

Chapter 11

The Long Road to Sámi Teacher Education



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Abstract *Sápmi* is the traditional term for the historical settlement area (the northern areas of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia) of the Indigenous people of this area, the Sámi. The school systems in Sápmi were imposed by Western educators and missionary workers in the eighteenth century. The road to a good Sámi school has had more than its fair share of obstacles, which is often a common experience at intersections between Indigenous peoples' cultures and attempts by Western authorities to influence the mindsets and behaviour of Indigenous people. In the face of assimilation pressures, many Sámi lost their language and identity as a cultural minority. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, a new direction of Sámi education arose: the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish education authorities decided that Sámi learners should have the opportunity to choose education in a Sámi language (of which there are several languages) in addition to receiving teaching in school subjects. Although the long road to Sámi teacher education has been a winding and tortuous path, today it is offered by two institutions (Sami University of applied sciences and Nord University). However, there are still challenges in obtaining enough teachers who have mastered Sámi languages.

11.1 Introduction

The Sámi are the Indigenous people of the northern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula (Norway, Sweden, Finland) and the Kola Peninsula (Russia). Precise numbers for Sámi residents in this area are unavailable, but there are about 80.000–100.000 Sámi people¹ worldwide:

¹<http://www.samer.se/samernaisiffror>.

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- In Sweden, there are an estimated 6000 Sámi who speak Northern Sami. Southern Sami and Lule Sami have about 500 speakers each. Pitesami and Ume Sami are spoken by about 40 and 10 Sami, respectively (Lindmark, 2021).
- about 50.000–65.000 in Norge²
- about 10.000 in Finland (but only 1992 were Sámi-speaking individuals in 2018, Statistics Finland, 2018).
- about 1.700 in Russia

Only a minority of Sámi speak the Sámi languages. Precise numbers are unavailable. There are ten Sámi languages (Sammallahti, 1998) that form their own language group in the Uralic language family.

There are similarities in how Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish societies have chosen to create conditions for viable Sámi cultures by promoting the establishment of Sámi parliaments, supporting Sámi education and so on. The representatives of Russian society have chosen a completely different approach, and Russia is thus an outlier in this context (Scheller, 2010; Zmyvalova & Outakoski, 2019).

The Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish education authorities have all decided that Sámi learners in schools can choose education in a Sámi language in addition to receiving teaching in school subjects. The education of Sámi learners is to take place within the same structural framework as other learners in those countries.

Norway has gone furthest in designing school subjects adapted to Sámi conditions in addition to offering instruction in Sámi languages. This means that Sámi students are taught in whole or in part in Sámi languages. Sámi teacher education programs exist for schools to enable to offer teaching in Sámi. This teacher education is not only about Sámi languages and Sámi literature in the Norwegian context, but also a wide range of school subjects that are adapted to Sámi conditions (Sámi curricula for science, social studies, music, food and health and so on).³ The content of schooling is to some degree adapted to everyday Sámi life and culture. In Sweden and Finland, Sámi education is more about the Sámi languages and the Sámi culture; that is, it is confined to language learning. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the evolution of Sámi education and its development over time and further to explore the long way to Sámi teacher education. As a representative of the majority society, I see Sámi education and culture as fascinating and interesting, but as a scholar I lack personal experiences that might help me understand Sámi conditions from the inside.

² 14,084 people voted in the Norwegian Sami parliamentary elections in 2021. About 32% of the voters talked one of the Sámi languages (Selle, 2020).

³ Norwegian pupils' curricula include material on Sámi conditions; for example, pupils should be able to "explain the Norwegianization of the Sámi and the national minorities and the injustices they have been exposed to, and reflect on what consequences it has had and has at the individual and social level" and "give examples of traditional Sámi knowledge of nature and discuss how this knowledge can contribute to sustainable management of nature." (<https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/lareplanverket/>). The Sámi curriculum was developed in collaboration between the Norwegian education authorities and the Sámi parliament (Sollid & Olsen, 2019).

In order for schools to operate with Sámi content, teachers who speak the Sámi languages are needed, and in order to ensure that teachers have the necessary competence, Sámi teacher education is needed. This chapter explains the long road to Sámi teacher education programs.

