



Troms og Finnmark fylkeskommune
Romssa ja Finnmarkku fylkkagielda
Tromssan ja Finmarkun fylkinkomuuni



SÁMEDIGGI
SAMETINGET

Cooperation Agreement between Sametinget (The Sami Parliament) and Troms og Finnmark County Council

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Social objectives

To include Sami language and culture in as many areas of society as possible, so that the Sami community and Sami enterprises have a secure future.

Introduction

By means of this cooperation agreement, the Parties will join forces to facilitate development in Troms og Finnmark, so that Sami choices about their individual and collective way of life and daily existence are a natural part of society's overall development in rural areas, towns and regional centres.

The background to the agreement is that Troms og Finnmark is the county with the largest Sami population and this obliges the Parties to make increased efforts to exploit Sametinget's role as the Sami peoples' democratically elected body and the County Council's role as social developer.

The Parties find demographic trends in the region disturbing. The weakening of the Sami rural communities is especially serious for the future of Sami culture in a broad sense. The Parties want to focus especially on Sami language development, retention of the Sami population and phasing-in of the new Act relating to Changes in the Sami Act (Consultation Act).

There is a shortage of statistics and research into all sectors of society, so the knowledge base for political decisions concerning Sami communities is incomplete. The Parties recognise the need to contribute to development of a common knowledge base on Sami affairs, where traditional knowledge is also taken into account in official planning, service provision and resource administration.

Troms og Finnmark County Council will arrange an annual Sami conference, where Sami questions are set in a regional, national and global social context.

The Parties will pay particular attention to the municipalities in Troms og Finnmark with a view to the municipalities developing their own Sami policies and building up their competence in managing Sami affairs locally.

The Parties will contribute to strengthening cooperation on questions relating to indigenous people nationally and internationally, especially in the circumpolar region and when shaping policy for the High North.

The Parties will seek to accelerate the work of following up the remaining parts of the Sami Law Committee's proposals for the areas south of Finnmark.

In June 2023, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will report on the history of Norwegianisation and its consequences. The Parties will encourage society in general to acknowledge the past and its consequences and recognise that many of the Norwegianisation mechanisms are still active today.

A functioning democracy requires information to be freely available in Sami as well as in Norwegian. A task for both Parties is to contribute actively to ensuring a free and well-informed debate on Sami issues. The Parties acknowledge that throughout our work together we have a responsibility to create an inclusive climate for debate and appreciate one another's commitment, based on our respective roles and responsibilities.

Part 1 The nature of the cooperation

This agreement relates to political cooperation, so it is not deemed to be legally or financially binding.

The cooperation agreement does not prevent cooperation over matters that are not specifically mentioned, or are subject to separate agreements in specific fields.

The cooperation agreement is based on agreements made under international law and obligations that affect indigenous peoples' rights, as well as on national laws, regulations and guidance that affects Sami interests and rights.

Annual meetings are held between the Sami Parliamentary Council and the County Government. The Parties also confer with one another whenever necessary on current issues, coordination needs and development requirements.

Top level reporting is agreed separately, when required.

The cooperation agreement comes into force once adopted by the Sami Parliament in plenum and the County Government.

Changes to the agreement can only be made by the Parties acting jointly.

Either party may cancel the agreement by giving 6 months' notice.

In the event of Troms og Finnmark County Council being split up, new agreements must be entered into between Sametinget and the new county councils.

The cooperation agreement is prepared in Norwegian Bokmål and shall be translated into North Sami and Skolt Sami.

Part 2 Sami languages

The Parties will strive to ensure that in Troms og Finnmark the Sami languages have a secure future and opportunities to develop. North Sami is the Sami language used most extensively in the region and services offered in North Sami will therefore be prioritised. Skolt Sami is in dire need of development from the current level and the starting point must be the existing situation. Some services will need to be offered in the Lule Sami and South Sami languages.

The Parties require providers of public welfare services of a general nature to have Sami language competence that enables them to offer an equal level of service to Sami-speaking users.

