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Truth and reconciliation process concerning Sámi issues

Report on hearings

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The report contains a summary of the results of the hearings held as part of the preparations for the truth and reconciliation process concerning the Sámi people. The series of hearings, aimed in particular at members of the indigenous Sámi community, took place on 2 May–29 June 2018.</p> <p>The truth and reconciliation process currently in preparation in Finland is based on the international institution of truth and reconciliation commissions that emerged in the 1970s. Truth commissions or truth and reconciliation commissions refer to processes of investigating injustices that have taken place in history and uncovering the truth (i.e. what has happened) in order to prevent such injustices from occurring again. A central feature of commissions investigating injustices against indigenous peoples is that they aim primarily to highlight collective injustices rather than to investigate injustices faced by individuals. These collective injustices have had, and continue to have, various effects on individual people.</p> <p>The report discusses topics including the thoughts of the Sámi people concerning the reconciliation process in preparation in Finland, which issues the commission, if established, should investigate and what kinds of commissioners or commission leaders would enjoy the trust of the indigenous Sámi people. The report also elaborates on particular features that came up in the hearings in different areas and/or with different groups.</p> <p>The indigenous Sámi people feel that the truth and reconciliation process is generally a good idea. However, strong distrust was expressed concerning the idea that Finland is investigating the injustices faced by the indigenous Sámi people in good faith, <i>bona fides</i>.</p>			
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<p>Čoahkkaigeassu</p> <p>Gullanraporta sisdisdoallá sámiid áššiid guoski soabadanproseassa válmmastallamii guoski gullamiidda oassalastan olbmuid dilálasvuodain ovdanbuktan assiid dakkarin dego sii leat deid ovdanbuktán. Gullamat ortnejuvvojedje miessemánu 2. beaivvis geassemánu 29. beaivái 2018.</p> <p>Suomas válmmastallama vuolde lea soabadanproseassa, mii vuodđuđa 1970 – logus riegádan riikaidgaskasas duohtavuhta- ja soabadankomišuvdnainstitušuvdnii. Álgoálbmogiidda guoski duohtavuhta- ja soabadankomišuvdnaproseassain dutket ja čalmmustahttet olles álbmogii kollektiivalaččát čuohcán vearredaguit. Kollektiiva vearredaguin leat leamas, ja leat, iešguđetlágán váikuhusat ovttaskas olbmui.</p> <p>Gullandilálašvuodain lei earenoamážit sáhkkan maid sámit jurddašit soabadanproseassas mii Suoma stáhtas lea válmmastallama vuolde. Dilálašvuodain ságastallojuvvui maid das, makkar sámiide čuohcán vearredaguid komišuvnna galggalii dutkat ja cielggadit. Goalmádin ságastallojuvvui earenoamážit das makkár olbmuide sámiin livčče luohtamuš vejolaš komišuvnna jođiheadjiin, ng. komissárain. Raportas čalmmustahttojuvvojit dárkibut maid sierra guovlluid ja/dahje joavkuid iešvuodát mat bohte ovdan ságastallándilálašvuodain.</p> <p>Álgoálbmot sámit atnet jurdaga duohtavuhta- ja soabadanproseassas obbalohkái buorrin. Sis lea goit hui garra eahpeluohtamuš dan ektui ahte Suoma stáhta livčče čielggadeamin álgoálbmot sámiide čuohcán vearredaguid <i>bona fides</i>, buhtis váimmuin.</p>			
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<p>Čuákánkiäsu</p> <p>Kuullâmraapoort siskeeld čuákánkiäsu materialist, mii čoggâšui sämmiläšaašijđ kyeskee sovâdättâmproosees valmâštâlmân kullee kuullâmtiläläšvuodâin. Material lii raportist nuhtân, mutâ nomâtteemmin tohhum. Kuullâmrieggee, mon čuosâttâhjuávkun lâi eromâšávt algâaalmug sämmiliih, uárnejui 2.5.2018 – 29.6.2018.</p> <p>Sovâdättâmproosees, mii valmâštâlloo Suomâst, vuáđuduvâ 1970- lovvoost šoddâm aalmugijkoskâsii tuotâvuotâ- já sovâdättâmkomissioinstituuition. Aalmugijkoskâsávt tuotâvuotâkomission (truth commission) tai tuotâvuotâ- já sovâdättâmkomission (truth and reconciliation commission) kočodeh prosesijđ, main tárkkojeh historjást tábáhtum puástuvuodâid já viggeh tuotâvuodâ adai tom, mii lii tábáhtum, seelvâtmáin eereeb iärásij estid tom, ete taah puástuvuodâh iä innig tábáhtuu. Komissioin, moh selvâtteh algâaalmugij kuáhtâm puástuvuodâid, tehálâš lii kollektiivlij puástuvuodâi oovdânpyehitim ton saajeest ete ovtâskâs ulmuu kuáhtâm puástuvuodâh selvâttuuččii. Kollektiivlij puástuvuodâin láá lamaš já láá, tiätulágán vaikuttâsah meid ovtâskâs ulmui.</p> <p>Raportist kiedâvuššo eereeb iärásij tot, ete magarijđ jurduid Suomâst valmâštállâmnaál orroo sovâdättâmproosees rávkká, maid komissio, mii máhđulávt asâttuvoo, kolgáččij tutkáđ já magariid komissaarâid adai komissio njunošulmuid algâaalmug sämmilijn ličij luáttámuš. Raportist oovdânpuáhtojeh tárkkilubbooht meid sierâ kuávlui já/tâi juávhui tiläläšvuodâin oovdânpuáhtâm sierânâsjiešvievih.</p> <p>Algâaalmug sämmiliih aneh jurduu tuotâvuotâ- já sovâdättâmkomissioprosesist jiešalnees šiev juurdân. Algâaalmug sämmilijn lii kuittâg noonâ epiluáttámuš tom kuáttá, ete Suomâ staatâ ličij seelvâtmîn algâaalmug sämmilij kuáhtâm puástuvuodâid rehelâš mieláin, <i>bona fides</i>.</p>			
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<p>Vuänõs</p> <p>Kuullâmrapportt âân se'st õ'htekeässmõõžž sää'maa'sšid kuõskki suávadvuõttprose'ss valmštõõllma kuulli kuullmõõžž pu'httem aa'sšin. Kuullmõõžž, koin ku'le alggmeer sä'mmlaid, rie'sšeš 2.5.2018 – 29.6.2018.</p> <p>Lää'ddjânnmest valmštõõllâmnalla âârrai suávadvuõttprose'ss vuâđđan lij 1970- låâggast šõddâm meeraikõskksaž tuõttvuõtt- da suávadvuõttkomissioinstituutio. Meeraikõskksânji tuõttvuõttkomission (truth commission) le'be tuõttvuõtt- da suávadvuõttkomission (truth and reconciliation commission) kääččat prose'ssid, koin ta'rĳstõõlât historiast šõddâm vie'rrvuõđid da põõrgât tuõttvuõđ le'be tõn, mii lij šõddâm, čiołgtumšin jee'rab mie'ldd cõggâd tõn, što ták vie'rrvuõđ jie teänab šõddče. Alggmeeraid šõddâm vie'rrvuõđid čiołgtei komissioin kõskksaž ä'sšen lij kollektiivlaž vie'rrvuõđi ou'ddepohttmõš privat oummid šõddâm vie'rrvuõđi čiołgtem sâjja. Kollektiivlaž vie'rrvuõđin lie leämmaž da lie jee'resnallšem vaaiktõõžž še privat oummid.</p> <p>Rapoortâst ĳiõtt'tõõlât jee'rab mie'ldd tõn, mâkam jurddjid Lää'ddjânnmest valmštõõllâmnalla âârrai suávadvuõttprose'ss câunn, mâi'd vuei'tlvânji šiõttuum komissio õõlgče tu'tĳkeed da mâkam komissaarid le'be komissio jââ'đtemoummid alggmeer sä'mmlain le'čči âskk. Rapoortâst čuä'jtõõlât tää'rĳben še jee'res vuu'di da/ le'be joouki šõddmõõžžin ou'dde puättam jii'jesnallšemvuõđid.</p> <p>Alggmeer sä'mmla â'nne jurddi tuõttvuõtt- da suávadvuõttkomissioprose'ssест tââ'đstes šiõgg jurddjen. Alggmeer sä'mmlain lij kuuitâg viõhss pann-naddjõs tõõžž, što Lää'ddjânnam riikk le'čči čiołgte'men alggmeer sä'mmlaid šõddâm vie'rrvuõđid puu'ttes miõliin, <i>bona fides</i>.</p>			
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Tiivistelmä	<p>Kuulemisraportti sisältää yhteenvedon materiaalista, joka kerääntyi saamelaisasioita koskevan sovintoprosessin valmisteluun kuuluvalla kuulemiskierrueella. Materiaali on raportissa sellaisenaan, mutta anonymisoituna. Kuulemiskierrue, jonka kohderyhmänä oli erityisesti alkuperäiskansa saamelaiset, järjestettiin 2.5.2018 – 29.6.2018.</p> <p>Suomessa valmisteltava sovintoprosessi pohjautuu 1970- luvulla syntyneeseen kansainväliseen totuus- ja sovintokomissioinstituutioon. Kansainvälisesti totuuskomissioiksi (truth commission) tai totuus- ja sovintokomissioiksi (truth and reconciliation commission) kutsutaan prosesseja, joissa tarkastellaan historiassa tapahtuneita vääryyksiä ja pyritään totuuden eli sen, mitä on tapahtunut, selvittämiseen muun muassa estämään se, että näitä vääryyksiä enää tapahtuisi. Alkuperäiskansoja kohdanneita vääryyksiä selvittävissä komissioissa keskeistä on kollektiivisten vääryyksen esiintuominen yksilöä kohdanneiden vääryyksen selvittämisen sijaan. Kollektiivisillä vääryyksillä on ollut, ja on, erinäisiä vaikutuksia myös yksittäiseen ihmiseen.</p> <p>Raportissa käsitellään muun muassa sitä, mitä ajatuksia Suomessa valmistelussa oleva sovintoprosessi herättää, mitä mahdollisesti asetettavan komission tulisi tutkia ja minkälaisiin komissaareihin eli komission johtohenkilöihin alkuperäiskansa saamelaisilla olisi luottamusta. Raportissa esitellään yksityiskohtaisemmin myös eri alueiden ja/tai ryhmien tilaisuuksissa esiinnoitteita erityispiirteitä.</p> <p>Alkuperäiskansa saamelaiset pitävät ajatusta totuus- ja sovintokomissio prosessista sinänsä hyvänä ajatuksena. Alkuperäiskansa saamelaisilla on kuitenkin vahva epäluottamus sitä kohtaan, että Suomen valtio olisi selvittämässä alkuperäiskansa saamelaisten kohtaamia vääryyksiä vilpittömin mielin, <i>bona fides</i>.</p>		
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Presentationsblad

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Referat	<p>Samrådsrapporten innefattar ett sammandrag över materialet som sådant utan att några tolkningar gjorts av den samrådsrunda som ordnades i samband med beredningen av försoningsprocessen gällande frågor som berör samerna. Samrådsrundan, där målgruppen särskilt var urfolket samerna, genomfördes mellan den 2 maj och den 29 juni 2018.</p> <p>Den försoningsprocess som är under beredning i Finland baserar sig på den internationella sannings- och försoningskommissionsinstitution som fick sin början under 1970-talet. En internationell sanningskommission (truth commission) eller sannings- och försoningskommission (truth and reconciliation commission) tillsätts för en process där man granskar orättvisor som skett tidigare i landets historia och reder ut sanningen om vad som skett, bl.a. i syfte att förhindra att samma orättvisor upprepas. För en kommission som utreder orättvisor som drabbat ett urfolk är det viktigt att lyfta fram kollektiva orättvisor i stället för att utreda orättvisor som drabbat enskilda individer. När det gäller urfolket samerna har det förekommit kollektiva orättvisor, som haft olika slags konsekvenser också för enskilda människor.</p> <p>I rapporten redogörs det bl.a. för vilka tankar den försoningsprocess som är under beredning i Finland väcker, vad en eventuell kommission borde undersöka och hurdana kommissionärer, dvs. ledare för kommissionen, urfolket samerna skulle ha förtroende för. Rapporten innehåller också en mer detaljerad redogörelse för de särdrag som framträdde vid samrådsmötena i olika regioner och/eller bland olika grupper.</p> <p>Urfolket samerna anser att en sannings- och försoningsprocess i och för sig är en god idé, men betvivlar dock starkt att finska staten skulle ha för avsikt att i god tro, <i>bona fides</i>, utreda de orättvisor som urfolket samerna utsatts för.</p>	
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SUMMARY

In October 2017, the Finnish government began the preparation of a reconciliation process concerning Sámi issues. The initiative for the process originated from the Finnish Sámi Parliament, which proposed to the Finnish government the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission for the Sámi people.

In preparing the process, consultations with the indigenous Sámi people were carried out at events held in May–June 2018 in the homeland of the Sámi and in towns with a Sámi association.

Indigenous Sámi people basically have a positive attitude to the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission. For them, it is important that, if a commission is established, it first examines the truth, that is to say what has actually happened. After that, it is time to embark on seeking reconciliation, in other words how the Sámi people, the government and the majority population can continue to co-operate towards a better tomorrow.

Because examining what has happened is the first step towards reconciliation, the term ‘reconciliation process’ currently used for the Finnish government’s procedure is, in the opinion of the Sámi people, misleading and questionable. According to the indigenous Sámi people, the process should be called the truth and reconciliation commission, which is a name more commonly used internationally and which examines and investigates past injustices and their causes and consequences and looks towards a better future.

The indigenous Sámi people are not ready for the process if the government does not make public its objectives set for the process. They also demand that the government clarifies its motive for starting a reconciliation process concerning Sámi issues. The Finnish government’s motive has not been made known.

An apology from the government to the indigenous Sámi people possibly made during or after the process is not expected per se, if the intention is merely to offer it as a so-called symbolic gesture without any concrete content.

According to the consultations, the indigenous Sámi people apparently have a need to give vent to the wrongs they have suffered and to talk about them. They recognise the problems caused by their experiences of injustice as individuals and as an entire people, but ways to rectify these problems are few since they have never collectively and openly discussed these experiences. One reason for the difficulty in dealing with the experiences of injustice is considered to be the fact that, throughout the period of Finnish independence, the indigenous Sámi people have felt that the majority population has looked down on them as second-class citizens. Remaining silent on issues has been a way to cope under the pressure of the majority population. Bringing matters out into the open for this purpose in the process to be carried out is considered the best way to help the Sámi, both as a people and as individuals.

The indigenous Sámi people consider it very important for the process to be able to increase the amount of correct information about them. In Finland, information and knowledge about the Sámi people is highly inadequate, which is seen as being one reason why the majority population view the Sámi negatively. By increasing knowledge and information, it is also believed that attitudes can be made more positive, when prejudices causing fear and hate are replaced by correct information. It is also felt that the process may be beneficial to the majority population and the Finnish people, by allowing them to process their own collective traumas, among other things.

According to the indigenous Sámi people, the potential truth and reconciliation commission must primarily and solely focus on the relationship between the Sámi and the government, because government actions or inactions are considered the greatest injustices. It is felt that the Finnish government engaged in the assimilation of the indigenous Sámi people without laws specifically enacted for this purpose. In Finland, however, the forced 'finnicisation' of the Sámi people has not been consigned to history and is considered to be continuing to this day. In the last eight years, opposition to the Sámi and assimilation procedures are said to have hardened. Clause 17.3 of the Finnish Constitution about the right of the Sámi people to maintain and develop their own language and culture has not been implemented. International agreements that Finland has signed are no safeguard for the Sámi against government assimilation, because the Finnish government is not seen as honouring these agreements.

The consultations revealed that mandate given to the commission cannot be strictly limited to one perceived case of injustice only. The experiences of the indigenous Sámi people are all interrelated. Neither is it possible to choose a single case of injustice from the continuum of injustices, because in Finland there is no endpoint to be found for the Sámi's experiences of injustice. Language and culture cannot be separated from each other.

The indigenous Sámi people themselves want to recount what has happened to them, and what they have experienced and are still experiencing to this day. They hope that once they have recounted their experiences, no-one will question them any more. What the Sámi people are telling is the truth, but what is noteworthy is that the Sámi are a heterogeneous people with their own history and special characteristics differing by region and linguistic group. The indigenous Sámi people want to write their own history visible in the state of Finland.

They hope that Norway, Sweden and Finland, in each of which a process concerning the indigenous Sámi population has been initiated or is under preparation, will work together because it is a question of one indigenous Sámi people in the area of the four countries.

Consultees without the collective acceptance of the indigenous Sámi people proposed above all that Finland first establish who the true indigenous people and its members are in Finland. After that, the reconciliation process can be returned to. According to them, the indigenous Sámi people are immigrants to Finland and a section of the population made indigenous by a political decision who should not have the rights of an indigenous population in Finland. Furthermore, all persons who belong to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament should be accepted into it. The process of seeking admission to the electoral register will be conducted until all those entitled to be entered are there, because all benefit holders must be able to decide on the benefits that being registered brings.