Sámi teacher education is currently offered by two institutions: the Sámi University of Applied Sciences (Sámi allaskuvla, established in 1989) and Nord University, both in Norway,⁴ but Sámi is also a university-level subject in Sweden and Finland. Students from Norway, Sweden and Finland take Sámi teacher education. Therefore, we can say that Sámi teacher education is a common concern in those three countries. The Norwegian state finances a significant part of Sámi teacher education programs, but the Swedish government also provides funding.⁵ Although Sámi teacher education programs exist today, these arrangements have a complex prehistory, which is detailed below. Furthermore, Sámi teacher education will also be affected by what the future brings for Sámi education, the Sámi culture and the Sámi as a people.

Although there has been a revitalization of Sámi identity and a growing interest in Sámi conditions in recent decades (Sarivaara, 2016), Sámi education is under pressure for several reasons. Among other factors, many Sámi live in places where Sámi is not the primary language. Although there are some vocational and higher education subjects in Sámi, education in that language is not offered in a broad portfolio of subjects. This means that many Sámi pursue education and later settle in places where they must speak another language (Keskitalo, 2020). The space for the Sámi traditional way of life has also narrowed, but it still exists. However, there are several examples of parents with Sámi ancestry living in large cities (Selle et al., 2020) wanting their children to learn Sámi as a bilingual strategy. There are examples of schools in large cities in Norway, Sweden and Finland where Sámi is offered to a minority, which also promotes bilingualism (often via distance education). And we see the contours of clear conflicts of interest between rural Sámi in Sámi-language administrative districts and the urban Sámi.

Although multilingualism has always been part of the Sámi culture, many Sámi of earlier generations lost the language. The status of Sámi has undergone major changes in the last 50 years. Several generations of Sámi were earlier put to shame and stripped of self-esteem by state authorities during periods when the Sámi had to adapt to the language and culture of the majority society (Nergård, 1994). Many Sámi children had to stay at boarding schools. This created a Sámi pain that has not fully healed, even today. From being something shameful, the Sámi identity is now

⁴The Sámi University of Applied Sciences has nationwide responsibility in Norway for Sámi teacher training, journalist training and higher education in general; it also plays an important role in higher education for Indigenous peoples in Finland and Sweden. In those countries, universities in Helsinki, Rovaniemi, Umeå and Uppsala offer Sámi studies, while Russia's Murmansk State Technical University teaches the Sámi language. The University of the Arctic is a network of universities, colleges, research institutes, and other organizations concerned with education in and about the north.

⁵Oral source: Ylva Jannok Nutti.

more and more something in which to take pride. This is a relatively new phenomenon, which gives hopes for the future viability of Sámi people, culture and languages.

Centralization and urbanization are ongoing global processes of great importance to Indigenous peoples (Peters & Andersen, 2013). One question is whether the bilingual tendency among Sámi living in cities will provide support for that viability: will bilingual living with a Sámi identity in Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish cities lead to sustainable Sámi language use over time? Further, there are settlements in Norway, Sweden and Finland (Sámi-language administrative districts) where Sámi is used in schools as a first language and where Sámi is the main administrative language. Both of these trends offer hope that the Sámi languages and culture have a future. An important prerequisite is Sámi schooling and hence Sámi teacher education, which only exists because there is Sámi schooling. Another issue is the importance of perspectives to Indigenize education (Madden & Glanfield, 2017): How could Sámi cultures, knowledge systems, experiences, and priorities for education unfold within Sámi teacher education?

11.2 The Sámi People's Languages

While parents can choose a Sámi language for their children at school, few choose Lule Sámi or South Sámi, and the number who choose North Sámi is declining. In addition, there is a great shortage of teachers who can teach any of these three Sámi languages. It has proven deeply challenging for some municipalities to engage teachers who have mastered the various Sámi languages, despite their subsidizing Sámi student teachers' education. The Norwegian education authorities are willing to finance Sámi teacher education variants in three Sámi languages, a costly commitment that is vital for maintaining Sámi language teaching and a vibrant Sámi culture for the rising generations: the Norwegian authorities have invested in North Sámi, South Sámi and Lule Sámi teacher education, despite the fact that few students are taking the last two variants. Swedish authorities provide support for courses in Sámi didactics, but offer no Sámi teacher education. North Sámi teacher education has a history of more than three decades in Norway, while teacher education for both South Sámi and Lule Sámi remains in the starting blocks.