When a service that includes an offer in the Sami language is centralised, the costs of the Sami language version shall be included in the estimate for centralisation costs.

The Parties will initiate research and development projects to facilitate wider use of the Sami languages, both in public administration and service provision and in society more generally.

The right to learn, use and develop one's native language is a fundamental human right that has not yet been fulfilled for many Sami in this region. Historical reasons aside, many more people, both Sami and others, must have the opportunity to learn Sami. If the Sami languages are to be learned and protected, it is important for them to be seen, heard and used as a natural part of daily life.

The Parties will work to ensure that the Sami character set and language can be used in digital systems, and that this requirement is included when digital services are developed and procured.

The Parties will help ensure that Norwegian Official Report (NOU) 2016:18 Hjertespråket ('The Heart Language') is followed up.

The Parties will use the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages to reinforce their work on Sami languages in Troms og Finnmark.

Sami place names and signage

The Parties will use Sami place names actively when marking locations, public buildings and building projects, as well as on public transport and in route information. The Parties shall encourage recipients of grants from Sametinget or the County Council to use Sami place names and make the Sami languages visible.

Sami language centres and Sami Language Region

The Parties will further develop the existing Sami language centres and recognise the need to establish more language centres in the region, including a Skolt Sami language centre.

The Parties will support municipalities that wish to establish Sami language centres, become part of the Sami Language Region or work on Sami language development.

Work on bilingualism in Troms og Finnmark County Council

The aims of the work on bilingualism in Troms og Finnmark County Council are that residents shall be able to learn Sami and use it when in contact with the County Council. Sami shall also be made more visible in the public arena.

To ensure that Sami language media have equal access to relevant information, the Parties will arrange for press releases to be available in Norwegian and North Sami.

The County Council intends to make all static information on the website tffk.no available in North Sami. The Parties will make arrangements whereby feedback from users and the public can be in either Norwegian or North Sami.

The Parties shall endeavour to publicise large events, such as conferences and seminars under their own auspices, in both Sami and Norwegian.

Sametinget will contribute annual bilingualism funding to the County Council and the County Council will provide dedicated funding for Sami language work. The County Council will prepare a specific language strategy for Sami. The Parties will endeavour to make the effects of the bilingualism visible.

Development of games and apps

The Parties will try to create a development environment for games and apps that can help to revitalise and reinforce Sami language and culture and broaden knowledge of Sami affairs.

Upper secondary education

School is an arena where Sami pupils must be able to preserve and develop their identity in an inclusive and diverse community. In their upper secondary education in Troms og Finnmark, the pupils shall receive teaching that is visibly based on Sami values, language, culture and social customs. The future of the Sami languages depends on children and adolescents learning them, so the Parties want more pupils to choose and complete Sami language learning.

As provided for in the curriculum, the Parties will work towards a comprehensive indigenous people's perspective in upper secondary education in Troms og Finnmark. This perspective embraces tangible and intangible cultural heritage and includes traditional knowledge, duodji (arts and crafts), music, theatre and visual arts, as well as siida (reindeer herding) and both close and extended family relationships.

In upper secondary education, Troms og Finnmark County Council shall offer Sami language learning to all students who want it. The Parties will encourage more students in upper secondary education to choose to learn Sami and complete their courses. Students who have had

Sami lessons in primary and lower secondary school can choose to be taught in Sami in selected common core subjects and university-preparatory programme subjects, if the necessary pedagogic conditions are present.

The Parties wish to make Sami language learning throughout the educational pathway from kindergarten to higher education more coherent. To this end, they will work to ensure that more kindergartens and primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools in Troms og Finnmark offer Sami language learning. The Parties wish to promote an educational environment that supports the students' language learning and identity development. Resources need to be coordinated in order to achieve this. The Parties will therefore take the initiative in creating a network that can support and develop Sami language learning from kindergarten to university. They will also recruit the necessary teachers.

The Parties will ensure that the Sami language teaching, whether face-to-face or digital, is delivered with high quality pedagogics and technology and that the teaching and educational resources offered for Sami language learning are equivalent to those for Norwegian. The Parties will collaborate to improve the teaching resources for Sami language learning and courses taught in Sami, so that what is offered reflects the diversity of subjects and methods that teachers and students have to work with.

