rate of employment. Price levels and taxes are both lower than on the mainland.

## Higher incomes

In 2015, the average gross income on Svalbard was NOK 621 400, compared to NOK 442 300 on the mainland, i.e. 40 per cent higher. Some of this disparity is caused by Svalbard's higher rate of employment, and the proportion of men

among the gainfully employed is also higher than the national average. If we compare the income of men and women on Svalbard with those on the mainland, the disparity is reduced to 32 per cent. Moreover, the tax level is lower than on the mainland, meaning that net incomes are higher on Svalbard.

### Can count themselves lucky

Svalbard is a virtually duty-free community. For an average household, prices were therefore 14 per cent lower than for a mainland household in 2013, the last year for which Statistics Norway has figures available. However, there are large variations between different sorts of goods. The cheapest goods are those for which the highest duties are charged in Norwegian shops. For example, on Svalbard, tobacco and alcohol cost only about a third of the price elsewhere in Norway. Transport is also cheaper in the archipelago. However, the price level for foodstuffs and non-alcoholic beverages was somewhat higher for Svalbard households than for those on the mainland in 2013. The greatest price differences were found in groups of foodstuffs such as fruit, dairy products, vegetables and bread. Until 2006, prices rose more slowly on Svalbard than on the mainland, but in the years leading up to 2013 prices rose somewhat faster. From 2001 to 2013, the consumer price index for Svalbard rose by 30 per cent, compared to 24 per cent on the mainland.

### Higher alcohol consumption than in mainland Norway

Permanent Svalbard residents can buy as much duty-free wine as they wish, but the sale of duty-free beer (and spirits) is regulated by a quota system. In 2009, nearly three in every ten Svalbardians reported drinking alcohol at least twice per week, men somewhat more frequently than women. On the mainland, this proportion was 18 per cent.

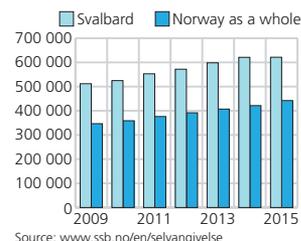
### Crowded housing and increasing rents

The housing market in Longyearbyen is worlds apart from that in mainland Norway and has also undergone fairly major changes with increasing pressure in recent years. While 70 per cent of the households in Norway as a whole were owner-occupiers in 2016, the same is true for only 10 per cent in Longyearbyen, where the vast majority are tenants. The remaining households lived in housing provided by their employer free of charge. Figures for 2009 show that most of the rental housing consisted of flats, semi-detached houses and other small housing units. Only 6 per cent of them were detached houses. The housing units in Longyearbyen were thus smaller, and a larger proportion, 14 per cent, lived in crowded dwelling conditions compared to the mainland. In Norway as a whole, seven per cent of the population lived in a crowded dwelling in 2015. (Crowded dwelling means that there are more persons than living rooms and bedrooms in a household).

On the other hand, housing costs remained lower for many years in Longyearbyen than on the mainland. Statistics Norway's Living Conditions Survey with figures for rents shows that by 2009 this was starting to change. According to the consumer price index for Svalbard, expenses for 'housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels' increased most until 2013, and by a full 75 per cent after 2001. The development towards higher housing expenses has most likely continued. Purchase prices and rents have increased, and dwellings owned by enterprises that were previously rented to their own employees are now increasingly rented to external tenants.

Statistics Norway

### Average gross incomes



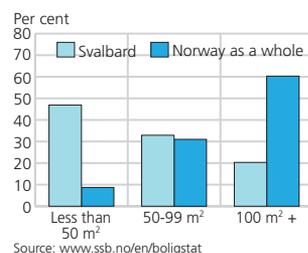
Since 2014, neither the consumer price index or Statistics Norway's price level survey for Svalbard have been produced due to methodological problems.

The last living conditions survey for Longyearbyen was produced in 2010, showing figures for 2009.