South Sámi is on the list of endangered languages in Norway, with only an estimated 500 language users today (about 200 people speak South Sámi in Sweden); similarly, Skolt Sámi and Lule Sámi are seriously endangered. About 500 people belong to the Skolt Sámi language group, most of them live in Finland. About 800 people speak Lule Sámi in Sweden and Norway.⁶ Pite Sámi is in the worst situation; it will be considered lost in a short time, with only 20 users left in Sweden. Although North Sámi is spoken by about 30,000 people in Norway, Sweden and Finland, it is

⁶<http://www.samer.se/samernaisiffror>.

also vulnerable. Lule Sámi and South Sámi are spoken in Norway and Sweden, whereas Pite Sámi and Ume Sámi only exist in Sweden; they are regarded as having disappeared in Norway. Inari Sámi is only spoken in Finland. About 500 people belong to the Inari Sámi language group, all in Finland. Akkala Sámi, Kildin Sámi and Tersámi are only spoken in Russia. Skolt Sámi is only spoken in Finland today; it is about to disappear in Russia and has already disappeared in Norway. The situation for Sámi languages is very serious in Russia. Tersámi is used on the Kola Peninsula and is close to disappearing. Akkala Sámi was also used there, but is considered to have disappeared or about to disappear. Kildin Sámi is the largest Sámi language in Russia today, with around 700 users; this language, too, is threatened.

11.3 Sápmi

Sápmi is the traditional term for the Sámi's historical settlement area; it has no formal borders, but the northern areas of Norway, Sweden and Finland, along with the Kola Peninsula in Russia, are commonly included. The oldest literary source of the history of the Sámi is Tacitus's description of "fenni", a people in the north (in his AD 98 work *De Origine et situ Germanorum*):⁷ "In wonderful savageness live the nation of the Fenni, and in beastly poverty, destitute of arms, of horses, and of homes; their food, the common herbs; their apparel, skins; their bed, the earth; their only hope is in their arrows, which for want of iron they point with bones." But the history of the Sámi goes back further than the first century of the common era. Archaeological findings indicates a prolonged history of Sámi in the north (e.g., Kleppe, 1974). The ancient Sámi were a hunting people based on a *siida* system, which means hunting teams that formed units, or a "Sámi village". Biologically primary knowledge (and skills) are things that humans have evolved to learn, such as their first language, as ways to solve life's challenges (Sweller et al., 2011). Through listening and watching, Sámi children and youth learned how to survive under harsh living conditions.

Biologically secondary knowledge is the material that humans encounter through schooling, which was invented to bridge the gap between primary and secondary biological knowledge (Geary, 2002). But the content of schooling must be perceived as relevant and rewarding for the learner in order for the bridge over the gap between primary knowledge and secondary knowledge to function constructively in people's lives (Darnell & Hoëm, 1996). If the cultural distance between the learners' background and the content of schooling becomes too great, significant challenges will arise. The failure of some learners to achieve can be due to the inappropriate nature of the majority's system of education and (sometimes vastly) different cultural environment (Darnell & Hoëm, 1996, p. 212). The attempts to facilitate Sámi education

⁷<http://cornelius.tacitus.nu/rom/germania/inledning.htm>.

that were not successful in the past failed because the schools did not reflect the surroundings and culture of the Sámi. It is only in recent years that serious attempts have been made to create a better alignment between Sámi culture and school content. However, some scholars believe that this alignment still has room to improve (Keskitalo & Määttä, 2011; Sarivaara & Keskitalo, 2016; Keskitalo, 2019).

In spite of several centuries of educational efforts, the Sámi people did not have a school shaped by their own culture, because school systems were imported in Sámi areas by outsiders; namely, Western educators and missionary workers. The road to the good Sámi school has had more than its fair share of obstacles, which is a common experience in the intersection between Indigenous peoples' cultures and the attempts of Western authorities to influence the mindsets and behaviour of Indigenous people. Further, the history of the Sámi also tells of the colonization of state power, the oppression of the authorities and the resistance of the Sámi (Keskitalo et al., 2013). As a result of colonization, the Sámi lost much of their autonomy, and to some extent their dignity. Opposition to inappropriate schools arose from Sámi who organized themselves into interest groups. This became clear in Sweden and Norway in the early twentieth century. International organizations' work for the rights of Indigenous peoples (Dunbar-Ortiz et al., 2015), which are enshrined in various conventions, declarations and specific provisions of broader human rights instruments, have, however, had an impact on increasing the rights of Sámi in the Nordic social context. Norway, Sweden and Finland have all acceded to these international conventions. Clear momentum in the work with Indigenous peoples' rights in international organizations emerged in the 1980s and has remained strong in the decades since then.

