

= Longyearbyen =

Longyearbyen (Norwegian pronunciation : [ʎi?rby?n] (lit . The Longyear Town) is the largest settlement and the administrative centre of Svalbard , Norway . As of December 2015 , the town had a population of 2 144 . Longyearbyen is located in the Longyear Valley and on the shore of Adventfjorden , a bay of Isfjorden located on the west coast of Spitsbergen . Since 2002 , Longyearbyen Community Council has had many of the same responsibilities of a municipality , including utilities , education , cultural facilities , fire brigade , roads and ports . The town is the seat of the Governor of Svalbard . It is the world 's northernmost settlement of any kind with greater than 1 000 permanent residents .

Known as Longyear City until 1926 , the town was established by and named after John Munro Longyear , whose Arctic Coal Company started coal mining operations in 1906 . Operations were taken over by Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani (SNSK) in 1916 , which still conducts mining . The town was almost completely destroyed by the German Kriegsmarine on 8 August 1943 , but was rebuilt after the Second World War . Traditionally , Longyearbyen was a company town , but most mining operations have moved to Sveagruva since the 1990s , while the town has seen a large increase in tourism and research . This has seen the arrival of institutions such as the University Centre in Svalbard , the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and Svalbard Satellite Station . The community is served by Svalbard Airport , Longyear and Svalbard Church .

= = History = =

In 1896 , Vesteraalens Dampskibsselskab started tours to Hotellneset . To accommodate tourists , they built a prefabricated hotel , but it was not profitable and was closed after the 1897 season . However , two families overwintered in 1898 ? 99 and Norway Post operated a post office at Hotellneset from 1897 to 1899 . The first commercially viable coal on Svalbard was harvested by Søren Zakariassen in 1899 . In 1901 , Bergen @-@ Spitsbergen Kullgrube @-@ kompani started mining coal in Adventtoppen .

The American industrialist John Munroe Longyear visited Spitsbergen as a tourist in 1901 , where he met with an expedition prospecting for coal . He returned to Spitsbergen 1903 , where he met Henrik B. Næss in Adventfjorden , who gave him samples and information on coal fields . Along with his associate Frederick Ayer , Longyear bought the Norwegian claims on the west side of Adventfjorden , and expanded the claims significantly the following year . In 1906 , the Boston @-@ based Arctic Coal Company , with Ayer and Longyear as the main shareholders , started mining in Mine 1a , after having built docks and housing . The company had American administration , but mostly Norwegian labourers , and named the town Longyear City . Coal was transported the 1 @.@ 2 kilometers (0 @.@ 75 mi) from the mine to the port using an aerial tramway . In 1913 , the company started preliminary work to open Mine 2a .

Following financial difficulties during the First World War , the mining operations were bought by Store Norske , which was incorporated in Oslo on 30 November 1916 . That year , SNSK built five new barracks , including one that was made into a hospital . SNSK introduced its own money with approval from Norges Bank , consisting entirely of banknotes at par with Norwegian krone . The American community buried their dead at Hotellneset . In 1918 , eleven people were killed by the Spanish flu and a graveyard was established in Longyear City . Two years later , 26 men were killed in a coal dust explosion in Mine 1 . This resulted in the mine being closed and electric operation being taken into use in Mine 2 . The same year , the first truck was delivered for use in the mining operations .

The Church of Norway appointed Thorleif Østenstad as Svalbard 's first vicar and teacher in 1920 . A school was established as a cooperation between the church and SNSK and had an inaugural eight pupils . The first Svalbard Church opened on 28 August 1921 , and the church 's reading room was from then used as a school . Longyear City was renamed Longyearbyen in 1926 .

The Norwegian Telecommunications Administration established a coast radio station , Svalbard Radio , at Finneset in 1911 , which was moved to Longyearbyen in 1930 . The town 's tourist

industry started in 1935 , when SS Lyngen started calling regularly during the summer season . In 1937 , SNSK established Sverdrupbyen to house workers for Mine 1b and operation of the mine started in 1939 . In 1938 , Longyearbyen 's first road was completed , between the town center and Sverdrupbyen . Operations at Mine 2b , a different entrance to Mine 2a , started in 1939 .

