



The Sámi

– one people in
four countries

- 40,000 Sámis in Norway
- 20,000 Sámis in Sweden
- 7,500 Sámis in Finland
- 2,000 Sámis in Russia

THE SÁMI are the indigenous people of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The Sámi are one people residing across the national borders of these four countries. They have their own traditional areas, with a distinct language, culture, livelihood and history.

“*Sápmi*” is the name of the traditional homeland of the Sámi. The term is found in all Sámi dialects. It derives from the Sámis’ own name for themselves, *sámit* or *sápmelaččat*. In the past, they were identified by various derogative terms: “lapper” (Lapps) or “finner” (Finns) in Norway, in Sweden “lappar” (Lapps), and “lappalaiset” (Lapps) in Finland. Today, the name, Sámi, or Saami, has been incorporated into the English language, including in reference books, and within the global indigenous people’s movement in which the Sámis are active participants.

There are source materials documenting that Sámis have lived in those regions in Scandinavia and on the Kola Peninsula where permanent Sámi settlements exist even today. In the interior of Finnmark County in Norway and Utsjoki Municipality in Finland, the Sámis are in the majority. It is estimated that the number of Sámis is between 60,000 and 70,000: approximately 40,000 in Norway; 20,000 in Sweden; 7,500 in Finland and 2,000 in Russia.

The definition of the term “Sámi” in the Norwegian Sámi Act of 1987 is based on a combination of linguistic and subjective criteria. Section 2–6 of the Sámi Act stipulates the following criteria for the right to be included in the Sámi census: “Everyone who declares that they consider themselves to be Sámi, and who either has Sámi as his or her home language, or has or has had a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent with Sámi as his or her home language, or who is a child of someone who is or has been registered in the Sámi census, has the right to be enrolled in the Sámi census in the municipality of residence.” The main application of this definition is limited to the identification of individuals who are eligible to vote or to be elected to the Sámi Parliament. Sámi individuals from Finland, Russia and Sweden who have resided in Norway for a minimum of three years are entitled to be registered in the Sámi census in Norway, subject to their fulfilment of the criteria as stipulated in section 2–6 of the Sámi Act.

www.samediggi.no; www.galdu.org
The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



His Majesty King Harald, opening the 5th Sámediggi, 9 October 2005. PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.

The Sámediggi (The Sámi Parliament) in Norway – the Sámis' democratically elected political body

THE SÁMEDIGGI (the Sámi Parliament) in Norway is elected through general elections by and among the Sámis in the country. It is an independent political organ and is the highest representative body of the Sámis in Norway. The legal basis for establishing the Sámediggi is found in section 1-2 of the Sámi Act, which states that the Sámis shall have their own national Sámi Parliament elected by and amongst the Sámis in Norway. The establishment of the Sámediggi is a central element in the fulfilment of Section 110a of the Norwegian Constitution, which was adopted by the Storting (the National Parliament of Norway) on 21 April 1988. Section 110a of the Constitution states that it is the obligation of the State authorities to create the conditions necessary for the Sámis to protect and develop their language, their culture and their society." The political mandate of the Sámediggi includes all issues that the Parliament considers affect Sámi interests.

The Sámediggi has 43 representatives (increased in 2005 from 39) elected by and amongst Sámis on the basis of a Sámi census. The country is divided into 13 constituencies. Elections to the Sámediggi are held every fourth year simultaneously with the elections to the Storting. The plenary of the Sámediggi is the Parliament's highest body and it is sovereign in the execution of its duties within the framework of the Sámi Act. The plenary sessions are held four times a year. In the interim, between the plenary sessions, the Sámediggi's Executive Council, under the leadership of the President of the Sámediggi, is responsible for executing the roles and responsibilities of the Sámediggi. The members of the Executive Council, including the President, are elected by and amongst the Sámediggi's representatives. Moreover, the Sámediggi has a number of thematic committees mandated to address specific substantive issues.



Sámediggi – Sámi Parliament in plenary assembly. PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.

The Sámediggi's activities are twofold: (1) to serve as the Sámis' elected political body to promote political initiatives and (2) to carry out the administrative tasks delegated from national authorities or by law to the Sámi Parliament. As a political organ, the Sámediggi works with the issues that the Sámediggi considers to relate to or are of special interest for the Sámi people. The Sámediggi takes the initiative and states its view on all matters of relevance to its work.

The State provides the necessary financial resources for the Sámediggi to fulfil its mandate. Funds are granted through various national budget lines. In the Government structure, the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion has the main responsibility for Sámi affairs, including the Government's responsibilities towards the Storting regarding the Sámediggi's use of funds. This Ministry is mandated to request financial reports from the Sámediggi on the utilisation of these funds, when this is deemed necessary. However, the Sámediggi has a relatively high degree of fiscal autonomy and allocates and distributes its funds according to its own priorities.

www.samediggi.no

www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

The Sámediggi's administrative office is in Karasjok. The new building was opened in 2000. PHOTO: JOHN T. SOLBAKK.



The Sámediggi

(The Sámi Parliament) in Norway as an administrative body

AT THE TIME of its establishment in 1989, the extent of the responsibility that was transferred and assigned to the Sámediggi was modest. The Norwegian Sámi Council of 1964, which was a body appointed by State authorities to address specific Sámi matters, was brought to an end with the establishment of the Sámediggi, and the tasks were transferred to the Sámediggi. One of these tasks was the management of the Sámi Development Fund, which at that time had an annual allocation of approximately 8 million Norwegian Kroner. This fund was used for grants to Sámi organisations, Sámi arts and crafts and handicrafts in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Ministry of Local Government.