*Living Conditions in Longyearbyen, Reports 2010/31, Statistics Norway*

[www.ssb.no/sosiale-forhold-og-kriminalitet/artikler-og-publikasjoner/levikaar-i-longyearbyen-2010](http://www.ssb.no/sosiale-forhold-og-kriminalitet/artikler-og-publikasjoner/levikaar-i-longyearbyen-2010)

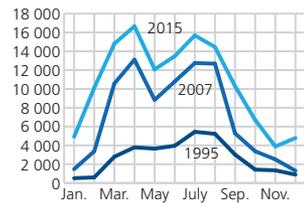
### Dwelling size, 2016



The statistics in this chapter include Longyearbyen and partly also Ny-Ålesund and Svea, but not Barentsburg and Pyramiden.

# The Arctic – increasingly popular with tourists

**Monthly guest nights in hotels/pensions in Longyearbyen**



Source: Visit Svalbard.

## An important industry

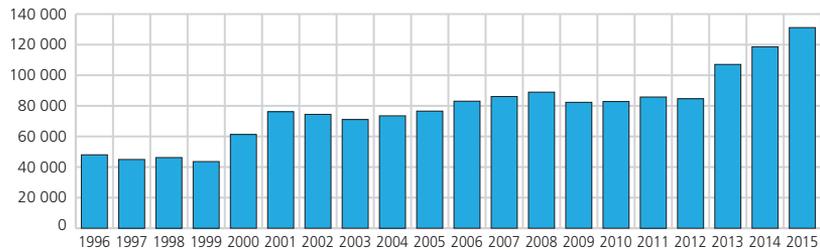
Since the launch of the commercial initiative for tourism in Longyearbyen in the early 1990s, this industry has seen strong growth. In 2015, enterprises associated with the tourism and leisure industry in Longyearbyen, Svea and Ny-Ålesund had a turnover of more than NOK 630 million. The number of FTEs increased from around 300 in 2008 to approximately 480 in 2015. In the same period, the number of enterprises engaged in accommodation and food service increased from 11 to 18.

## More and more holidaymakers

The number of guest nights in Longyearbyen remained stable at less than 80 000 from 2001 to 2005, after which it rose to between 80 000 and 90 000 until 2012, before rising rapidly to somewhat more than 130 000 in 2015.

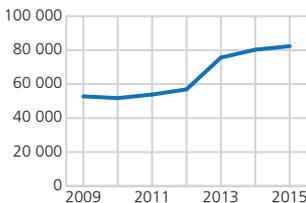
In 2015, holidaymakers accounted for approximately 66 per cent of the guest nights, while business travellers and course and conference participants made up 6 and 28 per cent respectively. Tourism on Svalbard is seasonal; there are fewer visitors in the autumn and winter, and more in the spring and summer months.

**Guest nights in hotels/pensions in Longyearbyen**



Source: Visit Svalbard.

**Number of arriving passengers. Svalbard airport**



Source: [www.ssb.no/en/flytrafikk](http://www.ssb.no/en/flytrafikk)

## Norwegian tourists in the majority

The majority of the tourists coming to Svalbard are Norwegians. The number of non-Norwegians has increased, but still accounts for a smaller proportion. Of all guest nights in Longyearbyen in 2015, somewhat less than 65 per cent was accounted for by Norwegians. Visitors from Europe outside Scandinavia make up the category with the largest growth among the non-Norwegian tourists.

## More cruise tourists

Tourists arrive in Svalbard by air or sea. No estimates have been made of how many airline passengers are tourists, but air passenger traffic has seen a strong increase. In 2015, somewhat more than 82 000 passengers arrived at Svalbard Airport.

Tourists who arrive by sea, do so either by cruise liners or private yachts. In the last five years, from 40 to 60 private yachts have visited Svalbard each year. The number of cruise liners that call on Svalbard for one or two days as part of a longer journey has remained stable between 20 and 30 in later years. The number of passengers on these vessels has increased strongly in recent years, from approximately 25 000 in 2011 to 41 000 in 2016. Many of the tourists who arrive in Svalbard by plane also join 4–7-day expedition cruises around the archipelago. The number of tourists participating in this type of cruise has increased from approximately 5 000 in 2001 to just over 12 000 in 2014. The cruise tourists went ashore at around 180 locations outside the settlements in 2015.