The expediency of continuing the reconciliation process must be seriously considered in a situation in which the indigenous Sámi people constantly feel that their existence is under threat, both from the government and from the majority population. The existence of the indigenous Sámi people is threatened by Finnish government legislation, which does not recognise or take into account the rights of the indigenous people and their distinctiveness from the Finnish people and from Finnishness. Forms of land use competing in the Sámi homeland, such as mining and increasing tourism, are threatening the right of the indigenous Sámi people to maintain and develop their language and culture. People are questioning the existence of the indigenous Sámi people, and the Sámi are being strongly opposed, particularly in Northern Finland and the Sámi homeland, by groups that have considered their right to land, water and trading to be under threat since the enactment of the Act on the Sámi Parliament in the 1990s.

The appropriateness and rationale for continuing the reconciliation process must also be examined from a perspective of the Finnish government and the Finnish people. The subjects of the process are the Sámi as an indigenous people. They must be ready to open up about the injustices they have suffered, particularly to the possible commission in order for the process to have any kind of prerequisites for success. The success of the process, however, also requires from the government and the majority population the sincere

will to examine and recognise the injustices suffered by the Sámi people. Together with the majority population, the Finnish government must be prepared for the mentally and financially tough process of a truth and reconciliation commission. The commission must not be set up lightly.

1 Implementation of and participation in consultations

1.1 Background to the reconciliation process

On 19 October 2017, the Finnish government began preparing for a reconciliation process concerning Sámi issues. The government discussed the issue with the Sámi Parliament. The initiative to launch the process originated from the Sámi Parliament.

The Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the Finnish Sámi Parliament have been investigating how the reconciliation process (commission) should be executed and what the function and composition of the independent commission responsible for the process itself should be. Consulting the Sámi people on the issue was a prerequisite for the process to progress.

On 18 April 2018, the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Justice and Sámi Parliament agreed to take forward the reconciliation process on the matter of consulting the Sámi people.

1.2 Timetable of consultations

The consultations were held between 2 May and 27 June 2018. They were held in the Sámi homeland laid down in Section 4 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament and, outside the homeland, in towns where there was a Sámi association. The consultations also took into account the bodies heard by the Ministry of Justice in Sámi matters.

The places where consultations were held were, in order, Nuorgam, Utsjoki, Karigasniemi, Sevettijärvi, Lisma, Nellim, Ivalo, Inari, Inari, Ivalo, Ivalo, Ivalo, Angeli, Lemmenjoki, Kuttura,

Vuotso, Rovaniemi, Oulu, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Helsinki, Inari, Partakko, Peltovuoma, Palojärvi, Hetta, Hetta, Karesuvanto and Kilpisjärvi.

In addition to the consultative events, it was also possible to have one's say on the matter by email, with the deadline being 29 June 2018.

1.3 Target group for consultations

The actual target group at the events was the indigenous Sámi people, and to hear them talking about their own issues. Approximately 300 people attended the consultations.

The consultations were public and open events. Each one lasted 2–3 hours.

1.4 Form of the events and notifying about them

The consultations were held as several smaller events so that as many people as possible could feel involved in the issue. At many events, regional coverage and placement of the threshold for expressing an opinion on the matter as low as possible were also targeted.

In order to facilitate the practical arrangements for the events, cooperation was carried out with Sámi associations, other associations and local people. The partners were also responsible for informing people about events in their area in whatever way they wanted to. Yle Sápmi and the Sámi Parliament also participated in providing information about the events by publishing an updatable consultation timetable on their websites. This timetable was also published on the website of the Prime Minister's Office.

Of the 30 events announced, ultimately 29 went ahead. Of the events, ten were completely in the Sámi language, ten were bilingual (Sámi and Finnish) and nine were completely in Finnish.

1.5 Questions particularly focused on at the events

At the events, truth and reconciliation processes were discussed, generally reflecting on the meaningfulness of the process for Finland's indigenous Sámi population based on processes

already implemented around the world. Another subject considered was the mandate set for the commission, i.e. what the commission should examine and investigate. From the mandate theme raised in public, the events also discussed experiences at boarding schools and the resultant loss of language and culture, and its meaningfulness as a mandate for the possible commission. Another topic of discussion was what kind of people would be trusted in leading roles for the possible commission, so-called commissioners, and how these commissioners should be chosen for this task.

The main questions to emerge at the events:

1. What thoughts does a possible truth and reconciliation commission arouse? Is there a need for the process?
2. What should a possible commission examine and investigate, i.e. what is its mandate? Boarding school experiences and the loss of both language and culture through boarding school experiences?
3. A question about the commissioners – to what kind of people would those present be prepared to recount even their most painful experiences, i.e. what kind of criteria should be set for the commissioners to be selected? And how should the commissioners be chosen?

2 Pronouncements on the reconciliation process, mandate and commission

2.1 Reconciliation process

In consultations with the indigenous Sámi people, something that particularly emerged was that in Finland they have learned and the majority population has been taught that they are an inferior, lower class of people to the majority population because of mockery targeted at them by the majority population and because of attitudes to the Sámi people. They have learned that their knowledge and skills are not on the same level as those of the majority population. This way of thinking of the inferiority of the indigenous Sámi people has become imprinted on them at least since the time of Finnish independence. This way of thinking alone may also have a strongly finnicising influence on the Sámi people, as the Sámi are put in the position of a child, to be looked after by the majority population; the Finns are omniscient and all-powerful, we can say nothing. The indigenous Sámi people want to be, and are, Sámi. They are proud of their roots, language and culture, and they have no wish to be assimilated into the majority population.

“The world is hardening all the time and the future must be taken into account, it takes so much energy to fight for the Sámi, it’s not nice for those who fight for the Sámi. My mother always told me you’re not like a Sámi, you should bow down, you should bow down, you are lower-class. I am of no help as I’m Sámi.”

In the consultations with the indigenous Sámi people, it emerged that in the Finnish process it should be taken into account that the Sámi are one people in a region covering four nations. They consider it natural that the nations, in which the processes based on the international truth and reconciliation commission institution are simultaneously under way or under preparation, should also cooperate. The suitability of a process similar to the reconciliation process being prepared in Finland is currently being studied in

Sweden. Sweden began preliminary preparatory work for the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission for the Sámi people in 2015. The Norwegian Storting established a truth and reconciliation commission for Sámi and Kvens (a Finnish ethnic minority) in June 2018, after preparations that lasted about one year. The term of office of the Norwegian truth and reconciliation commission will last until 2022.

In Finland, the indigenous Sámi people consider it very important for any commission to operate transnationally. By this, the Sámi people wish to strengthen the sense of solidarity of their people over national borders, and to prevent individual Sámi people from having to choose which national process they feel they belong to.

The international truth and reconciliation commission institution is considered a good thing. The indigenous Sámi people consider the process under preparation in Finland to be highly questionable in terms of its timing, the unclear motive of the government and its appropriateness.

“I think it’s a big question, the Act on the Sámi Parliament and perhaps also the Arctic Ocean railway project; before that you can’t decide anything about a thing like this. Since it is indicative of the will of the government. This has a lot to do with trust, and that’s something we don’t presently have much of. I see that the Arctic Ocean railway is a great dilemma, how Sipilä has blessed this process and at the same time also the Arctic Ocean railway, which is somehow the aim of this process, to let us know that colonisation is not continuing. So it’s just crazy that we want the Arctic Ocean railway to go through our countries and then somehow at the same time to begin reconciliation. I don’t know which is a worse threat. Is it that the government reconciliates now? And then in the future, if something goes wrong in relation to the Sámi people, they can always say “well, we’ve made up and apologised”. I don’t know if there is some other scenario here.”

“It seems as if we should accept the situation we now have. And forgive everything that the government has done to us. That’s what I understood from this. We’re not asking to receive back everything that has been taken away from us, but the rights of our children and grandchildren must be ensured in the future, that’s what we’re working for.”

2.1.1 On the possible benefits of the process

At the events, it became clear that the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission in itself is considered a worthwhile idea. In the opinion of the indigenous Sámi people, it is important to examine what the history of the Sámi in Finland has been and what their situation in Finland is now.

The public expression of these issues is seen as beneficial both to the Sámi themselves and to the majority population. As a result of the commission's work, the indigenous Sámi would obtain information about their own history within the state of Finland. They feel that their own knowledge of their history is deficient because of the national borders and the subordinate position of their people in relation to the majority population. The lack of knowledge of the history of their own people is also a result of the fact that neither the Sámi people themselves nor anyone else has learned anything about the Sámi in Finnish schools. Nowadays too, nothing is taught about them in school. The need for historical writings on the Sámi people is great. For the majority population, a benefit of the process would be that, through an increase in knowledge, their fears, prejudices and negative attitudes towards the Sámi would decrease.

An end result that resolves all problems is not expected from the reconciliation process. It could be useful in building reconciliation between the Sámi people and the majority population, for the self-esteem of the Sámi on both an individual and communal level and for individual Sámi to be allowed to give vent to their bitter experiences after keeping them bottled up for years and decades. Even a minor increase in knowledge may ultimately be greatly beneficial.

The indigenous Sámi people certainly do not wish the reconciliation process to become a tale of sacrifice. If a commission is established, they also wanted to bring out the positive things that the Sámi people have preserved as Sámi, in spite of the assimilation that has been and is being practised in Finland, the pressures related to it and the attempts at it. The indigenous Sámi people hope that the reconciliation process will shed light on what is positive in being Sámi and in the Sámi themselves.

In the opinion of the Sámi people, the only correct title for the process is the truth and reconciliation commission. For them, it is most important that first the truth, i.e. what has happened, be investigated without anyone questioning what emerges as having happened. The truth is not, however, just a single Sámi truth; the truth is manifold because different geographical areas and different Sámi language groups each have their own history and experiences, their own truth. After examining the truth, together we may begin to consider reconciliation, that is to say how the indigenous Sámi people, the Finnish government and the majority population will continue on together ensuring that past injustices are not repeated or do not continue. Without the truth, however, reconciliation will not be possible.

The indigenous Sámi people are prepared to participate in the truth and reconciliation commission process, if the Finnish government can genuinely prove that it wants to examine what the Sámi people in Finland have experienced and are still experiencing. The government must also genuinely commit to ensuring that in Finland the process is followed by concrete progress in implementing the rights of the indigenous Sámi people. Their right

to self-determination must be recognised. The government must recognise the right of existence of the indigenous Sámi people. A meaningless apology without the intention to change things for the better may as well not be made, as emerged in the consultations.

“And the other side must be sincere in its intentions. Of course here we’re very used to dozens of good and beautiful promises being made. Then we’re just made fools of when the negotiations begin.”

“[...] A good thing is of course that we hope that the Sámi situation, history and injustices that we have experienced will be brought out in the process and be discussed, so that our thoughts, experiences and expectations are heard. This requires the process to go through the Finnish people, and requires the heads of government, President and Prime Minister to take a stand and say “we have wronged the Sámi people”. But as long as the Finnish President, not our own president but Sauli Niinistö, is silent – I’ve not heard him take any stand on our behalf, he has been silent – the Prime Minister has been silent and other ministers just avoid the issue. At a seminar organised by the Finnish League for Human Rights, it was said “We will take the greetings to the government”. The feeling is that they don’t care. If you think about today from a point of view of the legal position of the Sámi people, the situation is simple. In law, we have two good provisions in the Constitution, but the Finnish government doesn’t implement them in the lower legal decrees. When the Sámi Parliament was established, intentions were good and they still are, but the Finnish Parliament does not wish to apply the legal provisions in lower legislation in practice, which would realise the rights of the Sámi people according to our right of self-determination. The idea of the right of self-determination is for us to be able to make our own decisions, but now we’re just standing by as the Finnish authorities decide for us. This is not right. The basic idea is simple: The heads of government and the authorities should now highlight this issue and clearly state what they have done and how they intend to act, otherwise I will not believe in the process.”

“The government must understand why it’s difficult these days for the Sámi people to have faith in it. The foundation and prerequisite for all the government’s work is for it to understand why the Sámi people find it difficult to trust it.”

“We go crying and telling our tales so that the examiners can say that it was hard, and then they apologise and nothing changes. This would be the worst – in my opinion there should be a clear intent about what is beneficial for us here.”

“[...] We can’t deal with our history without dealing with livelihoods and language. For us, it all comes in one package. If we have the knowledge and skill and are prepared for the process, it would be good to get things going forward. But does the government understand what it means, is the government ready? And if such a process comes, it

would be important for it to be called the truth and reconciliation commission. It cannot just be that now we make up and you forgive and everything is okay. Sure, it must come in such a way that if it comes, we will then have to dig out things that will force the truth out. The truth will have to be involved. I've also been thinking that the situation of the Finnish government is surely the most challenging. In Norway, it's been the law so it cannot be disputed, whilst in Sweden there have been many variants – efforts have been made to protect the Sámi reindeer herders with the concept “lapp skall vara lapp”, but efforts have been made to ‘swedice’ those that have not been ‘real’ Sámi, or reindeer herders. In Finland, since ‘finnicisation’ has not been written in law, they can deny its existence. Does the government understand just how treacherous this finnicisation has been. It has been so effective.”

2.1.2 Mistrust and fear of the process

Although the indigenous Sámi people are positive about the international truth and reconciliation commission institution, the consultative process revealed many different fears and threatening scenarios of the process being planned in Finland.

Consultations revealed that the Sámi do not trust the Finnish government and harbour a deep mistrust of the government's plans concerning the indigenous Sámi people. Those who have attended the events want to know why the Finnish government began to prepare the process in the first place. They also want to know if the government has already decided on the end result of the process. In the consultations, it emerged that the attendees did not understand what the objective of the government's proposed reconciliation process is, and what the government is aiming to achieve by it.

The indigenous Sámi people feel that everything has been taken from them in Finland. The rights to practise and preserve culture and language have been taken by taking away the rights to land and water, nature and the enjoyment of nature according to Sámi tradition. There is no protection at all for Sámi reindeer husbandry. The Sámi tradition of handicraft is exploitable by everyone. The very existence of the Sámi people has been forbidden and their identity has been taken.

According to paragraph 17.3 of the Finnish Constitution, as an indigenous people the Sámi have the right to preserve and develop their language and culture. This right is not being implemented and the paragraph in the Constitution has no practical meaning in a situation where the majority population decides even on matters in the core area of the Sámi right of self-determination. In Finland, the indigenous Sámi population do not have the right to determine themselves who belongs to their people and who are its members. What is more, if Sámi people step up to fight for their rights or even to open their mouths, the majority population attacks them in a hostile manner, and asks why the Sámi are always offended by

everything. In the experience of the Sámi, in Finland they are dispossessed of everything that is theirs and important to them. The only thing in Finland that nobody can take away from them is their feelings.

The indigenous Sámi people question the government's motive for embarking on the process. They suspect that, by implementing a process concerning the indigenous Sámi, the Finnish government is trying to improve its reputation internationally as a country that respects human rights and the rights of indigenous people, although at the same time it is further weakening the rights of the Sámi people. There is no faith in the government's genuine, sincere will to implement the process for the good of the indigenous Sámi people. In the consultations, it was considered whether Finnish politicians are trying to gain a feather in their cap for themselves through the process. On the other hand, thought was also given to what, for example, the present government has to lose by examining historical events.

“The first thing that came to my mind was ‘why now?’. Is it that now everything has been taken from us, and we still have to face this. Is it that when everything is taken, when we’ve taken everything, now we’re listening to you, so it’s all OK? What’s the idea behind this? What’s its aim? We’re now living in such a hard time, just like the time of finnicisation, when nobody other than the Finns are any good, so why now? Perhaps to make the UN happy, but what does that bring us? Right now what we’ve heard, let’s leave it at that. This is a kind of first impression, but I don’t yet know if we should begin this sort of a thing.”

In the consultations, the mistrust of the indigenous Sámi people in the government was also expressed in their puzzlement as to why the Sámi Parliament and the Finnish government are using different names for the process. The Sámi Parliament uses the term most commonly used internationally for the process: truth and reconciliation commission. The term ‘reconciliation process’ used by the government seems to be about dispute resolution and arguments. There has been great puzzlement about what there is to dispute and what should be resolved. It was also suspected that the purpose of the government is to force the Sámi people to forgive the government for the injustices done to them, without the government committing itself to anything after this forced forgiveness.

It is feared that the government's intention for the reconciliation process is ultimately something completely different from benefiting the Sámi people, and is actually against them.

