

= Sisimiut =

Sisimiut , formerly Holsteinsborg , is the capital and largest city of the Qeqqata municipality , and the second @-@ largest city in Greenland .

It is located in central @-@ western Greenland , on the coast of Davis Strait , approximately 320 km (200 mi) north of Nuuk .

Although now a place @-@ name , Sisimiut literally means " the people at the fox burrows " . The site has been inhabited for the last 4 @,@ 500 years , first by the Inuit peoples of the Saqqaq culture , Dorset culture , and then the Thule people , whose descendants form the majority of the current population . Artifacts from the early settlement era can be found throughout the region , favored in the past for its plentiful fauna , particularly the marine mammals providing subsistence for the early hunting societies . The population of modern Greenlanders in Sisimiut is a mix of the Inuit and Danish peoples , who first settled in the area in the 1720s , under the leadership of the Danish missionary , Hans Egede .

Today , Sisimiut is the largest business center north of the national capital of Nuuk and is one of the fastest growing cities in Greenland . Fishing is the principal industry in Sisimiut , although the town has a growing industrial base . KNI and its subsidiary Pilersuisoq , a state @-@ owned chain of all @-@ purpose general stores in Greenland , have their base in Sisimiut . Architecturally , Sisimiut is a mix of traditional , single @-@ family houses , and communal housing , with apartment blocks raised in the 1960s during a period of town expansion in Greenland . Sisimiut is still expanding , with the area north of the port , on the shore of the small Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay reserved for a modern suburb @-@ style housing slated for construction in the 2010s . Several professional and general schools are based in Sisimiut , providing education to the inhabitants of the city and to those from smaller settlements in the region . The new Taseralik Culture Center is the second cultural center to be established in Greenland , after Katuaq in Nuuk .

The city has its own bus line , and is the northernmost year @-@ round ice @-@ free port in the country , a shipping base for western and northwestern Greenland . Supply ships head from the commercial port towards smaller settlements in more remote regions of Uummannaq Fjord , Upernavik Archipelago , and as far as Qaanaaq in northern Greenland . The town airport is served by Air Greenland , providing connections to other towns on the western coast of Greenland , and through Kangerlussuaq Airport , to Europe .

= = History = =

= = = Prehistory = = =

= = = = Saqqaq culture = = = =

Sisimiut has been a settlement site for around 4 @,@ 500 years , with the people of the Saqqaq culture arriving from Arctic Canada during the first wave of immigration , occupying numerous sites on the coast of western Greenland . At that time , the shoreline was up to several dozen meters above the present line , gradually decreasing in time due to post @-@ glacial rebound . The Saqqaq remained in western Greenland for nearly two millennia . Unlike the following waves of migrants in the millennium following their disappearance , the Saqqaq left behind a substantial number of artifacts , with plentiful archeological finds on the coast of Davis Strait , from Disko Bay (Greenlandic : Qeqertarsuup Tunua) in the north ? to the coast of Labrador Sea near Nuuk in the south. has uncovered the changing settlement pattern , exhibiting transition from the single @-@ family dwellings to tiny villages of several families . The types of dwelling varied from tent rings made of the hides of hunted mammals , to stone hearths , with no evidence of communal living in larger structures . In contrast , there is evidence for reindeer hunting as a coordinated effort of either villagers or groups of more loosely related individuals , with gathering places in proximity of the

hunting grounds being found . Despite recent advances in DNA research based on hair samples from the ancient Saqqaq migrants (which gives insight into their origin) , the reason for the decline and subsequent disappearance of the culture are not yet known .

= = = Dorset culture = = =

After several hundred years of no permanent habitation , the second wave of migration arrived from Canada , bringing the Dorset people to western Greenland . The first wave of immigrants , known as Dorset I , arrived around 500 BCE , inhabiting the region for the next 700 years . The early Dorset people were followed later by the Dorset II people , although no artifacts have been discovered from the later era around Sisimiut , and few artifacts from the era of Dorset I have been uncovered in archaeological sites , with the finds often limited to harpoon heads and numerous animal bones . The largest number of Dorset culture artifacts can be found further north in the Disko Bay region , while the further to the south , the poorer the finds , disappearing completely on the coast of Labrador Sea in southwestern Greenland .

