

## Module 3: Multilevel Governance

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### Overview

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This module examines the concept of multilevel governance as it relates to politics in the circumpolar North. The term multilevel governance is used by scholars to refer to the existence of and interplay between a series of distinct yet interconnected forms of governance at the international, national and sub-national levels. Part one defines multilevel governance in detail noting the relationship between governance and government. Part two examines the different dimensions of multilevel governance in the circumpolar North. Part three explores different forms of Indigenous autonomy in the circumpolar North and their respective relationships to the broader multilevel governance structures in which they are embedded.

### Learning Objectives

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Upon completion of this module you should be able to:

1. Explain the conceptual meanings of governance and multilevel governance.
2. Outline different types and categories of multilevel governance.
3. Compare different forms of Indigenous autonomy in the circumpolar North and outline their relationships to the external multilevel governance structures in which they are embedded.

### Required Readings (including web sites)

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The Greenland-Danish Self-Government Commission's Report on Self-Government in Greenland. Executive Summary. April 2008, pp 15.

(<http://img9.custompublish.com/getfile.php/953432.1529.dwfvyfwtyy/Report+on+Self-Government+in+Greenland++Executive+Summary.pdf?return=www.arcticgovernance.org>)

## **Key Terms and Concepts**

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- Governance
- Government
- Home Rule
- Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)
- Multilevel Governance
- Nested Federalism
- Self Rule

## **Learning Material**

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### **3.0 Introduction**

The circumpolar North is home to a multilevel network of innovative governance arrangements. This network has evolved over the last 50 years to serve the interests and needs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous northern peoples. The institutions that comprise this network include public governments, ethnically based Indigenous organizations and representative bodies, and non-governmental organizations and collective associations. In some cases, these governance institutions have been created by existing governments but often are the result of grassroots efforts by northerners to realize self-government and autonomy.

**Learning Activity 1**  
**Think of examples of good governance practice in the North.**

### **3.1 Governance and Multilevel Governance: A Conceptual Overview**

In recent years the term **governance** has gained popularity among political scientists and students of politics as a way to describe relationships and structures that characterize political life in democratic societies. Governance is preferred to conventional terms like **government** because of its “capacity – unlike that of the narrower term ‘government’ – to cover the range of institutions and relationships involved in the process of governing” (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Whereas the focus of government is on the activities of public or state agencies and their engagement with the political system, the concept of governance encompasses a broader spectrum of actors and political relationships involved in the policy making process. Governance includes new political actors, quasi-governmental actors, private organizations or non-state actors as well as traditional agencies of government.

Governance is usually conceptualized as involving structure and process (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Governance structures refer to institutional features of a particular governance system. These might include laws and regulations that govern the actions of officials and citizens, elected bodies such as parliaments and appointed agencies within the bureaucracy. There are many ways of organizing a political system and it is important to understand how different organizational models influence the political process. For example, some countries have federal political systems that divide and decentralize power and authority between different levels of government.

Others have unitary political systems that centralize power in a national government. While countries may face similar issues and challenges, the structure of their respective political systems can dramatically affect the way in which they respond to issues and challenges.

Governance can also be thought of as a process. In this sense, governance is about a particular style or method of decision-making. Good governance is a popular topic in democracy and democratic transition literature. In other words, what are the principles and practices that produce efficient, effective and fair political decisions? According to Garner, Ferdinand and Lawson, good governance involves the following general practices: participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability. Many argue these practices are universal and should be expected or at least aspired to regardless of where governance is being carried out. It is important to note that many countries and societies have their own conception of what constitutes good governance. While others may not see these practices as appropriate, it can be argued such practices fit with their particular political, economic or socio-cultural circumstances of the country or society in question.

Multilevel governance refers to “a system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers – supranational, national, regional and local” (Hooghe and Marks, 2003). Multilevel governance, like federalism, involves relationships and interactions between different levels of government within a single polity and, increasingly, between countries and supranational, transnational and international bodies along a vertical continuum. Multilevel governance also reflects a change in the way scholars describe and explain the political process. Traditionally, students of federalism and regional politics focused primarily on relationships between recognized governments at the national (federal) and regional levels. Multilevel governance recognizes these relationships and argues new actors and governments, especially at local and supranational levels, challenge the power and authority of traditional governments. The influence of these new actors and governments must be incorporated into our political analysis if we are to gain a comprehensive understanding of the political process.