In the consultations, the indigenous Sámi people also expressed distrust in the Sámi Parliament. The initiative taken by the Sámi Parliament towards the government concerning the truth and reconciliation commission for the Sámi people is in itself respected and appreciated. The Sámi Parliament's motive for the process, however, arouses mistrust and suspicion in a situation in which Finland has many legislative processes concerning the Sámi people under way, and other projects and plans concerning the indigenous Sámi, which threaten their language and culture. The mistrust of the indigenous Sámi population in the Sámi Parliament is evident in their suspicion over whether, through their initiative, the members of the Sámi Parliament are really collectively working for the issues of the indigenous Sámi population, or whether they are seeking personal honour and reputation. The Sámi Parliament is considered being very passive in regard to its own people. It does not take into account, much less know, the special characteristics of the Sámi homeland or the needs or status of Sámi living outside the homeland. The Sámi Parliament is also seen as a body implementing the government's policy of subordination. The legitimacy of the Sámi Parliament to represent the indigenous Sámi population is also being questioned by people in a situation in which the Sámi Parliament is increasingly being 'finnicised' by people approved for its electoral register but not known to be members of the indigenous Sámi population.

"Otherwise we'll just go if they ignore our rights and language just to get their names in history. That must not be done. That's the one thing."

"Could it be changed to just be an awareness commission, forgetting reconciliation. I know the old people in our area and, for sure, for these old people this is like the last violation, telling some officials here what they would usually tell psychiatrists, then they just put it in the file right at the back. There's something sinister in this and it conflicts with my sense of justice."

"I also want the government leaders to speak themselves, not just to send you here. The President, Prime Minister and the government should clearly explain what they're intending. Before that, I won't have faith in anything. I've been working so long in Sámi politics. I remember the 1960s when I began in politics. We got together and sat in conferences. We've been working a long time and what have we seen? We've seen development. The Finnish government has without a doubt always wanted to assimilate the Sámi. If you look at the recent legislation on the reform of social and health care and regional government, the main aim is for the Sámi Parliament to drop out of it. The Sámi Parliament just has a few years left, just four or five years of being meaningful. I'm ready to quit and to say that, in this country, it isn't worth being Sámi."

In the consultations, the criterion for being against the process was presented not only as mistrust but also fear that, once again, the indigenous Sámi people and Sámi issues

will be examined without guarantees that anything will change for the better. The Sámi will be obliged to participate in the commission's activities as informants and to openly express even their most difficult experiences to the commission, possibly once again being traumatised by what they have experienced.

For the indigenous Sámi people, the process is one between the government and the Sámi people. According to the consultations, injustices suffered by the Sámi in Finland are a result of government action or government inaction. The fear is, however, that, for the government, the purpose of the process is to focus on relations between the northern people, the Sámi and the majority population and on resolving them positively for the majority population.

“The government will surely appoint to the commission people with the new-millennium idea that the Sámi people are not indigenous. The most terrible thing would be that the outcome of the commission is ‘Ping!’ – Finland has a new indigenous people. This outcome is frightening and thought must be given to whether there is even a need for this commission. They are so good at spoiling everything that’s planned for us.”

The worst outcome would be that we Sámi and this and that generation have displaced the true Lappish people and bullied them and the Sámi children of today are accused of racial discrimination.”

2.1.3 On the process of amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament and the definition of Sámi

In the opinion of the consultees, work to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament ongoing at the same time as the consultations was mixed up with the Sámi reconciliation process in terms of content. The difference between the reconciliation process and work to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament was not clear to ordinary people.

Attendees at the consultations talked much about the definition of Sámi and the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament. The unambiguous view of the indigenous Sámi people against the reconciliation process is the definition of Sámi laid down in Section 3 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament. If, as a result of the amendment work on the Act on the Sámi Parliament, the indigenous Sámi people are not given the right of self-determination to decide who belongs to their people, the prerequisites for the reconciliation process are not considered to exist. The representativeness of the Sámi Parliament as a body elected from amongst the indigenous Sámi has already now been put into question by decisions made by the Supreme Administrative Court to accept as Sámi onto the electoral register people who do not enjoy the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous people. If the

amendment to the Act on the Sámi Parliament does not improve the Sámi right of self-determination or weakens it even further, then the Sámi people will not believe that the government's reconciliation process has a sincere purpose as a process carried out for the good of the Sámi people. The indigenous Sámi are sorry that the leaders of government and Finnish decision-makers have problems in perceiving who are Sámi and who should be listened to in connection with Sámi issues.

"[...] What is being talked about and constantly being revealed from land registers, census registers and border records is that those who were entered in the electoral register by the Supreme Administrative Court decision were actually new residents. There are no grounds to suggest that they would be Sámi. And what we've now heard is that there would be a compromise that was talked about that they would remove the definition of Lappish, but put a transition period so that the next elections would still be under the old act, and in 2020 there would be a new one, but during that time they will already have got in. I think that it's already gone so far that it should be considered whether or not to be removed from the electoral register for the Sámi Parliament. If you have to witness with your own eyes your own people being subjugated, it's sad. This has surely never happened anywhere in the world, in so-called civilised nations where all opportunities to receive and guarantee material welfare are possible. Finland is one of the world's most prosperous nations, along with Norway and Sweden, and they would have no trouble organising Sámi affairs but they don't want to. They always want to assimilate. It feels a little as if the Swedish Sámi Parliament is the only one that tries a little to resist. It seems as if the Finnish Sámi Parliament is going in that direction. It's a regrettable process so, if it actually goes that way, I don't know what we'll do with a truth commission. [...]"

The definition of Sámi and the work to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament also gave food for thought to those who do not enjoy the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi to belong to the Sámi people. The amendment of Section 3 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament will certainly not be approved if paragraph 2 of the regulation about Lappish descent is removed from it. Likewise, amending the definition to be based on language will not be accepted. According to consultees who are without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people, the Sámi reconciliation process is pointless if it does not also concern the real indigenous people of Finland. In this context, 'real indigenous people' means those who have lived longest within the borders of Finland, but who have not been approved for entry in the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament. A condition is set for the establishment of the commission, i.e. the actual commencement of the process, according to which it will first be examined what section of the population is indigenous to Finland and which individuals belong to this indigenous people.

“Yes, this truth commission is needed, but I don’t believe in it in the sense in which the Sámi Parliament means it. I was in Inari when the first truth commission event was held, where there were other truth commission people from parts of the world where people had been killed and oppressed. But then, in a row of tables, in addition to those foreigners, there were three young Sámi girls. When their turn to speak came, one of them wept copiously about her fate, how she has been treated. Then it suddenly occurred to me, had I come to the wrong place, had I come to some theatre? But then I was amazed to see the Sámi interpreter who was interpreting it into Finnish, also start to weep. The interpreter also wept. It was certainly quite a theatrical performance.”

“First there must be unanimity about who belongs to the indigenous people. Because this concerns the indigenous people who are called Sámi in Finland. But if you consider that the Sámi are only those who are in the register and have been granted the right to vote, then this is a kind of judicial murder committed against the real indigenous people who are the Forest Sámi and Forest Lapps. But it seems that you can get the right to vote in the Sámi Parliament just by studying the language and practising the culture to some extent. You don’t have to be genetically Sámi or Finnish, you can be absolutely anything. In my opinion it’s not worth even starting if there is no unanimity on who is indigenous. It should not be confined to the Sámi homeland and major towns, to ‘city Sámi’. The truly indigenous peoples live in old ‘siida’ all the way down to Kuusamo. These are the people.”

2.2 The mandate

From what has emerged in the consultations held in different areas and from the special features later presented in this report, it is possible to compile a mandate for the commission covering all areas and their characteristics and concerning all Sámi as an indigenous people. The indigenous Sámi people hope that any mandate given to the commission is not limited, but gives the Sámi people a genuine opportunity to recount all the collective injustices they have suffered in Finland without the truthfulness of their experiences of injustice being questioned any more after that by any party.

At the consultations, the Sámi’s experiences of boarding schools was also particularly discussed, as well as the loss of language and culture as a result of these experiences. This theme as a mandate for the commission has been in the public domain. At the consultations, this theme on its own was considered too narrow an assignment for a possible commission to examine.

2.2.1 Themes as a mandate for the commission

2.2.1.1 On the right to land use, the right to land and water

Of the suggestions for a mandate raised by the indigenous Sámi people, most concern land use in some way or other. Among other things, the status of the Sámi's traditional livelihoods, fishing, hunting and reindeer husbandry, has been developed in Finland such that practising them is virtually impossible. Traditional livelihoods are not recognised and their preservation is not financially supported. In Finland, forms of land use competing with reindeer husbandry, and tourism for example, do receive subsidies. Traditional forms of fishing are being suppressed by legislation which recognises neither the Sámi nor other local northern residents but, in relation to their fishing right, puts them in the same category as tourists.

The curtailing and prohibition of rights are destroying the very foundation of the existence of the indigenous Sámi people, and practising traditional forms of culture, for example, is becoming impossible. It is hoped that a commission will examine the continua of the land use of Sámi communities and the changes they have undergone and are undergoing, for example from a perspective of the traditional 'siida' system of local Sámi communities.

A common mandate suggestion from the indigenous Sámi people and consultees without group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámis is to specifically examine rights to land use and water. A difference concerning land and water is that the indigenous Sámi use the term 'usufructuary and administrative right', whilst consultees without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people expressly emphasise right of ownership in the sense of private ownership.

"The most important question is land. If the people has no land, it is left unclear how Sámiland was derived and it is interpreted in two ways. We interpret it such that the Sámi area is the Sámi area, but the Finns interpret it such that a Sámi area is an area in which there are points where Sámis live here and there. There's such a great difference in interpretation that it affects the enactment of laws. For example, the Act on Forest Administration, which is based on the fact that everything, the whole region is state-owned land, but there are just a few areas where there are Sámi dwellings. And such an interpretation has eaten away the foundation of the entire Sámi people. The Sámi people has been eliminated. In every way."

2.2.1.2 Legislation

All the themes that emerged in the consultations are, in one way or another, connected to Finnish legislation. As a mandate, a proposal was to examine how, during the time of Finnish independence, legislation has been formed that has curtailed the rights of the indigenous Sámi people and is continuing to curtail them. Neither has legislation taken into account

their material and immaterial rights and the characteristics of the people, according to the experiences of the indigenous Sámi people. Still to this day, legislation does not take into account the rights of the indigenous Sámi people.

According to the indigenous Sámi people, their right as an indigenous people to maintain and develop their language and culture as prescribed in paragraph 17.3 of the Finnish Constitution has been meaningless. What is more, the obligations set forth in the Sámi Language Act concerning the right to use the Sámi language when dealing with authorities have not been implemented in practice. Legal provisions banning the weakening of the status of Sámi culture are also being continually removed from legislation. In the reform of land use and fishing legislation, among other things, the rights of Sámi as an indigenous people to practise traditions based on their culture are not taken into account at all. Reindeer husbandry practised by the indigenous Sámi people has no legal protection.

In consultations with the indigenous Sámi people, according to reports the Finnish government does not observe international agreements to which it has committed and which place obligations on it in relation to the Sámi as an indigenous people.

“Once a group of lawyers came to visit from Strasbourg. We explained what kind of good laws we have. Articles from the Constitution, and the government and other authorities must negotiate with us. The European lawyers said “Yes, you have good law, but how is your power of veto applied?” I said that we don’t have one. That’s it. They said that then this all means nothing, you’re just a messenger. The Finnish government has really closely ensured that we don’t get any power of decision about anything. They cheat us, we’re like children, we enthusiastically write our opinions but the government and other authorities don’t care about them.”

“The government doesn’t say anything and constantly tightens up legislation. The Act on Forest Administration, the Fishing Act, the Hunting Act. The Reindeer Husbandry Act has been kept as it is. Word has it that it can’t be tampered with because it’s the law of Moses. The reason is that if they begin to screw with it, rights will come from reindeer. Does a reindeer have a right to pasture. Opponents want to transfer reindeer to fenced-in areas, almost to cowsheds.”

2.2.1.3 The history of the indigenous Sámi people in Finland

The indigenous Sámi people want a possible commission to examine their history in Finland. When examining the history, the Sámi history in Norway, Sweden and Russia must, however, also be taken into account, because the Sámi are one people separated by national borders. The indigenous Sámi people feel that they know hardly anything even about their own

history, let alone that of the Sámi living in other countries. Knowing history is important to identity.

Books about Sámi history have not been written in the Sámi language. In schools, virtually nothing is taught about the indigenous Sámi people. The Sámi people do not necessarily even know themselves what they have lost through finnicisation.

In the opinion of the indigenous Sámi people, their historic writings would also be of benefit to the majority population, whose knowledge of the Sámi is these days either very scant or based on wrong information, beliefs and stereotypes. Increasing knowledge may reduce the fears and hatred of the majority population towards the Sámi people.

“It’s as if our history has been deleted because, when we go to a museum, there are rock paintings but it does not say that they are by the Sámi. Then again, the Finns have archaeology and it’s said that they were Finnish, but the Sámi are like sparrows that have just landed here. There’s nothing, history on a level of education and science has been taken from us.”

2.2.1.4 Opportunities to make a living in the north

The Sámi people want the commission to examine why opportunities for living and making a living in the Sámi homeland have deteriorated over the decades and are still deteriorating year-on-year. Services are being taken away and people are moving far away for education and work. Many people would like to return to their home region in the north, but job opportunities are few and surviving on natural sources of livelihood are unlikely if they have not been working in such fields all their lives. The reduction in opportunities to make a living is negatively and directly affecting the chances of the indigenous Sámi people to maintain and develop their language and culture, for example as the language becomes impoverished, hampering the passing on of cultural traditions to the next generations.

On the other hand, traditions based on the culture of the indigenous Sámi people to live from nature and with nature in the Sámi homeland will also soon be impossible to practise. Legislation is constantly being amended so that the practising of Sámi cultural traditions, for example fishing and hunting, are being finnicised by force. The difference between indigenous Sámi identity and Sámi culture and Finnishness and Finnish culture is not recognised.

In the north, the borderless nature of countries is reflected in people’s way of living and how they experience their environment. Borderlessness also gives rise to working, doing one’s business and having relations and friends in another country. This borderlessness is a natural thing to the Sámi and also makes life easier in the north. The Finnish government

does not seem to recognise, much less acknowledge, this interaction that is natural for the Sámi people. People feel that the Finnish government shuts in the indigenous Sámi people carrying Finnish passports within Finland's national borders.

“There’s history from long ago, you cannot just look back a hundred years. It’s just got worse all the time, the trampling of our rights. I don’t know what the result has been around the world that, like the Church, the State would apologise. There’s no use in that. From the government I want the rights that we had in Sámiland and, if no attempts are made at that, it’s pointless to do this work. The fact is that, if we Sámi cannot live here, the Sámi language and culture will die. The policies of yesterday and today will surely gradually kill the culture.”

“[...] But I’ll say that now we are living in the worst possible time in Finland’s Sámi history. Even when the borders were moved, even when there were boarding schools, it was not as great a threat as now when our whole social structure is about to be broken as well as our chance to remain a people. The government has finnicised all our possibilities so effectively. [...]”

2.2.1.5 Other themes

Topics emerging from the consultations as a possible mandate:

The naming of Sámi places; Sámi naming traditions; the state of the Sámi language; common municipal and provincial language strategies; the rights of cross-border people; the participation of the Sámi in wars; the role of the media in hate speech practised towards the Sámi; the possibility of the media to influence matters positively; the impact of the Church/churches on the Sámi and Sámi culture; the content and meaning of the Skolt Act; the family areas of Skolt Sámi lost to the Finnish state and recognising them; the comprehensive history of the Inari Sámi; false information spread about the Sámi; the values of the Sámi; Sámi values; Sámi spirituality; the Finnish school system; the responsibility of Finnish universities to promote Sámi rights and educate the population on the existence of the Sámi; hate speech; everyday racism and discrimination; the marginalisation of the Sámi legal system; the right of self-determination of an indigenous people; explanation of the term ‘indigenous people’ to correct misunderstandings; identity; how the Sámi define ‘Sáminess’; Sámi people who are disabled, their position and the implementation of their rights; how and when the land in Northern Finland was transferred to the State; how the institutions of the majority population have come to Sámiland; differences between Sámi groups; the attitude of the Sámi to so-called Sámi returnees and Sámi living outside the Sámi homeland; Sámi life and society through the eyes of Sámi people in 100 years.

“For the Sámi, there is so much to do but time is not on our side. There’s no use. We can slave away and resist and promote, put effort into it, but nothing will ever come of it. Sometimes it would be so easy not to need to fight. For someone to understand when you say “Don’t put on a fake Sámi dress” and for someone to believe you. But I don’t feel like talking about this any more, it’s been discussed for ten years and is not going anywhere.

“[...] How could we support each other so that those who live here could still make a living from it, but those who have moved could still move around here. As one woman once said, what’s the use of being Sámi when you’re just a Sámi. If you’re born and grow up Sámi, that’s what you are. You can’t choose to be born Sámi. It’s always with us wherever we live.”