= = = Thule people = = =

The Inuit of the Thule culture ? whose descendants form the majority of the current population ? arrived nearly a thousand years ago , with the first arrivals dated to approximately 13th and 14th century . The Thule people were more technologically advanced than their Dorset predecessors , although they still relied on subsistence hunting , with walruses , reindeer , and particularly the fur seals constituting the base of the economy in the early period .

The shoreline was still at a higher altitude than today , with the Sisimiut valley east of the Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay , partially under sea . Many artifacts and graves from the several centuries of permanent settlement remain scattered in the region . Rich in fauna , the coastal region from Sisimiut to Kangaamiut was particularly attractive for migrants , and due to a large number of historical artifacts it is currently listed as a candidate for the UNESCO World Heritage Site , with the application received in 2003 .

= = = Colonial era = = =

There are no signs of Norse settlement in the region . At the time of Hans Egede 's establishment of the first Danish colonies , Dutch whalers dominated the area and swiftly burnt down his Bergen Company whaling station on Nipisat Island , approximately 30 km (19 mi) to the north of the present @-@ day town . It was not until Jacob Severin was granted a full monopoly on the Greenlandic trade and permitted to act as an agent of the Danish navy that the Dutch were finally removed in a series of battles in 1738 and 1739 .

The present town was established in 1764 by the General Trade Company as the trading post of Holsteinsborg (" Fort Holstein ") , named for the first chairman of the Danish College of Missions in Copenhagen which underwrote and directed the missionary work in the colony . At the time of its founding , the Kalaallisut name of the place was Amerlok , after its fjord . The colonists formally established several villages in the region , of which only two remain to this day : Itilleq and Sarfannguit . Under the Royal Greenland Trading Department , Holsteinsborg was a center of the trade in reindeer skins .

Several 18th @-@ century buildings still stand in Sisimiut , among them the 1725 Gammelhuset (" Old House ") and the 1775 Bethel @-@ kirken (" Bethel Church ") or Blå Kirke (" Blue Church ") , the oldest surviving church in Greenland . The buildings were moved from the former site of the settlement at Ukiivik (Holsteinsborg) together with the rest of the settlement . The new church on the rocky pedestal was built in 1926 , further extended in 1984 . The entrance to the yard with the old church and other protected historical buildings is decorated with a unique gate made of whale jawbone . In 1801 , a smallpox epidemic decimated the population of Sisimiut and other coastal settlements , although the population growth quickly resumed due to plentiful marine life on the

coast .

== 20th century - present ==

The 20th century saw industrialization , through the construction of a shipping port , and a fish processing factory of Royal Greenland in 1924 , the first such factory in Greenland . Fishing remains the primary occupation of Sisimiut inhabitants , with the town becoming the leading center of shrimping and shrimp processing . Until 2008 Sisimiut had been the administrative center of Sisimiut Municipality , which was then incorporated into the new Qeqqata Municipality on 1 January 2009 , with Sisimiut retaining its status as the administrative center of the new unit , consisting also of the former Maniitsoq Municipality and the previously unincorporated area of Kangerlussuaq . The municipal council , seated in the town hall and headed by Mayor Hermann Berthelsen , consists of 13 members , including the mayor and his deputies , and representatives of the four primary political parties of Greenland : Siumut , Atassut , Democrats and Inuit Ataqatigiit .

== Geography ==

Sisimiut is located approximately 320 km (200 mi) north of Nuuk , and 75 km (47 mi) north of the Arctic Circle , on the eastern shores of Davis Strait , perched on a series of rocky outcrops at the western end of a large peninsula bounded from the north by the Kangerluarsuk Tulleq fjord and from the south by the wide Amerloq Fjord .

== Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay ==

Immediately to the north of Sisimiut a small inlet of Davis Strait , the Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay (Danish : Ulkebugten) , separates the town from the Palasip Qaqqaa massif in the north , at the southern foot of which the town airport is located . The 544 m (1 @, @ 785 ft) high twin summit commands a wide view in all directions , with the majority of the coast of the Qeqqata municipality visible in good conditions .

The bay is navigable in its entirety , protected from the open sea by a series of skerries in the west . Both the local port and the local sailing harbor are located on the southern shore of the bay . The 2 @. @ 2 NM (4 @. @ 1 km ; 2 @. @ 5 mi) road to the airport passes through the bridge over the Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay . Halfway between the town and the airport there is a small beach of dark sand . The beach , as well as the skerries off the coast , are very popular in the summer .

