



Economic Brief 5 : Key Recommendations

Social Services, Social Welfare and Community Development in the Arctic

The Arctic is increasingly the focus of ever more economic activities with impacts on Arctic communities. Many success stories have emerged, but there is also cause for concern in view of the broader social trends unfolding. How Arctic communities are affected by the economic upsurge is a question that needs greater attention. Today, Arctic social welfare stands at a crossroads, as JUSTNORTH researchers argue in the policy brief about community viability and quality of life in the region.

The last few years have seen economic cutbacks in many nations across the region. Social injustices have risen while the quality of life and the availability of social services have diminished, a fact compounded by the complex and remote Arctic geography. Health disparities between Arctic inhabitants and the rest of the national population are significant, with mental health a particular challenge. Similarly, educational levels are lower across the Arctic region compared with national averages. At the same time, many communities are becoming less populated as people migrate to areas with better social and economic opportunities.

Across case studies about public transportation, redistributive policies, and corporate social responsibility, among others, JUSTNORTH researchers have examined how community development in the Arctic can be strengthened. Among the policy recommendations are the following:

- 1 Investment in public transport systems needs to be increased and public transport's benefits should be better distributed, especially towards already disadvantaged communities and areas.**
- 2 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) frameworks, which have the potential to be a contributor to Arctic welfare, should stimulate closer collaboration between local communities, national authorities and companies. The aim should be to ensure that large-scale economic projects have more local benefits.**
- 3 CSR principles should be codified into legal requirements (rather than being a charitable decision).**