“Finns don’t even know that the Sámi were there when the Germans burnt Sámiland. History starts from there, even Members of Parliament they tell the so-called ‘truth’, they are immigrants from other countries, they aren’t Sámi but immigrants, there are only a few Inari Sámi and they are oppressed. That’s what’s said on the Internet. And at Member of Parliament level, that’s what’s written. Finnish government employees, can they inspire trust in the Sámi in anything?”

2.2.2 Boarding school experiences, and the loss of both language and culture because of such experiences

In consultations, boarding school experiences were discussed in detail. At the events, the purpose was to consider the boarding school theme superficially and explore it as a possible commission mandate. In spite of this, times at boarding schools or school in general were remembered very precisely in the accounts.

In consultations, almost every participant had something to say about their boarding school days. Experiences, memories or consequences are good, bad or regrettable, depending on the individual. Even those who did not attend a boarding school during their school years have some kind of experience of them, either through their parents or grandparents. School days in general arouse emotions too. The Finnish school system in itself is seen as assimilating.

In the minds of descendants of people who attended boarding school, boarding school has been one of the main if not the main reason for the loss of language. Those who attended boarding school do not accuse boarding school in itself of being the reason for the loss of language, even though speaking Sámi in boarding schools was forbidden. The loss of the language is rather considered a consequence of moving it out of the way of the dominant language in a situation where, for one reason or another, the language used in boarding schools was Finnish.

Those who lost their language as a result of their experiences in boarding school feel very differently and individually about the issue. During their time at boarding school, some learned that ‘Sáminess’ and the Sámi language were worthless, as a result of which they rejected the Sámi language and never again re-adopted it. Others were bullied, as a result of which they did not teach it to their own descendants, even though they can still speak it themselves. They wanted to protect their own children from future experiences of being bullied. Some lost the Sámi language when they went to school as, at home, the parents began speaking only Finnish to their children to make it easier for them to manage at school. The reasons for parents choosing to speak only Finnish to their children has not been investigated, because what took place happened very naturally and those who lost their language did not feel that they had also lost their Sámi identity as a result of their parents’ choice, even though they lost their language ability.

The negativity of the boarding school experiences in relation to the loss of language is mainly evident in those who attended boarding school in the municipalities of Inari and Utsjoki. Particularly in the experiences of the Sámi who attended boarding school in Ivalo, the school years are remembered as being gloomy and Ivalo as a place that remains distinctively anti-Sámi to this day. Positive experiences and memories about boarding school and school days also commonly emerged in the consultations.

Whilst acknowledging the negative effects of boarding school experiences of Sámi or their descendants who attended boarding school in eastern parts of the Sámi homeland, according to Sámi who live, for example, in Käsivarsi

, their boarding school experiences have not had any negative impact on their use of the Sámi language. The large number of Sámi at boarding schools there, family connections between children, the communal way of life of the Reindeer Sámi and living in their own community in the fells and forests for most of the year are, according to the consultations, the reasons why boarding school years did not negatively impact the status of the Sámi language in the Käsivarsi. It can generally be said that the Sámi language and culture and their possible loss have been impacted by many factors depending on the area and the language group, not just boarding schools.

The consultations revealed that experiences of being unloved were also part of boarding school experiences. Young schoolchildren were left without their parents’ love for very long periods and great distances away. Generally they were allowed to go home a couple of times a year, at Christmas and in the summer. At boarding school, children were deprived of the closeness to their parents that they needed, and felt unloved. The effect of this on boarding schoolchildren has been that their ability to love their own children, partners or other relatives is inadequate. Experiences of boarding school have also caused individuals to be unable to process their experiences, leading to alcoholism and mental health problems.

All in all, the Sámi have much knowledge about each other's boarding school experiences, the differences and similarities between boarding schools, and good and bad experiences and memories. The experience of having to leave home as a very young child and go far away for a long time is a collective experience. With regard to boarding school days, many also said that under no circumstances do they wish to talk about these times to anybody any more. At the consultations, violence and sexual exploitation experienced at boarding schools were also touched upon. As people who suffered cruelty, the children particularly remember the staff who worked at the boarding schools.

It is also understood that the school days were a practical necessity, as schools had to be attended and were far away. On the other hand, it was suggested that boarding school experiences have perhaps divided the Sámi people in Finland in two: those who have decided not to renounce and abandon their Sámi identity, and those who, through their difficult experiences, have not had the strength to fight against renouncement and abandonment and have turned against their own people.

Venting one's feelings about boarding school experiences is considered important. In the opinion of the indigenous Sámi people, however, it is just one factor among many other experiences of injustice of the Sámi that are more important than the times at boarding school. Boarding school days have also already been studied and documented. When examining boarding schools or any individual issue, it must also be considered that the indigenous Sámi people cannot distinguish language and culture from each other. Everything is interrelated.

It has emerged in the consultations that, through the ages, the indigenous Sámi people have considered normal school days and school attendance as a worse finnicising factor and experience of finnicisation than boarding school itself.

Boarding school days, their reasons and consequences are unanimously considered too narrow a topic as a mandate for the commission.

"Finland should guarantee the Sámi the opportunity to live as Sámi in their own area. To strengthen the position of the Sámi people, but this has not been done. Our land is constantly being chopped up and sold like a commodity. The government should look at the basic issues, not just boarding school days. There were good and bad things about them, but it's no solution."

"You can wonder what's the use of examining boarding school times. If it's done, if it is done, I don't believe that the Sámi will go along with it. I wouldn't start it, because what use is it to the Sámi?"

“I feel really bad talking about boarding school times. We set off on the last day of August, went home for Christmas and also home for the summer. I don’t even want to talk about it. I want to completely forget it. If the topic is the boarding school period, I won’t say anything. They were such horrible experiences, as horrible as can be.”

“The boarding school era is no more. What can you do about it now?”

“They’re small things, but when there are many of them they become big and are always being taken away; this also concerns the theft of the Sámi language which has gradually been happening. It’s important to building identity. If you’ve lost that, you may lose the human right to self-esteem. They’re such deep issues that you should be allowed to talk about them. Like boarding schools, they had the effect of you losing the connection to your own people; you didn’t learn things if you went to school, later you should have taken it back if it had been possible. The things that trouble people, they have more impact than boarding schools do. It goes into our traditions, philosophy and values, to that level.”

“School is central, how it has taught or not taught the Sámi. It all comes from school, what kind of foundation we receive, what we learn about our history, our language, it’s institutional discrimination which is still taking place.”

2.3 The commission

At the consultations, the possible composition of the commission was considered. What kind of people would be trusted to lead the commission as so-called commissioners? How should the commission and, in particular, its commissioners be selected so that they would be trusted in their work?

2.3.1 The commissioners

An absolute condition put forward by the indigenous Sámi people for the commissioners to be selected is that they must understand the Sámi people. This means that a commissioner must know about the Sámi people, Sámi culture and the regional and historical differences between the Sámi. This is important to ensure that the indigenous Sámi people are not once again forced into the position of a so-called teacher to explain why they are talking about what they are talking about, even before they actually get to talk about the matter itself. The indigenous Sámi people want to talk about their matters to people who understand why the Sámi people talk about them and what they mean by talking about them.

Based on what was heard in the consultations, qualities that engender trust and are required from the commissioners are justice, impartiality, objectivity, persistence, stability, independence, open-mindedness, the ability to listen and to hear, and empathy. An important attribute for someone elected as a commissioner is considered to be that they themselves have a genuine will and an understanding of the task entrusted to them. The commissioners must not drive their own agenda and must be obliged to bear responsibility for the work they do.

It is also considered important that the commissioners have expertise on the selected mandate. Experts from a wide range of different fields must be among them. Their areas of expertise must be connected to the commission's mandate. By 'expertise', the Sámi do not mean a degree or education; they also view so-called quite normal people or perhaps people engaged in a form of Sámi livelihood as possible commissioners.

The indigenous Sámi people want ethnic Sámi to be commissioners. An 'ethnic Sámi commissioner' means a Sámi from Finland, Norway Sweden or Russia. Sámi living in another country may view the Finnish situation more objectively, although problems may arise from lack of knowledge of history or maybe legislation.

Each language group wants someone speaking its own language, either as a commissioner or in a so-called group of fieldworkers. It is felt that it is easiest and safest to talk about one's own difficult experiences in one's own language. It also strongly emerged that regional representativeness is a very important matter, even if the Sámi belong to the same language group. According to the Sámi, regional differences are so great that apparently the know-how of a Sámi who knows about Sámi issues or even speaks the same Sámi language may be very geographically limited. Regionality must be taken into account to ensure that all Sámi are in an equal position in relation to the commission.

It was also proposed at the consultations that, of the commissioners, at least one should come from outside the home nations of the indigenous Sámi people. Such a commissioner could be, for example, a representative of another indigenous people who would be completely objective with regard to Finland. It was also hoped that the commission would be granted a possible representative from already established truth and reconciliation commissions, whose work, after the commission's possible establishment, would be completely new and unique in Finland. It was suggested that the commission would need the expertise of people who had already served previously as commissioners.

The indigenous Sámi people see no obstacles to an ethnic Finn serving as a commissioner. The only objection would be to an ethnic Finn acting as head commissioner in charge of the commission. Reasons for and against the participation of a government representative in the commission were also presented. It is felt that a government representative will oblige

the government to adhere to the end result proposed by the commission in a different way than a commission without a government representative. Strong mistrust in the government is a factor against a government representative. A government representative on the commission is seen as directing the commission's work in a direction predetermined by the government.

Age distribution and gender distribution should be taken into account in the selection of commissioners. It emerged in the consultations that it is very important for the group of commissioners to contain both older and younger people. The older Sámi generation feels that it can more easily trust and speak to someone of the same generation on account of a common experience of life.

At the consultations, commissioner candidates that must absolutely be excluded were listed. Politicians, people who are active in the media or social media, or people who otherwise express their opinions publicly, regardless of their ethnicity, are not wanted as commissioners. A representative of the Finnish Sámi Parliament is not wanted as a commissioner. There is also suspicion of researchers because, in the experience of the Sámi, the work of researchers is almost always driven by some personal agenda. They do not want people who have become publicly well-known, so-called 'big names', to be commissioners, because a name is no guarantee of someone's genuine and sincere will to fulfil a given task. Neither do they want people who represent the majority population and who have already presented themselves in some role in the reconciliation process.

"[We want] the sort of person who has knowledge, ability and a good heart. A really good heart and understanding. As some professor said, anyone can acquire knowledge and skills. But they should also have wisdom. I believe that wisdom sees and understands that, when someone else tells something, why he tells it like that. Not that he tells it like that, but can see why, what he is really saying and why he feels that way. I would choose the wisest people of all for that. I do not, however, want Sámi or Finnish politicians."

"It greatly depends on the person. It doesn't matter that someone might have been here in our area, that doesn't guarantee that he is wise and has knowledge. Some people always have their head in the sand, they don't see anything. Taking people area by area, that would be one way – to take someone who has proven skills and advance knowledge of the local situation, then it would be easier to move forward: Languages, we have three Sámi languages, and it should be someone who knows all three: Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi."

"If nobody knows anything, it's pointless to explain. What language are you speaking? Sámi. "It's a disappearing cultural tradition". If, from the very beginning, I have to talk

about these things that I've experienced since childhood. It's not very easy. It requires quite a lot of sensitivity from someone. For them to grasp it, to understand."

"It could be quite good if there were also people other than Finns and Sámi. People from outside. Who have no emotional attachment at all to the matter. Of course, it's difficult to find people without any emotional attachment, but I think there's a danger if the people are from the Sámi population, there are risks in that, and also of course if they are Finnish. That carries its own risks and threats. When I think about it concretely what kind of person it could be that I would speak to. That's a good question."

"I've been following this development in the Sámi Parliament, the Act on the Sámi Parliament, the definition of Sámi identity, etc. So of course in the same way [I've been following] who should lead this work. It would be the same just to jump out of it, not vote in the Sámi Parliament, not to get involved in something like that. If the aim is to involve people to be able to say "everything's all right, we've agreed" even though Sámi issues are not progressing in Parliament at all, as they've begun to get mixed up with the definition of Sámi. It's these kinds of experts who mix things up, there are these disruptive forces in the Sámi Parliament. If these kinds of forces exist in the commission, it'll be useless, just an extension of the government's colonialism. I wouldn't trust in it, but perhaps we can jump out of it if it seems that nothing will come of it. Much depends on when it begins and who is in power politically. Will it be our large party, if we get it out. The Centre Party. They more than any are eating away the Sámi' rights, even in Lapland, the representatives of the Centre Party are the worst. Unfortunately that's how it is."

"Does it really matter who's there, if we know that the end result is that the government gets absolution."

2.3.2 Selection of commissioners

The selection of commissioners was considered to be the most difficult task in the preparation of the whole process. It is felt that, without trust in the commissioners, the chances of success for the process will decrease. The indigenous Sámi people want to be choosing the commissioners themselves for their own affairs.

The distrust of the Sámi people in the government and even in the Sámi Parliament is also reflected in ideas about the method of electing the commission. The Sámi people do not think they can trust a commission appointed jointly by the government and the Sámi Parliament. This view would not be changed even if the appointment criteria were published, because both the government and the Sámi Parliament are seen as political actors and, in appointing a commission for the indigenous Sámi people, in the eyes of the

Sámi the commission becomes political. The indigenous Sámi do not want the process to be political.

In consultations, it emerged that there is a desire for the Sámi to get to decide on the commissioners themselves or at least to approve the commissioners selected for the job, to ensure that there is general trust in the objective end result of the process. At the consultations, different ways of selecting the commissioners were considered in order to ensure trust both in the commissioners and thereby in the whole process.

Of the different models, the most suggested way which differs slightly from the others was presented in a harmonised way such that the Sámi people would select from a community based on traditional and regional community-forming models (e.g. *siida*) a so-called authorised person who would convene with other authorised Sámi to select the commissioners. The authorised Sámi would select the commissioners from a group which had been put together in advance from suggestions by communities and individual Sámi people.

Another proposed method of selecting commissioners was a smaller group of Sámi whose task it would be to look for the best candidates for commissioners. After that, all the Sámi would then possibly get to select from this list collected by the group the commissioners to be appointed to the task.

At the consultations, consideration was also given to the possibility of a completely open search and its good and bad sides. The good signs of an open search are that it enables all those who wish to apply for the position to do so, and the search criteria are available for all to see. The argument presented against an open search is that the best possible applicants will not necessarily apply to be commissioners through it. Another problem is considered to be that, through an open search, who or what party will ultimately select the commissioners for the commission from the received applications.

Irrespective of the method of selection, the selection of commissioners must be open and transparent. The final selection criteria for the commissioners must also be public.

It was proposed that the number of commissioners should, in all cases, be more than three. Consultees suggested 5-15 commissioners. All commissioners must enjoy the trust of the indigenous Sámi people. Trust is important, for example because, as was considered in the consultations, these commissioners will select their own possible assistants for the different functions of the commission. All in all, the commissioners will have the extremely responsible duty of leading the commission and implementing the mandate.

“It’s also a question of who will select it and how. This will be key to the success of the whole commission. In my opinion, there should also be ordinary people on it; ordinary people should not be excluded. We have many Sámi who, for example, do not follow politics and just live their daily lives. But if the government appoints people, you know what’ll happen. You’ll get the sort of people who have always been against the Sámi, and that’s no good. Or it may be good for some and not others. [...] The greatest benefit from this could be for ordinary people who have suffered. I’m thinking about individuals now, I can’t think of the whole group. People who have suffered from the deeds of the Finnish government. If they received just a little benefit in their lives from now on, that could help the whole community. Our area still has community spirit but, in many places, the Sámi are so scattered and there is no common way of thinking. If an individual feels that they are now being heard and able to tell about actions that have bothered them. If that happened, it would at least help that individual. The greatest fear is that the commission will be composed of people who do not know the Sámi culture and do not value it. And it’ll go according to the Finnish way and the Sámi view will not be emphasised. Then the whole thing will be turned against us.”

3 A more detailed examination of the consultations, and characteristics by region and language group

3.1 Utsjoki

The events held at Utsjoki particularly highlighted the equal treatment of Sámi and people from elsewhere concerning, for example, fishing, hunting and nature-related activities. Through its actions, the government has taken from the Sámi people many of its rights to practise fishing based on its culture and to live from nature. These rights are still being curtailed.

In Utsjoki, the hindrances placed in the way of the practising of Sámi culture are evident in, among other things, a reduction in the Sámi's traditional dam fishing and drift net fishing. For example, making a dam takes a long time but the fishing season has been cut to just two or three days.

In Utsjoki, there are many land-use plans, which threaten the traditional way of the Sámi people to live from and with nature. Such plans include power lines, wind farms and excavations.

Metsähallitus manages hunting, fishing and land use. According to the people from Utsjoki, the Sámi have not had the opportunity to buy land, for example. People from elsewhere (tourists) have had and still have this opportunity. The general parcelling of land is seen as a colonial measure and an injustice to the indigenous Sámi people. Through its actions, the government has generally reduced and is continuing to reduce the possibilities of both the Sámi people and members of the local majority population to live in the north.