Since its establishment, the Sámediggi has gradually assumed the administrative responsibilities for Sámi issues. Since 1992, the Sámediggi has had the formal responsibility for the development of the Sámi language in Norway, including a fund for annual allocations for this purpose to municipalities and county council districts with Sámi populations. In 1993, the Sámediggi assumed the responsibility for Sámi culture with a Sámi culture fund from the Norwegian Council for Cultural Affairs. Since 1994, the Sámediggi is responsible for the protection of Sámi cultural heritage sites from the Ministry of the Environment, the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and the Tromsø Museum. In 2000, the Sámediggi took over the Sámi Educational Council's functions from the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs. The Sámediggi has the responsibility for the development of Sámi teaching aids with the allocation of an annual permanent grant for this purpose.

The main administrative office of the Sámediggi is located in Karasjok. The Sámediggi also has offices in Kautokeino, Nesseby, Kåfjord in Troms County, Tysfjord and Snåsa. There are approximately 115 employees in the Sámediggi (2006). The Sámediggi's total budget for 2006 was about 260 million Norwegian Kroner.

www.samediggi.no; www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



PHOTO: ALTAPOSTEN.

The damming of the Alta-Kautokeino Watercourse (The Alta Case)

THE DAMMING of the Alta-Kautokeino Watercourse is the most controversial hydroelectric power development in Norwegian history. In 1978, the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) adopted a bill for the construction of a 110-metre high dam near Alta. This was a considerably smaller hydroelectric power plant than originally planned; the initial plan from 1970 involved submerging the Sámi village of Máze.

The development project met strong opposition from the civil society, particularly from the Sámi society. The first demonstrations against the development were organised that same year in Máze. In the years that followed, the opponents organised demonstrations, campaigns and various movements in order to get the Parliamentary majority to reverse the plan to build the hydroelectric power plant. Sámi groups held hunger strikes in front of the Storting. The opposition was also based on environmental concerns, including that the damming would harm salmon fisheries in the Alta River. The Sámi rights' aspect of the opposition was based on Sámi land and water rights claims, and the negative impact the project would have on the semi-nomadic reindeer husbandry communities that used the areas along the river as seasonal grazing land for their reindeer herds. The opposition culminated in the largest civil disobedience action in Norway after World War II when, in January 1981, some 600 policemen had to forcibly remove the demonstrators from the project site. This conflict ended up in the Norwegian Supreme Court, which ruled in favour of the development project. The power plant and dam were finished in 1987. However, the Sámi rights conflict related to this project led to a number of important achievements for the Sámi. As a result of the strong Sámi opposition against the development of the Alta-Kautokeino Watercourse, in 1980 and 1981 a number of meetings were held to conduct negotiations between the Government and a Sámi delegation appointed by the Norwegian Sámi Association, the Sámi Reindeer Herders' Association of Norway and the Sámi Council's Norwegian Section. The result was that the Government appointed two committees to discuss Sámi cultural issues and Sámi legal relations. The latter committee was called the Sámi Rights Committee, and prioritised towards a democratically elected body for the Sámis. This resulted in the Sámi Act of 1987, which in turn is the foundation for the establishment of the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) in Norway, which opened for the first time on 9 October 1989. The other concrete results of the Sámi Rights Committee are the 1988 amendment of the Norwegian Constitution, and the adoption of the Finnmark Act in 2005.

www.samediggi.no • www.galdu.org
 The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



The foundation for Norwegian Sámi policy

THE SÁMIS are the indigenous people in Norway. According to international law, the Sámi people are entitled to special protection, including of their cultural values and rights.

The Norwegian legislation that forms the legal foundation for the Sámi policy is first and foremost made up of the following:

- Article 110a of the Constitution
- Act of 12 June 1987 No. 56 concerning the Sámi Parliament (the Sámediggi) and other legal matters pertaining to the Sámis (the Sámi Act).

Article 110a of the Constitution states: “It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sámi people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life.” The constitutional amendment implies a legal, political and moral obligation for Norwegian authorities to create an environment conducive to the Sámis themselves influencing on the development of the Sámi community. Article 110a of the Constitution is a constitutional guarantee for the Sámis as an indigenous people, as a legal and political guarantee for the protection of the Sámi language, culture and society. Even though the constitutional provision does not expressly use the term “indigenous people”, it is assumed that the State’s obligation as expressed in the Constitution is based on the fact that the Sámis are the indigenous people in Norway. Much of the positive development of the Sámi policy in Norway in the wake of the establishment of the Sámediggi can be directly related to the political and legal framework established by the amendment of the Constitution.

Chapter 1–2 of the Sámi Act states: “...the Sámis shall have their own national Sámi Parliament elected by and amongst the Sámis”. Chapter 2 of the Sámi Act also contains decisions concerning the Sámediggi’s authority and area of activity, election rules, etc. Pursuant to Chapter 2–1 of the Sámi Act, the Sámis shall themselves determine the Sámediggi’s area of activity.

Section 1-5 of the Sámi Act establishes that the Sámi and Norwegian languages have equal standing in Norway. They are equal pursuant to detailed provisions in Chapter 3 of the Sámi Act concerning use of the Sámi language.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion, Bjarne Håkon Hansen, at the Sámediggi, autumn 2005, guided by Aili Keskitalo, newly elected President of the Sámediggi. PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.

Sámi issues

in central administration in Norway

THE DEPARTMENT OF SÁMI AND MINORITY AFFAIRS in the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion has the main responsibility for developing and maintaining an overall governmental policy towards the Sámis. The Department is the central administrative and coordinating organ concerning Sámi issues. As such, it also serves as the Secretariat for a separate inter-ministerial coordinating organ for Sámi issues.

The Department works to make conditions favourable for the Sámis for further development and strengthening of their culture, language, and industrial and community life, which also includes developing contacts and dialogues between the Government and the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament). The Department is also responsible for co-ordination of the Government's cooperation with the other Nordic States concerning Sámi issues. It also participates in the development of Norway's international positions on indigenous people's affairs.