== Alanngorsuaq ==

To the east , a wide valley extends into the interior of the peninsula , bounded from the north by the conjoint massif of Palasip Qaqqaa and Majoriaq , dissected by the Qerrortusup Majoriaa valley alongside which leads the Polar Route from Sisimiut to Kangerlussuaq . Depending on variants , the route is between 150 km (93 mi) and 170 km (110 mi) long .

In the middle of the valley towers a standalone Alanngorsuaq mountain (411 m (1 @, @ 348 ft)) , surrounded by several lakes , one of which serves Sisimiut town as a water reservoir . The entire area of the valley is another popular picnic destination , with easy access to the water reservoirs by a gravel road in the middle part of the valley . The reservoirs in the valley provide the town waterworks with 882 @, @ 000 m³ (1 @, @ 154 @, @ 000 cu yd) of water , with the potential for 7 @, @ 200 @, @ 000 m³ (9 @, @ 400 @, @ 000 cu yd) annually .

== Nasaasaaq ==

To the southeast , the valley is bounded by the Nasaasaaq massif with several distinct summits , the highest of which is 784 m (2 @, @ 572 ft) . The Nasaasaaq ridge has several summits . The main summit is the most prominent , rising over the remainder of the ridge in a tall 150 m (490 ft)

cone at 784 m (2 572 ft) . The ridge terminates in a 611 m (2 005 ft) trabant overlooking Sisimiut . To the east the ridge gradually falls to nearly 300 m (980 ft) , before turning east @-@ north @-@ east towards the Aappilattorsuaq massif . The southern wall of Nasaasaaq falls directly to Amerloq Fjord . The northern wall is not a uniform surface , dissected by ledges , dihedrals , and ramps .

The main access route to the summit leads through one of the ramps to the saddle between the main summit and its western trabant . The passage on the top cone is secured by ropes for unprepared tourists . One of the variants of the Polar Route follows the coast of Amerloq Fjord at the base of the southern wall of Nasaasaaq . The main summit is visited for its long @-@ range view of the coast , although more limited to the north than that of Palasip Qaqqaa to the north of the town airport . An alternative route to the top of interest to mountaineers leads through the hard to find low pass to the east of the main summit , and from there directly on the summit cone ridge .

= = Climate = =

Sisimiut lies within the polar climate region , belonging to the E group of the Köppen climate classification . The average temperature is 10 ° C (50 ° F) or lower throughout the year . The coldest months on average are February and March which have average highs of ? 10 @. 2 ° C (13 @. 6 ° F) and ? 10 @. 1 ° C (13 @. 8 ° F) respectively . The warmest months are July and August which have average highs of 9 @. 8 ° C (49 @. 6 ° F) and 9 @. 3 ° C (48 @. 7 ° F) respectively and are the only months of the year in which the average lows are above 1 ° C (34 ° F) , both at 3 @. 3 ° C (37 @. 9 ° F) . Precipitation is very low in Sisimiut , with the greatest amount of rainfall occurring in the second half of the year , between July and December , with August and September being the wettest months . The sea winds from Davis Strait moderate the climate , with the area known for its fogs .

= = Demographics = =

With 5 @. 598 inhabitants in 2013 , Sisimiut is one of the fastest @-@ growing towns in Greenland , with migrants from the smaller settlements reinforcing the trend . Apart from Kangerlussuaq , it is the only settlement in the Qeqqata municipality exhibiting stable growth patterns over the last two decades .

The gender imbalance is evident in Sisimiut , with men consistently outnumbering women during the last two decades , running from 20 % in 1991 , to 13 % in 2000 and 2010 . Nearly 10 % of the town 's inhabitants in 2010 were born outside Greenland , a decline from 16 @. 5 % in 1990 and 11 @. 8 % in 2000 .

= = = Housing = = =

Most families in Sisimiut live in single @-@ family houses , most often the traditional colorful wooden prefabricated homes shipped from Denmark , and almost always raised or supported by a concrete foundation due to permafrost . In the 1960s , Danish authorities began construction of communal apartment blocks in most towns in Greenland , including Sisimiut .

Unlike in Nuuk , the modern environmentally friendly construction technologies have not yet arrived to Sisimiut , and in 2010 the existing communal @-@ block district remained in a state of partial disrepair . The Qeqqata municipality however is planning the town expansion in the 2010s , with the area north of the Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay reserved for real estate . The new neighborhood will bear the name Akia .