At the consultations in Utsjoki, the language rights of the indigenous Sámi people were considered from many perspectives. In Utsjoki, the Sámi language is spoken in everyday life, but reading and writing in one's mother tongue is difficult or even impossible, because there is no opportunity to learn them. Those who have lost their mother tongue hope to somehow get it back. At the events, consideration was given to how to define adequate, good or excellent Sámi language skills. Concern was also aroused by how the Sámi language should be preserved for future generations, if the authorities are not obliged to participate

in its preservation. The Sámi Language Act alone does not ensure the preservation of the language.

The implementation and consideration of the rights of the indigenous Sámi people's own minority, the disabled, 'special people' in the Sámi language, have been forgotten in Finland. The Sámi have taken care of their disabled relatives in their own ways. Nowadays, people are diagnosed with any number of conditions, and treatment takes place in Finnish, a foreign language, and in surroundings foreign to the Sámi. The language rights of the disabled are ignored. Disabled people must themselves be strong enough to grow up as Sámi.

Ignorance of the Sámi's own history is also attributable to language rights; none of the Sámi's own history is written in Sámi. Ignorance about their own history is also strongly linked to the Finnish school system, the curricula of which do not oblige teachers to teach about the Sámi people. Schools have not taught and continue not to teach anything about the Sámi. People have gone from Utsjoki to, for example, Kautokeino in Norway to learn about the culture of their own people, and to the University of Oulu to learn about the history of the Sámi people. Institutional discrimination exists to this day, not just in history. The school system essentially finnicises, even though schools may teach the Sámi language and in the Sámi language. The school system in itself is, however, considered as only serving the majority population.

Ignorance about their own history is also a result of border closures by countries, which have made the indigenous Sámi 'a people torn apart by borders'. In the consultations, it was considered how national borders affect the life of the Sámi. The drawing of borders between the countries has alienated the Sámi and even relatives from each other. For this reason, the modern-day Sámi youth are unaware of the common history of the Sámi people and their existence as one people across four countries. It has also been suggested that any commission should be a transnational commission, because commission work carried out only nationally will once again separate the people. In Utsjoki, the majority of people have relatives in Norway and do not want to again be faced by a situation where they have to choose which country they belong to and which country's commission work affects them.

The drawing of national borders that took place hundreds of years ago, which separated the Sámi people across four countries, is now being used against the Sámi; the Sámi in Finland have become immigrants from Norway, Sweden and Russia. The history of cross-border existence and the Sámi people is not known and there is no desire to know about it. At the same time, the Sámi's own knowledge is not considered to be anything and is no good anywhere.

The hate speech of today, in both the media and social media, burdens the Sámi both mentally and physically. When major media outlets broadcast anti-Sámi content, this encourages private people to publish text hostile to the Sámi in social media.

The term ‘indigenous people’ is foreign to the majority population. Because they do not know what the term means, there is always a ubiquitous need first to explain the meaning of the term. In Finland, the Sámi are a people greatly downtrodden by the government.

People go from Utsjoki to work in Norway, as a result of which tax affairs – the taxation of the cross-border workers – is considered punitive and unfair. An example of this unfairness is the ‘trygdeavgift’ levied by the Norwegian government, which is similar to Finnish social security contributions, but cross-border workers who pay their tax in Finland are not allowed to declare them in their taxation because the payment is translated directly in Finnish as a ‘contribution’, not a tax. People in the consultations expressed a wish for something to be done to make life easier in the border regions. People want to live in their home areas and do not want to be forced south, for example.

In the consultations, the impact of the evacuee period on the Sámi people was also considered. It transpired that, because of the evacuee period, Sámi surnames in Utsjoki were changed to Finnish ones. Because of the evacuee period, language was lost and many people did not return to the north. The Sámi who were left in the north during the war had to slaughter their reindeer to feed the soldiers, without any compensation. The importance of reindeer in the war, both as food and to transport supplies, is never mentioned anywhere. The Finnhorse is of course declared a hero in the same context. Generally speaking, the participation of the Sámi people in the war on Finland’s side is neither mentioned anywhere nor remembered on Finnish Independence Day.

The Church has had a significant impact on Sámi identity, language and culture. In Utsjoki, the Laestadian religious movement in particular. ‘Joik’ (monotone Lappish chanting) has largely been lost because people have been taught that it is bad and that “only drunks do it”. They have been taught to belittle the Sámi’s own culture, respect for nature. Things that are part of Sámi culture are called ‘ungodly’.

3.2 Inari

Of the Sámi homeland area laid down in Section 4 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament, the area around the municipality of Inari is an area where people belonging to all of Finland’s Sámi language groups live. At their own consultations, the Inari Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Northern Sámi drew attention to their own special features concerning history, injustices

and the present day. It is noticeable that the division of the areas of one municipality between three different Sámi language groups may be considered a factor heating up the atmosphere between the Sámi. In matters of land use rights and usufructuary rights, the Inari Sámi in particular feel discriminated against in relation to the Skolt Sámi and Northern Sámi reindeer herders.

3.2.1 The Inari Sámi

At consultations with the Inari Sámi, the Inari Sámi language and its position were considered. The status of the Inari Sámi language is considered delicate and vulnerable, as a result of which every speaker and teacher of the language is very important to the language community.

The Inari Sámi language was almost lost generations ago, but nowadays the number of people trying to revive it is growing. For many, the language was learned passively at home, even if their parents did not speak it with them. It seems that the choice of parents not to speak Inari Sámi to their children was partially a conscious one. It was thought that the children would cope better in school if they spoke only Finnish. Inari Sámi who spoke the language were bullied at school so they felt that, by not transferring the language, they would protect their descendants from experiencing similar bullying.

The Inari Sámi feel that their language is the Sámi language that has been discriminated against. At school it has been possible to learn only the Northern Sámi language. It has only been possible to read Inari Sámi as a mother tongue but, by the 1990s, there were hardly any Inari Sámi who spoke it as a mother tongue. Today in Inari schools, it is possible to study Inari Sámi and, for example, also to sing in that language at school celebrations. Inari Sámi language nests are important to the transfer of the language and identity, but they take place only in the municipality of Inari. Elsewhere, children have to be put in Northern Sámi language nests.

Many Inari Sámi have grown up with the view that the Northern Sámi are the true Sámi. They have had this feeling for decades. In Inari, from the 1970s to the 1990s the young people learned to regard the Northern Sámi as the true Sámi and were amazed at the Sámi pictures on tobacco playing cards from which they could not recognise themselves. Unlike the 'invisible' Inari Sámi, the Northern Sámi are highly visible and have not been afraid to show their Sámi identity in public. It is felt that the close ancestral communities of the Northern Sámi strengthen their community spirit and identity.

The Inari Sámi who did not grow up in Reindeer Sámi families have been sensitive to finnicisation. The Inari Sámi or Sámi identity has been strange since a strong connection to the land has been lacking.

The lives of Inari Sámi families have been affected by, for example, the Riutula Children's Home, which was founded in the early 1900s. Inari Sámi parents have even been asked to give their children to the children's home. At the children's home, however, the Sámi children lost their language and culture. Hundreds of Inari Sámi were lost to Spanish flu in the early 1920s. Orphaned children ended up in a children's home. Orphaned Inari Sámi children in a Finnish-language children's home also lost their Inari Sámi language.

According to the Inari Sámi people, from a perspective of preserving their language it is important for there to be no so-called language police. 'Language police' means people who jump on language errors thereby scaring people away from learning a language. Those learning the language or trying to recover it must be treated with an open mind and encouragement. The Inari Sámi language is divided into eastern and western dialects. The eastern dialect has similarities to the Skolt Sámi language, and the western dialect has absorbed influences from the Northern Sámi language and is the so-called better-known Inari Sámi language. New words continue to mould the language and support is needed in learning the new words. For the Inari Sámi, it is important that both those trying to recover the language and new language learners have the opportunity and right to learn the Inari Sámi language, regardless of where they live.

The Inari Sámi feel that they are always open to taking what is good from Finnishness, if they have needed to do so in order to cope. It has been said for a long time that the Inari Sámi identity also embodies a belief in the authorities.

Inari Sámi are puzzled by opportunities in land use and management traditional to them, opportunities that have been whittled down over time and continue to be so. The rights of the Inari Sámi to traditional fishing waters and hunting grounds have been shared with other Sámi groups and also with non-resident tourists in the municipality of Inari. One informant said the following regarding fishing: *"It's the same sort of thing with Juutuanjoki river, before I would think, now it's good weather, I'll go fishing with my child. Now I can't, those who got to buy permits first can. I could try and see if I can buy a permit, but I'm in the same situation as every one else, Swiss people and everyone."*

The impact of the Arctic Ocean railway project on reindeer husbandry was considered. The Arctic Ocean railway is seen as an extension of colonialism. The replacement of the population in Inari is seen as something being forced by the government, since traditional ways of life are becoming impossible. Ultimately people have to leave the homeland, because there are no possibilities to make a living, there are no more means of livelihoods there.

The regulation of Lake Inari for the needs of the power industry, which began in the 1940s, is considered forced population replacement that has already happened. The regulation

affected people's living conditions and livelihoods, forcing the local people to leave in order to survive and bringing new people in their place. At the consultations, people considered whether the impact of the regulation on the local population was even considered when it was begun.

In its struggle against competing forms of land use, the reindeer husbandry of the Inari Sámi receives no outside help. The Reindeer Herders' Association does not seem to help in Sámi reindeer husbandry at all, quite the opposite.

The Inari Sámi feel that they are in an unequal position in relation to the Skolt Sámi. The Skolt Act is considered an injustice towards the Inari Sámi. An even greater perceived injustice for the Inari Sámi's in the Act is the fact that, by virtue of it, the Skolt Sámi who were settled in the traditional lands of the Inari Sámi are granted the guaranteed possibility to enjoy the lands and waters. Whilst the Inari Sámi who have traditionally lived there have to buy or rent from the State or private persons both their land and their usufructuary right in order to be able to practice their traditional way of life in the land of their forefathers, the Skolt Sámi are granted these rights for free by virtue of the Skolt Act.

In the consultations, people remembered how, with the blessing of a priest, money was raised for the printing of elementary readers for the Inari Sámi language by selling the remains of Inari Sámi people from burial islands. The price for a complete skeleton was 70,000 Finnish marks. Behind the printing of the pioneering elementary reader for the Inari Sámi are cruel deeds that there is a desire to reveal. Threats and blackmail have been practised since the early days of Finnish independence.

At the consultations, a desire was expressed to know how the institutions came northwards and shaped the north even before the time of Finnish independence.

The Inari Sámi consider it one of their strengths that they are open to adopting new members into their community. On the other hand, descendants of the Inari Sámi who were orphaned by the Spanish flu and cannot speak Sámi feel discriminated against, even within their own language group. The consultations with the Inari Sámi emphasised the internal division within this group of Sámi between those who can speak the Inari Sámi language and those who cannot. At the events, the need was expressed to examine broadly the settlement history and cultural history of the Inari Sámis.

3.2.2 The Skolt Sámi

The Skolt Sámi who have settled in Finland come from three siida: Suonikylä, Paatsjoki and Petsamo. In the Treaty of Tartu in 1920, the area of Petsamo was annexed by Finland and the siida of Suonikylä, Paatsjoki and Petsamo became part of Finland. When the Second

World War broke out, the Skolt Sámi in Suonikylä, Paatsjoki and Petsamo were evacuated from the area of Petsamo, which Finland ultimately lost back to the Soviet Union when the war ended. After the period of evacuation, the people from each siida were settled in a different area and in their current permanent location in the eastern parts of the municipality of Inari. The Skolt Sámi did not return back to the north after evacuation.

In the experiences of the Skolt Sámi, the loss of their home and the breakup of their community across national borders are strongly felt to this day. Through the disconnection of their way of life and annual cycle enabled by their traditional family areas, they have learned to be rootless. And at home they have learned that home and the true way of life have been left back in Suonikylä, for example. They have learned that the Skolt Sámi were settled in lands occupied by others, as their traditional family areas were largely left behind national borders. The feeling of rootlessness stemming from the loss of their home, and also awareness of their roots and pride in them, are very much part of the modern existence of the Skolt Sámi.

Their self-esteem has disappeared, but it has begun to emerge again since the late 1990s. They feel that there is nothing that could have been done for the good of the Skolt Sámi identity since they have been able to respect neither themselves as Sámi or their roots. For this reason, they have not learned, for example, the language or the tradition of handicraft, even though they have been externally encouraged to do so.

The Skolt Sámi have learned to feel inferior to other Sámi. When talking about the Sámi people and Sámi identity, they have learned to feel that this means Sámi other than the Skolt Sámi, even though the Skolt Sámi call themselves by the name 'sä'mmlaž, which means 'Sámi'.

The Skolt Sámi survive in the areas of settlement designated to them by the Finnish government and they have adapted, although it has not been easy. The Skolt cottages built by the State have never ever been made draught-proof and, once they have received one, they will no longer get a new one. The Skolt Sámi have experienced bullying. When their chances of making a living became impossible, the Skolt Sámi moved away from the Skolt area. In the hope of a better life, the Skolt Sámi even changed their surnames. Family connections were broken when relatives were not seen for decades and only returned to the north in their twilight years.

The first Skolt Act, the Act on the Settlement of Certain Skolts (273/1955), was enacted in 1955 and the Act on Skolt Land Use (593/1969) in 1969. As a result of amendments to these acts in the 1970s, better opportunities to make a living were finally enabled for the Skolt Sámi in the Skolt region. As one informant said about the state of affairs before the legislative reform, *“even a fox has its hole, but a Skolt boy has nothing and has to leave”*.

But as the life of the Skolt Sámi began to get easier, rumours were started from elsewhere about how the Skolt Sámi were getting everything from the government for nothing. Today the Skolt Sámi feel that they are just in the way of others.

Skolt legislation was put together into a statute, the Skolt Act, in 1984. The Skolt Act of 1995 (253/1995) superseded the 1984 act. The aim of the act is to improve the living conditions and livelihood opportunities of the Skolt population and area, and to maintain and promote Skolt culture. In the consultations, it emerged that the Skolt Sámi hope that the content of the Skolt Act, the benefits and rights that it actually provides and what it means, be explained to everyone. By making the content of the act comprehensible to all, misunderstandings and the resultant ideas about the benefits from the State enjoyed for free by the Skolt Sámi can be eradicated from people's minds. In the experiences of the Skolt Sámi, the misapprehensions caused by the Skolt Act stir up groundless opposition to the Skolt Sámi.

According to the Skolt Sámi people, the government breaches the Skolt Act when it sells land in the Skolt area in violation of what is prescribed in the act. The hope of the Skolt Sámi is to live and dwell in the Skolt area in a way that ensures that the community and its preservation are given a chance. Their worst fear is that once again they will have to move.

The Skolt Act also provides on the village assembly of the Skolts, a system of self-government based on Skolt traditions. Although the Skolt village assembly is prescribed in law, it is felt that its position in the eyes of the State corresponds more to that of a society than a self-governing body. According to the act, the village assembly must be heard and has the right to speak on, for example, matters concerning land use, but in practice this right of the village assembly to be officially heard has not been implemented in Skolt Sámi matters. Previously, the village assembly had a strong position of power and was heard, even at State level.

At the consultations, people remembered the short-sighted interpretation of the law practised at the village assembly, according to which Skolt Sámi would lose their Skolt status if they married anyone other than a Skolt Sámi. This interpretation by the village assembly dates back to the 1950s. Then again, correct decisions by the village assembly are lauded, for example the preservation of Suonikylä's 'gramota' archives. The Russian czars signed documents concerning the Skolt siida, which the Skolt people kept in their gramota archives. The gramota contained documents concerning the position and rights of the Skolt siida and documents on financial relationships to the Church, which taxed the Skolts. According to the czars, the Skolt Sámi should not have been taxed as severely as the Church wanted. Of the gramota, only the Suonikylä one remains, which the heads of the village hid when the Church began to collect up village gramota in order to make taxation easier.

The Skolt Sámi who belonged to the Orthodox Church have also experienced being persecuted for their faith because they belong to the ‘Russian Church’.

The loss of the Skolt Sámi language largely began in the period 1955–1970; children who started school in the 1950s have spoken only Skolt Sámi, but those who began school in the 1970s have spoken only Finnish. The Skolt Sámi who kept their language no longer taught their mother tongue to their own children. The reasons for failing to teach it were experiences of being bullied and the fact that since they themselves neither learned Finnish properly nor learned to write their own mother tongue, they thought that it would be easier for their own children if they learned one language, i.e. Finnish, properly. Another reason for the loss of language is seen as the settling of Skolt Sámi ‘in a line’, for example along the Sevetintie road. Living far from each other broke the traditional community spirit of the Skolt Sámi people and hampered the preservation of their language.