The Government and the Sámediggi have jointly developed procedures for when and how consultations between Norwegian authorities and the Sámediggi shall be carried out. Such consultations shall take place when the issue concerned can directly affect Sámi interests. As of January 2006, detailed guidelines are being prepared dealing with how the consultation procedures can be implemented in a practical way.

www.dep.no/aid/
www.samediggi.no
www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



The UN Building. PHOTO: TORIKEL RASMUSSEN.

Norway's international obligations

NORWAY HAS ACCEPTED specific obligations under several international conventions, declarations and agreements applicable to minorities and indigenous peoples. Both sets of obligations are applicable to the Sámis as an indigenous people and minority, and establish a framework for the Norwegian Sámi policy. Some of the most important instruments are:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular Articles 1 and 27 (1966)
- ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989)
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular Articles 2, 17 (d) and 30 (1989)
- The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)
- The Council of Europe's Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (1992).

In addition to legally binding international instruments, a number of international declarations are important elements of the framework for Norway's Sámi policy, including Agenda 21 – adopted by the United Nations Conference for Environment and Development (1992), particularly Chapter 26, and the Declaration and Programme of Action from the World Conference on Human Rights (1993).

Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has been the most important international human rights provision in the development of the Norwegian Sámi policy and recognition of Sámi rights under domestic law. Article 27 states that: "In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities, shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or use their own language." The Article protects minorities, and indigenous peoples, against discrimination. The State is also obliged to adopt positive measures to protect the identity of an indigenous people or minority and the rights of its members to enjoy their culture and language and to practise their religion. It requires that the rights contained in the provision are not denied.



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues first leader Ole Henrik Magga. PHOTO: UN LIBRARY.

With regard to the exercise of the cultural rights protected under Article 27, it is recognised by relevant United Nations bodies that culture manifests itself in many forms, including a particular way of life associated with the use of land resources, especially in the case of indigenous peoples. That right may include such traditional activities as fishing, hunting or reindeer herding.

The ILO Convention No.169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples contains provisions dealing exclusively with indigenous and tribal people's rights. Norway was the first country to ratify the ILO Convention in 1990. The ILO Convention recognises that indigenous peoples are entitled to exercise control over and manage their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and to maintain and develop their identities, languages and religions, within the framework of the States in which they live. The Convention also contains provisions concerning indigenous people's rights to lands and natural resources. Indigenous people's access to their lands and resources are regarded as central for their material and cultural survival as distinct peoples.

www.dep.no/aid/

www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Three Presidents photographed in February 2005. Lars Anders Baer, the Sámediggi, Sweden, Pekka Aikio, the Sámediggi, Finland and Sven-Roald Nystø, former President of the Sámediggi, Norway. PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.

The Nordic Sámi Convention

THE CONCEPT OF A NORDIC SÁMI CONVENTION was first raised by the Sámi Council – a pan-Sámi non-governmental organisation, established in 1956 – at its periodic four-year conference, the Sámi Conference, in 1986. The Sámi Conference reiterated its recommendation in 1992. The issue was brought up in 1998 in a joint meeting of the Sámi Rights Committees in Finland, Norway and Sweden.

During the 46th session of the Nordic Council (joint body of the Nordic States) held in Reykjavik, Iceland on 28 February 1995, the Ministers responsible for Sámi issues from Finland, Norway and Sweden met and decided to start the work on a Nordic Sámi Convention.

In the autumn of 2002, the Ministers responsible for Sámi affairs in Finland, Norway and Sweden, together with the Presidents of the Sámediggis (Sámi Parliaments) in these three countries, appointed an expert group to prepare a Nordic Sámi Convention. After three years of intense work, the group of experts submitted its proposal at the annual joint meeting of the Ministers responsible for Sámi affairs and the Presidents of the three Sámediggis on 16 November 2005 in Helsinki. The expert group was led by former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Norway, Professor Carsten Smith.

The proposal for the Convention consists of 51 articles divided into seven chapters. The overall objective of the draft Convention is to affirm and strengthen the rights of the indigenous Sámi people with particular emphasis on securing and developing the Sámi language, culture, livelihoods and society. The draft Convention recognises the Sámis as the indigenous people of the three countries, and as one people residing across national borders. The proposed Convention contains a set of proposed minimum standards, based on existing and emerging international human rights standards.

The Expert Group proposes that the Convention should be subject to ratification by Finland, Norway and Sweden, and that ratification should not take place until the three Sámi Parliaments have given their approval. The draft Convention is currently under discussion in the three countries.

www.samediggi.no

www.galdu.org

www.dep.no/aid/

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



The Finnmark Act and the Finnmark Estate

THE FINNMARK ACT was adopted by the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) in the spring of 2005. The Act involves the transfer of approximately 95 % (about 46,000 km²) of the area in Finnmark to Finnmark's inhabitants through a new agency called the Finnmark Estate.

The Finnmark Act and the establishment of the Finnmark Estate is in response to demands from the Sámis that Sámi rights to lands and waters needed to be acknowledged and resolved. Consequently, in 1984, the Government appointed the Sámi Rights Committee to discuss these questions and make the necessary conclusions and recommendations. The Sámi Rights Committee's recommendations have formed the basis for the Finnmark Act, and the establishment of the Finnmark Estate. For further information, see sheet # 4 on the Alta Dam.

Norwegian authorities were of the view that Sámi use of lands, waters and natural resources did not establish any formal legal rights. This was due to the misconception that a nomadic way of life did not lead to any land rights. This view has changed, and gradually, Sámi rights to lands, waters and resources are being strengthened.

The basis for the Finnmark Act is that the Sámis, through protracted traditional use of the land and water areas, have acquired individual and/or collective ownership and right to use lands and waters in Finnmark County. One of the most important objectives of the Act is to give the population in Finnmark greater influence in the administration of the property in the county. Discussion and recognition of existing rights is an important element of the Finnmark Act, and the rights of use and ownership in Finnmark must still be discussed and clarified further. A commission and a tribunal will be set up for this purpose. The principles of established custom and immemorial usage will form the foundation for this work. Fishing rights in the sea are not included in the Act. However, fishing rights in saltwater in Finnmark County will be subject to further elaborations and discussions.

