DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
- Committee on culture and education -

DELEGATION TO INARI, FINLAND
1–4 April 2013

REPORT
The Committee on Culture and Education organised a delegation to visit the Sami people in Inari, in Lapland (Finland), from 1 to 4 April 2013. The delegation was led by Mrs. Doris PACK, Chairwoman of the Committee. The list of participants is attached.

The aim of the delegation was to learn more about the living and education conditions of the Sami people, the only indigenous people of the European Union. In Finland, the Sami minority number some 10.000 people.

In Inari the delegation had exchanges of views with the Sami Parliament and the representatives of the municipality. It was also able to visit Inari comprehensive school where three different Sami languages spoken in Finland are taught, and the Sami Education Institute.

1. INTRODUCTION

Inari municipality

With a surface area of more than 17,000 km², Inari is the largest municipality in Finland. It is located in the Province of Lapland and has a population of 6,726. Inari consists of two main villages: Ivalo and Inari. Inari is the only municipality in Finland with four official languages: Finnish, Inari Sami (400 estimated speakers), Skolt Sami (400 speakers) and North Sami (700 speakers).

The Sami people

The Sami are the only indigenous people of the European Union. There are Sami people in Norway, Sweden, Russia and Finland. The total Sami population is estimated to be over 75,000. Currently, around 10,000 Sami live in Finland. There are seven to nine Sami languages in total, and three of them are spoken in Finland: North Sami, Ánar Sami (or Inari Sami) and Skolt Sami.

Under the Finnish Constitution (731/1999), the Sami, as an indigenous people, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Also according to the Constitution, in their traditional home area, the Sami have linguistic and cultural self-government. The Finnish Sami Language Act (1086/2003) guarantees the Sami people right to use Sami language in authorities and services provided in Sami language.

The traditional Sami home area consists municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari, Utsjoki and Lappi reindeer herding district of the municipality of Sodankylä.
II. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Monday, 1 April 2013

Briefing meeting with Mr. Pekka NURMINEN, Head of the EP Information Office in Finland

The first meeting of the delegation was held in Helsinki-Vantaa together with Mr. Pekka Nurminen, Head of the EP Information Office in Finland. Mrs. Doris Pack opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and introducing Mr. Nurminen.

Mr. Nurminen started his presentation by explaining briefly the history and geopolitics of Finland, and then mentioned a few words on the Finnish political parties and the topics currently discussed at the political level.

History of Finland

The land area that now makes up Finland was probably settled around 9,000 BC. Most of the region was a part of the Kingdom of Sweden from the 13th century to 1809. In the south-western part of the country, an urban settlement evolved in Turku that became one of the biggest towns in the Kingdom of Sweden, and its population included German merchants and craftsmen. Outside this area, the degree of urbanization was very low. In the Northern part of the country, there lived a small population of Sami hunters, fishermen and small-scale farmers. In 1809, the vast majority of Finnish-speaking areas were ceded to the Russian Empire, making this area the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland.

Finnish political parties

The Finnish government, led by Mr. Jyrki Katainen, Prime Minister, is a majority coalition formed by the National Coalition Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Left Alliance, the Swedish People's Party in Finland, the Green League and the Christian Democratic Party. The Government has 19 ministers. According to a recent poll, the National Coalition remains the largest party in Finland with support of 21%. However, Green League and the Finns Party have witnessed a significant growth in their membership compared to that of other parties after the last parliamentary polls held in 2011.

Municipality reform

According to the Government Programme, Finnish municipalities will undergo extensive reforms in the coming years. The current proposal would remove the right to independent health care decision-making from municipalities with fewer than 20,000 residents. The plan would affect 280 of Finland’s current 336 municipalities. Most of these already share health and social services with neighbours. There are about 100 municipalities under 20,000 people that organise these services independently. In some municipalities of Lapland, the reforms can have a serious impacts on the availability of social and health services due to long distances between municipalities.

Finland in the EU

Mr. Nurminen also referred to Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's speech of 26 March, in which he outlined his vision for the future EU. According to Mr. Katainen, the economic crisis has overshadowed debate on Europe's future. At the moment, there is no need for major institutional reforms. A strong Europe requires that all Member States do their homework.

Mr. Nurminen's presentation was followed by a discussion on Finnish political tendencies and its possible implications for the Sami people.

Tuesday, 2 April
In the course of the morning, the members of the delegation travelled from Helsinki to Inari, Lapland.

**Welcoming words Mrs. Nikula, owner of the hotel**

Once at the hotel, the Members were warmly welcomed by the hotel owner who explained briefly about the history of Inari and the family-run tradition hotel.

**Meeting with the Sami Parliament representatives**

The first meeting was organised in the Sámi Cultural Centre Sajos which is the centre of Sami culture and administration and where the Sami Parliament meets.