Svalbard remained unaffected by the German occupation of Norway in 1940 . However , from 1941 the archipelago became of strategic importance in the supply chain between the Allied powers , as well as a source of badly needed coal . The Norwegian government @-@ in @-@ exile rejected a Soviet ? British occupation ; instead the British Army started Operation Gauntlet to evacuate Spitsbergen . On 29 August 1941 , the entire population of Ny @-@ Ålesund was evacuated to Longyearbyen , and on 3 September 765 people were evacuated from Longyearbyen to Scotland . Later the last 150 men were also evacuated . With Longyearbyen depopulated , a small German garrison and air strip was established in Adventdalen , mostly to provide meteorological data . After the British Operation Fritham regained control of Barentsburg , the German forces left Longyearbyen without combat .

In September 1943 , the Kriegsmarine dispatched two battleships , Tirpitz and Scharnhorst , and nine destroyers to bombard Longyearbyen , Barentsburg and Grumant . Only four buildings in Longyearbyen survived : the hospital , the power station , an office building and a residential building , in addition to Sverdrupbyen . Longyearbyen remained unsettled until the end of the war , with the first ship from the mainland leaving on 27 June 1945 .

= = = Post @-@ Second World War = = =

Plans were laid during the war to ensure a quick reconstruction and commencing of mining . By 1948 , coal production reached the pre @-@ war level of 480 @,@ 000 tonnes (470 @,@ 000 long tons ; 530 @,@ 000 short tons) per year . Nybyen was established in 1946 and consisted of five barracks , each housing 72 people . The first issue of Svalbardposten was published in November 1948 . Until then , there had irregularly been published various wall newspapers . In 1949 , Longyearbyen received telephone service with the mainland via a radio connection between Svalbard Radio and Harstad . In 1949 , a farm was built in Longyearbyen to hold cattle for milk , pigs and hens . A local radio station started broadcasting in 1950 . The burial ground remained in use until 1950 , seeing 44 people buried . However , it was discovered that the bodies were failing to decompose because of the permafrost . Bodies have since been sent to the mainland for burial . The community center Huset opened in 1951 .

Mining in Mine 1b was terminated in 1958 , but operation in Mine 5 started the following year . Preliminary work on Mine 4 started in 1954 , and from 1960 it was used as a reserve mine . The Norwegian Air Force started serving Longyearbyen with postal flights in the 1950s . In 1959 , a man fell seriously ill , so a landing strip was prepared in Adventdalen . From the same year , Braathens SAFE started serving the tundra airport with irregular winter flights . In 1957 , a principal was hired at the primary school and a new church was opened on 24 August 1958 . From 1961 , the primary school was supplemented by a private middle school . A branch of Tromsø Sparebank opened in 1959 .

In the 1960s , the town 's farm was closed and replaced by industrial liquifying of powdered milk . The first serial @-@ produced snowmobile was taken into use in 1961 . By 1969 , there were 140 registered snowmobiles and only 33 registered cars . From 1962 to 1984 , a recreational centre was run at Sverdrupbyen . Ordinary operation in Mine 4 started in 1966 but was terminated by 1970 , two years after Mine 2b closed . Operations in Mine 6 commenced in 1969 . Television broadcasting equipment was installed in 1969 , with the schedule of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation being aired with a two @-@ week delay .

In 1971 , a new school building , with a combined primary and lower secondary school , was opened , along with a new gymnasium and a 12 @.@ 5 @-@ meter (41 ft) swimming pool . The Svalbard Council was established on 1 November 1971 . It consisted of 17 non @-@ partisan members that were elected or appointed in three different groups ? SNSK employees , government employees and others , although the ratio changed several times . Operations of Mine 3 started in

March 1971 and operations in Mine 7 commenced the following year . In 1973 , the Ministry of Trade and Industry bought a third of SNSK . It continued buying additional shares until reaching a 99 % ownership in 1976 . The airport was opened in 1975 and initially provided four weekly services to mainland Norway and semi weekly services to Russia . In 1978 , the community received satellite communications with the mainland . The same year , an upper secondary program was introduced at the public school . From 1984 , television programmes were broadcast live via satellite .

Store Norske underwent a gradual change during the 1980s . Since 1980 , Spitsbergen money has been taken out of circulation and replaced with ordinary Norwegian currency . Mine 6 closed the following year . From 1982 , SNSK permitted private individuals to own and operate cars . By 1990 , there were 353 registered cars and 883 snowscooters . On 1 July 1983 , SNSK moved its head office from Bergen to Longyearbyen . Svalbard Samfunnsdrift (SSD) , a limited company that was responsible for public infrastructure and services , was established by SNSK on 1 January 1989 . Responsibilities included healthcare , the fire brigade , the kindergarten , roads , rubbish disposal , power production , the water and sewer system , the cinema , cultural activities and the library . Ownership was taken over by the Ministry of Trade and Industry on 1 January 1993 .