### Organised tours are popular

There is a wide choice of organised tours, such as glacier crossings, boat trips, snowmobile safaris, kayak tours and dog-sledding. Snowmobile tours, hiking and dog-sledding are the most popular activities. However, many people prefer to experience the Svalbard nature in solitude. In recent years, from 500 to 700 visitors have ventured out into the wilderness of Svalbard on their own for recreational purposes.

### Museums and cultural heritage

Svalbard Museum is Longyearbyen's most popular attraction, with approximately 45 000 visitors in 2015. Other museums include the one in Barentsburg, the Town and Mining Museum in Ny-Ålesund and the 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 the Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani.

Svalbard has nearly 1 800 protected cultural heritage sites. Many protected sites remain in use, including old trapping stations, the buildings in the old mining town of Ny-Ålesund and the road leading to Sverdrupbyen.

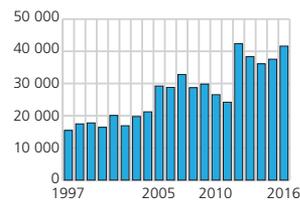
### Coal tourism in Longyearbyen and Pyramiden

Mine 3 in Longyearbyen was closed in 1996, but reopened to visitors for guided tours in 2015.

Until 1998, a Russian company extracted coal from the mines in Pyramiden on the Billefjord. This location is a complete urban and mining community where the material traces were 'frozen' in time when the place was abandoned in 1998. At its peak, it had more than 1 000 inhabitants, but for a long period it was left nearly empty, before being cleared and upgraded for tourism purposes. A hotel has now been established there.

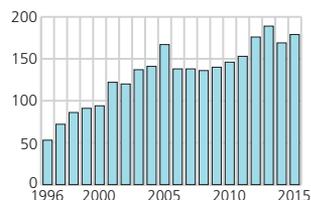
Barentsburg has a number of hotels. On the whole, the Russians are also investing more in tourism on Svalbard.

### Tourists on overseas cruises



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

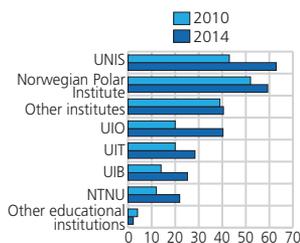
### Number of locations where cruise passengers went ashore



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

# More research, more students

## Number of Norwegian research FTEs on/related to Svalbard



Source: Norsk polarforskning - forskning på Svalbard. NIFU Report 37/2015

## Research for science and settlement

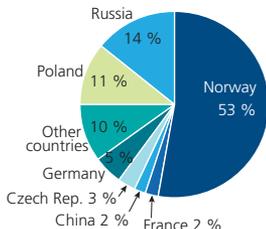
Research has long traditions on Svalbard; systematic studies of the archipelago have been undertaken since the 19th century. In addition to its importance for science, research has become an increasingly important instrument for maintaining permanent settlement and activity on Svalbard. Its location is favourable for studies of various processes in the Arctic, and this is also where some of the changes in the global climate and environment are first noticed. The research activity has today assumed a considerable scope, and interdisciplinary and international collaboration is a key priority. Svalbard is the world's northernmost location offering modern facilities, infrastructure and logistics for research.

## Norway is the largest research nation ...

Norway is the prominent research nation on Svalbard. Altogether, 303 Norwegian full time equivalents (FTE) were performed in the archipelago in 2014, compared to 208 in 2010 and 133 in 2006. These figures include FTEs performed on Svalbard as well as on the mainland on the basis of material/data collected on Svalbard.

Estimates show that approximately NOK 535 million was spent on Svalbard-related research in 2014. The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS), the Norwegian Polar Institute and the universities of Tromsø and Oslo are the most important Norwegian research institutions.

## Proportion of research days on Svalbard. 2014



Source: Norsk polarforskning - forskning på Svalbard. NIFU Report 37/2015

## ... followed by Russia and Poland

Registrations show that in 2014, Norwegian and foreign researchers spent just over 61 000 research days on Svalbard; an increase of 56 per cent from 2010. The total time devoted to Svalbard-related research is far higher, however, because fully or semi-automatic measuring stations can provide the basis for a lot of research, even though the researcher has spent only a few days on Svalbard.