The Skolt Sámi language has mainly been preserved as an everyday language by Skolt Sámi working in reindeer husbandry, and those who have been able to work in the Skolt Sámi tongue. Family communities have kept the language, although many even quite common words have already been lost. It has been necessary to create new words even for old things since the language has already been practically lost. The Skolt Sámi suspect that the loss of language already began during *siida* times because, although the community was Skolt Sámi-speaking, the children were taught Finnish. The reasons for the loss of language are also strongly related to the drawing of national borders, lack of self-esteem, the settlement of Skolt Sámi far from each other and a feeling of being different and inferior.

3.2.3 The Northern Sámi

At consultations held in Northern Sámi in the area of the municipality of Inari, the rights of the Sámi people were discussed. The Sámi thought about their rights to traditional fishing waters, hunting lands and reindeer grazing lands, the right to Sámi reindeer husbandry and also what the Sámi right is to be Sámi in Finland and what the right of the Sámi people is to their history.

The status and future of the traditional Sámi livelihood, reindeer husbandry, is considered a matter for concern. On the subject of Sámi reindeer husbandry, it is also essential to understand that, even among the Sámi themselves, its practice differs depending on the methods, traditions and geography of the area in question. Finland, however, does not wish to recognise the difference between Sámi reindeer husbandry and reindeer husbandry practised by the majority population; the aim is to classify Sámi reindeer husbandry with animal husbandry practised by the majority population according to agricultural models. The government and the Reindeer Herders’ Association do not support Sámi reindeer husbandry; all acts, decrees and regulations have been prepared according to the system of

agriculture. Reindeer husbandry has been made bureaucratic; there needs to be an auditor, an accountant and an entrepreneur in order to survive. At the consultations, a wish was expressed that some day clarification would be given concerning all the things in Finnish history and today that have resulted in making a living from reindeer husbandry becoming almost impossible and why the reindeer husbandry of the Sámi people is not recognised.

At the consultations, it was considered whether people are aware of the impact of forestry and logging on the land and animals and whether people know how profitable forestry in the north generally is. Extensive forest logging has been carried out in the area around the municipality of Inari. Forest felling has destroyed the forests' bird populations and hampered reindeer husbandry. In the north, the forest grows very slowly so the destruction caused by logging is felt for decades. Furthermore, the land is being surveyed and excavated for different purposes, but the local people get no information about the surveys and their results.

Possibilities for making a living in the North have been reduced. In the north, the basic structures of life like services, roads or communication connections are either not built at all or are not taken care of. People are forced to move to larger population centres for work and education. The Sámi feel that all the local people in the north want to move away from it.

Local people and tourists enjoy the same rights to both fishing and hunting. The only difference now between a local person and a tourist from the south is that the tourist thinks that, in the north, he is in an area where everything is permitted. When a person from the north goes south, he does not camp on the property of someone else or drive through someone else's garden. An injustice is felt to be the fact that, whilst a local person and his life history and traditions have no value, a tourist from the south is treated like a lord when he comes north. Furthermore, the tourism business practised by the majority population blatantly exploits 'Sáminess'.

The Sámi feel that Sáminess and the rights of the Sámi people to the region of their birth should not depend on where they live. The right to the region of birth and to enjoy it should be preserved, even if one has to move elsewhere, for example for work or study.

With regard to preservation of the Sámi language, the possibility to make a living in the north and in small forest villages is vitally important. In tight, smaller family and village communities and in the reindeer husbandry sector, the language has been preserved as a working language, even though its transfer from generation to generation has required conscious work and the will of choice to pass the language on for posterity. At the consultations, people also considered why the language has not been preserved in all small

villages. There are many descendants born in the 1920s and 1930s who lost the language and later regained it.

The Sámi language as a home language is considered important, as speech language learned at home is quite different from a language learned and taught at school. In olden days at school, when Sámi from different dialect and language groups attended school, they also switched naturally to speaking Finnish with each other as not every dialect or language was understood.

Ivalo, the central administrative village of the municipality of Inari, is a completely Finnish village in the eyes of the Sámi. Ivalo is also seen as an anti-Sámi village, yet one where Sámi live and where Sámi of different eras have attended school. Sámi who have come to Ivalo from the areas of Inari and Utsjoki have very sombre experiences of boarding school in Ivalo. At schools in Ivalo, according to those who started school in the 1980s, Sámi language teaching was given at the end of the school day, so its study was ultimately omitted due to a lack of desire to further extend the school day. Schoolchildren who were still learning the Sámi language as their mother tongue in Ivalo in the late 1990s feel that they were isolated from their own age group, as they were placed in special groups, such as in the same class as the mentally disabled, just because they were learning the Sámi language.

The Northern Sámi are also troubled by the breaking of the Sámi name tradition, since priests would not baptise children with Sámi-language names. This is now possible once again.

At the consultations, the measurements of the Sámi people performed at Inari at the turn of the 1960s and 70s were also remembered. In the measurements, people had to strip naked and all parts of their body were measured apparently for the purpose of establishing what the Sámi people were. All were urged to go and be measured, but it was not explained to the Sámi people for what purpose they were ultimately being measured. The image is that measurements were particularly targeted at Sámi women and girls.

In the consultations, the Sámi people's own legal system was also raised, their way of handling and arranging things, which has been displaced by the customs and laws of the majority population.

They also considered whether it is a sign of the subordination of the Sámi people under strong pressure that they are even starting to reject their own people, for example when Sámi move back to their homeland in the north. The attitude of the Sámi to their own returning migrants can be very strict, excluding them from the community. The language of the returnees is judged and their ways criticised, because their traditional Sámi way of doing

things and their Sámi language have grown rusty. Sámi returning to their homeland may feel like strangers in their own community and home area.

“There are people who had to leave as children and then came back, I’m one of them. When you come back, no matter how much you are your own person, you feel that people don’t listen to you and that you have to work hard for many years to be accepted. You’re not a Finnish woman, but you’ve been finnicised. You don’t know how to drive a sled. There are many things you don’t know. There were many things you didn’t know. You should learn, but you’re always discriminated against for being a Finnish woman, just go back there.”

3.3 The northern part of Sodankylä – Vuotso

Vuotso is situated at the northern border of the municipality of Sodankylä and the southern border of the municipality of Inari, but belongs to Sodankylä. At the southern border of the Sámi homeland stipulated in the Act on the Sámi Parliament, people emphasise living on the border and either struggling alone against changes or just accepting them if they have insufficient strength or will to fight them because they feel that help or support is not really available from anywhere.

In Vuotso, the construction of the reservoirs Lokka and Porttipahta weighs heavily on the minds of the people. These reservoirs built by Kemijoki Oy in the late 1960s covered the homes, livelihoods and history of hundreds of people. Houses were burned, reindeer pastures taken, the village of Sompio was badly cleared, and people were forced to evacuate, some for the third time. Reindeer and elk calves drowned in the reservoirs. Efforts were made to save some from floating peat rafts into riverboats. The local people offered to fell trees themselves that would otherwise end up at the bottom of the lakes, but permission for this was not granted. They took Kemijoki Oy to court and appealed to governmental leaders to stop the destruction. The filling of Porttipahta was stopped for a couple of weeks. At that time, the matter was considered more the destruction of nature than culture. Kemijoki Oy’s files remain secret to this day. The Sámi of Vuotso want the files to be made public, so that what happened and how the land was taken from the people can be revealed. According to the Sámi, in Finland a veil of silence has been thrown over the issue; elsewhere in the world, such destruction would have been a major and serious matter.

In Vuotso, the effects of the construction of the reservoirs are still felt to this day. Many feel that, in their twilight years, they are homeless since their home was covered under the artificial lakes. In Vuotso, there still live Sámi who have had to leave their homes three or

four times. They first had to leave their homeland for Kittilä and then to Vuotso because of the Winter War, the Lapland War made them evacuate to Ostrobothnia then finally they had to move back to Vuotso to avoid the reservoirs. Because Vuotso has no homes for the elderly, people there still have one move in front of them almost 100 km away from their home to the old people's home in Sodankylä.

The new Teno fishing agreement is a prominent topic in public discussions. When the salmon river of the people of Vuotso, Tankajoki, was harnessed to connect the reservoirs of Lokka and Porttipahta, and a channel to the river was built along with a hydroelectric power station, the issue was not publicly discussed anywhere. Now these reservoirs are full of coarsefish and Tankajoki as a salmon river is just a memory. Constant changes to the environment and measures hampering the pursuit of culture weigh heavily on the Sámi in the region of Vuotso. In Vuotso, however, it has rather been customary just to accept their fate rather than making a loud noise about it.

The Sámi in the Vuotso region largely lost the Sámi language generations ago, because of pressures from the school system and the environment, among other things. Those who have kept the language best are those involved in reindeer husbandry, because reindeer husbandry is by nature a communal way of life and the vocabulary of reindeer husbandry or related to reindeer can only be mastered in the Sámi language. The older generations have spoken Sámi amongst themselves and are still speakers of the language. The natural passing on of the language for posterity has, however, stopped. Even as far back as the 1980s, it was no longer possible to study Sámi in Sodankylä schools, and Sámi children and young people kept their Sámi identity quiet. Nowadays, the situation with the Sámi language in Vuotso is brighter, because now children can study it in school and young people also dare to show publicly that they are Sámi. As a home language, as far as is known Sámi is used in only a few households.

The municipality of Sodankylä is still not considered to have a positive attitude towards the Sámi people or language. Nothing is taught about the Sámi in school, and they are not mentioned in the municipality, even in any other connection. The Tankavaara Gold Museum was established to recount the history of gold prospectors, but the museum does not mention a single word about the Sámi people. The Sámi have, however, also prospected for gold, but have not made any official claims. The majority population with their official claims have ended gold digging by the Sámi.

For almost 60 years, the people of Vuotso tried to get a chapel for their village, but it was always rejected by municipal and parish voices. The lack of a chapel in Vuotso is seen as oppression, forcing people into a spiritual vacuum. In the opinion of the people of Vuotso, the municipality of Sodankylä considers their homeland some kind of reservation whose

value lies in the fact that municipal decision-makers can use the forest for recreational purposes.

The policy practised by the Finnish government concerning the traditional means of livelihood of the Sámi people, reindeer husbandry, is considered nothing less than cultural genocide. Through its policy, the government has destroyed the Sámi socio-economic system in relation to reindeer husbandry, for example by preventing the cycling of pastures and by treating reindeer husbandry as just a part of the system of agriculture. Laws have been passed so that “the reindeer herder at least cannot oppose normal social development”. Legislation has not safeguarded, much less recognised, traditional Sámi reindeer husbandry in any way. The authorities have even denied the existence of the Sámi way of reindeer husbandry or the existence of the Sámi reindeer herders, by stating that the Sámi do not differ from the majority population in anything more than their clothing. Now the majority population has started to claim that even the Sámi clothing does not belong to the Sámi but to the majority population.

In the consultations at Vuotso, it was stated that previously the majority population expressed their opposition to the Sámi by mocking their inferiority; nowadays, they express it as pure hatred.

“I know the mood of people who come from the land now under the water. Now that they're old, they fret because they have no home. Their mood, the loss of their home, things are not okay. At first there were films and such about it, beautiful songs. But then not even that. Good that I raised this here, often people just accept their fate and grieve amongst themselves.”

3.4 Enontekiö

In Enontekiö in the eastern parts of the municipality of Enontekiö, the Sámi spoke more than anyone else about the structural racism directed at the Sámi in Finland. They feel that this structural racism is now such a natural thing in the actions and behaviour of both the government and the majority population that people are not even conscious of it.

For decades, efforts have been made to promote Sámi issues and rights in different ways, but the government or, for example, the municipality of Enontekiö in Enontekiö have rejected all these positive efforts. The only thing in which there has been progress is the position of the Sámi language in school teaching. Children may learn the Sámi language in school, although they may still have to struggle for the implementation of matters related to the study of the Sámi language.

The legislation that was supposed to have been enacted in order to implement the rights of the Sámi people is not considered beneficial to the Sámi. Funds allocated to implementing Sámi rights have high-handedly been used by municipalities for purposes other than those for which they were intended.

The municipality of Enontekiö has practised an anti-Sámi policy for a very long time.

The structural racism directed at the Sámi is believed to be a result of fear. This fear stems from the idea that they know about the Sámi and their life, but actually they do not know. Ignorance gives rise to fear.

Structural racism is seen as one reason why Enontekiö also contains many people who have lost their language and who have not wanted to teach it to their descendants. Experiences of discrimination, mockery, contempt and bullying at school are part of the structural racism. They have made the Sámi feel ashamed about their Sámi identity. The Sámi have been made to feel that their language and culture are inferior. Society has made them value their language as inferior to that of the majority population.

In Enontekiö, the Sámi also raised the question of who is Sámi. Efforts to reform the Act on the Sámi Parliament are considered attempts to suppress the Sámi in Finland, as the Sámi do not even have the right of self-determination to decide who belongs to their people. The ability of the Sámi Parliament to represent the Sámi people is questioned because, according to a decision by the Supreme Administrative Court, representatives of the majority population have already been approved for the Parliament, people whom the Sámi do not recognise as belonging to them. This has eaten away and is eating away at the legitimacy of the Sámi organs of self-government provided for in the law, and has made people wonder whether the Sámi should ultimately leave the Sámi Parliament and once again start to look after their own affairs through associations, as was done previously.

In Enontekiö, they feel that the Sámi people have no right to existence in Finland. The Sámi people and Sámi issues have of course been researched, but the research and even finding it are denied because in Finland the Sámi have no status. Finland does not comply with the international agreements to which it has committed, when it denies the Sámi and their rights. Paragraph 17.3 of the Finnish Constitution is completely ignored. Denial of the Sámi people was written into Finland's and the government's way of operating even before Finnish independence. Since Finnish independence, everything has been taken from the Sámi in Finland. The feeling of powerlessness, that everything has been taken and now even their identity, is immense. As one informant said, "the only thing that cannot be taken from us is our feelings".

The Sámi means of livelihood have been finnicised. In Enontekiö, most Sámi are Reindeer Sámi or at least descended from them. The lack of recognition of Sámi reindeer husbandry in Finland is considered destructive of the entire Sámi way of reindeer husbandry, as the Sámi are forced, through different subsidies and the obligation to provide additional reindeer fodder, gradually to move towards livestock farming based on the Finnish model. Providing fodder in nature destroys not only the land but also people, because once you start giving it, you cannot stop. People are blinded and envy ensues. The opportunity to make a living in Enontekiö from Sámi reindeer husbandry has also been curtailed by Finns who began reindeer husbandry at a later time. The Reindeer Herders' Association neither supports Sámi reindeer husbandry nor acts in its interests.

At Enontekiö, people thought about the hay damage compensation paid over decades by the Reindeer Sámi to farm owners. The Reindeer Sámi had to pay the farm owners considerable sums for alleged damage caused by the reindeer to their crops. Some Reindeer Sámi families even had to move away from Enontekiö, when the demanded sums of compensation became too great for them to pay.

It is known that some Sámi were allegedly murdered in Enontekiö in the 1930s. The motive was reindeer, which then changed owner as a result of the crimes. These crimes have remained officially uninvestigated. Locally, however, the perpetrators are known, and they still haunt the minds of the Sámi people to this day.

The Laestadian religious movement and the impact of the Church on Sámi identity and culture also occupied the minds of the people in Enontekiö. In Enontekiö, they considered a possible connection between the hard Finnish preachers and the weakening and finnicisation of the Sámi identity. The joik tradition disappeared from Enontekiö, and the Sámi language also deteriorated.

Later generations have never been told about the bad memories of the Enontekiö Sámi from the period of evacuation in Jokkmokk on the Swedish side. The 'väärtilä' (landlord), friendly Finnish families in Palojoensuu along the main road, are remembered as good Finns with whom there still are connections.

3.5 Käsivarsi

The Sámi people in Käsivarsi in the northwestern parts of the municipality of Enontekiö and along the Kõnkämäeno and Muoniojoki rivers on the present border between Sweden and Finland are Reindeer Sámi. The characteristics defining their community spirit and history are nomadism (moving together with reindeer according to a traditional annual cycle,

usually from summer pastures to winter pastures and back again) and strong adherence to the use of the Sámi language in daily life. The Sámi in this area feel that they have always been proud Sámi, proud of their language and culture. The value that they place in their own language, culture and background is also evident as the foundation for their strong Sámi language. In Käsivarsi the Sámi language and life with reindeer go hand-in-hand, and it is impossible to speak about the language without the reindeer, and vice versa.

In this area, reindeer husbandry is organised according to the 'siida' model based on Sámi tradition. The siida, reindeer villages, are smaller reindeer husbandry units based on history and often organised by individual families. The siida determine the organisation of reindeer husbandry independently, and are independently divided into even smaller winter siida based on their traditions and needs.