The Finnmark Estate is managed by a board of directors, with six members, three appointed by Finnmark County Council District, and an equal number appointed by the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament).

www.finnmarksloven.no, www.galdu.org
The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

Reindeer husbandry – an exclusive Sámi livelihood in Norway

REINDEER HUSBANDRY is a traditional Sámi livelihood. In Norway, it is legally protected as an exclusive Sámi livelihood. This means that within the reindeer grazing areas, the right to herd reindeer is a statutory, exclusive right for persons of Sámi descent with the required linkage to a reindeer herding family. Approximately 2,800 people are engaged in reindeer husbandry in Norway.

The reindeer grazing districts in Norway stretch from the border with Russia in the north-east to Femunden in the southeast. The country is divided into six reindeer herding regions, which in turn are divided into 82 districts.

The Sámi reindeer herding communities move their semi-domesticated herds between coast and inland, and in some cases, across the national borders between Norway and Sweden. The reindeer communities are organised in “siidas”, which are working partnerships where several families move together between seasonal grazing lands. Today, the nomadic lifestyle has been replaced by a modernised, semi-nomadic lifestyle. However, the reindeer herds are still moved between different seasonal grazing lands.

Today, reindeer husbandry is a modernised livelihood with a large degree of mechanisation and use of technological innovations. However, in their daily operations, reindeer herders still depend on the traditional knowledge transmitted from earlier generations, such as the interaction between nature and the use of grazing areas under changing climatic conditions.

Reindeer meat makes up only a small part of the total meat market in Norway. Reindeer meat is an ecologically sound product, and valued as such. However, Sámi reindeer husbandry is not only about providing meat for family consumption and sale, but also a manifestation of an important part of the Sámi culture. It is a very specific Sámi way of life which goes far beyond being just an occupation or income-providing activity, and is an important material foundation for the Sámi culture.

www.reindriftno

www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



PHOTO: MIHKKU SOLBAKK.

Salmon fishing in Finnmark's rivers



FOR A VERY LONG TIME, the Sámis fished and had the fishing rights in the rivers in Finnmark, and the Sámi settlements (“siida”) organised the fishing in the large rivers. There was collective fishing with the use of several types of fishing tackle.

In Deatnu – the Tana River – the residents also collaborated across the international border. Starting in the 1870s, Norwegian and Finnish authorities introduced regulations in the Tana River. Several traditional fishing methods were forbidden in the upper part of the river, such as “duhásteapmi”, where they used the light from fire to lure the salmon to the boat, “goldin”, fishing with drift- and dragnets, and “rastábuođđun”, where they closed the river with nets. The rules did not consider the Sámis built-up rights. An Act of 1888 further regulated the river, but guaranteed that persons with a permanent connection to the Tana Valley could retain the fishing right they had acquired through “immemorial usage”. An Act of 1911 reduced the rights holders by claims to agricultural production as conditions for receiving salmon fishing rights. The objective of the special fishing rights in Tana today is that the right shall be exercised by the rights holders themselves. The annual meeting makes decisions concerning administration of the river.

In the Alta River, the right to fish has been considerably restricted throughout history. In a judgment in the 1880s, the local population, i.e. the Sámis, immigrated Norwegians and Kvens, had their control of the river established. The municipality's inhabitants have the right to fishing in the Alta River as a public right of access. Active farmers in the river valley have the fishing rights. Before Midsummer Eve, the inhabitants of Alta have free access to fishing. The fishing rights after Midsummer Eve (which is of particularly great value) are administered by Alta Laksefiskeri Interessentskap. People from Kautokeino Municipality have traditions of fishing in the Alta River. There is discussion about whether a public right of access to fishing in the river should also apply to Sámi reindeer herdsman and inhabitants in Kautokeino Municipality.

Salmon fishing in the Neiden River has been of great importance for the East Sámi (Skolt Sámi) community and way of life. The East Sámi have had their summer residence by the Skoltefossen waterfall where they have participated in cast-net fishing. The fishing rights are connected to the right of ownership a land, an operational requirement and a residential requirement. The incomes from the fishing go to those who are members of Neidenelvns Fiskefellesskap. At the annual meeting, decisions are made concerning how the fishing is to be done.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006



PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



The Sámi flag

and Sámi People's Day

- *6 February is Sámi People's Day*
- *The flag was approved by the Nordic Sámi Council in 1986*
- *The flag is common to the Sámis of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden*

SÁMI PEOPLE'S DAY – 6 February – is commemorated by Sámis in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. It is celebrated in different ways in the different Sámi communities. In Norway, by a legal amendment, the Sámi People's Day is an official flag-flying day. The Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) has the authority to adopt detailed guidelines for usage of the Sámi flag in Norway.

The Sámi People's Day is a commemoration of the first Sámi National Council meeting, which was held on 6 February 1917 in the Norwegian city of Trondheim. This was the first time in history that Northern Sámis and Southern Sámis from Norway and Sweden came together to discuss matters of common interest. Ms. Elsa Laula Renberg – a well-known Sámi leader – was one of the prime organisers of this meeting, which brought together more than 100 Sámi leaders.

The Sámi flag was approved at the 13th Nordic Sámi Conference in Åre, Sweden in 1986. The flag was designed by Ms. Astrid Båhl from Northern Troms in Norway. The motif derives from the “goavddis” (the shamanic drum used in rituals by the Sámi people), and the poem “Beaivvi bártnit” by Anders Fjellner (1795–1876) – which is based on a traditional legend describing the Sámis as the sons and daughters of the sun. The flag's circle symbolises the sun and the moon.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

The Sámi language

THE SÁMI LANGUAGE belongs to the Finno-Ugrian branch of the Uralic languages, and is linguistically related to the Baltic-Finnic languages (Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian). The Sámi language and traditional homeland stretches across the northern parts of Finland, Norway and Sweden, as well as the Kola Peninsula in Russia. In Scandinavia, it stretches as far south as Femunden on the Norwegian side and to Dalarne in Sweden.