Researchers from nearly 30 countries were involved in research activities on Svalbard in 2014. Norwegians accounted for 53 per cent of the research days, followed by Russians and Poles. In total, these three countries account for 78 per cent of the research activity.

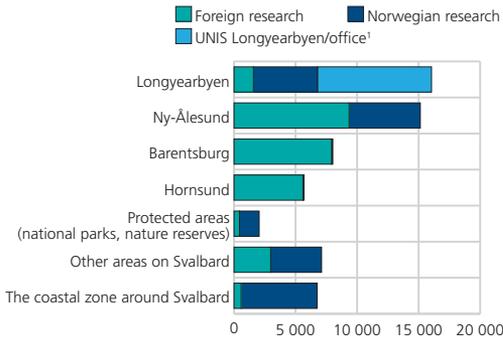
## Most research in Ny-Ålesund and Longyearbyen

Ny-Ålesund and Longyearbyen each account for approximately 25 per cent of the research days. Barentsburg and Hornsund are also important research locations, and a substantial part of the research is also undertaken in the field or on research vessels. Most of the research in Longyearbyen is undertaken under Norwegian auspices, while the foreign activities are mainly concentrated in Ny-Ålesund or other parts of the archipelago.

## Geoscientific publications predominate

The number of academic publications that deal with Svalbard has increased dramatically. In the 1990s, a total of approximately 100 publications came

## Number of Norwegian and foreign research days. 2014



<sup>1</sup> UNIS' research days in Longyearbyen not spent in the field.  
Source: Norsk polarforskning – forskning på Svalbard. NIFU Report 37/2015

## More research institutions – in more locations

There are two main centres for research on Svalbard: Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund, but much research activity is also undertaken in Barentsburg and Hornsund. In 1964, Ny-Ålesund was established as a centre for international Arctic research and environmental surveillance. Fourteen institutions now maintain permanent stations there. The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) was established in 1993, and other institutions include the Norwegian Polar Institute, the EISCAT Svalbard radar (since 1996) and the Svalbard Satellite Station (SvalSat, since 1999). Svalbard Research Park, established in 2005, co-locates the educational and research institutions in Longyearbyen. Expedition SINTEF maintains a field laboratory in Svea. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, established in 2008, shall help ensure global plant life, for the benefit of growers, refiners and researchers.

A number of Russian institutions are involved in research in Barentsburg, mostly associated with the Russian Academy of Sciences, Roshydromet and Polar Marine Geological Research. The Polish Academy of Sciences maintains a research base in Hornsund.

out each year, but in later years, production has been between 280 and 300. Nearly half of the publications focus on geoscientific topics. In recent years, Norwegian researchers have accounted for somewhat less than 30 per cent of the publications.

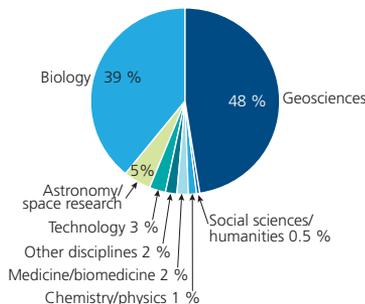
## Foreign students attracted to arctic subjects

The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) was established as a foundation by Norway's four oldest universities in 1993. The university offers various courses at master's and PhD levels. The courses focus on Arctic biology, Arctic geology, Arctic geophysics and Arctic technology.

The number of students has grown strongly over the last five years, and close to 700 students from more than 40 countries are affiliated with the university centre. In the first years, most of the students came from Norway, but today non-Norwegian students are in the majority. Many of the foreign students come from the Nordic countries, but the proportion of non-Nordic students is growing. Women and men account for approximately equal proportions of the student body.

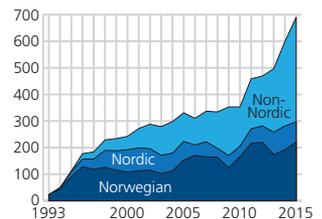
Students tend to stay on Svalbard for two weeks to six months at a time, and many return several times. The courses last from two weeks to two years. The university's goal is for students to spend longer periods on Svalbard, and an increasing proportion of students stay for a full semester or take their entire degree on Svalbard.