In addition to recognizing the vertical “displacement of state power and control” upwards to the supranational level and downwards to the local level, multilevel governance also has a horizontal dimension, which includes the “outward” influence that quasi-state and non-state (private) actors at all levels increasingly have on the political process (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Non-state actors have always exerted influence over politics, e.g., the political leverage private economic actors such as multinational corporations and other business interests have over government. A myriad of non-state and quasi-state actors actively participate at all levels of the political process and it is important to recognize the roles they play.

### 3.2 A Typology of Multilevel Governance

**Multilevel governance** can be divided into a number of types, including vertical, horizontal, state-centered and Indigenous varieties. Using circumpolar North examples this section will elaborate on these different types.

### **3.3 Vertical Multilevel Governance**

The countries and regions of the circumpolar North provide a wealth of examples of vertical multilevel governance ranging from local, regional and state governments to transnational organizations and international bodies. In most cases these governments and organizations are connected to other parts of the multilevel network.

Local government often is considered the least “glamorous” and powerful level of government. In many respects it is the most important because tasks performed by local government often impact directly on citizens. Local government serves as a training ground for politicians, a forum for the politically active and a conduit for non-governmental organizations to influence the political process in communities they serve. Local government in the circumpolar North is especially important because communities are geographically and politically isolated and therefore more reliant on the decisions of local politicians and administrators.

The northern village of Kuujjuaq (population 2000) is located in the Inuit region of Nunavik, northern Quebec, Canada. The municipality is responsible for services such as water delivery, sewage and garbage collection, road maintenance and recreational services. Kuujjuaq has an elected mayor and council as well as appointed administrators responsible for overseeing the delivery of services (see: <http://www.nvkuujjuaq.ca/en/index.htm>).

All village governments in Nunavik are represented on the council of the Kativik Regional Government (KRG). The KRG Council is comprised of one councilor or mayor from each village. The council is headed by an executive committee comprised of members appointed from and by the KRG Council. The Kativik Regional Government “makes decisions, establishes priorities and acts on behalf of the residents of the Kativik region [Nunavik]” (Kativik Regional Government). The KRG is responsible for local administration (municipal annual returns and elections); transportation and communications (regional and inter-municipal transportation services and facilities); policing; and labour training and utilization. The KRG also establishes minimum standards for municipalities to follow in areas such as the construction of dwellings and buildings; sanitary conditions on both public and private property; the prevention of water pollution and the cleansing and purification of municipal waters; and road construction and maintenance and waste management (Kativik Regional Government). Collectively, the municipal and regional governments of Nunavik provide citizens with a number of critical services. These bodies also provide citizens with a voice and forum to influence the political, economic and social life of their communities.

Another example of a regional government is the County of Finnmark (population 72,000) in northern Norway (<http://www.ffk.no/English/1707.aspx>). Since Norway has a unitary governance system, county level governments are subordinate to the central (national) government. This differs from a federal system where some regional governments have constitutionally defined powers that cannot be taken away or controlled without their consent. Norwegian counties do not have direct and exclusive representation in national-level institutions as an upper chamber of a national parliament. Representatives from constituencies in Finnmark

represent the region in the Norwegian national parliament, the Stortinget. In the Norwegian system power is decentralized and the Finnmark county government is responsible for a number of important policy fields especially social development. Finnmark has a county parliament, unlike the Kativik Regional Government, which is comprised of elected representatives from each municipality, the parliament in Finnmark is directly elected by county citizens. Like Nunavik, Finnmark is divided into municipalities with elected mayors and councils.

An important and unique feature of the Norwegian system is the Sámi Parliament (<http://www.samediggi.no/artikel.aspx?AId=884&Mid1=270>). The Sámi are an Indigenous people who live in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. In Norway, the Sámi have their own parliament, the Sámediggi. The Sámediggi consists of 43 representatives directly elected by registered Sámi in 13 constituencies across the country. Many Sámi live in the County of Finnmark, which has a cooperation agreement with the Sámi Parliament.