Mr. Klemetti Näkkäläjärvi, President of the Sami Parliament, opened the meeting by introducing his colleagues Ms. Tiina Sanila-Autio, 1st Vice President, working as a teacher of Skolt Sami in the Sami Education Institute (SAKK), and Mr. Heikki Paltto, 2nd Vice President and active reindeer herder. Mr. Näkkäläjärvi told that he came from a reindeer herding family and had just achieved his doctoral thesis at the University of Oulu, Finland. After the introductions, Mr. Näkkäläjärvi made a presentation on the Sami Parliament, Sami people and Sami languages.

*Samediggi, the Sami Parliament in Finland*

Mr. Näkkäläjärvi explained that the Sami Parliament is an independent legal entity of public law which, due to its self-governmental nature, is not a state authority or part of the public administration. It functions under the Ministry of Justice. The 21 members and 4 deputies are elected from among the Sami every four years. Only Sami are allowed to vote in elections. The last elections took place in September 2011.

The main purpose of the Sami Parliament is to plan and implement the cultural self-government guaranteed to the Sami as an indigenous people. It expresses an official view of the Sami and represents Sami people both in Finland and internationally, as regards the issues concerning Sami language and culture and their position as an indigenous people. The Sami Parliament can make initiatives, proposals and statements to the authorities.

**Endangered languages**
Mr. Näkkäläjärvi reminded the Members that, according to the UNESCO international classification, all Sami languages are endangered: Inari Sami and Skolt Sami are severely endangered languages. Language nest activity and education in Sami language have somewhat increased the use of the language. However, as regards the different Sami languages, in Finland, the majority of language learning material and education, media, literature, music exist only in North Sami.

The removal of Sami people outside Sápmi (traditional Sami home area) weakens their link to nature and traditional Sami livelihoods. Urbanisation has been a huge challenge to Sami people and Sami culture. In fact, most of the Sami live outside Sápmi, and Helsinki has more Sami inhabitants than any other town or city in Finland. These urbanised Sami have even developed their own new "City Sami" language.

The profitability of Sami livelihoods and vitality of Sápmi has to be guaranteed for the protection of Sami language and traditional knowledge. However, the current political climate in Finland hampers the status of the Sami and minority languages. In fact, Finland has not yet ratified the ILO 169 Convention on endangered languages, and also the reform of the Act of Sami Parliament is under construction. In addition, very often the Sami are not invited in the working groups that decide on matters that concern them. According to Mr. Näkkäläjärvi, increased involvement in decision-making is one of the main challenges of the current Sami Parliament legislature.

**Sami language revitalisation programme**

A working group set by the Finnish Ministry of Education prepared a proposal for a Sami language revitalisation programme in 2012. The negotiations are still ongoing and there is no funding allocated for the revitalisation programme for 2013. The Sami Parliament is very concerned that the revitalisation programme has not started yet and that there is no funding available.

The working group has evaluated the status of Sami language, with the following conclusions:

The revitalisation of Sami language requires that:

1. Sami language nest services will become permanent and services will expand.
2. Day-care in Sami language is provided according to the relevant legislation.
3. Education in Sami is developed to cover the whole Finland, which involves the use of distant learning methods.

**Sami people and EU**

The Sami Parliament had recently paid a visit to Brussels and met with the EU institutions. Mr. Näkkäläjärvi mentioned that the EU funding is vital but too often unreachable, as small operators have difficulties in understanding funding procedures. He suggested that in Finland, the funding be managed by the Sami Parliament instead of the Regional Council of Lapland as is currently the case.

After the presentation, Mrs. Pack introduced the Members of the delegation. She also expressed her concerns as regards the status the Sami languages and culture in Finland. She explained that the Committee on Culture and Education is currently preparing a report on endangered languages and linguistic diversity in the EU (Rapporteur Mr. Alfonsi)

The Members raised many questions and found out that Finland’s accession was seen very positively by the Sami, as human rights play an important role in the Union. The Members also found out that the Sami would like to have much more cultural autonomy and that the budget allocations to Sami culture were too small. Sami Parliament representatives also expressed their concerns as regards the Finnish hunting legislation and the fact that the Sami are not involved when such decisions are made that
concern their livelihood – in particular reindeer herding and fishing.

Mrs. Sanila-Autio, 1st Vice-President, regretted the fact that the State funding for education is far too limited. The children living outside the Sami area cannot learn or study in their mother tongue, and even in Sápmi this is difficult, even though the right to use the Sami language when dealing with the authorities is legislated with the Sami Language Act which aims to secure the constitutional right to maintain and develop the Sami language and culture.

To Members’ questions on the election procedure, Mr. Näkkäläjärvi replied that there is an electoral register: family background and relationship to the Sami language and culture are considered when deciding who is Sami. In general, the turnout rates are high, about 60-70%.