## "Svalbard articles" by discipline. 2012-2014



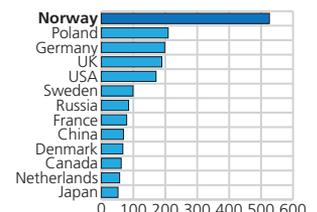
Source: Norsk polarforskning – forskning på Svalbard. NIFU Report 37/2015

## Nationalities represented among UNIS students



Source: UNIS.

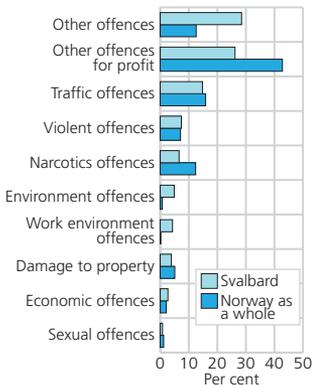
## "Svalbard articles" by country. 2012-2014



Source: Norsk polarforskning – forskning på Svalbard. NIFU Report 37/2015

# The cold arm of the law

## Proportion of offences reported to the police, by group of offence. 5-year average (2010-2014)



Source: [www.ssb.no/en/lovbrudda](http://www.ssb.no/en/lovbrudda)

Life in the archipelago is governed by Norwegian laws and regulations. The Svalbard Act lays down the principles for Norwegian legislation 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 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 with appurtenant regulations. No visa or work and residence permit is required to travel to Svalbard. The Norwegian Immigration Act does not apply, nor is Svalbard part of the Schengen Area. However, having a dwelling and the ability to be self-supporting are preconditions for residence.

## Major variations in the number of reported offences

During the last decade, the annual number of offences reported to the police with Svalbard as the scene of the crime has varied from 74 to 111. Although the annual variations may be major, the level of offences on Svalbard has remained relatively low for the last 10–15 years. The figures are too small to quantify the reported offences in terms of incidence per 1 000 inhabitants, but the number is lower than on the mainland. Ticket fines were imposed in the majority of cases where punitive sanctions were enacted.

## A different crime profile

Crime on Svalbard differs from that in mainland Norway. Compared to the mainland, there is a lower proportion of offences for profit in the archipelago. The proportion of narcotics offences is very low, but there is a higher proportion of reported violations of working environment and environmental regulations. The latter is most likely due to the stricter environmental regulations in the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act.

## Weddings, weapons and visas

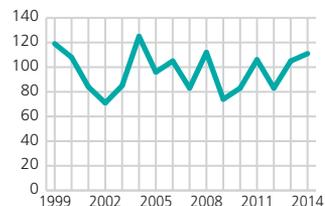
The Governor of Svalbard is the Norwegian government's senior representative in the archipelago, and also serves as Chief of Police. In addition to crime, the Governor's office has in the last five years processed 800–950 administrative police matters annually. This involves issuance of certificates of good

## Regulations in force for Svalbard. 2016

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Environmental regulations | 12 |
| Protection orders         | 13 |
| Other regulations         | 9  |

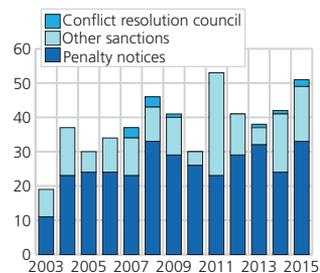
Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

## Number of offences reported to the police



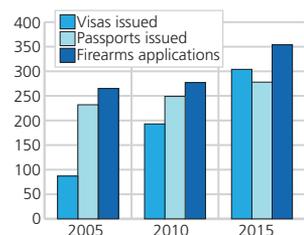
Source: [www.ssb.no/en/lovbrudda](http://www.ssb.no/en/lovbrudda)