Some circumpolar regions have more entrenched forms of political autonomy. Unlike Nunavik, which is nested in the Canadian province of Quebec, the Canadian Territory of Nunavut is an example of a northern region that is a recognized constituent unit within a federal system of government. Nunavut (population 30,000) was created in 1999 following a negotiated land claim agreement between the Inuit of the eastern Arctic and the federal and territorial governments in 1993 and subsequent referendum on the division of the Northwest Territories.

### Learning Highlight 1

To find out more about the Sámiráddi or Sámi Council, the transnational organization that represents the Sámi of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, go to: <http://www.saamicouncil.net/?deptid=1113>

The Government of Nunavut is similar in terms of its political and administrative organization to other provinces and territories in the Canadian federation. It has an elected legislature and executive branch headed by a premier. Elected officials oversee government ministries and appointed public officials. In the Canadian federation, territories have less autonomy than provinces and a closer political relationship with the federal government. Nevertheless, the Government of Nunavut oversees a number of important policy areas including education, health, social services, justice and the environment. By comparison, in Nunavik these areas are overseen by the provincial government and delivered by regional organizations that answer to the provincial government.

The Government of Nunavut is connected to the Canadian political system through representation in intergovernmental forums. For example, the premier of Nunavut regularly meets with premiers of other provinces and territories and the federal prime minister at first ministers meetings to discuss matters of national importance. Intergovernmental meetings in specific policy areas such as health, education and the environment also take place on a regular basis between territorial, provincial and federal officials. Although the organization and responsibilities of the Government of Nunavut are similar to other provinces and territories, it has unique institutional features. For example, unlike most provinces and territories, it has a consensus model of government in which elected representatives do not belong to political

parties and reach decisions through consensus. This model is more consistent with the governance traditions of Nunavut Inuit.

### Learning Highlight 2

To learn more about the Arctic Council and the states and organizations that participate in this circumpolar governance body, go to: <http://www.arctic-council.org/>

The predominant position of states or countries within the international order means the eight countries that border the circumpolar North occupy an important place in this system of multilevel governance. The Arctic Eight include the Russian Federation, the United States, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Although mainland Denmark is not located in the Arctic, it is considered an Arctic country because of its historical association with Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Many of these national governments have specific ministries or departments that deal with northern and Arctic issues. Canada, for example, has the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index-eng.asp>). Other countries spread responsibility for northern and Arctic affairs across a number of different ministries and government agencies.

These countries are all members of the Arctic Council, a circumpolar body that serves as a forum for cooperation and discussion mainly on matters relating to environmental security.

Representatives of Indigenous peoples across the circumpolar North also actively participate in council sessions and deliberations through their status as Permanent Participants. Indigenous organizations represented in the Arctic Council include the Aleut International Association (AIA), the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Gwich'in Council International, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Sámi Council. These organizations play an influential role in discussions on a range of issues affecting the circumpolar North (Wilson, 2007).

### Learning Activity 2

Divide students into groups and assign each group a Permanent Participant. Research the activities of your group's Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council and write/present a short brief on the issue or issues that this Permanent Participant has advocated in the Arctic Council.

## The Northern Dimension of the European Union

The European Union (EU) is a supranational federation comprised of 27 member countries from western, central and southern Europe. Development of the EU's Northern Dimension Policy began after Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995. The policy was introduced in 1999 with participation of EU member states and non-EU states Norway, Iceland and the Russian Federation. The Northern Dimension Policy focuses on the EU's relationship with the Russian Federation in a number of critical areas such as environmental protection, nuclear contamination and economic cooperation.

## Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North

The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) is a non-governmental organization representing 41 Indigenous peoples in northern Russia, Siberia and the Russian Far East. Established in 1990 and registered as a public political movement in 1993, RAIPON's goal is to defend human rights and legal interests of its members, and assist them in confronting environmental, social and economic problems. According to the Arctic Council, RAIPON "works to guarantee the right of protection of native homelands and traditional way of life as well as the right to self governance according to national and international legal standards" (Arctic Council).