The Parties will encourage more students and apprentices to undergo and complete upper secondary education and vocational training.

The Parties will work on further development of vocational subjects related to Sami culture and enterprise, including an offer of teaching in duodji in upper secondary education in Troms og Finnmark. The Parties will facilitate close cooperation with Sami enterprises on apprenticeship training contracts in duodji, reindeer husbandry subjects and industries with a traditional Sami basis.

The Parties will collaborate in the development work for the county municipal resource schools. Through such work, the Parties will ensure mutual exchange of information about conditions in and expectations of the Sami education. Sametinget will provide academic guidance on curriculum questions, help to construct a strong language teaching model and cooperate on measures to promote expertise in the resource schools for Sami education. The resource schools will prioritise their performance and development according to their various mandates:

Lakselv Upper Secondary School shall have special responsibility for promoting Coastal Sami traditions. The school will also focus on the cultural dimension in Sami upper secondary education, county-wide.

Nord-Troms Upper Secondary School in Nordreisa/Skjervøy shall have specific, county-wide responsibility for guidance on Sami language teaching and the associated resources.

Kongsbakken Upper Secondary School in Tromsø shall have special responsibility for coordina-

ting Norwegian and Sami language learning, in line with curriculum expectations for students to become functionally bilingual.

Heggen Upper Secondary School in Harstad shall have special responsibility for revitalising Sami language learning in Sør-Troms through a special development programme.

Tana Upper Secondary School shall have special responsibility for Sami agriculture, fishing and forestry and the Parties will reinforce the school as a resource school for this purpose.

The County Council's bullying representative and pupil/apprentice representative will continue to promote increased awareness about bullying of Sami pupils in the upper secondary schools and will further develop their expertise in order to look after Sami-speaking pupils in their areas of responsibility.

Careers advice and adult education

The Parties shall keep one another informed when they identify needs in the population and among employers for relevant training, education, skills and qualifications.

The Parties will work together to promote the Sami perspective in careers advisory activity. They will also endeavour to make the careers advice offered in Troms og Finnmark more visible to relevant audiences and take steps to ensure that the population is offered careers advice in Sami.

The Parties shall ensure there is a two-way flow of information and guidance regarding Sami societal challenges, in the context of helping individuals to make good choices regarding education, training and work.

Offers of adult education play an important part in the work of vitalizing the Sami languages and can make a key contribution to increasing the supply of staff with Sami language skills in both the public and private sectors.

To ensure that good language training is offered and attracts many new recruits, the Parties will raise the profile of the Sami languages as an important and relevant skill, both in the job market and society generally.

Higher education and research

The Parties consider it fundamentally important for North Norwegian education institutions to be able to offer a broad portfolio of educational courses and high-quality research, including sustainability and indigenous people's perspectives, so that they can satisfy the need for a highly qualified workforce in the North.

The Parties agree that the courses on offer in Sami languages must be developed, and teacher recruitment must be secured, to cover the whole educational pathway from kindergarten to university. The Parties believe that it is important for Sami subjects to be well enough structu-

red to maintain high quality, even when there are few applicants. The Parties are committed to increasing research activity in Sami languages.

The Parties will take the initiative to develop a broader range of training in Sami cultural knowledge aimed at public employees, where Sami infrastructure in the form of Sami centres is used for decentralised courses.

Part 3 Societal and business development

Sustainability, climate, consultations and population development

The Parties will arrange for sustainable development in the region in line with the UN Sustainable development goals and will seek to ensure that plans and projects that affect nature and the environment reflect national and international obligations regarding climate gas emissions. The Parties' collective experience, expertise and traditional knowledge should be exploited jointly, in order to protect vulnerable nature and maintain biological diversity as far as possible.