## Number of sanctions (except fixed penalty notices)



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

## Firearms, visas and passports



Source: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

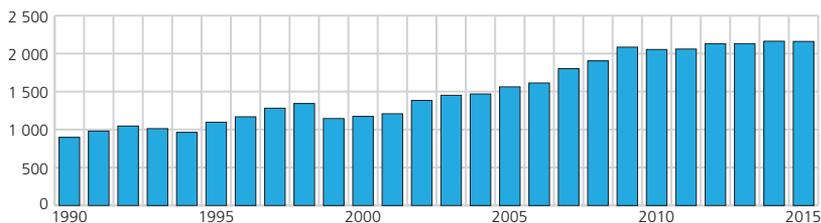
conduct, visas and passports, as well as processing of firearms applications. The Governor's office is also the local search and rescue station, with rescue and emergency preparedness as one of its key remits.

The Governor of Svalbard is vested with the same authority as a county governor on the mainland, and environmental protection and various administrative duties fall within the Governor's jurisdiction. For example, it is the Governor who marries people on Svalbard and grants separations and divorces. A total of 31 marriages were performed in the archipelago in 2015. Many of the couples who marry on the islands are visitors.

### A snowmobile life

The Governor is also responsible for registering cars and regulating snowmobile traffic. There are nearly as many snowmobiles as there are inhabitants in Longyearbyen (a little more than 2 100 in 2015), and figures from the living conditions survey in Longyearbyen in 2009 showed that approximately 70 per cent of the Svalbard households own one or more snowmobiles. The use of snowmobiles in national parks and nature preserves is regulated by the Governor. In recent years, between 10 and 30 exemptions have been granted annually for snowmobiles to be driven in national parks. These exemptions encompass up to 100 snowmobiles. In addition, exemptions are granted every year to visitors for driving snowmobiles outside Management Area 10, an area of central Spitsbergen where visitors can travel of their own accord without notifying the Governor.

#### Registered snowmobiles (half-track motorcycles)



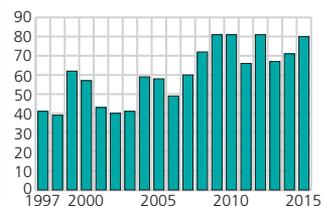
Source: [www.ssb.no/en/bilreg](http://www.ssb.no/en/bilreg)

Even though there is only 50 km of roads in and around Longyearbyen, and no roads that connect the settlements, there are still nearly 1 500 registered personal and commercial vehicles (marked with ZN number plates) on Svalbard.

### Always prepared

Not all trips into Svalbard's wilderness pass without incident. 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: Office of the Governor of Svalbard.

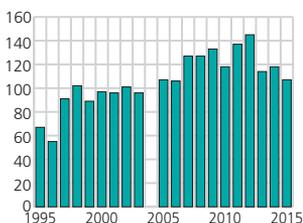
# Much for research, little for health and social benefits

## From 'company town' to democracy

In 1988, the Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani AS established Svalbard Samfunnsdrift AS to 'operate and develop the Norwegian local communities on Svalbard'.

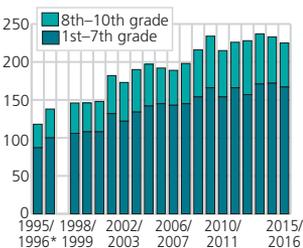
On 1 January 2002, Longyearbyen Community Council was established, and all the shares in Svalbard Samfunnsdrift AS were transferred from the government.

## Children in day care



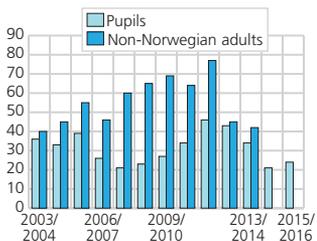
Source: <https://www.ssb.no/en/barnehager>

## Pupils in primary/lower secondary school



Source: [www.ssb.no/en/utgrs](http://www.ssb.no/en/utgrs)

## Pupils in upper secondary education



Source: Longyearbyen Community Council.

## Longyearbyen Community Council and the Governor

With the exception of health and care services, the community council is charged with most of the same responsibilities as local authorities and county authorities elsewhere in the country. The Governor's main remit includes environmental protection and policing, but the responsibilities extend to a number of other areas that elsewhere in the country are taken care of by various government agencies.

