



Economic Development in the Arctic

Course Syllabus - (5 ECTS) Spring 2021 - University of Greenland - Ilisimatusarfik

Lecturer

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Course description

The goal of the course is to introduce the student to the main issues of economic development in the arctic region with particular emphasis on Greenland. Through a brief review of theory, evidence, and country-case studies, the course aims to answer key questions such as: What are the main drivers of socio-economic development in the Arctic? What are the historical and current issues affecting economic growth in Greenland? What is the impact of climate change in the arctic economies? Is economic growth good for the environment in the Arctic? Are urbanization and migration important for growth in the arctic? How different is 'human development' across the arctic region and what has been the role of policy?

Course learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course the student will be able to: *identify* the main issues of economic development in the arctic; *understand* different perspectives and their basis in theory and evidence; develop an independent opinion on the long-term economic evolution of the arctic, and ultimately use the relevant concepts of the theories of economic growth & development to *reflect* critically on local problems.

Teaching method

Series of lectures using an active learning approach – problem-based learning

Topics

1. *Catching up, economic structure and diversification in the Arctic*
2. *The problem of youth unemployment in the Arctic*
3. *The economic effects of climate change in the Arctic*
4. *Mining development in the Arctic*
5. *Living conditions in the Arctic*
6. *Human capital in the Arctic*

Criteria for final assessment

Class exercises: 20%

Final essay: 80%

The final essay is an individual written assignment (at home) approximately of 1.500 words as a minimum (or six pages double-spaced excluding the references) on a related topic of economic development in an arctic country/region (a development issue on a case-study of the arctic or an analytical reflection). This essay should be written in English using a proper citation of academic literature. Grades will be given according to the Greenlandic Grading Score (GGS).

The final essay should contain:

1. *An introduction to the main question.*
2. *What is the relevant literature (what has been said about the issue/topic before)?*
3. *Your argument or explanation of the issue.*
4. *Your discussion of other authors' works/views on the issue using the academic literature (articles/books).*
5. *Conclusions.*



Literature and class activities

Topic 1 “Structure, development, and economic policies in the Arctic”

- Szirmai, A. (2015). The concept of development. In Szirmai, A. *Socio-Economic Development*. Chapter 1. Cambridge University Press.
- Larsen, J. N. (2015). The Arctic Economy in a Global Context, in Evengård, B., Larsen, J. N., & Paasche, Ø. (Eds.). Chapter 12. *The New Arctic*. Springer.
- Arnaut, J.L. (2020). The Political Economy of Greenland: From Colonialism to a Mixed Economy. In L. Høgedal (Ed.), *Greenland's Economy and Labour Market*. Routledge: London, U.K.

Student exercise 1. Disaggregate the structure of the Greenlandic economy using national accounts from 2010 to 2018 (using data from www.stat.gl)

Topic 2. The problem of youth unemployment in the Arctic.

- Karlsdóttir, A., Cuadrado, A., Gaini, F., Jungsberg, L., & Ormstrup Vestergård, L. (2019). “Enabling vulnerable youth in rural areas, not in education, employment or training.” NordRegio. <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1326483/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- MacDonald, J. P., Ford, J., Willox, A. C., & Mitchell, C. (2015). “Youth-led participatory video as a strategy to enhance Inuit youth adaptive capacities for dealing with climate change”. *Arctic*, 486-499.

Student exercise 2. Calculate youth unemployment rates in Greenland by region from 2000 to 2018 (using data from www.stat.gl)

Topic 3. The economic effects of climate change in the Arctic

- Arnaut, J.L. and Lidman, J. (2021). Environmental sustainability and economic growth in Greenland: Testing the environmental Kuznets curve. Mimeo.
- Gill, A. R., Viswanathan, K. K., & Hassan, S. (2018). The Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) and the environmental problem of the day. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 81, 1636-1642.
- Prowse, T. D., Furgal, C., Chouinard, R., Melling, H., Milburn, D., & Smith, S. L. (2009). Implications of climate change for economic development in northern Canada: Energy, resource, and transportation sectors. *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment*, 38(5), 272-281.

Topic 4. Mining development in the Arctic

- Rodon, T. (2018). Institutional development and resource development: The case of Canada's Indigenous peoples. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement*, 39(1), 119-136.
- Bjørst, L. R. (2017). Uranium: The Road to “Economic Self-Sustainability for Greenland”? Changing Uranium-Positions in Greenlandic Politics. In: *Northern sustainabilities: Understanding and addressing change in the circumpolar world* (pp. 25-34). Springer.
- Arnaut, J.L. (2021). Can we predict the future of arctic mineral mining? A primer on statistical forecasting using Greenland's mineral commodities. In *Samfundsvidenskabelig praksis - Arktiske perspektiver*. Ilisimatusarfik-University of Greenland.
- Video analysis: “Kuannersuit / Kvanefjeld” from the International Uranium Film Festival (by Lise Autogena and Joshua Portway): <https://vimeo.com/214697146>



Topic 5. Living conditions in the Arctic

- Poppel, B. (2017). Well-Being of Circumpolar Arctic Peoples: The Quest for Continuity. In *The Pursuit of Human Well-Being* (pp. 565-605). Springer, Cham.
- Duhaime, G., Caron, A., Lévesque, S., Lemelin, A., Mäenpää, I., Nigai, O., & Robichaud, V. (2017). Social and economic inequalities in the circumpolar Arctic. *The Economy of the North 2015*. Link: <http://www.chaireconditionautochtone.fss.ulaval.ca/documents/pdf/Social-and-economic-inequalities-in-the-circumpolar-Arctic.pdf>
- Christensen, J., Arnfjord, S., Carraher, S., & Hedwig, T. (2017). Homelessness across Alaska, the Canadian North and Greenland: A Review of the Literature on a Developing Social Phenomenon in the Circumpolar North. *Arctic*, 70(4), 349-364.

Topic 6. Human capital in the Arctic

- Brincker, B., & Lennert, M. (2019). "Building a nation in the classroom: Exploring education policy in post-colonial Greenland". In: *Including the North: a comparative study of the policies on inclusion and equity in the Circumpolar North*.
- Larsen, J. N., & Fondahl, G. (Eds.). (2015). Education and human capital (Chapter 9; p. 349-399). In: *Arctic human development report: Regional processes and global linkages*. Nordic Council of Ministers.