= = Economy and infrastructure = =

= = = Industry and services = = =

Fishing is the principal industry in Sisimiut , with harvested stocks of shrimps , salmon , halibut and cod . The Royal Greenland fish processing plant at the port is the largest within Greenland and is amongst the most modern shrimp @-@ shelling factories in the world . In 2008 , supplied by 8 boats and the factory trawlers , the plant processed an annual amount of 20 @,@ 180 tons of shrimp , around 1 @,@ 680 tons per month . This was roughly constant throughout the year , although when fish catches were larger the fish was frozen . The plant eventually sold around 6 @,@ 019 tonnes of shrimp . Hunting is also important to some of the local livelihoods , mainly seals , walrus , beluga whale , narwhale , reindeer and muskoxen .

KNI and its subsidiary Pilersuisoq , a state @-@ owned chain of all @-@ purpose general stores in Greenland , are based in Sisimiut . The Pilersuisoq chain operates in all small settlements in the country , as well as smaller towns which are not covered by supermarket chains . A range of shops operate in Sisimiut , from chain supermarkets of Pisiffik and Brugsen to independent outlets , also serving supplies to the smaller settlements in the region . Polaroil , a liquid fuel distribution company , is headquartered in Sisimiut . It employs 70 staff and operates 70 stations in Greenland . The headquarters were moved from Maniitsoq to Sisimiut in the late 2000s . In 2010 KNI announced plans to also move the operational base of Polaroil from Maniitsoq to Sisimiut , causing protests in the former community already experiencing depopulation . Other facilities include two banks , a library , a Post Greenland office and a small hospital / health center with 19 beds .

There are advanced plans for the Alcoa aluminium smelting plant . Maniitsoq , the second @-@ largest town in the municipality , is another proposed location alongside Sisimiut . The plant would provide employment for 600 ? 700 people , or more than 10 % of the population . As it is a vital decision for the town , wide public consultations were carried out in 2008 ? 2010 by both the town authorities and the Government of Greenland in order to address potential environmental and social concerns . The Sisimiut Hydro Power Plant is located north of the town . The plant has two turbines providing 15 megawatts of power and the electricity from the plant is transferred to Sisimiut by a 27 @.@ 4 km (17 @.@ 0 mi) long high voltage line .

Although rainfall is low , Sismiut has abundant natural supplies of fresh , drinkable surface water , collected from a reservoir under Alanngorsuaq . Water is also pumped to the waterworks from another lake around 2 @.@ 5 kilometers away in the mountains . The water mains are preinsulated and electrically anti @-@ freezed so supply the residents during the winter months . The water supply network is capable of producing some 882 @,@ 000 cubic meters of water per year ; two water @-@ supplying lakes by the town have a combined annual minimum capacity of more than 7 @.@ 2 million cubic meters .

= = = Tourism = = =

Tourist facilities in Sisimiut include several youth hostels and hotels , such as Hotel Sisimiut with Restaurant Nasaasaaq , and Seaman 's Home , and a conference center . The other restaurant of note is the Misigisaq Restaurant , located at the harbor . It is the only Chinese restaurant in the country and it uses Greenlandic ingredients cooked in the Chinese style . The town has a heated open @-@ air swimming pool , which is supported on stilts so that the heat does not melt the permafrost . Several camping sites are located in Sisimiut valley and near the Kangerluarsunnguaq bay . During winter , a ski lift operates at the foot of the Alanngorsuaq mountain , at the base of the northern slopes of Nasaasaaq .

Tourism is becoming increasingly important , with several outfitter companies based in town . Year @-@ round operations offered include dogsledding , heliskiing , guided hiking , mountaineering , kayaking , and boating . The tough , 160 km (99 mi) long Arctic Circle Race takes place each winter , with the trail partially overlapping with the Polar Route from Sisimiut to Kangerlussuaq . The race was inaugurated in 1998 , since then becoming an international competition .

= = Education and culture = =

The Knud Rasmussen High School (Knud Rasmussenip Højskolia) , founded in 1962 , is located on the eastern outskirts of the town , west of the old heliport site . Apart from the traditional curriculum , it provides specialized courses in Greenland history and culture including skin preparation and ski instruction . The school is also notable for its special unit , the Women 's High School (Greenlandic : Arnat ilinniarfiat) added in 1977 , and focusing on traditional arts . During summer , the school building is used as a hostel . In autumn 2002 , the school was responsible for erecting a series of stone sculptures around Sisimiut : near the airport , in the municipal building , at the Gertrud Rask Minde children 's home , at Arnat Ilinniarfiat and around the school itself .