<http://www.raipon.org/Default.aspx?alias=www.raipon.org/english>

### 3.4 Horizontal Multilevel Governance

The preceding section outlined multilevel governance in the circumpolar North from local to global. There are distinct layers to this multilevel structure and linkages between these different layers are clear. Another dimension to the multilevel governance structure is horizontal in nature. Whereas vertical multilevel governance is an expression of the shift of state power from the national level upward to the supranational and international levels and downward to the regional or local levels, horizontal multilevel governance is an expression of the "outward" shift of state power to non-state (private) and quasi-state actors.

A good example of outward displacement of state power is the emergence of Aboriginal economic development corporations in the Canadian North. These corporations were originally created by land claim agreements between Aboriginal peoples and governments for the purpose of managing funds designated for Aboriginal beneficiaries of the land claims. In some cases they have played an active role in subsequent negotiations on regional autonomy.

One of the best examples of this governance type is the Makivik Corporation (Makivik) in Nunavik (<http://www.makivik.org/>). Makivik is an economic and cultural development corporation responsible for investing funds from the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, a land claim signed in 1975 by the Inuit of Nunavik, the Cree of northern Quebec, and the federal and provincial governments. Makivik operates as a private corporation investing in business ventures. Makivik's mandate is to use profits from these ventures to benefit northern Quebec Inuit and preserve and promote Inuit culture.

Since its creation in 1975, Makivik has played an important political role as a representative for Nunavik in self-government negotiations with the provincial and federal governments. Makivik is a prime example of the outward shift in political power to organizations not part of the traditional state structure. Economic development corporations in other parts of the Canadian North are taking on similar roles.

Another example of horizontal multilevel governance are transnational organizations that represent the collective interests of Indigenous peoples. A good example is the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), an organization that represents Inuit across the circumpolar north from Russia to Greenland. (<http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/index.php?ID=1&Lang=En>). While organizations such as the ICC fit into the vertical system of multilevel governance through its involvement in international forums such as the Arctic Council, it is not a typical state actor. The ICC is a non-governmental, transnational organization that includes representatives from each of the Inuit

regions across the circumpolar North. It does not have a democratic mandate as representative state bodies such as governments usually do. Nevertheless, the ICC carries a great deal of political weight among the Inuit and at the national and international levels.

### **3.5 State-Centered and Indigenous Multilevel Governance**

Another way of categorizing multilevel governance is according to individuals and groups represented. State-centered forms of multilevel governance represent citizens within defined territories and conform to established international state sovereignty norms. These governance structures can typically be located along a vertical continuum of state power. The most powerful actors within this structure are state governments. All other governments tend to define themselves by their relationship to state governments. Institutions of state-centered governance are typically public in nature, meaning they represent citizens with a defined territory rather than a specific group of people who share similar characteristics or status.

By contrast, Indigenous structures of multilevel governance tend to represent interests of specific Indigenous groups and communities. They are an outgrowth of the global struggle by colonized peoples to achieve self-determination and self-government. In some respects, they are also a response to the failures of state-centered institutions to properly represent the interests of Indigenous peoples. Given the predominance of the state, institutions and organizations that comprise Indigenous multilevel often directly engage with state structure. For example, many Canadian Inuit representative bodies and organizations are embedded within the existing state structure. A number of Inuit organizations are unique and do not fit within the traditional model of governance.

Although Indigenous governance focuses on the interests of Indigenous peoples, it is important to note there are two different models of Indigenous governance: public governance and ethnic governance. Both models are evident in the circumpolar North and often co-exist within the same region. Some governance structures that emerged from self-government and land claim negotiations in Nunavut and Nunavik are public. For example, the Nunavut Territorial Government and the Kativik Regional Government represent and are accessible by all people living in Nunavut and Nunavik, respectively, regardless of their ethnic background or status. However, in other regions access to government institutions is limited to specific groups. In the Inuit region of Nunatsiavut, “the Labrador Inuit Constitution uses an approach to citizenship in which all beneficiaries of the Land Claim Agreement are entitled to participate in Labrador Inuit self-government” (Labrador Inuit Constitution Summary, 2002). Similarly, other circumpolar Indigenous groups as the Sámi also restrict participation in their governance institutions to group members. Other governance structures, such as economic development corporations in northern Canada, have a mandate to serve specific interests of the Inuit beneficiaries to land claim agreements.