11.4 Early Sámi Education: The Colonization Policies Towards the Sámi

No part of Sámi culture was more important than the language, which was an integral part of Sámi identity. Therefore, it is interesting that early efforts to build a bridge between Sámi and school took place to some extent in Sámi areas. The Swedish mission among the Sámi intensified in the seventeenth century. The mission was an integral part of the Swedish state's colonial interest in mastering the Sámi area and utilizing its resources. In 1619, the Swedish priest Nils Andersson/Nicolaus Andreæ (1557–1628) published Sámi religious songbooks and catechisms (Siegl, 2017). He offered to run a school for Sámi children and teach them to read in Sámi, Swedish and Latin. The Swedish king supported his efforts and granted funds for the education of six Sámi boys, who were also to be provided with food and clothing. This became the first Sámi schooling in Sweden, the ultimate purpose of which was to produce Sámi-speaking priests. However, the importance of this early attempt at Sámi education should not be exaggerated: the Sámi children found little in the school system that spoke to them and their world. The Christianization

of the Sámi nevertheless became a protracted process. The Sámi guarded their traditional performances and rites. In 1685, the Swedish state decided that the Sámi should be Christianized by force, and missionary work intensified. The colonising the Sami region was awakened by discovery of natural resources. In the 1720s, the state and ecclesiastical authorities in Sweden tried to get a stronger grip on the language conditions. Specifically, the question was about what form of language the church would use in the Sami ABC books and catechisms.

To avoid the requirement to participate in the church's teachings and services, many Sámi simply would not come to the church in their own villages or moved to other places that were further away from the church's influence. At the 1723 Riksdag, it was discussed how the Sámi Christianization could be made more efficient. The background was that there had been recent reports of continued use of traditional Sámi rites. The solution was to set up a school system, the so-called Lapp school (Johanson & Flodin, 1990), but the cultural distance between the Sámi culture and school content became too great for these efforts to be regarded as successful. However, this instruction was done with use of Sámi languages.

Another example of using the Sámi's own language in missionary work and schooling can be found in the former state of Denmark-Norway. From the middle of the seventeenth century, the Danish-Norwegian church dispatched catechists to teach in some Sámi areas. The Danish king Fredrik IV established his own missionary work among the pagans of Denmark-Norway. The Mission College in Copenhagen directed the Norwegian pietist Thomas von Westen (1682–1727) to begin mission work among the Sámi. He started a missionary school in Trondheim, sent missionaries and teachers to the Sámi areas of northern Norway and had churches and schoolhouses built. The system that developed under von Westen's leadership covered most Sámi in Norway at that time; he wanted the Sámi to be taught in their own language and initiated translations of Christian scriptures for use in church and school. In many ways, von Westen was a pioneer in the Danish-Norwegian area because he realized the importance of using the Sámi language. The efforts were intense and so successful that the same church system could be introduced for the Sámi as for the rest of the regency's population. Von Westen was a key figure behind the *Seminarium Scolasticum* (later called the *Seminarium Lapponicum*), which was founded in Trondheim in 1717 (Grankvist, 2003; Hoëm, 2007). One of its aims was to educate priests and teachers who could preach and teach in Sámi. In 1719 he established the *Seminarium Domesticum*, which trained Sámi boys to be teachers. This seminary was run from his own home, which was open to Sámi. Between 1716 and 1723, he made three mission trips to northern Norway, where he preached in Sámi and gave sermons characteristic of the austere faith of his day.

In Finland, there has been teaching for Sámi since the seventeenth century (Laiti, 2019). Initially, this meant catechetical education delivered by itinerant teachers (Kylli, 2019). Once again, the cultural distance between Sámi culture and school content was too great to be fully effective, but catechetical education in Sámi areas did not disappear until the beginning of the twentieth century.

11.5 The Assimilation Policies Towards the Sámi

In the 1700s, many priests and missionaries made efforts to translate religious literature into Sámi and to develop primers to help Sámis learn the skill to read. A teacher training college was established in Trondenes in Norway in 1826, with teaching in Sámi, and a number of books in Sámi were published (Dahl, 1976). The establishment of the seminary had a clearly Sámi purpose, as it was primarily intended for Sámi people. These efforts were largely unsuccessful, partly because the content was not successfully adapted to everyday Sámi life.