The Parties will collaborate over matters that have mutual public policy implications and are important for positive regional development in Troms og Finnmark. The Parties agree that the development of Sami society and the indigenous people's perspective shall form an integrated party of overall planning in Troms og Finnmark and will take responsibility for protecting Sami cultural foundations in nature through planning, administration, use of policy instruments and arena creation.

The County Council shall consult Sametinget according to the principle of free and informed advance consent in line with the provisions of the Sami Act and Article 6 of ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent States. Sametinget shall play an active role in developing and implementing regional planning strategy, regional plans and other plans and strategies in and for Troms og Finnmark County. It also has special responsibility for helping to communicate and actualise Sami interests and rights in planning processes.

New arrivals and population decline are among the greatest challenges for development in the High North and for local Sami communities. In their local development work, the Parties will seek to make local communities more attractive so that the population wants to stay, especially young people and entrepreneurs.

Troms og Finnmark County Council and Sametinget shall collaborate with municipalities to protect Sami interests in a way that also strengthens environmental, social and economic development in the county.

The Parties will also consider possible ways of developing agreed positions on the Finnmark Estate (FeFo), in a way that sustains the purpose of the Finnmark Act. Together with FeFo, the Parties will look more closely at the principles for future dividend distribution.

Business and industrial development

The Parties worry that too few new businesses are started in the region and too few new jobs are created in existing businesses. The Parties will therefore arrange for value creation, knowledge production and innovation, where the region's natural and cultural resources are key to preserving and developing the desire to stay, jobs and employment. Using grant schemes, purchasing regimes and active ownership, the Parties will prepare the way for sustainable business development.

The Parties share a common objective to ensure that Troms og Finnmark's energy and natural resources are used more for business and industrial development than for delivering raw materials out of the region. The Parties expect that economic activity based on the North's natural and cultural resources will have important, lasting local and national ripple effects. The Parties therefore wish to cooperate closely over joint investments in business and employment development, included export-oriented enterprises and supply industries. The Parties will seek to ensure that skilled jobs are created as the Green Shift progresses.

The Parties see a need for better coordination between the education systems, business, public administration and the voluntary sector to help with employment, the desire to stay and live in the region and recruitment of young adults.

Research, innovation and mobilisation

An important area for joint investment is the mobilisation of Sami participants in research, innovation and entrepreneurship.

The Parties will ensure that the slice of regional research funding earmarked for Sami interests is correctly targeted.

The Parties agree to look at the possibility of expanding the 'Sápmi næringsshage' business consultancy service into a national resource for Sami business development and innovation.

The Parties will jointly promote increased Sami participation in the EU programmes. Through Interreg Aurora, the Parties will seek to establish a Sami business organisation that can look after the interests of Sami SMEs and support their development.

Joint business initiatives

The Parties agree that predictable conditions must be secured for the reindeer industry as regards land use and cultural and development.¹

The Parties share a wish to strengthen agriculture, including Sami agriculture, as an important foundation for settlement and infrastructure in the region.

The Parties agree to facilitate the development of local food, including increased value creation from reindeer meat and other traditional raw materials.

The Parties agree that wilderness resources are important for securing the Sami culture and will work together to see that they are protected and exploited responsibly.

1 Further clarification will emerge during the work on the "Regional plan for reindeer husbandry in Troms", where Sametinget is part of the steering committee.

Fishing and marine industries

The Parties will seek to coordinate a common fisheries policy, based on sustainability and the population's historic rights to the ocean's resources.

The Parties will play an active part in the work on a new quota scheme, of the Hurdal political platform, in order to promote common interests and close collaboration with the relevant players in this work.

The Parties will work to apply the subsidiarity and dependency principles to the management of marine resource harvesting.

The Parties will improve and develop the fish reception structure, so that small-scale fishermen will have secure and predictable delivery facilities locally.

The Parties will endeavour to ensure that fisheries are planned and managed so that important breeding and fishing grounds, and local communities' facilities for traditional fishing and harvesting of aquatic resources, are protected.

Tourism and culture industry

The Parties recognise Sami culture as an important tourism resource and will work to further develop high quality tourism products.