Northern Sámi is the largest Sámi dialect and is spoken by Sámis in Finland, Norway and Sweden. In 1979, a common written language for the Northern Sámi branch of the Sámi language was adopted. The orthography is close to the spoken language.

The Sámi language is rich in words and expressions describing nature, fauna, formations in nature and snow; terms that are important in hunting, fishing and reindeer herding societies. The changes in the Sámi lifestyle have resulted in loss of many particular terms and expressions which are no longer relevant or in use today.

A study conducted by the Sámi Trade and Development Centre in 2000 for the Sámi Language Council estimates Sámi language users in Norway at approximately 25,000. About half of these speak, read and write Sámi. There has been a positive development the past twenty years, particularly in the administrative area for Sámi language and encompassed by the Sámi Language Act in Norway, i.e. the municipalities of Nesseby, Tana, Karasjok, Porsanger and Kautokeino in Finnmark County, and Kåfjord in Troms County. Today, Southern Sámi is the most vulnerable Sámi dialect, since the Sámi language is no longer the everyday language in many South Sámi families. The Lule Sámi dialect is in a somewhat better position as many children are now learning Sámi at home and in school.

www.samediggi.no

www.galdu.org

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.





Radio and television

IN THE AUTUMN of 1946, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation's (NRK) office in Tromsø started sending 15-minute weekly radio broadcasts in Sámi. Since that time, the broadcasts have increased to more than 30 hours a week. NRK's Sámi Radio Section was established in 1976 with its main office in Karasjok. The NRK Sámi Radio in Norway now has eight local offices around the country.

In addition to the daily broadcasts in Northern Sámi, NRK Sámi Radio produces regularly scheduled radio broadcasts for the Lule and Southern Sámi-speaking populations. Both of these dialects have 30-minute radio programmes every week and newspapers on text TV, which are also offered on the Internet. The local offices in Tysfjord and Snåsa produce programmes in Lule and Southern Sámi, respectively.

In the autumn of 2001, NRK in Norway and Sveriges Television (SVT) in Sweden started jointly sending daily 10-minute televised newscasts in Sámi in these two countries. One year later, the Finnish Broadcasting Company's (YLE) Rundradio joined this cooperation. Today, the broadcasts are 15 minutes and are produced by NRK Sámi Radio with input from Sweden and Finland. The broadcasts are sent on national television in Norway, Finland and Sweden. In addition, NRK Sámi Radio produces weekly children's programmes in Sámi, which are also broadcast on national television in Norway.

Through a pan-Nordic project, the Sámi radio stations have established an Internet news service. Work is in process to increase the Internet offer with both cultural and entertainment services.

In addition, the commercial radio stations P4 and Kanal (Channel) 24, and the commercial television station TV 2, broadcast programmes in Sámi and on topics of Sámi interest to meet the requirements of licensing terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Culture.



Newspapers

THE FIRST SÁMI LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, *Muitalægje* ('The Narrator'), was published in 1873. Two years later, the paper ceased publication as the Sámi publishers did not have the necessary finances to continue. During the next 50 years, several attempts were made to generate a permanent Sámi language newspaper. All of these attempts failed after a short time, because of a lack of financial resources and due to the fact that they were directly opposed by the majority population and Norwegian authorities. This was during the period of Norway's new official policy of assimilation of the Sámis into the majority population, and direct suppression of the Sámi language.

Today's Sámi newspapers also face difficult financial challenges. Due to the relatively small number of Sámis who are literate in their own language, the readership is not large enough to sustain Sámi language newspapers solely through subscriptions and single-copy sales. The Government supports the Sámi press with a permanent subsidy through the annual national budget. In 2005, the subsidy totalled approximately 13 million Norwegian Kroner.

The following newspapers receive Sámi press support today:

Ságat, published in Norwegian. It is published in Porsanger Municipality, twice a week. In 2005, the circulation was about 2,300 per edition.

Min Áigi, published in Sámi. It is a weekly paper published in Karasjok Municipality. In 2005, the circulation was about 1,150 per edition.

Áššu, also published in Sámi. This is also a weekly publication – published in Kautokeino Municipality. In 2005, the circulation was about 1,050 per edition.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (1943–2001), nom de plume Áiloahš, is probably the most famous Sámi author. Áiloahš was a lyric poet, “joiker” (performer of “joik-song”, songs of the Sámi people), a composer and pictorial artist.

PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.

Sámi literature

IN THE 1970S, Sámi literature began to flourish. This growth of both Sámi fiction and non-fiction can be directly attributed to the Sámis’ struggle and to other Sámi cultural expressions of that time.

Sámi authors, like most other indigenous people’s authors, write for a very small audience whose formal education has often been, and still is, limited. It has therefore been important for the Sámi cultural advocates to get the Norwegian authorities to establish support schemes for literature, amongst other things. This was important because the reader and buyer base was and is so small that no publishing house can count on covering its production costs through regular sales. Neither can the authors count on any particular profit on their books through sales.

Starting in 1984, Sápmi (the name Sápmi or “Sameland” is used to designate the Sámi homeland in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden), Greenland and the Faeroe Islands were given the opportunity to nominate their own books for the Nordic Council’s literary award. Nils-Aslak Valkeapää from Sápmi received the Nordic Council’s literary award in 1991. Valkeapää was an internationally recognised writer and artist, and his works have been translated into several Nordic languages and English.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Publishing companies

INDPENDENT SÁMI PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES are of a relatively recent date. Along with an increasing Sámi language text production starting in the 1970s came the need for special Sámi publishing companies that could undertake the publishing responsibilities. Previously, some authors published their own books. In 1912, for example, editor and author Anders Larsen published his own book, *Beivvi Álgu*, which is regarded as the first Sámi language novel.

The Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) in Norway administers financial production support for Sámi language textbooks and fiction. It also allocates annual financial support for the operation of Sámi publishing companies. The annual production of Sámi book is limited to around 30 titles. This includes books for children, youth and adults.

Today, the largest Sámi publishing house is Davvi Girji OS, which also has the most Sámi publications in its portfolio. Important Sámi publishing companies today also include Dat O.S in Kautokeino and Idut AS in Porsanger, both of which publish books and music. Yet another Sámi publishing company, ABC-Company in Karasjok, only publishes electronically. These publishing houses are all geographically located in the Northern Sámi region, but they publish also in Lule and Southern Sámi. The only Sámi publishing house outside the Northern Sámi region is Báhkko, located in Tysfjord, which publishes in Lule Sámi. These publishing houses receive financial support from the Sámediggi for their operational costs.

In December 2002, a number of Sámi non-fiction authors formed a foundation for the purpose of publishing books, and in particular non-fiction and documentary literature. The foundation is called ČálliidLágádus, (Norwegian: Forfatternes Forlag, English: Authors' Publisher).

Net addresses for Sámi publishing companies:

www.davvi.no
www.calliidlagadus.org
www.idut.no
www.dat.net
www.abc-company.no

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Library

Sámi Special Library in Karasjok

THE SÁMI SPECIAL LIBRARY serves as the administrative library for the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) in Karasjok.

The library's main tasks are acquisition, storage, organisation and communication of books and other material in the Sámi language and about Sámi relations. The library receives one copy of everything that is published in Norway where the entire or substantial parts of the text are in Sámi. The Sámi Special Library primarily functions as the libraries' library, informs about its own activities and Sámi relations in general, and lends materials to other libraries. The library's collection consists of more than 35,000 volumes, videos as well as audio books, music recordings, microfilms, language courses, periodicals and newspapers. The library's catalogue is available on the Internet. Access to the library is free and open to all.

Sámi Special Library: www.samediggi.no

Book buses – Mobile libraries

To respond to the needs of a dispersed population, an addition to the regular libraries, special book buses, provide opportunities to borrow Sámi books and books about Sámi culture, as well as videos and music. Tana and Nesseby municipalities in Finnmark County have established a collaboration through which they provide their inhabitants with mobile library services. The Sámi municipalities of Karasjok and Porsanger in Norway have a similar collaboration together with their neighbouring Sámi municipality of Utsjoki in Finland. The municipalities of Kautokeino and Kåfjord have their own mobile library services. A Southern Sámi book bus with its base in Hattfjelldal in Nordland County services the Southern Sámi region, which includes several municipalities. The Lule Sámi book bus, with its base in Drag in Tysfjord, Nordland County, covers the Lule Sámi Region in Norway.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

Sámi language and cultural centres in Norway

SÁMI LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL CENTRES are important meeting places for Sámis. They serve an important purpose in providing a space for Sámis to share experiences and communicate about matters related to Sámi language and culture in their communities.

The language centres work in relation to the educational system, collaborate with local Sámi institutions and organisations, and are part of the Sámi teachers' networks in the region. The centres also hold classes for children and adults and organise various local Sámi events. The language centres also function as arenas for interaction between generations. Many of the language centres collaborate with several municipalities, some also with several counties or countries.

The language centres receive annual financial support from the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament).

The Sámediggi's Language Motivation Award

The Sámediggi bestows a Language Motivation Award to individuals, institutions or organisations that deserve special recognition for their efforts to preserve, strengthen and promote the Sámi language. The award is 10,000 Norwegian Kroner and an artistically designed certificate. The award was presented for the first time in year 2000.

www.samediggi.no

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

The Árran Lule Sámi Centre in Drag in Tysfjord was opened in 1994. PHOTO: ODDMUND PAULSEN.



Beaivváš production. PHOTO: Mlŋ Áigi.



Sámi theatre

DRAMATIC ART is a relatively new art form in a Sámi context. However, it has become an important part of the communication of Sámi culture. The Sámi theatres function as arenas for communicating and experiencing Sámi art and culture, and for use of the Sámi language.

Beaivváš Sámi Teáhter

The Beaivváš Sámi Teáhter is a national Sámi theatre, and tours throughout all of Sápmi. Initially, the theatre was created as an informal theatre group in the early 1980s in Kautokeino. In 1991, the theatre was given a separate budget line in the Norwegian national budget. In 2002, the theatre was placed under the Sámediggi's (Sámi Parliament) budget administration. At present, the theatre's budget is approximately 13 million Norwegian Kroner.

The Beaivváš Sámi Teáhter has produced almost 70 plays for all age groups. A complete and updated tour overview can be found at:

www.beaivvas.no

Åarjelhsaemien Teatere

Åarjelhsaemien Teatere – the Southern Sámi Theatre – is an organisation consisting of theatre aficionados from both the Norwegian and Swedish areas in the Southern Sámi region. It was initiated in 1985 by Southern Sámis who wanted to make the Southern Sámi culture, language and music more visible. The formal organisation was established in 1987.

www.hemnes.sapmi.net/sub/teater/sydsamisk_teater.html

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

PHOTO: Mimi Aicci



Active Sámi youth – in relation to the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament)

The Sámediggi's Youth Policy Committee (SYPC)

The SYPC aims to contribute towards the strengthening of Sámi youths' participation and influence in the Sámediggi's policies. The SYPC seeks to motivate young Sámis to become active within the community and politically involved; it aims to increase youths' participation in the elections to the Sámediggi and to get more young Sámis represented in the Sámediggi and various boards and committees. The SYPC also organises the Sámediggi's annual youth conference, and works on issues on its own initiative.

The SYPC acts as a contact link between Sámi youth and the Sámediggi, and as a consultative body and initiative-taker towards the Sámediggi concerning youth issues. It assists the Sámediggi in the formulation of its youth profile and youth policies. The SYPC has a permanent contact in the Sámediggi Executive Council, and has two meetings a year with the Council.