After 1800, however, new ideas began to spread. One involved the notion of cultures having higher or lower standing, and the other concerned superior and inferior races. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, biological racism entered Swedish and Norwegian Sámi politics. It began to be claimed that the Sámi were born with certain racial characteristics that made them inherently inferior to the rest of the population (Keskitalo et al., 2018), a view that ushered in the darkest chapters in the treatment of the Sámi by the Norwegian and Swedish authorities.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, missionary efforts were largely discontinued, and the Sámi were to be served by ordinary priests and teachers speaking Danish or Norwegian. In the nineteenth century, there was a reassessment of policies regarding the Sámi, whose level of knowledge of Norwegian and Christianity had declined. The Norwegian authorities' uncompromising Norwegianization policy towards the Sámi and Kvens (a people of Finnish descent in northern Norway) from the middle of the nineteenth century led to Sámi-speaking teachers being unwanted in Sámi districts. In 1848, the Storting, Norway's parliament, made the first decision in the direction of Norwegianization. In 1851, the *Finnefondet*⁸ was established to give the Sámi people Norwegian language skills (Keskitalo et al., 2011). This was the start of displacing Sámi as languages of teaching in favour of Norwegian; Sámi was relegated to an auxiliary status. The only books published in Sámi were a grammar, dictionaries and a bilingual abecedar, along with religious writings; nothing that treated the Sámi's own culture or literature was printed. From the middle of the 1800s, the policy of Norwegianization meant that the Sámi languages disappeared from large areas.

The last half of the nineteenth century was marked by nationalism and the cultivation of traditional Norwegian culture. Many of the leaders in the struggle for national independence were at the same time responsible for a strict policy of Norwegianization for the Sámi people. The idea of one nation and one people was promoted, and nation building in Norway emphasized unity. In that context (Hodne, 1994), schools played an important role as identity-creating and unifying institutions. A Norwegian national culture was promoted through school curricula, and the

⁸ A Finnefond was in use between 1851 and 1921. The Finnefond's funds went to building schools, to extra salaries for teachers, financial support for school children and their families as well as teaching materials. Finnefondet helped finance the state's Norwegianisation policy towards Sami and Kvens.

Norwegian language was used almost exclusively in public schools. This nation-building agenda legitimized the harsh assimilation policy pursued against the Sámi, which included pressure to use the Norwegian language. Norwegian Sámi schooling was also affected by racism and a long-lasting policy of Norwegianization for the Sámi people. The government constantly emphasized that the Sámi had to learn Norwegian, although no one said precisely how that was to occur. Few practical language skills came from studying religious writings. From the dawn of the twentieth century, boarding schools were promoted (Keskitalo & Olsen, 2019). The first such schools were established in 1905, and boarding school development continued until the end of the 1960s. Many students who experienced boarding school found it a negative experience. Learners with Sámi as their native language were forced to complete their schooling in Norwegian without any support for the preservation of their Sámi skills in the learning process. This policy had particularly unfortunate consequences: many learners with a Sámi background attended school for years but developed only a poor grasp of Norwegian, which resulted in Sámi learners graduating at a significantly lower rate than Norwegian-speaking students (Hoëm, 1965). Sámi opposition to the policy of assimilation emerged in the early twentieth century, leading to the creation of a Sámi organization dedicated to asserting Sámi rights.

In Sweden, meanwhile, where having children learn Swedish was an explicit goal, the Riksdag decided on a change in Sámi education in 1913. A special reform introduced nomadic schools for Sámi children. Teaching was to be arranged in the form of a catechetical school during the first 3 years that the nomadic children went to school; some teachers were also itinerant. This new initiative was mandatory for the children of the nomadic Sámi. The school statutes from 1925 and 1938 state that the teaching language should be Swedish, and teaching in Sámi did not occur at all during the first half of the twentieth century. In northern Sweden, special houses (huts) were built where the children were cared for by Sámi principals. In the 1940s, these huts were replaced by boarding schools. In the mid-1940s, nomadic schooling meant a 6-year primary school, with a seventh year introduced in the 1950s. In practice, the teaching language was Swedish, but Sámi could be used for explanatory purposes if a teacher knew how to speak it.