During the 1990s , the authorities started a process to " normalise " Longyearbyen by abolishing the company town scheme and introducing a full range of services , a varied economy and local democracy . Commercial enterprises included a shopping mall replacing SNSK 's provision store in 1992 . Similarly , Esso opened a commercial fuel station in 1994 . The Svalbard Council changed its regulations from 1993 and allowed parties to run for election . In a step to increase tourism , Svalbard Polar Hotel opened in 1995 , and a year later mining of Mine 3 terminated . Longyearbyen Community Council was established in 2002 , replacing the Svalbard Council and assimilating SSD , and took on many of the responsibilities and the structure of a municipality .

This period also saw the rise of a number of scientific establishments . The Agricultural University of Norway had established a primitive seed bank in 1984 . The University Centre in Svalbard opened on 6 September 1993 and had 30 students in its inaugural semester . Telenor Mobil established GSM coverage in 1995 , and in 2004 the Svalbard Undersea Cable System opened , providing fiber optic cable connection to the mainland . The European Incoherent Scatter Scientific Association (EISCAT) opened a radar in 1996 , followed by Svalbard Satellite Station in 1999 and the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in 2008 .

= = Geography = =

Longyearbyen , the largest settlement in Svalbard , is located in the lower portion of the Longyear Valley , along the Longyear River . The lower parts of the town lie along the southwestern shore of the bay of Adventfjorden , a 7 by 4 kilometers (4 @.@ 3 by 2 @.@ 5 mi) branch of Isfjorden . Longyearbyen is on the Nordenskiöld Land peninsula of Spitsbergen , the largest island of the Svalbard archipelago . It is the world 's northern @-@ most town , with all settlements further north being research or meteorological outposts . Across the bay lie the ghost towns of Advent City and Hiorthhamn .

Longyearbyen is divided into several neighbourhoods . On the west side of the river , along the bay , lies the port and affiliated utility and industrial services . The western part of this area is called Bykaia and the eastern part Sjøområdet . Above lies Skjæringa , the site of the Governor 's offices . Slightly up the valley on the west side lies Gamle Longyearbyen (" Old Longyearbyen ") and the church . Even further up lies the graveyard , then Huset and the cinema , and finally Sverdrupbyen . Most of the residential , commercial and cultural institutions are located on the east side of the river . Along the bay the area is called Sjøskrenten . Further up lies the university centre and Gruvedalen , the largest residential area . Southwards from there is the main shopping area as well as the town hall . To the east is the residential area Lia and further up Haugen , which is also the location of the school . Furthest up in the valley is Mine 2b and Nybyen , which is mostly used as student housing . Westwards out of town towards Hotellneset is the airport and Mine 3 . The remaining mines are located in Adventdalen , to the east of town .

== Climate ==

Svalbard 's climate is a combination of an Arctic climate (Köppen : ET) tempered by the North Atlantic Current . Nordenskiöld Land is the warmest and wettest part of the archipelago , caused by the convergence of mild and humid air from the south and cold air from the north . Average summer highs are typically 3 to 7 ° C (37 to 45 ° F) while average winter highs are ? 11 to ? 13 ° C (12 to 9 ° F) . Longyearbyen experiences midnight sun from 19 April to 23 August , polar night from 27 October to 14 February and civil polar night from 14 November to 29 January . However , due to shading from mountains , the sun is not visible in Longyearbyen until around 8 March . Snow typically covers the town from November to March . The warmest temperature ever recorded in Longyearbyen was 21 @. @ 3 ° C (70 @. @ 3 ° F) in July 1979 and the coldest was ? 46 @. @ 3 ° C (? 51 @. @ 3 ° F) in March 1986 . Svalbard and Longyearbyen are among the places in the world that have warmed fastest in the latest decades . The average temperatures in the table below are based on 1961 @- @ 90 . In the more recent period 1981 @- @ 2010 , winter has warmed 3 @. @ 4 ° C (6 @. @ 1 ° F) and summer 1 ° C (1 @. @ 8 ° F) compared to 1961 @- @ 90 .