The Sámediggi's administration functions as Secretariat for the SYPC, and enquiries to the SYPC can be made through the administration or directly to the SYPC's members.

The SYPC consists of five permanent members, all of whom are appointed by the Sámediggi Council. They come from various parts of the country, and are between the ages of 18 and 28.

The Sámediggi's youth conferences

The Sámediggi's first annual youth conference was held in Karasjok in 2001. The themes at the various conferences have been:

- Racism and intolerance (2001)
- Youth and increased contribution and influence (2001)
- Sámi culture on sale? (2002)
- Tradition versus modernity? (2002)
- Sámi language, Sámi language administration and Sámi language development (2005)

www.samediggi.no.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

Photo: Min Áigi.



Sámi youth organisations

THE SÁMI YOUTH ORGANISATIONS function as meeting places for Sámi children and youth, and as fora for social, cultural and political work. They generally have a wide range of activities such as language work, cultural festivals, sporting events, tours and information dissemination. An important common goal is to work to strengthen and develop the Sámi language, culture and identity.

Davvi Nuorra

Davvi Nuorra is a nationwide party-political and religious independent organisation for Sámi youth ranging from 13-32 years. Davvi Nuorra's objective is to disseminate knowledge and information about Sámi youths' everyday life and circumstances of life, create solidarity and support Sámi youth in relation to their Sámi identity. Davvi Nuorra works amongst other things on skills development amongst Sámi youth on issues concerning the Sámis by organising courses, conferences and workshops..

www.davvinuorra.org

Sámi organisations' youth committees

Both the Norwegian Sámi Association (NSR) and the Association of Norwegian Reindeer Sámi (NRL) have their own Youth Committees. NRL's Youth Committee works primarily with themes concerning Sámi youth connected to reindeer husbandry. NSR's Youth Committee works with topical issues relating to youth policies, within the organisation, in relation to the authorities, and not least in relation to the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament).

NSR's Youth Committee: www.nsr.no

NRL's Youth Committee: www.nrl-nbr.no

Doajmmasiebrre Julev-Sabme (DSJ)

DSJ is an apolitical organisation that covers the Lule Sámi region. DSJ works to strengthen the identity of Sámi children and youth and, has organised summer camps for children and the Hellemo Cup in soccer, amongst other things.

Sámi Childhood and Adolescence – about offers to Sámi children and youth. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the Sámediggi, 2003.

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Photo: Min Áigi



Children's rights

THE UN CONVENTION on the Rights of the Child obliges State parties to respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention to each child within their territories without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's background, including the child's or his/her parents language, religion, culture, national, ethnic or social origin. Some of its provisions have particular relevance for the rights of Sámi children, in particular Articles 2, 17 (d) and 30.

Article 2 of the Convention prohibits all forms of discrimination against children due to their background or origin, including their ethnic origin. Article 17 (d) obliges States to encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child belonging to a minority group or who is indigenous. Article 30 of the Convention is of particular relevance in the Sámi context. Article 30 states:

“In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.”

Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is very similar to Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – in both substance and wording.

The obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child establish an important framework for Norway's policy in relation to Sámi children, including policies in areas such as day-care centres, primary schools, upper secondary schools, the media and other areas of life.

National implementation of the Convention involves creating childhood environments where Sámi and Norwegian cultures have the same status and are equal to the greatest extent possible. It also involves the adoption of positive measures whenever this is required in order to fulfil the obligations under the Convention.

The conditions under which children and youth grow up are largely determined by municipal programmes and services. Thus, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs actively seeks to inform and encourage municipalities to take into account the special needs, rights and interests of Sámi children and youth. As part of this effort to make municipalities aware of their responsibilities in relation to Sámi children, the Ministry has developed an information pamphlet, entitled “Sámi childhood – about programmes for Sámi children and youth in 2003”, which has been distributed to all municipalities in the country. This information material is the result of a joint effort between the Ministry and the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament). The aim is to provide a good source of information and inspiration in order to promote improved conditions for Sámi children and youth around the country.

www.odin.dep.no/bld, www.samediggi.no
The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.

Day-care centres

UNDER THE DAY-CARE CENTRE ACT, municipalities have special responsibility to guarantee Sámi children and youth a childhood and adolescence that helps strengthen their identity and their sense of belonging to the Sámi community. Section 8 (3) of the Day-Care Centre Act states the following: "The municipality has the responsibility for ensuring that the day-care centre offer for Sámi children in Sámi districts builds upon Sámi language and culture. In other municipalities, the conditions shall be arranged such that Sámi children can secure and develop their language and their culture."

Moreover, Section 2 (4) of the Day-Care Centre Act states that day-care centres "shall take into consideration the child's age, functional level, gender, social, ethnic and cultural background, including Sámi children's language and culture."

A new framework for the day-care centre's content and tasks was established 1 March 2006 and takes effect 1 August 2006. The Sámi perspective is an integrated part of the framework.

Today, approximately 45 day-care centres in Norway can be characterised as Sámi day-care centres, including municipal and private day-care centres. Around 960 Sámi children benefit from their programmes and services. Moreover, some regular Norwegian day-care centres also offer day-care and education for Sámi children in Sámi.

The majority of the day-care centres in Norway are municipal, but some are private and are owned by organisations, individuals or associations. The day-care centres can have Sámi-speaking children, Sámi/Norwegian bilingual children and Norwegian-speaking Sámi children. Thus, the goals of communication of Sámi culture, strengthening of Sámi language and culture, functional bilingualism and communication of Sámi culture are accomplished in different ways.

The Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) has the responsibility for providing financial subsidies to Sámi day-care centres in order to secure their existence.

www.samediggi.no

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



PHOTO: MIHKKU SOLBAKK.



PHOTO: MIHKKU SOLBAKK.

Architect illustration of the new building.



Sámi allaskuvla/ Sámi University College

SÁMI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE was established in Guovdageaidnu / Kautokeino in 1989 to strengthen and develop traditional and modern Sámi competence.