There are a number of reasons behind the choice of public versus ethnic governance models. The Inuit tend to employ the public model because Inuit comprise the majority of citizens in regions such as Nunavut and Nunavik so there is no danger of them being overwhelmed demographically and controlled politically by non-Inuit citizens. The public governance model may also have been part of a regional autonomy strategy to gain support from other government levels where public models and inclusivity are the norm. The choice of an ethnic model is usually due to

concern that non-Indigenous residents may use their demographic weight to gain political control of government institutions through democratic means. In the case of the Sámi, it may be because various Sámi parliaments serve Sámi in their respective countries and are not connected to a specific territory within these countries. Other regional government institutions (for example the Finnmark County government) are public in nature and serve the interests of all in the region, Indigenous or otherwise.

### Learning Highlight 3

To find out more about consensus decision-making (Aajiiqatigiingniq) and the other principles of Inuit traditional knowledge (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit - IQ) that are being incorporated into Nunavut's political system, go to:

<http://www.gov.nu.ca/hr/site/beliefsystem.htm>

Regardless of whether the public or ethnic governance model is used, Indigenous peoples in the circumpolar North have tried to “Indigenize” existing government institutions in order to make them more compatible with the socio-cultural milieu in which they operate. The Government of Nunavut developed a series of governance principles rooted in traditional practices and norms and is attempting to apply them to government operations, programs and policies. These principles are referred to as **Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)** and include respect for others; fostering good spirit and inclusivity; serving and providing for family and community; making decisions through discussion and consensus; skills development through practice, effort and action; working together for a common cause; being innovative and resourceful; respect for the land, animals and environment (Timpson, 2009).

A number of northern governments have adopted the consensus governance model. For instance, in the Canadian territories of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories political parties do not exist. Citizens run independently for office and decisions are made by consensus by elected members of the legislative assembly. This system was designed to avoid the acrimonious and competitive squabbling that takes place in western parliamentary government systems. It is also closer to the traditionally practiced form of decision-making used by Inuit peoples for thousands of years.

In the Russian Federation, northern regional governments conform to the public governance model. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, regional governments across Russia enjoyed a greater degree of political autonomy, in large part because the central government was weak and unable to project its authority at the regional level. This contributed to political and economic instability and confusion in the early 1990s. This situation was partially stabilized after the federal government under Boris Yeltsin signed a number of bilateral power sharing agreements with the regions, including a number of key northern regions like the Republic of Sakha and the Komi Republic. By the mid to late 1990s, the federal government regained some degree of political control over the country, but its power was not fully re-established until after the election of Vladimir Putin in 2000.

Between 2000 and 2008, Putin took steps to strengthen and entrench the power of the federal government at the expense of the regions, thereby strengthening the power *vertikal* or vertical line of authority from the federal to regional and local levels of government. These steps included the harmonization of regional laws with federal laws; the creation of seven federal districts, a move which enabled the federal government to gain greater control over the activities of the regional governments; and regional amalgamations. All these reforms affected northern regions, but regional amalgamations have had the most profound political and economic impact.

### 3.6 Indigenous Autonomy in the Circumpolar North

For many years following colonization, Indigenous peoples in the circumpolar North were politically marginalized and dominated by southern-based governments and interests. While outsiders still exert a great deal of control over the political destiny of the circumpolar North, Indigenous peoples have started to reverse this situation. Indigenous peoples play important roles in the development of innovative and effective governance models throughout the circumpolar North.

In northern Canada and the United States, the negotiation of land claim agreements provided a legal and political basis for the development of self-government arrangements. Starting in 1971, a number of Alaskan Indigenous groups signed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) with federal and state governments granting these groups title to lands throughout the state and compensation benefits (<http://www.ancsa.net/>). In Canada, land claims were negotiated with the Inuit and the Cree of northern Quebec in 1975, the Inuvialuit of the western Northwest Territories in 1984, the Inuit of the eastern Arctic in 1993, the Inuit of northern Labrador in 2003. Other circumpolar countries followed different paths. The Sámi of northern Europe established separate parliaments, while Greenland achieved **Self Rule** status within the Kingdom of Denmark. In the Russian Federation and its predecessor, the Soviet Union, northern Indigenous peoples exercise limited cultural and administrative autonomy. While there was hope the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 would lead to greater autonomy for Indigenous peoples in Russia, this has not occurred.

