

OFFICIAL NAME: Greenland

CAPITAL: Nuuk

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Self Governing Overseas Territory of Denmark

AREA: 2,175,600 Sq Km (840,000 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 57,800



LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY: Greenland, the world's largest island, is located northeast of the North American Continent. Around 83% of Greenland is a permanent ice cap and mountains line both the east and west coasts holding the inland ice in place. The highest mountains are located in the east while a gradual slope to the coast causes glaciers to discharge icebergs into the sea. Both coasts are irregular and broken by numerous fjords. The coastal areas are the only regions suitable for human settlement.

CLIMATE: Greenland has a polar climate in the northern regions while the southwest coastal areas have a maritime climate with long cold winters and short cool summers. Precipitation decreases from south to north. Average annual temperature ranges in Thule are from -23 degrees Celsius (9 degrees Fahrenheit) in February to 5 degrees Celsius (41 degrees Fahrenheit) in July while in the south they range from -8 degrees Celsius (18 degrees Fahrenheit) in February to 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the indigenous Eskimos or Greenlanders who account for 92% of the population. The remainder are Europeans mostly Danes.

RELIGIONS: Mostly Christians, either Lutheran or Moravian.

LANGUAGES: The majority of the population speak Greenlandic which is the indigenous Eskimo language that includes many Danish words. Danish is also taught in schools.

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1990: In 1951 the US-Danish agreement placed Greenland's defense under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and in 1961 the world's most powerful radar station was built there to warn of surprise missile attacks on the US. In 1953 the new Danish constitution changed Greenland from a colony to a province. It gave Greenland equal rights with the rest of the Danish Kingdom and gave the people of Greenland the right to elect a legislature, however, laws that affected Greenland continued to be made by the Danish government. During this time Denmark started to train

Greenlanders to take over local administrative and technical jobs held by the Danes. In the 1970's many Greenlanders began objecting to Denmark's control over their affairs and in 1979 Denmark granted Greenland internal self government which established a new provincial government that controls the internal affairs of the province. Greenland became part of the European Community (EC) in 1973, although it withdrew in Feb. 1985. Elections in Apr. 1991 resulted in the formation of another Forward coalition under Lars Emil Johansen.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Danish Krone divided into 100 Ore.

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partner is Denmark.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Coal, Cryolite, Fish, Lead, Molybdenum, Sheep, Uranium, Zinc.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Fish, Fish and Food Processing, Hides and Skins, Mining.

MAIN EXPORTS: Coal, Cryolite, Fish, Fish Products, Lead, Molybdenum, Uranium, Zinc.