The nomadic journeys, or annual migrations, of the Reindeer Sámi siida in Käsivarsi covered almost 400 km even into the 1970s. Nomadism, however, became impossible from the mid-1970s on account of, for example, settlement, fences and changes in boundaries between the lands of reindeer herding co-operatives. In the area, however, traditional reindeer husbandry culture with its annual migration has not been completely given up, even though the distances between the winter and summer pastures have been greatly shortened. The Sámi from the area have adapted themselves and their reindeer husbandry to the possibilities afforded by the time.

In Käsivarsi, nomadic reindeer husbandry culture and annual migrations have also incorporated the 'väärtil' (very good acquaintance, friend) culture as a key feature. All the families of the nomadic Sámi have had their own Finnish 'väärtil' family in the villages where they have their winter pastures. 'Väärtil' culture is based on the barter economy. The Sámi have been allowed to spend the winter with their 'väärtil' families, either in the same house or in a separate building. The Sámi have given their 'väärtil' families reindeer to thank them for the winter accommodation. As Finnish households have got richer, however, the 'väärtil' culture has disappeared. In the minds of the Sámi, the village of Palojoensuu in particular and its residents are still remembered as good people with whom they have maintained relations to this day.

At consultations in Käsivarsi, reindeer husbandry-related matters in particular occupied the minds of the Sámi. In that region, they fear that the continuation of the traditional reindeer husbandry model and lifestyle that has continued and been handed down for centuries will no longer be possible. Finland does not recognise the Sámi reindeer husbandry model, and the reindeer herding co-operatives system is considered damaging to the model, as it has been established based on general agricultural models. The Reindeer Herders' Association does not support possibilities for the Sámi to maintain their type of reindeer husbandry.

In the consultations, consideration was given to how Sámi reindeer life can be taken care of and regulated in different ways. It is felt that the parties that regulate Sámi reindeer husbandry do not understand or care about it. The highest permitted reindeer numbers are a threat to Sámi reindeer husbandry. They have also forced the Sámi in Käsivarsi to change their traditional way of selling reindeer, so that now they have to sell all the calves whilst traditionally in the region they have only sold 'urakka' (one-year-old males) and 'pailakka' (untamed reindeer).

The systems of subsidy and compensation based on agriculture are considered a threat to Sámi reindeer husbandry. Money is no compensation for the reindeer life, which has been the cornerstone of life for the Sámi in Käsivarsi. Sámi reindeer husbandry is being suppressed by Finnish money and subsidy systems, which are attracting more people into the sector. Because of this, reindeer herding co-operatives are filling up and the highest permitted numbers of reindeer are reduced further. Reindeer herders are being forced to provide additional fodder for reindeer.

The lands are being burdened not only by wild animals but also by the effects of increasing tourism and construction. Increasing tourism and travel entrepreneurship are hampering traditional Sámi reindeer husbandry. Tourists are scattering huge herds of reindeer through their ignorance. In summer, tourists climb the same mountains where the reindeer are, forcing them down into the valleys, each one of which also contains tourists. In spring, snowmobile riders stop for coffee at the same places where reindeer have gone to feed because the snow has melted. Nowhere are the reindeer left in peace any more. Tourism entrepreneurs, on the other hand, are against reindeer because they feel that they hamper the development of the tourist industry. The municipality of Enontekiö supports tourism and wants the Sámi to become tourism entrepreneurs, even though such business is not part of the Sámi culture and the Sámi do not wish to do it.

The town planning policy of the municipality of Enontekiö is considered anti-Sámi. While the plans of the Sámi people are being stopped by the need to wait for town planning, the planning of Kilpisjärvi, for example, is being carried out without hearing the Sámi or considering Sámi reindeer husbandry. Kilpisjärvi is expanding rapidly, but the living space of the reindeer is being taken not only by building, structures and new roads but also by the fact that the village boundaries are disappearing as a result of construction. The living space of the reindeer is shrinking, being stolen by competing forms of land use. At Kilpisjärvi, the University of Helsinki's biological station is also one of the forms of land use competing operationally with Sámi reindeer husbandry. The biological station in particular is considered a sign of the desire to make reindeer husbandry impossible in Kilpisjärvi, for example by building a fence all the way around Malla National Park to prevent the reindeer from gaining access to it. The biological station is spreading its areas of research widely through the surroundings of Kilpisjärvi, not only in Malla National Park.

For the Sámi living in Käsivarsi, the Sámi language has remained alive as their daily language of use across generations. These Sámi could not use any other language in their daily lives and amongst themselves. The Reindeer Sámi life has preserved the language in essence; most do not even know reindeer husbandry vocabulary in Finnish, and feel that no words even exist in Finnish for it. The strong overall community spirit and family-centredness of the life of the Reindeer Sámi have given the Sámi in the region a feeling of pride in their roots, language, as well as self-esteem. The passing on of a strong oral tradition from generation to generation has to this day helped them to maintain a strong identity. Nowadays, however, the passing on of the oral tradition in Käsivarsi is under threat, as interaction between people has increasingly transferred to the mobile network and social media. There are hardly any natural situations any more for discussions between people and between different generations, so the oral tradition is not being naturally transferred from one generation to the next.

In Käsivarsi, the Sámi identity is an everyday yet extremely highly valued thing. The Sámi, however, fret about the fact that their Finnish language skills, particularly their writing ability, have been left behind in terms of the level of Finnish language required to take care of affairs with the authorities and official Finland in order to be understood. When drawing up official documents, many rely on the help of other people who can write Finnish. Because they also think in Sámi, they want Finnish-language writing to be in line with Sámi-language thought, and for this the Sámi have been mocked or even criticised from their school days all the way to adulthood.

At consultations in Käsivarsi, the lack of Sámi institutions in the area was also particularly highlighted. The only one operating in the area, the public radio station Yle Sápmi, ceased its 40-year operations in Karesuvanto in 2010, after which the affairs and language of the local people have not been heard even on Sámi-language radio. Owing to the lack of institutions, the Sámi living in Käsivarsi feel that they have been left alone to promote their own issues and defend their homeland. They do not have adequate financial or mental support to work as active promoters and defenders of their own affairs. Furthermore, a natural connection to either their home institutions or those of the majority population is lacking in the region. The Sámi in the region have learned to adapt their lives to any given situation, rather than raising their voices to defend themselves.

At the consultations, people also considered the importance of the Sámi Parliament as a representative of the Sámi in Käsivarsi. They do not feel that the Sámi Parliament represents them or their affairs. They think that the Sámi Parliament does not know the situation in Käsivarsi. It does not even seem to be interested in the situation and the Sámi people there. The Sámi Parliament does not even have a representative from Käsivarsi. The Sámi Parliament is seen as having been finnicised, and it is feared that it will continue to be finnicised.

The Sámi in Käsivarsi also thought about the fate of their elderly people. The only home for the elderly in the municipality of Enontekiö is situated in the village of Hetta, which is mentally far away from the life and history of the Sámi people from Käsivarsi. Those who do not have close relations or children to look after them in their twilight years expect to have to move away from their home area to the old people's home. Hetta, the village centre of Enontekiö, is not seen as a natural living environment for Sámi from the region. In Käsivarsi, they hope that the municipality will enable a home for the elderly in, for example, Karesuvanto, which is the central village of Käsivarsi.

3.6 The towns

In the opinion of the Sámi people who live in towns, questions concerning the Sámi language are uppermost in their minds. Of the people who attended the consultations, most are first-generation town-dwelling Sámi. For them, experiences related to the Sámi language, for example ability or inability in the language, have accompanied them to the town from the Sámi homeland. The language was either acquired at home or lost at home even before going to school. Both ability and inability in the Sámi language are, however, equally natural, particularly to older town-dwelling Sámi, and the language is not a defining feature of the Sámi identity.

In towns, opportunities to use the Sámi language are limited and it is used chiefly among family and friends and at Sámi society conventions.

Maintaining the Sámi language in towns requires more conscious work. The language is also considered to be impoverishing, since it cannot be used like Finnish in the natural environment. The colours of the language fade.

The younger generation of urban Sámi see ability in the Sámi language as very important, because it enables an irreplaceable sense of solidarity among the Sámi community and with relatives who speak the language. The feeling of shame and being different can be forgotten when one learns the language. Those who do not know the language feel like outsiders from their relatives living in the Sámi homeland in Finland, Sweden or Norway, at least on an emotional level. Lack of ability in the language thus has a negative impact, at least on the self-esteem of second-generation urban Sámi when they meet Sámi who know the language.

At the consultations, people considered how it has been possible to use the Sámi language in Finland. With the authorities, at the doctor's, in school and at daycare, they have had to use Finnish. Having to handle one's affairs in a foreign language may have engendered a loss

of rights. The Sámi have also been finnified by making it impossible to receive services in their own mother tongue. Despite the enactment of the Sámi Language Act, the Sámi must continue to take care of their affairs in Finnish, regardless of what they want.

They hope for continuity in the realisation and implementation of their language rights, even outside the Sámi homeland, so that individuals would not always be required to fight for their rights. The regaining and maintenance of the language should be supported, because the language supports the Sámi people's feeling of solidarity and community spirit.

The possibility for Sámi children to learn the language outside the Sámi homeland is the responsibility of the home, because organising Sámi language daycare or school teaching still requires much hard work. Young urban Sámi are learning about their Sámi identity by acquiring the information themselves and, where possible, at home. At school, they learn nothing about the Sámi people and Sámi history.

They do not feel that the Sámi Parliament has the authority to distribute State subsidies specifically intended for the organisation of language teaching, outside the Sámi homeland. By doing this, the Sámi Parliament is implementing the government's policy of subjugating the Sámi .

The people otherwise hope that the Sámi Parliament will show some activity in promoting the implementation of Sámi rights, and not just be content with representing the Finnish government through government funds. The Finnish people, even officials and decision-makers, have hardly any knowledge about the Sámi people. In the dissemination of knowledge, it is hoped that the Sámi Parliament will be present as an actor because it represents the Sámi people as laid down in the law.

In towns, the Sámi identity emerged in discussions. Belonging to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament should not be a qualifier for allowing someone to feel that they are Sámi in terms of their identity.

Discussions showed that the so-called invisible expression of 'Sáminess' is considered important in terms of what makes someone Sámi; for example, how Sámis learn about their family and relatives, which is considered to be central to community spirit. It is not enough for them just to learn about the Sámi people at school, if there is no understanding or knowledge of what distinguishes the Sámi from the majority population. The Sámi right of self-determination cannot be implemented in full in Finland, if the Sámi do not understand that they are a people of their own.

It was hoped that any possible commission would highlight and investigate what is positive in the Sámi identity. Why do Sámi still exist and want to teach their language and culture

to future generations? Why do those who have lost the language want to relearn it? One reason for the continued Sámi existence to this day is considered to be the fact that the Sámi are proud of their roots and value their Sámi people.

In a general discussion aiming to determine the essential elements of 'Sáminess', external visible factors such as language or clothing play a key role. It emerged from consultations, however, that it is important to examine what the essential elements of 'Sáminess' are for the Sámi. There is also a desire to know what the Sámi's own solutions have been to survive in nation-states.

The urban Sámi also gave thought to the Sámi values of the Sámi people. What kind of values in relation to nature and the environment should families teach their children? Should they respect nature and use it ecologically, in order to preserve the Sámi culture from a perspective of sustainable environmental protection.

"Everyone who has struggled with their language has had to fight with their own parents. It shouldn't be so that I'm angry with and bitter towards my own parents."

"The feeling of shame is less after I have learned [the language]. I have always been ashamed that I don't know the Sámi language. At family meetings, I hid behind my mother's back even though it wasn't my fault. But now I don't feel ashamed any more; now that I know the language, I'm not stupid any more."

"There is mercy and forgiveness in the fact that, although I've become Finnish, I have a chance to learn the language and culture in my twilight years. Because it's a big part, even if it's been hidden, it's a piece of my heart, so I should really work on improving it."

"Thinking about the injustices of history, where you could use the language. Not only at boarding school, but also at the doctor's, handling affairs, how much did you lose in terms of financial benefits when you didn't know the language, you've missed out on all the municipal and state apparatus. How much have you been cheated in construction projects and land deals when you didn't know the language. The boarding school is just the tip of the iceberg. A Sámi person, when they went to the doctor in the 1960s, could they tell the doctor what was wrong? Could they fill in forms, even understand where to put their name? Not to mention researchers who went there, how much did they exploit the language inability of the people? If you don't understand, you're left outside the discussions. Those generations who didn't know the language properly. We haven't done a great deal of research on it either. It wasn't really until the [Sámi] Language Act came along that the Sámi had the right to take care of their affairs in Sámi with government authorities."

3.7 The Sámi youth

The Sámi youth are concerned about the Finnish government's simultaneous measures concerning the Sámi people and their homeland, such as the reconciliation process and, on the other hand, the Arctic Ocean railway project, which appears to hamper it. The young people are worried about whether the government understands that all its measures are interrelated and inseparable, for example that they are carrying out a reconciliation process after which they will build the Arctic Ocean railway without taking the reconciliation process and its purpose into account at all.

The key issue in the lives of the young people are school and school-related matters. In their experience, learning the Sámi language at secondary school and in high school has been made possible. The schools' slightly reluctant attitude to the study of the language has, however, been evident either in the paucity of lessons or some kind of prejudice towards its study. Sámi language lessons at school have focused solely on learning the language, but not on Sámi history, which the young people say they know very little about. By 'the history of the Sámi people', the young people mean history that transcends national borders, not just the history of the Sámi people living in Finland. They need to find out about the history of their people on their own.

Because schools teach nothing about the Sámi people, it is up to the young people themselves to answer Sámi-related questions such as "do you live in a 'kota' hut?". Constant answering and telling about their people seems like a burden, because their answers to these questions are doubted in any case. Such doubt is considered a consequence of ignorance and chronic lack of knowledge about the indigenous Sámi people.

In the opinion of the young people, the correct knowledge of the majority population about Sámi could be increased if schools taught and, for example, history books told about the Sámi people. With the increase in knowledge, prejudices, fears and hate speech directly targeted at the Sámi would decline. It would also be beneficial for the Sámi youth themselves and empowering from a perspective of their Sámi identity to learn about the history of their own people who have been separated by national borders.

They also want the Sámi system of naming places to be explained, so that the young people can learn their traditional place names. Now traditional Sámi places are named according to names thought up by the majority population.

In the minds of the young people, the Finnish school system is assimilating the Sámi. In Finland, the finnicisation of the Sámi has been carried out insidiously otherwise too. Things have rather been left undone and rights not granted, and instead laws have been enacted the purpose of which has been to finnicise the Sámi people. In Finland, investigating the

finnicisation of the Sámi is considered challenging because, with a lack of written text, events and their occurrence can be denied.

The Sámi youth are calling for the media to take responsibility for the finnicisation of the Sámi people. By 'media', they mean not only the traditional media but also social media. The Sámi youth feel that the media run by the majority population is oppressive, and they consider that it is responsible, for example, for inciting hate speech against the Sámi. In the experience of young people, the media consciously and deliberately presents Sámi-related matters giving the majority population to understand that the Sámi are once again angry about something, even if they are not. Rarely do they broadcast something positive about the Sámi.

In an era where the media is ever-present, young people are required to have really good self-esteem and endurance to be able to defend themselves, their opinions and their people. Alternatives are considered to be either not caring about feedback received that is anti-Sámi or even targeted at an individual, or remaining completely silent about it for fear of a further response.

The youth are worried about the ability of other young Sámi to cope. The minds of those who have not been strong enough to endure the feedback or the general anti-Sámi attitude may be shocked or have already been shocked.

When a young mind becomes ill as a result of hate speech targeted at the Sámi population and he or she requires professional help, pleas for such help may just remain in discussions with other young Sámi. This leads to a lack in Finland of Sámi-language mental health services with expertise in Sámi culture. When you require help, it is frustrating to have to explain your background, language and culture just so that the helping party will understand why you have come to see them.

Young Sámi name community spirit and a feeling of solidarity with their fellow-men and with nature as strengths of the Sámi people. In the experiences of the young people, the same communal spirit and connection are factors distinguishing the Sámi from Finns, both in their own 'Finnishness' and as peoples. Although the majority population in Finland learn about their history in school and the Sámi do not, there is an understanding about 'where we are coming from and where we are going' and that the Sámi are stronger than the majority Finnish population.

Young Sámi people think about the immigrant rhetoric encountered by the Sámi people, and its general acceptance in Finland. In the opinion of the young people, the talk about the Sámi having, for example, moved from Norway to Finland has become ingrained in Finland. Such talk has become the truth for the majority population. It is feared that the prevailing

attitude in Finland will only deteriorate. The young Sámi people wonder whether, in their time, the situation will arrive where they have to move to Norway where the Sámi are considered to be able to live in relative peace.

The young people wonder whether Finland is ready to examine and recognise the injustices suffered by the Sámi in Finland, when they have not necessarily dealt with Finland's own history and traumas. This failure manifests itself, for example, in the anger of young Finnish people when the young Sámi say that they are not Finnish but Sámi, that is to say in the Sámi youth's interpretation that the Finnish youth are ignorant of their own Finnish identity and history. The young Sámi hope that not only the government but also the Finnish people commit to the process because, without the people, the benefits of the process will be few. It is very important for the Finnish decision-makers to gain awareness of the Sámi and the correct information about them. There is a desire for the process also to be beneficial to the majority population to allow them to deal with their own experiences and history.