## Barentsburg

Barentsburg has its own hospital, day-care centre and school, as well as cultural and sports facilities.

## Full day-care provision

There are approximately 110 children attending day care in Longyearbyen, in a total of three day-care centres with around 40 employees (2015). The day-care centres are funded through parental contributions, state grants and subsidies allocated by the local authorities. The Norwegian Day Care Institution Act does not apply on Svalbard, but the parental contribution nonetheless stays within the government's maximum rate. In the autumn of 2010, all children on Svalbard had access to day care.

## Multi-purpose school

Longyearbyen School includes the primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels, supervised after-school activities, courses in music and performing arts and Norwegian-language classes for adults who are not native Norwegian speakers. The school was previously run by the Norwegian state, but on 1 January 2007 Longyearbyen Community Council assumed the operational responsibility. In 2013, the school had somewhat more than 50 employees, who accounted for 46 FTEs.

## Arctic syllabus

The number of pupils in primary and lower secondary level at Longyearbyen School has increased from 114 in 1993 to 225 in the autumn of 2015. The school has devoted a lot of time to developing local curricula, which place greater emphasis on the Arctic and Svalbard's geographical location.

The number of pupils in upper secondary level has tended to vary from 20 to 40. Each year, the school provides courses for specialisation in general studies, but the study programmes provided depend on the student body. In addition, from 50 to 80 adults attend the school's courses in Norwegian language and social studies annually.

## Culture in the Arctic

Longyearbyen School is also responsible for the School of Music and Performing Arts, which provides training courses in music, dance, drama and art. This school has had between 70 and 130 pupils a year. Every inhabitant of Longyearbyen visits the Svalbardhallen, a multi-functional sports complex, nearly 20 times a year, and the public library approximately eight times. Every Longyearbyen inhabitant also went to the cinema nearly three times in 2013.

## No care and nursing services

No care and nursing services are provided on Svalbard, and Norwegian legislation pertaining to health care and social welfare does not apply in full.

Norwegian residents maintain the affiliation to their home municipality on the mainland, which is responsible for health care and social welfare if the need for care and nursing should arise. In other words, Longyearbyen is not somewhere people can spend their entire lives, it is a place to come for work.

### Hospital and child welfare services

Longyearbyen Hospital provides emergency services to permanent residents and visitors. It is a small hospital with six beds and about 20 employees. The local community council has a family and child welfare service that carries out tasks that are traditionally the responsibility of the child welfare service on the mainland. The service has received 7–8 notifications in each of the last years, 12 investigations were undertaken and eight children received some form of assistance.

### Public administration expenditure and revenues

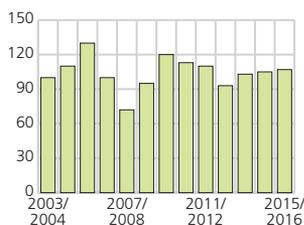
Public revenues from taxes and duties currently cover approximately 40 per cent of the expenses associated with the administration of Svalbard. The remainder is funded by transfers from the state budget. The relatively low tax revenues are a result of Svalbard's low tax rates. In 2015, income tax on earnings up to NOK 1.1 million was 8 per cent, increasing to 22 per cent on earnings that exceeded this amount. The corporate tax level is also far lower than in Norway in general, and no value added tax is levied.

In addition to the expenses in the Svalbard accounts, a number of government agencies perform part of their activities on Svalbard. The expenses incurred by these activities are covered through these agencies' chapters in the state budget. This part of the public expenses on Svalbard is approximately equal to those incurred by the Governor, Longyearbyen Community Council and other public bodies for the administration of Svalbard.

Total public expenditure on Svalbard amounted to somewhat less than NOK 900 million in 2015. In comparison, the equivalent expenditure nationwide was approximately NOK 1 500 billion.