The Parties will also ensure that the Sami perspective is included and nurtured as tourism in the region develops, by measures such as developing a better knowledge base for tourism in Sami areas.

The Parties wish to investigate the possibility of promoting and developing creative businesses, based on Sami art and culture.

Predators

The Parties agree that a knowledge base that records the real stocks of predatory animals must be established. The Parties will work to ensure that the Predator Agreement is followed up and that the stocks are managed at a level that enables businesses based on grazing animals to be viable across the whole county. The Parties will work at introducing target numbers for eagles, and stock registration for white-tailed and golden eagles, so that numbers can be regulated and managed sustainably.

Transport and infrastructure

The Parties agree that important issues in transport and infrastructure are access to public services, education, cultural and leisure offerings, healthcare, information and other services that sustain a good quality of life in the outlying districts. Buses, boats and ferries are important for value creation, the development of settlement and the job market throughout Troms og Finnmark. Transport also affects the business community's ability to transport goods, which in turn is an important condition for growth and community development.

The Parties agree that better early-stage communication and exchanges of information from the county councils, including their political priorities, are important for the development of Sami communities.

Troms og Finnmark County Council will work to achieve a good, coordinated public transport system across the whole county, with fare discounts for the young and a route structure that enables as many boarding students as possible to travel home at the weekend. This is particularly important outside the regional centres.

The Parties agree that students shall have equal travel conditions across the county irrespective of where they live and study.

The Parties will strive to ensure that the whole of Troms og Finnmark has a digital infrastructure that provides equal access for all.

Part 4 Sami culture

The Parties will strive to achieve a thriving Sami artistic and cultural environment, with viable institutions, and sees these as a precondition for positive developments in Sami languages, culture and identity.

The Parties will help to ensure predictability for the established Sami artistic and cultural institutions and create space for increased production and dissemination of information about Sami art and culture.

The Parties agree to work for the inclusion of Sami institutions in national and regional cultural initiatives, including the Northern Norwegian Cultural Agreement. The Parties will develop a structure of institutions that can, collectively, represent Sami interests in local, regional, national and international contexts.

The Parties recognise the need for Sami visibility and Sami discussion forums in rural and urban settings and will help to establish a Sami house in Tromsø.

The Parties agree to develop Sami architecture, design, duodji and dáidda (modern Sami art) as important elements in the expression of contemporary Sami and Northern Norwegian culture.

The Parties wish to stimulate a multi-faceted Sami artistic and cultural life, featuring quality and depth in production, dissemination and collaboration with the cultural world more generally.

The Parties require all institutions in Troms og Finnmark that receive grants from the Parties to take responsibility for Sami culture in their geographical areas, based on the institutions' regional and national mandates for their specific areas of activity. The Parties encourage the institutions to collaborate across their various grant schemes.

The museums in Troms og Finnmark

The Parties will prioritise increased cooperation in museum development and will work towards the Sami museums in Troms og Finnmark being treated and financed on an equal footing with the museums in the national network of museums.

The Parties require all the museums in Troms og Finnmark that receive municipal grants to take responsibility for Sami languages and culture in the region.

The Parties will together pay increased attention to recognising and perpetuating the intangible, spiritual aspects of the Sami cultural inheritance as living elements of the wider cultural heritage.

The Parties will support the development of 'Ä'vv saami muzei i Njauddâm' (the Skolt Sami Museum in Neiden).

The Parties will support the continuation of the Bååstede project, whose purpose is to repatriate the Sami cultural objects.

The Parties will work to improve the framework conditions for the conservation of Sami vessels.

Management of the cultural heritage

The Parties shall exercise their ongoing, obligatory responsibility to collaborate in the management of the cultural heritage, of the Cultural Heritage Act provisions on the duty of cooperation. Arrangements shall be made for information and good cooperation at a technical level. The collaboration is based on mutual trust, exchanges of technical information and practical adaptation.

The Parties shall arrange for information and cooperation over conservation of structures and vessels and will cooperate to improve craft skills in the field.