The Finnish *Folkeskole* was established in 1866. There were large local variations in schooling that were offered to the Sámi. In Finland, too, an important goal of school activities was integration: the aim was to unite the entire nation of Finland under a patriotic ideology. The school system was effective for nation building and for the assimilation of Sámi people, thanks to its nationwide reach and the uniform national values, identities, ideologies, and norms that schools imparted (Nyssönen, 2019). The Finnish school had a strong connection to nationalism, which was intensified during the late 1800s and early 1900s, when the country was an (ostensibly) autonomous Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire. The Sámi gained access to teaching in the ordinary schools, but there was no explicit policy of assimilation, as in Norway. The legislation on primary and lower secondary schools did not oblige municipalities to offer instruction in the children's native language, although there were schools in which Sámi was taught. However, there was no plan to establish segregated schools for the Sámi out of paternalistic motives, as there was in Sweden.

In Finland, everyone was to receive the same education. The school was thus an expression of the dominant state ideology: national unity through equal treatment and the avoidance of the hierarchical policies and views that characterized Scandinavian school policies. Thus, the Sámi's entry into Finnish schools followed a different trajectory from what happened in Norway and Sweden (Nyyssönen, 2013, 2019). However, Finnish schools still lacked sensitivity regarding Sámi culture and language and had difficulty offering education in poor areas.

Problems arose for Sámi industries and the Sámi culture from the intrusion of modern society, with large-scale forestry, hydropower development, mines, roads, railways and eventually large-scale tourism. While some Sámi also benefited from these innovations, the physical and economic space for the Sámi way of life and culture became smaller and smaller.

In the face of these pressures, Sámi people began to change their primary languages from Sámi to the majority language in the twentieth century, thus denying their Sámi background. People lost their language and identity as a cultural minority; they had previously been the subject of centuries of missionary activities that had nearly obliterated the Sámi religion. Some also kept their Sámi identity hidden from their descendants because being Sámi had been seen as negative for so many years. However, some Sámi also began to organize themselves in defence of their language and culture.

11.6 A New Turn: The Recognition That Sámi Learners Must Learn Sámi at School

In the years after World War II, a more balanced view of Sámi schooling emerged in Sweden, but it took some time to take hold (Henrysson & Flodin, 1992). In 1962, the nomadic school became voluntary and open to all Sámi children; Sámi later became a compulsory subject. During that same early post-war period, there was also a gradual change in Norwegian policy towards the Sámi. The Norwegian authorities tried to resolve Sámi school issues on a more open-minded basis, without Norwegianization as an objective. Sámi could primarily be used as a pedagogical aid to promote Norwegian language teaching. A new turn in Sámi policy came with the Sámi Committee of 1956, which advocated protecting the Sámi languages and culture, teaching in and on Sámi, Sámi textbooks, Sámi upper secondary education and scholarship schemes for Sámi youth. However, Sámi parents were opposed to the emphasis on schooling (for instance, in reindeer husbandry, schooling was directly disqualifying in relation to a future in the primary industries). A major challenge was that schools did not provide instruction in Sámi culture and language; on the contrary, they led students away from their roots. In 1959, it was in principle possible to use Sámi as languages of instruction, and with the extension to 9 years schooling in 1969, parents could demand Sámi education. In the 1970s, training in Sámi as a second language was implemented. Although instruction in Sámi was

permitted, Norwegian was still the main language in teaching Sámi speakers through the mid-1980s. It was at this time that both the Sámi languages and Sámi content gained a stronger place in schools. The curriculum reform of 1987 separated Sámi curricula from national curricula for the first time. Beginning in 1988, primary schools had their own Sámi curricula in seven subjects, at least on paper; however, little effort had been made to fill these curricular frames with content (Olsen, 2019), and the Norwegian authorities only developed curricula for Sámi schools after 1997. Parallel curricula for Norwegians and Sámi were maintained in the curriculum reforms of 2006 and 2020. There are now equal and parallel curricula in Norway's Sámi districts. Learners who have the right to education in Sámi but who live elsewhere, follow the curriculum in Sámi as a first or second language. They receive training in other subjects according to the national curricula.