The other educational centers in Sisimiut are : Sanaartornermik Ilinniarfik , the construction engineering school with capacity for 200 students , the Arctic Technology Center ; Piareersarfik , the vocational institution for the service industry professionals , and Oqaatsinik Pikkorissarfik , a foreign language school .

= = = Sisimiut Museum = = =

Located in a historical building near the harbor , the Sisimiut Museum specializes in Greenlandic trade , industry and shipping , with artifacts based on ten years of archaeological research and excavations of the ancient Saqqaq culture settlements near the town , offering an insight into the culture of the region of 4 @, @ 000 years ago .

The museum also hosts a collection of tools and domestic items collected during 1902 @-@ 22 , an inventory from the Old Church with the original altarpiece dated to approximately 1650 , and paintings from the 1790s . The peat house reconstruction of an early 20th @-@ century Greenlandic residence with domestic furniture is part of an outdoor exhibition . The exhibition includes the remains of a kayak from the 18th century and the Poul Madsen collection , a collection of handcraft , art , house items and ethnographic objects compiled over fifty years . The Greenlandic stone exhibition is housed in the Bygge og Anlægsskolen building .

= = = Arts and crafts = = =

The modern Taseralik Culture Center (Greenlandic : Taseralik Kulturikkut) is located in the eastern part of Sisimiut , on the shore of the Nalunnguarfik lake . The center often hosts traveling theatre troupes , as well as concerts , from classical to folk music . The Sisimiut Culture Day on 21 November is also celebrated at Taseralik . Greenlandic handicrafts , created in a workshop located in an old warehouse on the old harbor , are sold in the Greenland Travel Incoming 's Arts n ' Craft , and in several small shops along the main street . Greenland stones and sealskin products are created in the Natseq and Panigiit workshops .

= = Transport = =

= = = Air = = =

Sisimiut Airport is located 4 @. @ 1 km (2 @. @ 5 mi) to the northwest of the town , at the mouth of the Kangerluarsunnguaq Bay . Before the airport was opened in the 1990s , Sisimiut had been served by the now @-@ closed heliport , located on the eastern outskirts of the town , in the Sisimiut valley . The airport has a short , 799 m (2 @, @ 621 ft) runway suitable only for STOL airplanes . Travel outside of Greenland is routed with a change of planes at Kangerlussuaq Airport . Air Greenland operates scheduled services to Nuuk , Maniitsoq , and Ilulissat . Taxis as well as an infrequent town bus service connect the airport with the center of Sisimiut .

= = = Sea = = =

For most of the year , Sisimiut is served twice @-@ weekly by coastal ferries of Arctic Umiaq Line

which link the communities of the western coast . There is also a weekly Royal Arctic Line ferry to Itilleq and Sarfannguit . The port in Sisimiut is the northernmost year @-@ round ice @-@ free port in Greenland , serving as the country 's primary maritime base north of Nuuk . Supply ships from the port head north , serving the entire coast , from the Uummannaq Fjord region , through Upernavik Archipelago , to Qaanaaq in the far north . M / S Akamalik , one of the largest ships in the fleet of Royal Greenland , is based in Sisimiut . Home to the first shipyard of Greenland dating from 1931 , the port also handles more than 50 cruise liners per year . The local kayak club operates at the bay harbor east of the port .

= = = Ground = = =

Roads in Sisimiut , including the road to the airport , are surfaced , but there is no road linking Sisimiut to any other settlement . In the 2000s construction of the 170 km (110 mi) road to Kangerlussuaq was discussed for several years without resolution . The road would have been the first of its kind in Greenland , connecting two far @-@ away settlements , and reducing the need for passenger and freight exchange at Kangerlussuaq Airport , the Air Greenland hub . The cost of around ? 40M (? 700 per inhabitant of Greenland) and ? 1M in annual maintenance cost has prevented construction . The town has its own bus network . In winter dog sled routes are used to link to settlements further north . Snowmobiles are , as a more modern approach , also used . Transport within a town is usually done by foot , although both private cars and the city bus - which drives loops through town - are popular .

= = Twin towns = =

Sisimiut is twinned with :

- Albertslund Municipality , Denmark
- Klaksvík , Faroe Islands

Sisimiut has friendship links with :

- Whitstable , United Kingdom