### 3.7 Nested Federalism in Russia and Canada

In Russia and Canada, a number of regions where Indigenous peoples live are integrated into a pre-existing system of multilevel governance through a form of regional autonomy called nested federalism. **Nested federalism** refers to autonomous territories within other recognized federal units. This form of federalism originated in the Soviet Union in the 1930s when specific territories known as autonomous *okrugs* (districts) were created to represent some northern Indigenous peoples. These regions were located within existing larger federal units. While the *okrugs* enjoyed limited cultural and administrative autonomy, under Soviet rule the political autonomy of these regions was constrained by the highly centralized Communist political system.

In the post-Soviet period, these regions were granted constitutional status as constituent units within the new Russian Federation and are represented in both chambers of Russia's federal parliament (the State *Duma* and the Council of the Federation) and have similar political and administrative features as other constituent units. The *okrugs* are also considered parts of larger

constituent units, host regions, and represented in the elected assemblies of their respective host regions.

Some *okrugs*, such as the Khanty Mansiisk Autonomous *Okrug* in western Siberia, have prospered in the post-Soviet period largely due to the existence of large oil deposits and negotiated shares of rents from these resources with its “host” region Tiumen *Oblast* and the federal government (Wilson, 2001). Other *okrugs* have not been as fortunate. Evenkiia and Taimyr (Dogano-Nenets) were merged into their host region (Krasnoiarsk Krai) and lost the autonomy they enjoyed as *okrugs* (Wilson, 2003). The impetus for regional amalgamations has been driven by desperate economic circumstances facing many northern regions in Russia. Many inhabitants of the regions view political mergers with larger, more prosperous and populated southern regions as a way to solve the economic problems they have experienced since the late Soviet period. Unfortunately, such economic solutions come at the expense of political autonomy.

Although one of the original goals of the autonomous *okrugs* was to provide northern Indigenous peoples with administrative and cultural autonomy, the current plight of Indigenous peoples in these regions suggests this is far from being achieved. In many *okrugs*, Indigenous peoples have been politically and demographically marginalized by migrants to the regions and, in the post-Soviet period, by interests connected to large resource companies. Even though *okrugs* such as Khanty Mansiisk still bear the name of two Indigenous groups, the Khants and the Mansii, their demographic presence and political influence in the region is extremely limited (Wilson, 2001).

Russia seems to be systematically dismantling its nested regions while other circumpolar countries are using nested federalism as a means of operationalizing Aboriginal self-government. In Canada, nested regions have been created in Nunavik (located in the province of Quebec), Nunatsiavut (located in the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador) and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (located in the Northwest Territories). Nested federalism is seen by Indigenous inhabitants and governments of these regions as a way of realizing autonomous Aboriginal self-government without challenging the territorial integrity of existing constituent units within Canada’s system of multilevel governance (Wilson, 2008).

### 3.8 Greenlandic Home Rule

One of the world’s most far-reaching experiments in Indigenous autonomy is in the Inuit region of Greenland (<http://uk.nanoq.gl/>). In 1979, Greenland, a former colony of Denmark, was granted **Home Rule** status under which the Greenlandic government was given control of domestic governance such as healthcare, education and the environment. Greenland continued to rely on Denmark for military security and some funding, but became an active participant in circumpolar affairs either directly through organizations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council or indirectly by participating in Danish delegations to meetings of the Arctic Council and other multilateral bodies. Greenland was represented in the Danish Parliament, the *Folketinget*.

#### Learning Activity 4

Research the Greenlandic government’s position on resource development. Debate the positive and negative consequences of the government’s position.

In 2008, 75.5 percent of Greenlanders voted in favour of Self Rule, a system of government that strengthens Greenland's autonomy from Denmark. Following implementation of Self Rule in June 2009, Greenland retained the authority and relationships it enjoyed under Home Rule and gradually took over other areas of domestic governance such as criminal justice and oil exploration. The latter is particularly important as the government feels exploitation of natural resources could provide the necessary revenue to make Greenland financially self-sufficient. Greenland will formally be "recognized under international law as a separate people from the Danes" (New York Times, 22/06/2009).