In Finland, the most patriotic elements of the curriculum were removed in the period after World War II. Boarding schools were expanded, the Sámi languages were downplayed, and Sámi culture was largely ignored and categorized as lower than Finnish culture. However, there was still no explicit plan for assimilating the Sámi. The scope of boarding schools became smaller in the 1960s as roads and school transport improved. The boarding schools did not disappear completely; they remained in the largest towns. The intention to establish teaching in Sámi did not result in any concrete developments until the late 1950s.

In Sweden, the Riksdag decided on a reorganization of Sámi education in 1962. The former nomadic schools became voluntary and open to all Sámi children, and the Sámi language became a compulsory subject. From 1962 onwards, it is fair to say that Sámi schools were like any other Swedish schools at the primary level. The Sámi school has an important task in communicating to Sámi society and Sámi norms, values, traditions and cultural heritage, along with teaching them to read, speak and write Sámi. Today, the Sámi school is responsible for ensuring that each student is functionally bilingual. Sámi children can also choose to go to a traditional primary school and receive teaching with Sámi elements through the integration of teaching Sámi in those schools.

11.7 The Emergence of Sámi Parliaments

The Sámi mobilized in the final decades before the turn of the millennium, leading to the formation of Sámi parliaments. The Sámi Parliament of Finland was created in 1973; a separate Act on the Sámi Languages was adopted in 1991 and came into effect in 1992. It made Sámi an official language with the status of a regional minority language. The languages and cultures of the Sámi and their status as an Indigenous people became early important responsibilities of the Sámi Parliament in Finland. The Sámi Parliament of Norway opened in 1989, while the Swedish Sámi Parliament was established in 1993. A Kola Sámi Assembly was established in 2010, but it is not recognized by the Russian or local governments. The Russian legal framework supports teaching in Sámi, but is not supported by the Russian education authorities

(Zmyvalova & Outakoski, 2019). The evolution of Finnish policies was delayed when compared to the gradual change in Norwegian policy towards the Sámi. The Finnish assimilation policy towards the Sámi was at its peak just as the assimilation policy in Norway was in decline. This may have been a key cause for the early establishment of a Sámi Parliament in Finland.

11.8 The Evolution of Sámi Teacher Education

Between 1904 and 1953, there was almost no systematic education of Sámi teachers. One of the early advocates for Sámi interests, Per Fokstad, proposed Sámi as the languages of instruction in primary education in 1924, with Norwegian taught as a foreign language (1923, 1926). Fokstad also fiercely supported Sámi teacher education and the creation of a Sámi academy (Kortekangas, 2019). These ideas became realities many decades later, through the establishment in 1973 of the Nordic Sámi Institute, a research and general cultural institution that has a formal role in the Nordic Council of Ministers. Over time, its main mission changed to Sámi research. In 1953, Sámi topics were used as curriculum at Tromsø Teacher Training College. In autumn 1973, teacher education was established in Alta, as the result of the work of a committee whose mandate was to assess the need for teachers and thus teacher education specifically aimed at Sámi conditions and Sámi districts. Recruitment to Sámi upper secondary schools had declined, which had follow-on consequences for the recruitment of Sámi teachers.

Teacher education programmes in Norway have seen many changes since 1973. After a period in which Sámi teacher education was housed in the Sámi Department at Alta Teacher Training College (Alta lærerhøgskole), the Sámi University of Applied Sciences (Sámi Allaskuvla) was established in Kautokeino (Guovdageaidnu), in 1989. The Sámi University of Applied Sciences offered general Sámi teacher education for primary and lower secondary school in Sámi and in a Sámi environment. This general education was elevated in 2013 to a 4-year primary and lower secondary teacher education and to a 5-year Sámi teacher education master's programme in 2017. Students come from all over Sápmi; including those from Norway, others come from Finland, Sweden and Russia. The university offers integrated professional teacher education. There are two variants: Sámi Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Education programmes for grades 1–7 and 5–10, respectively. 14 students fulfilled these two programs 2014–2020.

In 2018, a South Sámi primary school teacher education master's programme for levels 1–7 was inaugurated at Nord University in Levanger (4 students), and a Lule Sámi primary school teacher education master's programmes for levels 1–7 opened at Nord University's Bodø location (5 students). Nord University has nationwide responsibility for Lule Sámi and South Sámi higher education. These programs qualify graduates to teach Sámi-speaking children, and the education authorities implemented these initiatives for teacher education in South Sámi and Lule Sámi

due to a lack of teachers with this language competence. No student has fulfilled these programs so far.