It could be nice if, for the first time, a decision was made that our history is true and should be in school textbooks. So it wouldn't always be that we say it's true and somebody else says it isn't. We won't get to talk about anything if we have no written history. They should decide that we can read about our people in books. If this happened, it would be [a] concrete [step]."

"In Utsjoki, we have nothing to do with the people from Enontekiö. It wasn't until I was an adult that I heard the Enontekiö Sámi dialect for the first time, as we weren't used to hearing it. Here in Inari, you hear all kinds of dialects and other things. I can say that I don't know the people from the west side. We have nothing to do with the history of the Sámi, for example from the southern parts of Sweden or Norway; that's their own area and we know very little about it. Of course we know in general that the first people came from there and then the borders were closed, we know that but every place has its own culture."

3.8 Consultees without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people

When consulting people without the group acceptance and recognition¹ of the indigenous Sámi people, a significant characteristic that emerged was the difference in experiences and

¹ The criterion inherent in the indigenous people's right to self-determination deriving from international law for an indigenous people as a group to recognise someone who identifies themselves as a member of an indigenous people as belonging to that indigenous people. This report refers to acceptance as a member of the indigenous Sámi people *per se*, not whether or not one is entered in the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament.

ideas compared to what was heard from the Sámi people. In speeches, there was strong opposition to those belonging to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament, the so-called 'Register Sámis' and to those belonging to Finland's indigenous population and thus to the indigenous people, but not to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament. In the opinion of participants in the consultations, the Sámi Parliament represents an elite that discriminates against the only indigenous people of the Finnish nation.

The indigenous people of the Finnish nation uses many names for itself, such as Lapps, indigenous population, original population, original residents, Forest Lapps and Forest Sámi. The fact that people on the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament belong to the indigenous people is not disputed, but they are not indigenous people expressly within the State of Finland and within Finland's national borders

Norway is mentioned as the only country in which they can be Sámi. In Finland and Sweden they are spoken of merely as Lapps. 'Sámi' is a term that Finland did not have, and it was developed in the 1970s. Because the term 'Sámi' has been developed, the Sámi identity in Finland is artificial.

At the consultations, the migration of the Northern Sámi Reindeer Sámi from Norway to Finland was particularly highlighted. Some of them also moved to Finland from Sweden. It is worth noting, however, that there are no Sámi in Sweden either, only Lapps. The Skolt Sámi moved from Russia. The indigenous Sámi at the consultations were generally acknowledged as immigrants to Finland.

At the consultations, it was emphasised that the definition of an indigenous people is given in convention number 169 of the International Labor Organization. The most important criterion defining an indigenous people is descent, bloodline. Furthermore, in defining Finland's indigenous people, an important criterion is that they have lived and dwelt in the same place continuously within the borders of Finland for centuries.

At the consultations, it was emphasised that, in order to prove that they belonged to the indigenous people and indigenous population, all people should be obliged to take DNA tests. A definition of someone belonging to the indigenous people based on language and language ability is questionable, because language can be learned by anyone. In addition to this, in a situation where, based on their bloodline, persons belonging to the indigenous people are presently not accepted on the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament, it is considered an injustice that, for example, children adopted from abroad without bloodline are members of the indigenous people.

"In my opinion, it's not stated clearly in the ILO Convention what 'indigenous people' means; if you try to interpret it, then probably what we are talking about is that we are

indigenous people, it's written there and has been interpreted like that elsewhere in the world.

It emerged in the consultations that people without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people have undergone DNA tests. Their purpose is to prove that they belong to the 'original residents' and conform to the definition of 'origin' stated in ILO Convention 169; in other words, that their ancestors have lived in the areas for centuries and at least before other residents. They have also acquired documentary evidence of their original status, settlement history and the land ownership of their ancestors, among other things. They are ready to claim to themselves rights granted to the indigenous Sámi people "created by a fabricated, political decision". These rights refer particularly to land and water rights. For example, people who identify themselves as Lappish say that they are seeking for the Lapps indigenous people's rights after which, as was told at the consultations, these rights no longer belong to anyone but the Lapps.

Of the participants at the consultations who were without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people, those who identified themselves as Forest Sámi emphasised that the true indigenous people of Finland are the Forest Sámi. "They have lived in Finland for a very long time and have been the target of oppression, discrimination and assimilation by various governments. The latest oppressors and forces of invalidation are groups of Sámi, who have arrived from neighbouring countries. They stop at nothing to try to get for themselves the status of Finland's indigenous people." At the consultations, it was heard that the Forest Sámi refer to "the Forest Sámi proper all the way from what is presently Kuusamo, the Lake Sámi of the Inari region and the River Sámi and Fell Sámi from Utsjoki." According to the Forest Sámi, the reconciliation process should deal with not only examining who belongs to the actual indigenous people, but also the conquest and exploitation of the countries in Lapland over the last 150 years.

At the consultations, it emerged that the importance of access to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament above all has nothing to do with the right of identity. Experiences of being discriminated against and oppressed do not eliminate the right to identify oneself in the way one wants. It was said that efforts to be admitted to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament will continue for as long as everyone who belongs there is entered in the register. This is because the most important thing for the consultees without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people is to gain access to the benefits and special rights available through belonging to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament, and getting to decide on their distribution. At the consultations, it was not specified what is precisely meant by the benefits or special rights deriving from being entered on the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament.

At the consultations, land ownership was emphasised when talking about land rights. The land ownership of the Lapps and Forest Sámi is based on the Lappish villages in the time of Swedish rule, and this is seen as continuing unbroken to this day. The Lapps and Forest Lapps undeniably own the land.

“We talk of land and water rights and nobody has them except us. But others are given our rights, they should not be given because the land is ours. Even the government’s forest. This is the threat. To me it seems really strange. I’ve thought about this issue like this and that’s enough. If no-one had talked about land and water rights but just about language and culture, we wouldn’t be sitting here. But when land and water rights came up, things began to concern us. We won’t give our rights to anyone else.”

Reindeer herders outside the Sámi region and outside the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament feel that the conditions for practising reindeer husbandry are discriminating against the majority population. Through belonging to the electoral register, the indigenous Sámi people get many times greater compensation, for example for damage caused by predators or eagles, than the people practising reindeer husbandry outside the Sámi homeland or people who are not entered in the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament. Through being entered in the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament, reindeer meat produced by Sámi reindeer owners who have become members of the indigenous people is also unjustifiably protected by different trademarks. It is worth noting that, according to what transpired in the consultations, the practice of reindeer herding is an integral part of determining who belongs to the indigenous people. Because of this, someone engaged in reindeer herding feels strongly that they are a member of the indigenous people through their means of livelihood. It was told at the consultations that most of the reindeer in Finland are owned by Finland’s true indigenous people, the Forest Lapps.

“There’s a steel wire fence. On the other side is the Sámi area. Our herd is grazing where the eagle is, and there are no reindeer in the Sámi area when the calves are small. So there the compensation is 1 1/2 times bigger, you have to make big decisions when you go north of the steel wire fence. We suffer racist treatment there. As for culture, I’ve never doubted my own identity. I’m known as a reindeer man and someone from a particular family, there’s no doubt about that.”

“[...] People on the Sámi register get better benefits, they have more reindeer and can establish a reindeer farm. Another bad thing is that they took away our Lappish costume, the true one-piece suit from Central Lapland. Those poor fell folk didn’t have money for the cloth but these marketing men bought it. Our costumes are so old, older than anyone’s. Fortunately some remained after the wars. When the villages were burned. Joik has also been stolen from us. And the Finnish Nature League made it happen that meat is only bought from Sámi people, it’s properly reared reindeer. Clear discrimination. [...]”

The consultations also highlighted how the indigenous Sámi people have unjustifiably helped themselves to the clothes, handicraft and joik of Finland's true indigenous people.

“History is strange in that it expressly starts from different products that have existed and been taken. It's written that whitefish can be found in Inari, not just from the archives of Central Lapland. Only in those places has there been a Lappish costume, first a working costume, a one-piece suit, there are 500, which was also a forerunner to one-piece European suits. Not many people made them. Those who had the money, tax revenues, could buy the cloth. It was almost as much as selling reindeer, but those big Lappish villages bought and made the products. [...] I have 150-year-old gaiters, still in good condition, although the fur is starting to wear. There is a difference, talking about the Sámi costume, you regret who has the right to wear it. We certainly have the right as we were the first to have them. You shouldn't make people wearing the costumes feel guilty. We've had the costumes for hundreds of years. So to that extent we've been a wealthy family.”

“We talked about it, such a simple thing as handicraft. My wife does handicraft, but then the question came of who is allowed to do it. Just think, where did the Lappish woollen scarf come from, do you know? We know that it came from Ostrobothnia since there's no timber here, my wife makes them, come and buy some. Is it worth shouting about some piece of handicraft, a pair of mittens or reindeer fur shoes? Things that we've been making since we were little boys.”

It emerged in the consultations that the loss of the Sámi language suffered by people without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people has already been happening for hundreds of years, since the time when the finnicisation of the Sámi was at its most severe. Use of the Sámi language was punishable by being put in the stocks, among other things. The need for officials and priests to know what people in the north were saying amongst themselves led to the loss of the language and apparently the language could only be preserved in the most remote regions. Because the loss of language took place so long ago, those seeking admission to the electoral register of the Sámi Parliament must find evidence of the language of their ancestors from long ago. It is, however, difficult to acquire old information and documents. There is a desire to make information easier to obtain, so that seeking admission to the Sámi Parliament electoral register would also be easier.

“On the subject of the definition of Sámi. The Northern Sámi were not even in Finland when the Lappish language was prohibited. That's why their language was preserved, that's why they emphasise language as their criterion, and don't accept continuous proven history of settlement and continuous proof of origin. They don't even accept the

definition of indigenous people in the ILO Convention. Everywhere else it is observed but not in Finland.

The consultations revealed that surnames were finnicised to make it easier to receive mail at home. In places where there were many people with the same surname, people had to wait weeks for mail because, for example, it was delivered to the wrong people.

The seminar organised by the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Sámi Parliament at Inari on 10 February 2018, which was based on the experiences of international guests from truth and reconciliation commissions was a hot topic at the consultations. The seminar was seen as a 'crying forum'. The consultations highlighted the fact that the young Sámi who spoke at the seminar had not experienced discrimination. The crying by the young people and interpreters at the event was considered staged in order to fool the international guests. The issue of the true indigenous people was not brought up at the seminar and the international guests were given wrong information in advance about the indigenous people in Finland.

At the consultations, the investigation of boarding school experiences was rejected. Some people had said that it had been nice to be in the boarding schools and that no bullying had happened there. Even if children sometimes bullied each other, that was just natural.

Consultees without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people demanded at the events that the main issue of the Sámi reconciliation process should first be to examine who is indigenous to Finland. In addition, according to the consultations, before the commission is established disputes between 'the elite of the Sámi Parliament' and people not on the electoral register should be examined. These disputes concern belonging to the indigenous people and are considered to result in the elite of the Sámi Parliament oppressing people not on the electoral register. According to the participants at the consultations, the 'Sámi Parliament elite' means Northern Sámi Reindeer Sámi, who have moved to Finland from, for example, Norway. If a commission is established, but Finland's true indigenous people are left outside its mandate, in the opinion of the consultees this amounts to judicial murder and cultural genocide.

"In Finnish, someone from Lapland is Lappish. I don't know who thought up this Sámi word here in Finland. It's come from the Sámi Parliament or somewhere in this takeover system. The biggest problem here in terms of discrimination are the Lapps who don't even get to vote in their own area, there are no other problems here."

"The truth commission could intervene in this matter of applying for the Sámi Parliament. Because the Northern Sámi say that sure they know their relatives but they don't know us."

"A good example are the Skolts. The first Skolts became Finnish citizens in the 1920 peace treaty. And they lost this right when they lost the lands but, after the war, they were given to the people of Suonikylä even though they had not been on the Finnish side at all but in Russia; they were given the Skolt village. And they became indigenous people. People always talk about national things here. They always try to water things down as to a joint Nordic Sámi Parliament. Some special Nordic agreement, the Sámi Parliaments of three countries are driving this. They try to take the rights of indigenous people away from us. It's a threat, and now they've already been taken, the people of Inari can't get on any register even after showing their tax card."

"How can they investigate how the indigenous people have been mistreated if Parliament has decided that those on the register are the indigenous people? Our family has existed since the year 500 and we've governed the areas, how can they make a political decision about the matter and then investigate? First a historical chronology, who is the indigenous people and who have paid their taxes on Lappis lands. I vehemently dispute: the government and the Sámi Parliament have no rights to State lands. They belong to the members of the 'Lapinkylä' and their descendants, and the government together with the Sámi Parliament can negotiate for land rights. I have it in documents, and I'm not giving them to anyone come what may, I've told Sipilä that too."

"The truth commission is the right way to go, but it must bring out the truth, who are the indigenous people and who aren't, when they came and what role they played. We've looked into Forest Lapp identity, and I can say what the problem is in Sweden. There the officials don't recognise the Sámi, only the Lapps. It's Lapland, not Sámiland. It's the land of the Lapps, the same in Sweden. It's different in Norway, the Sámi identity came from there. They're Sámi who came after the rebellion in Alta. I don't dispute that there are Sámi and indigenous people there but not in Finland. The first Sámi came in the 1800s during the gold rush. Everything about the Forest Lapps can be found in the parish registers. The only thing being disputed is that, in 18th century, these Lapps began to build houses and received household names and surnames because farms had to have them. But in spite of that, the parish registers state that there are Lapps and their families. This must be brought out because the largest group are Forest Lapps. They own 95% of the reindeer and they have a long history. They haven't even lost the language completely, it's used in reindeer husbandry, we use the words. But the language was killed, in the 1960s and 70s you weren't allowed to speak it, I've been punished too when I couldn't discuss some of these reindeer things using Finnish words. In Norway, the Sámi identity was later greatly taken up, because the Kven were the largest people there. Here on this map you can see where the game was. Kittilä was the first place to begin so-called reindeer husbandry because that was the first place where there were no more wild reindeer."

The attitude of consultees without the group acceptance and recognition of the indigenous Sámi people to the pertinence and appropriateness of the reconciliation process was not unreserved in the consultations. At the events, they expressed their concern about the credibility of the consultations, for example with regard to the government, owing to the backgrounds of the officials who were carrying out the consultations. According to those who attended the consultations, they were unable to get their message through anywhere to anyone, for which reason they do not trust anyone.

“ [...] This trust thing about these consultations should be questioned. Why did the Prime Minister’s Office not take some Virtanen or Rantanen from the south to do this? We know what family you are, can we trust you? [...]”

“ [...] when we say that bullying has happened, it’s certainly been happening for centuries, but we’ve been finnicised and our language trodden into the mud. This bullying was perhaps forgotten at some stage but now the Sámi Parliament and the Sámi nationalists are bullying the Inari Lapps. We’re being bullied and classified as third-class citizens, are not allowed to vote or even exist. One day, a Lappish commission will be established, and it’ll be said that that Juuso’s girl came here to interrogate us, but that she represents our oppressors. It’s not a nice feeling when you feel that you are indigenous but the government doesn’t accept that. [...]”

“ [...] How can we know that our message will be delivered. There’s no trust in anything.”

3.9 Statements sent by email

More than ten statements were received by email and opened for inclusion in the consultations. Statements received by email have been taken into account either in a general content-related summary of the consultations or, if a statement has concerned some certain target group, in conjunction with a more precise examination of that target group.

Statements delivered by email were mainly general opinions concerning the process. The statements considered the meaningfulness of the possible truth and reconciliation commission for the Sámi in Finland at the present time. They also suggested ways by which the process could be implemented, as well as proposing commissioners for the possible commission.

In Finland, experiences of boarding school and the loss of both language and culture have been publicly put forward as a mandate for the possible commission. Opinions were also given on these themes by email.

Many emails took a stand on relations between the Sámi and the majority population, which have come to a head. History and historical reasons for the antagonism were also brought up.

False information disseminated about the indigenous Sámi people, disinformation and its impact on the Sámi were also raised.

The majority population expressed concern about the tense relations in Lapland between different groups of people, backgrounds and ethnicities. Everyone in the north is suffering from this tension while it is felt that Southern Finland is just laughing at them. The majority population is also concerned that the different groups in Lapland will set preconditions for the reconciliation process. The majority population hopes that no such preconditions are set so that the process will have a chance of succeeding in resolving the most urgent present disputes.

Those from the majority population expressing an opinion on the matter say that they hope that they will not be held responsible for the injustices of the past, which they could not have influenced. The fear is that the situation will become more tense, particularly in the Sámi homeland, amongst people representing different ethnic backgrounds.



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