== Demographics ==

As of 2015 , Longyearbyen had a population of 2 @, @ 144 people . The largest regional group of Norwegians are from Northern Norway , particularly Nordland and Troms , which make more than 40 percent of the population . Roughly 300 people (16 percent) are non @- @ Norwegian citizens , with the largest nationalities being from Thailand , Sweden , Russia and Ukraine . Because of the dominance of the mining industry , the gender distribution is skewed with 60 percent of adults being males . Longyearbyen has an over @- @ average share of its population between 25 and 44 years old , but nearly no residents over 66 . The number of children in relation to the population is at the national average , but Longyearbyen has significantly fewer teenagers than the national average .

Longyearbyen experiences a very high turnover ; in 2008 , 427 people (23 percent) moved away from the town . The average person lived in Longyearbyen for 6 @. @ 3 years , although it is 6 @. @ 6 years for Norwegians and 4 @. @ 3 years for foreigners . In 2009 , about a quarter of the population had lived in the town since before 2000 , and can thus be regarded as permanent population . The longest residing people tend to work in the mining industry , followed by local government employees . The shortest tenures are held by students and employees in higher education , tourism and the state .

Seventy percent of households consist of a single person , compared to forty @- @ one percent on the mainland , giving an average 1 @. @ 6 people per household . The difference is largely caused by persons working on Svalbard while their family remains on the mainland . Longyearbyen 's population is more highly educated than the national average : 54 compared to 43 percent have upper secondary education and 30 compared to 26 percent have tertiary education . Among women , 40 percent have higher education .

== Politics and government ==

Longyearbyen Community Council has many of the same responsibilities of a municipality . It is organised with a 15 @- @ member council that since 2011 has been led by Mayor Christin Kristoffersen of the Labour Party . The council 's main responsibilities are infrastructure and utilities , including power , land @- @ use and community planning , education from kindergarten to upper secondary level and child welfare . It operates three kindergartens in addition to the 13 @- @ grade Longyearbyen School .

No care or nursing services and welfare payments are available . Norwegian residents retain pension and medical rights through their mainland municipalities . The University Hospital of North Norway operates a clinic , Longyearbyen Hospital . Other public offices with presence on Longyearbyen are the Norwegian Directorate of Mining , the Norwegian Polar Institute , the

Norwegian Tax Administration and the Church of Norway . Longyearbyen is subordinate Nord @-@ Troms District Court and Hålogaland Court of Appeal , both located in Tromsø .

The Svalbard Treaty of 1920 established full Norwegian sovereignty over the archipelago . The treaty came into effect in 1925 , following the Svalbard Act that established the institution of the Governor of Svalbard . She or he holds the responsibility as both county governor and chief of police , as well as holding other authority granted from the executive branch . Duties include environmental policy , family law , law enforcement , search and rescue , tourism management , information services , contact with foreign settlements and judge in some areas of maritime inquiries and judicial examinations ? albeit never in the same cases as acting as police . Kjerstin Askholt has been governor since 2015 ; she is assisted by a staff of 26 professionals . The institution is subordinate to the Ministry of Justice and the Police , but reports to other ministries in matters within their portfolio .

Because of the special treaty status of Svalbard , Longyearbyen is subject to Norwegian legislation , but citizens of any signatory country may conduct commercial activities and live in town . However , people without a source of income can be rejected by the governor . The treaty limits Norway 's right to collect taxes to that of financing services on Svalbard . Therefore , Longyearbyen has a lower income tax than mainland Norway , and there is no value added tax . The treaty has resulted in Longyearbyen being a demilitarized zone and is not part of the European Economic Area nor the Schengen Area like the rest of Norway .

= = Culture = =

The community council runs a number of cultural activities , such as a cinema , a youth club , a library and a gallery . The town 's sports club is Svalbard Turn . Svalbardhallen is an indoor sport centre that includes a multi @-@ sport hall large enough for handball or three badminton courts , a shooting range and a 25 @-@ meter (82 ft) swimming pool . Svalbard Church of the Church of Norway has the entire archipelago as its parish . The congregational hall is 126 m² (1 @, @ 360 sq ft) while the sitting room is 112 m² (1 @, @ 210 sq ft) . The church is built in half @-@ timber . Svalbardposten is a weekly newspaper published on Friday . Printing takes place in Tromsø and the majority of subscribers live on the mainland . Icepeople , an alternative newspaper in English , is also published weekly . There are two museums in town , Svalbard Museum and the Spitsbergen Airship Museum . Dark Season Blues has been held annually in October since 2003 . 20 residents of the town are members of the Liverbirds Svalbard and regularly meet in the Svalbar on match days during the winter months .