11.9 An Outlier: Russian Sámi Education

While the policy patterns regarding the Sámi in Norway, Sweden and Finland have certain similarities, developments regarding the Sámi in Russia have been radically different. The Soviet regime was established on the Kola Peninsula only in 1920, 3 years after the communist November Revolution that toppled the tsarist regime. Kotljarchuk (2019) argues that the politics of self-determination became a tool for communists pursuing a nationalist agenda for the “oppressed” Sámi people: in the early days of the Soviet Union, minority schools got teaching materials in Sámi. This arrangement differed from the Nordic countries at this time. However, the situation became worse later. Sámi instruction disappeared from schools, and the Russian Sámi had no longer native-language school system or textbooks: in 1938, all Sámi schools were closed and Sámi-language textbooks confiscated. The promotion of Sámi education in what is now Russia was completely suspended until the 1990s. The Russian Sámi education has still a difficult and challenging situation.

11.10 Discussion

The review of the developments that led to Sámi teacher education programmes reveals not only a winding but even a tortuous path. On the one hand, Sámi education and teacher education are viable in both traditional Sámi areas and certain urban areas with significant Sámi populations. There has been a flourishing related to Sámi identity and an increased awareness of the need to preserve Sámi languages and culture. This tendency is part of a larger pattern: since the 1960s, there has been a wave of revitalization among the world’s Indigenous peoples, and the Sámi renaissance is no exception. Likewise, a certain optimism is associated with recent innovations in Sámi professions: value creation and employment in the primary industries of agriculture, reindeer husbandry and fishing, along with the newer opportunities in tourism and culture. We can find examples of new generations of Sámi who know how to protect and further develop Sámi industries like tourism. On the other hand, there is also a certain pessimism about the future of the Sámi. What lies ahead for the Sámi languages in urbanized Nordic regions? The Sámi’s primary industries, such as reindeer husbandry, are in decline. Many are moving from villages to larger centres, where Sámi is not the vernacular. There, the Sámi encounter the majority language everywhere. Thus, there will be fewer opportunities to use their first language.

The situation for promoting Sámi interests, including Sámi schools, in Russia is very difficult (Zmyvalova & Outakoski, 2019). However, the situation is somewhat

better for Sámi interests in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Sámi languages are stronger in those societies because their status is more vigorously protected through laws and other measures. The opportunity to learn Sámi languages in school (at least as distance education) has never been better. Several public enterprises are actively working with Sámi languages, and Sámi languages are more visible than ever. Nevertheless, their future remains uncertain. The general trend is that the use of the Sámi languages as everyday means of communication is in decline (Sønstebø, 2021). This is especially true in areas where Sámi languages have been exposed to pressure from the majority society and in small Sámi language communities. The shortage of teachers with adequate competencies in Norway (Sønstebø, 2021), Sweden (Samisk språkcentrum, 2021) and Finland (Huhtanen & Puukko, 2016; Arola, 2020) is a threat.

Nordic co-operation to ensure integration in the Nordic region is a vital issue for Sámi teacher education and Sámi education.⁹ Norway, Sweden and Finland should co-operate on Sámi issues through both a multilateral official body and at the political level. The three countries' Sámi parliaments also have a co-operative body. Perhaps this intensified Nordic co-operation will find viable solutions to the challenges outlined above? Today, formal organizational arrangements for Nordic co-operation on Sámi teacher education issues are weak.¹⁰ It is difficult to find a better justification for Nordic co-operation than the ambition to ensure a future for Sámi education and hence Sámi teacher education.

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⁹The notion of Nordic Sámi teacher education is not new: the 1987 Sámi Culture Committee found that the ideal goal would be a Nordic university college (NOU 1987: 34 Sámi culture and education).

¹⁰In 2017, Norway, Sweden and Finland concluded negotiations on a Nordic Sámi convention, but further actions have been limited. The lack of progress in Nordic cooperation can be linked to tensions (related to extractive industries, renewable wind power, an Arctic railway, fishing rights, etc.) in Sámi territories between state authorities and the Sámi parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland (see, e.g., Tønnesen, 1977; Larsen, 2021). It should be noted that there are differences of opinion among the Sámi on the question of rights (Horn, 2021), but it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss conflicts of justice related to the ownership of resources.

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