The majority of Greenland's population is Inuit. Greenland has chosen to adopt a public form of governance similar to the Danish parliamentary system. Greenland has an elected legislature (*Inatsisartut*) in which several political parties are represented. The government is controlled by Inuit and Kalaallisut, a dialect of Inuktitut. The Inuit language is the official language.

## Conclusion

This module has provided an overview of the different forms of governance in the circumpolar North. This multilevel governance system is complex and sophisticated, and while the organizations and institutions in it are varied and serve different constituencies and groups, their collective purpose is to provide Northerners with the capacity to control their own destiny. The historical development of multilevel governance in the circumpolar North is a reflection of grassroots initiatives by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Northerners in the public and private sectors. Despite many challenges and issues facing peoples and regions of the circumpolar North, enhanced autonomy through robust and effective governance is seen as the best means of responding to these problems.

## Discussion Questions

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1. Should decisions made by the Arctic Council be binding on all members? Should Indigenous Permanent Participants be made full members? Discuss.
2. The Inuit and Sámi are examples of multi-state peoples. What are some of the challenges they face in terms of coordinating a joint response to pressing issues affecting the circumpolar North?
3. What political tensions might exist between economic development corporations and elected governments in the Canadian North?
4. Are ethnically based forms of governance justifiable in a democratic system of government?
5. What are the benefits and shortcomings of nested federalism as a form of Aboriginal self-government?
6. Now that Greenland has achieved Self Rule, do you think Greenland should press for full independence from Denmark? What challenges would Greenland face if it became fully independent?

## **Study Questions**

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1. Explain the difference between the terms government and governance.
2. Compare and contrast the characteristics of vertical multilevel governance and horizontal multilevel governance and provide an example of each.
3. Why has Indigenous multilevel governance become an important response to the challenges facing Indigenous peoples in the circumpolar North?
4. Explain the difference between public and ethnic forms of governance.
5. Discuss the significance of Land Claim Agreements to the political and economic development of the circumpolar North.
6. Outline similarities and differences between nested federalism in the Russian Federation and Canada
7. Why did the Greenland Government set up the Greenland Home Rule Commission in 1999-2000?
8. What were the Greenland Home Rule Commission's recommendations for making Greenland less financially dependent on Denmark?
9. Did the Greenland Home Rule Commission support the strengthening of Greenlandic participation in international affairs? What recommendations did the Commission make in this area?

## **Glossary of Terms**

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**Decentralization:** the transfer of power and authority from one level of government to another level of government. Typically, the transfer takes place between national and regional or local governments.

**Ethnic Governance:** governance structures and practices that represent the interests of a specific ethnic group.

**Federalism:** a system of government in which power and authority are divided between two or more autonomous levels of government.

**Governance:** the administration or management of activities carried out by institutions in the state and non-state sectors. The term governance refers to the structures that govern as well as the process of governing.

**Home Rule:** a model of territorial autonomy that defined the relationship between Greenland and Denmark from 1979 until 2009.

**Horizontal Multilevel Governance:** a governance system that links traditional governments with quasi-state and non-state (private) actors.

**Indigenous Autonomy:** the ability of Indigenous peoples to exercise political autonomy and control over a defined territory or region.

**Indigenous Multilevel Governance:** a governance system that represents the interests of specific Indigenous groups and communities. These groups and communities may or may not be recognized at the international or national levels.

**Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ):** principles of good governance based on Inuit traditions and developed specifically for use in the Territory of Nunavut.

**Multilevel Governance:** a system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers – supranational, national, regional, local.

**Nested Federalism:** a system of federal governance in which autonomous territories exist within other recognized constituent units.

**Public Governance:** governance structures and processes that represent the interests of all people within a defined territory regardless of their ethnic status or cultural background.

**Self Rule:** the current model of territorial autonomy in Greenland.

**State-Centered Multilevel Governance:** a governance system that includes nationally and internationally recognized territories.

**Supranational Federation:** a system of federal governance that is comprised of states or countries rather than sub-national regions. An example of a supranational federation is the European Union, a supranational federation comprised of 27 states.

**Unitary Political System:** a system of government in which power is concentrated in a national or central government. Regional governments may exist, but they are subordinate to the national government.

**Vertical Multilevel Governance:** a governance system that links governments and governance bodies along a vertical axis from the local to global levels.

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