= = Economy = =

The only mining still taking place in Longyearbyen is at Mine 7 , located 15 kilometers (9 mi) up Adventdalen . It produces 70 @, @ 000 tonnes (69 @, @ 000 long tons ; 77 @, @ 000 short tons) of coal annually , of which 25 @, @ 000 tonnes (25 @, @ 000 long tons ; 28 @, @ 000 short tons) is used to fuel Longyear Power Station , Norway 's only coal @-@ fueled power station . Most of Store Norske 's production is done at Sveagruva , located on Van Mijenfjorden , 60 kilometers (37 mi) south of Longyearbyen . No roads connect the communities ; instead , workers live in dormitories in Svea . Seventy percent commute home to the mainland while thirty percent commute to Longyearbyen . Mining has not been profitable and Store Norske relies on state subsidies to retain production .

The University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) has 350 students and a permanent faculty of 40 professors and assistants and 120 guest lecturers . UNIS does not offer degrees , but instead offers semester courses in biology , physics and geology . Student housing is located at Nybyen . The college is part of the 12 @, @ 000 m² (130 @, @ 000 sq ft) Svalbard Science Centre , which also features the Norwegian Polar Institute , EISCAT and Svalbard Science Forum . In 2006 , about 9 @, @ 000 research days were spent in Longyearbyen , most of which were by Norwegians . This made Longyearbyen the second @-@ largest research outpost on Svalbard , marginally below Ny

@-@ Ålesund . In contrast , Longyearbyen has almost only Norwegian research , while Ny @-@ Ålesund is roughly evenly split between Norwegian and foreign .

Svalbard Satellite Station was built because of Longyearbyen 's excellent location to download data from satellites in polar orbit . Located at Platåberget above Hotellneset , it was built as a cooperation between NASA and the Norwegian Space Centre , but has since 2001 been operated by Kongsberg Satellite Services . EISCAT operates an incoherent scatter radar to study the northern lights . The Svalbard Global Seed Vault , administered by the Global Crop Diversity Trust , is a secure underground facility capable of storing millions of crop seeds . The facility has been designed to protect against natural and human disasters , including global warming , floods and fires and nuclear holocaust . The site was chosen for a number of factors including its remoteness , sound geology and the ambient temperature of the permafrost .

Longyearbyen is the centre of tourism on the archipelago , although most tourism is generated based on natural experiences rather than visiting the town itself . However , Longyearbyen does provide supplies , accommodation and several museums . In 2008 , Longyearbyen experienced 89 @, @ 000 guest @-@ nights , up from 30 @, @ 000 in 1995 . The average guest stayed 2 @. @ 2 nights and 60 percent of the capacity was used by tourists . About 40 @, @ 000 tourists flew into Longyearbyen . Two @-@ thirds of the tourists come from Norway . In 2007 , the tourism industry had a revenue of NOK 291 million and produced 200 man @-@ years .

= = Transport = =

Longyearbyen has a road network stretching 50 kilometers (30 mi) , but the network does not extend to any other communities . In 2008 there were 1 @, @ 481 registered road vehicles and 49 percent of all households had a car . Cars are registered with ZN on the registration plates . There is a single workshop , Svalbard Auto , which is also a Toyota dealer .

Snowmobiles are a popular mode of transport and there are more snowmobiles than residents . In 2008 there were registered 2 @, @ 672 snowmobiles and 69 percent of households owned at least one . Off @-@ road motorized transport is prohibited on bare ground , but snowmobiles are used extensively during winter ? both for commercial and recreational activities . Transport from Longyearbyen to Barentsburg (45 km or 28 mi) and Pyramiden (100 km or 62 mi) is possible by snowmobile by winter , or by ship all year round .

Svalbard Airport , Longyear is located at Hotellneset , 3 kilometers (1 @. @ 9 mi) northwest of town . It has a 2 @, @ 483 @-@ meter (8 @, @ 146 ft) long runway and is the only airport that is permitted to serve aircraft from off the archipelago . Scandinavian Airlines operates daily flights to Oslo and Tromsø , while there are irregular flights to Russia . Lufttransport operates regular charter services to Svea Airport and Ny @-@ Ålesund Airport , Hamnerabben . Arktikugol operates helicopters to Barentsburg and Pyramiden . There are two quays in Longyearbyen , one for export of coal and one for general goods . From 1907 to 1987 , the mining companies operated a network of aerial tramways to transport coal from the mines to the port .