At present, the Sámi University College is the only institution of higher education and research that meets and serves the requirements of the Sámi community. The Sámi University College and the Sámi research institution, the Nordic Sámi Institute, have been affiliated since 2005. In total, they have approximately 80 academic and administrative employees. It is the vision of the Board of Directors of this institution that it too shall be a scientific university college by 2011.

The working language of the Sámi University College is Sámi in instruction, administration and amongst employees and students. Sámi education and research form the college's characteristic academic and professional profile, and the college has a Nordic-Sámi and international perspective with students from all the four countries in which the Sámi live: Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The Sámi University College also collaborates with other indigenous institutions, with emphasis on the circumpolar region.

The school teaches and researches in various disciplines, including journalism, teacher education, Sámi language, reindeer husbandry, doudji (Sámi handicrafts), "joik" (Sámi traditional form of singing), Sámi story-telling tradition and indigenous culture. Most of the studies are assembly-based. The school has around 200 students annually.

A person can learn Sámi by following Sámi introductory courses that are arranged during the summer, after which it is possible to continue studies in Sámi up to the research level.

www.samiskhs.no

The Sámi People – a Handbook, Karasjok 2006.



Sámi allaskuvla

Samisk høgskole - Saamelainen korkeakoulu
Саамская Высшая Школа - Sámi University College



PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



PHOTO: MIN ÁIGI.



PHOTO: MIHKKU SOLBAKK.

Gáldu – Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

GÁLDU – Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – is established as a link in Norwegian authorities' human rights policies and Sámi policies and is a supplement to the human rights community in Norway. Gáldu means "source" in Sámi, and the Centre has as a vision to be an independent, relevant and reliable source of information about indigenous people's rights and Sámi rights.

The main objective of the Centre is to contribute to increased knowledge about and understanding of Sámi and indigenous people's rights. It is a professionally independent institution and has as its activity to produce and disseminate documentation and information about Sámi rights and indigenous people's rights. Everyone who is seeking knowledge about indigenous people's rights both nationally and internationally can avail themselves of the Centre, which is located in Kautokeino and has three employees.

Gáldus' website www.galdu.org (English website: www.galdu.org/web/index.php?giella1=eng) contains a wealth of new information and other material about indigenous peoples around the world, and is also a resource for information about international and national conventions, declarations, processes and other issues affecting indigenous peoples. The Centre publishes a journal of indigenous people's rights, *Gáldu Čála*, with relevant themes and a high professional level.

The Centre's information package, "We Are the Sámi", is a collection of basic information about the Sámis on Fact Sheets and DVD, which can easily be used in all contexts where Sámi conditions are going to be presented.

www.galdu.org
www.dep.no/aid
www.dep.no/ud

On behalf of the Board of the Nordic Sámi Institute Veli-Pekka Lehtola has awarded the 2006 Israel Ruong scholarship for young Sámi researchers to Lena Kappfjell. Photo: Johnson Bia.



Nordic Sámi Institute

THE NORDIC SÁMI INSTITUTE is affiliated with Sámi Allaskuvla-Sámi University College in Kautokeino. The Institute was founded in 1973 by the Nordic Council of Ministers on Sámi initiative and was sited in Kautokeino. The Council of Ministers also previously financed the operation of the Institute, but now, the operating costs are shared by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Education and Research (Norway), the Ministry of Education and Science (Sweden) and the Ministry of Education (Finland) pursuant to their own declarations and in accordance with agreed distribution.

On establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute, a foundation for Sámi research was created on the basis of the Sámi mindset and needs. There was also an opportunity to build up its own Sámi professional competence in different areas. Today, a staff of about 20 senior and junior research fellows conducts research projects in Sámi language, social and legal research. The research is conducted in collaboration with other research and educational institutions with a pan-Sámi and international point of departure.

Sámi research is crucial to developing the Sámi society for the future. Every indigenous community has a need to build up its own knowledge and expertise. Contributing to the development of international indigenous people's research is an important objective for the Institute.

The Institute's research is published primarily through the journal series *Diedut*. *Sámi diedalaš áigečála* is another journal that is published as a collaborative effort amongst Sámi University College, the University of Tromsø's Centre for Sámi Studies and the Nordic Sámi Institute.

A common science building is under planning in Kautokeino. Here, the Nordic Sámi Institute will be co-localised with Sámi University College, Sámediggi's (Sámi Parliament) Department of Language and Education, the Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry and Sámi arkiiva – Sámi Archive.

www.nsi.no

Photo: Min Áigi



International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry (ICR)

THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR REINDEER HUSBANDRY (ICR) was established in 2005 by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development as an administrative agency with special powers. The Centre, which is located in Kautokeino, is established for a limited period. The daily operations are led by a general manager who is appointed by the Board of Directors.

The ICR is a professionally independent institution that will contribute to maintaining and developing a sustainable reindeer husbandry and to strengthening the collaboration amongst reindeer herders. The Centre will also contribute to protecting reindeer husbandry's traditional knowledge, and promote knowledge and understanding of reindeer husbandry. In addition, the Centre will offer professional and administrative assistance to the Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH) and its international activities. The target group for the Centre's activities includes reindeer herders, public authorities, research institutions and communities, organisations and liaison bodies in Norway and other countries.

The Centre is led by a Board of Directors with five members and three deputy members. The Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion appoints the Chairman and other board and deputy members in consultation with the WRH. The appointments are made on the basis of submitted recommendations from the WRH, Sámi University College – Nordic Sámi Institute, the University of Tromsø – Department of Arctic Biology, the Sámi Council and reindeer husbandry organisations in Norway (Association of Norwegian Reindeer Sámi), Finland (Sámi Reindeer Herder's Association in Finland), Sweden (National Association of Swedish Sámi) and Russia (Reindeer Herders' Union of Russia).

The ICR reports annually to the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion.

www.reindeercentre.org