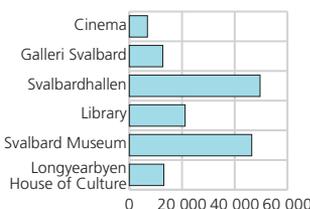
Thirty-five per cent of the funds are devoted to research and development, while this proportion amounts to nearly 2 per cent nationwide. Costs for transport, which mainly includes the Governor's helicopter service, amount to 14 per cent of the public expenditure on Svalbard. Only somewhat less than 5 per cent of the public funds on Svalbard are spent on health and social services, while on the mainland this proportion is almost 60 per cent.

### Pupils in the School of Music and Performing Arts



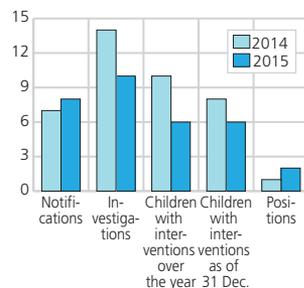
Source: Longyearbyen Community Council.

### Visits to cultural institutions. 2015



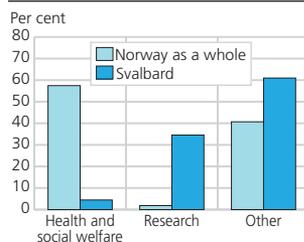
Source: Longyearbyen Community Council and Svalbard Museum.

### Child protection in Longyearbyen



Source: www.ssb.no/en/barnevern

### Public expenditure by purpose



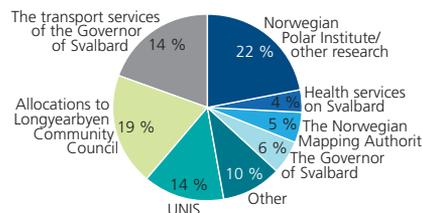
Source: www.ssb.no/en/offseksvalbard and www.ssb.no/en/offinnut

### The Svalbard budget

Every year, government funds are transferred to Svalbard over the Svalbard Budget and the chapters of the various ministries in the state budget.

Most of the statistics in this chapter refer to Longyearbyen. Statistics on public administration refer to Norwegian administration and Svalbard as a whole.

### Expenditure by public bodies on Svalbard. 2015



Source: <https://www.ssb.no/en/offseksvalbard>

# More statistics and analysis

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## Svalbard statistics

*This is Svalbard* is a popularised depiction of society, nature and the environment in the archipelago. It has been prepared on the basis of statistics and analyses from Statistics Norway and other sources.

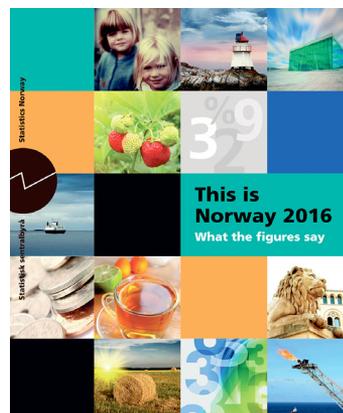
On [www.ssb.no/svalbard](http://www.ssb.no/svalbard) you can find statistics and analyses with more in-depth and detailed information on topics that have been described briefly in this publication.

The key figures page [www.ssb.no/en/svalbard/nokkeltall/svalbard-en](http://www.ssb.no/en/svalbard/nokkeltall/svalbard-en) also provides a total overview that includes text, access to key figures and links to historical statistics for Svalbard in Statistics Norway and on external websites.

## This is Norway

The booklet *This is Norway* presents figures from a number of areas and attempts to provide an overview of Norwegian society and its development in recent years.

The 21 chapters cover large sections of Norwegian society. Like *This is Svalbard*, this publication consists of text, tables and graphical presentations, with a view to making it easy for users to read and understand.



## Downloads and orders

*This is Svalbard* and *This is Norway* can be downloaded from [www.ssb.no](http://www.ssb.no)

The publications are free of charge, and printed versions can be ordered by email: [salg-abonnement@ssb.no](mailto:salg-abonnement@ssb.no)

## **Questions about statistics?**

Statistics Norway's information service answers questions about statistics and assists you in finding your way on [ssb.no](https://ssb.no). If required, we can assist you in finding the right expert, and we also answer questions regarding European statistics.

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