The Parties will work together to have the Cultural Heritage Area at Ceavccageađge/Mortensnes and the traditional Sami hunting grounds at Gollevárri and Noiddiidčearru/Kjøpmannskjølen included in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The Parties will cooperate and continue to implement the Regional Plan for Cultural Heritage and Cultural Environments in Finnmark 2017-2027 and also aim to expand it to apply to Troms.

Dramatic art, film and visual arts

The Parties will strengthen and develop Sami dramatic art environments as part of the comprehensive investment in dramatic art in the North.

The Parties recognise 'Beaivváš Sámi Našunálateáhter' as the national theatre for professional theatrical activity with Sami as the presentation and stage language. The Parties will seek to achieve a predictable environment for the theatre to create and practice Sami dramatic art, as well as building stage design expertise and the necessary infrastructure.

The Parties will help to develop the Sámi mánáid teáhter/Sami children's theatre in Deatnu/Tana into a national institution.

The Parties will strengthen and develop Sami film-making the film environment, as part of the comprehensive investment in the film medium in the North.

The Parties will jointly arrange to develop the visual arts, where building up of institutions and environments, and support for individual artists, are important elements.

The Parties consider it important to support the Sami cultural communities in establishing new platforms for artistic presentation and critical appreciation, in order to create independent fora for critical discussion and reflection on Sami art and culture in Troms og Finnmark.

The Parties will help to ensure there is room for Sami music and joik to develop, including within the regional music scheme 'Landsdelsmusikerordninga i Nord-Norge'.

The Parties consider it important to ensure that there is breadth in Sami productions in Den kulturelle skolesekken (DKS) (literally 'the cultural school satchel') in Troms og Finnmark.

Libraries and literature

The Parties shall contribute to mutual information about Sami library services. The Parties shall participate in one another's academic library collections. They shall also collaborate on courses and other training in Sami literature and Sami library services, for school staff and public libraries in Finnmark og Troms. The Parties have annual contact meetings. There is a separate cooperation agreement for libraries.

The Parties will work together on the dissemination of Sami literature and on improving the conditions for production of Sami literature.

The Parties will cooperate technically and financially on a Sami library service at the Centre of Northern Peoples, in order to build up and develop new methods for communicating Sami literature.

Sport and physical training

The Parties will promote Sami sport and physical training in their networks and ensure predictable general conditions for developing offers and activities.

The Parties provide annual operational funding to the Sami Sports Federation (Norway).

Sami associations

The Parties will arrange for viable Sami associations in Troms og Finnmark.

Troms og Finnmark County Council will provide basic grants to Sami associations engaged in cultural work in the county.

Health, living conditions, sport and public health

In line with the Public Health Act, the Parties will arrange for targeted measures based on research findings and population-wide/county health investigations into the public health challenges faced by the Sami population.

The Parties will jointly finance the Saminor 3 research into health and living conditions.

The Parties will cooperate on national public health initiatives, focusing on local and regional implementation for Sami children, young people and the elderly. It is particularly important to follow up the Public Health Programme for Municipalities (2017-2027), which emphasises mental health, drug prevention and quality of life for children and young people aged 0-24. There is also a need to collaborate over the quality reform 'Leve hele livet' (Live Life to the Full) for the over-65 age bracket.

The Parties will contribute to increasing research-based knowledge about dental health conditions in the Sami population in order to plan and develop a good dental health service.

Violence, bullying and discrimination

The Parties will support research into, and development of, measures against violence, bullying and discrimination against the Sami, especially in education and the working life.

The Parties will support research and measures that address contemporary issues and contribute to making questions around Sami LHBTIQ individuals² and their rights more visible.

When a person has been subjected to violence, the Parties will work to strengthen and ensure the availability of treatment for the individual and their relatives.

² *LHBTIQ is the Norwegian blanket abbreviation for persons and groups whose gender and sexuality does not conform to previously accepted biological norms. It includes lesbian, homosexual, bisexual and trans persons. The "I" stands for inter-sexuality and the "Q" for queer persons. (Translator: The equivalent blanket abbreviation in English would be LGBTIQ, but note this is a fast-changing and potentially emotive field).*