To Mrs. Pack’s question whether the situation of the Sami was better or worse in Finland than in other countries, Mr. Näkkäläjärvi replied that the situation is at least as good in Finland as in other countries; in Sweden, the legislation concerning Sami is weaker than in Finland, but for example in Norway, the budgetary resources are larger than in other countries.

Presentation and guided tour of Sami Cultural Centre Sajos

After the meeting with the Sami Parliament, Mrs. Ulla Aikio-Puoskari, Educational Secretary, and Mrs. Marja Männistö, Project Planner, both Members of Samediggi, introduced the Sami Cultural Centre Sajos to the Members of the Committee on Culture and Education.

The centre of Sami culture and administration, Sajos receives EUR 5 million in funding from the European Regional Development Fund. The centre aims to preserve and promote Sami language, culture and business activities as well as to manage and develop the cultural self-government of the Sami. In addition to the Sami Parliament, also other institutions, such as Lapland Regional State Administrative Agency and the Sami Archive have their premises in Sajos. The centre also runs a Sami library.

Dinner hosted by the Sami Parliament

After the guided tour, the Members of the delegation had the opportunity to continue discussions with the Members of the Sami Parliament over a working dinner that took place in the Restaurant Galla of Sajos.

After the dinner, Mrs. Anne Morottaja, Member of the Sami Parliament, chanted a joik to the Members. The joik is a unique form of cultural expression for the Sami people and a very long-standing musical tradition. Members had also the possibility to learn and sing childrens' songs in all three Sami languages.
Wednesday, 3 April

Visit to Inari school

The visit to the school started with the presentations made by the representatives of Inari Municipality, 
Mrs. Irja Seppänen, Head of Education Department, Mrs. Ulla Hynönen, Deputy Head of Education 
Department, and Mr. Yrjö Musta, School Principal.

Mrs. Seppänen and Mrs. Ulla Hynönen explained that education in Finland is based on an egalitarian 
system, with no tuition fees and with free meals served to full-time students. The Finnish education 
system consists of day-care programmes and a one-year "pre-school", a nine-year compulsory basic 
comprehensive school (from 7 to 15) and upper secondary education or vocational training.

Inari School is a nine-year compulsory comprehensive school that also provides for pre-school classes 
both in Finnish and in Sami. After their nine-year basic education in Inari School, the students may 
choose to continue their secondary education in an upper secondary school located in Ivalo, some 40 
kilometres from Inari, or in a vocational training institute called Sami Education Institute (SAKK) 
located in Inari.

All three Sami languages spoken in Inari, North Sami, Anaar Sami (Inari Sami) and Skolt Sami, can be 
learned in Inari School, either as mother tongue or as a foreign language. Also some subjects are taught 
in Sami. Unfortunately, there are not always properly qualified teachers in all subjects.

In 2012, in total 248 pupils studied Sami languages in 57 different groups. The school is also actively 
involved in international activities through Comenius programme, Europe for Citizens programme, IPM 
and Euroscuola.

When asked about the secrets of the Finnish education system that has a good reputation within the 
EU, Mrs. Seppänen and Mrs. Hynönen both highlighted the importance of small group sizes. While the 
normal ratio in Finland is 21 pupils per teacher, in Inari School there are on average only 10 pupils per 
teacher, which is almost the best ratio in the whole country.

Mr. Musta, School Principal, explained the situation of Sami language in Finland and their status as 
edangered languages.

Under the relevant legislation, Sami can be the language of instruction in basic education as well as in 
general and vocational upper secondary education and training, and it can also be taught as the mother 
tongue or as a foreign language. In the four municipalities located in the Sami area, pupils speaking 
Sami must primarily be provided with basic education in that language, should their parents so choose.

However, currently there is not enough funding to finance teaching material in Sami, which hampers 
teaching of Sami and also the smooth functioning of the school. There have been discussions of 
increasing funding by the State but no decision has been made yet.

As for pedagogical approaches and curricula, for the moment, the only option is to translate Finnish 
text books into Sami languages. The situation will get even more difficult in a near future, as in 2016, 
new curricula will need to be ready in Finland, and the old material will not be in accordance with the 
new curricula.

From the three Sami languages, the situation of the North Sami is the strongest, as regards teaching and 
pedagogical material. At school, there are 27 North Sami pupils and 30 other pupils have North Sami as 
a foreign language.
As regards Inari Sami, the first ABC book has been published recently, and there are 15 pupils that learn it as a mother tongue in classes 0 to 5. There are in total three teachers for Inari Sami. The language nest activity has contributed to the fact that the pupils can directly start their schooling in Inari Sami.

As regards Skolt Sami, there is only one pupil at the moment learning it as an optional subject two hours a week, and there is no ABC book published in Skolt Sami yet. Skolt Sami also suffers from lack of human resources. There is no teaching on the spot but via internet.

One major concern for Sami children is also the distance between school and home: some of them need to travel 65 kilometres twice a day to attend the classes, which makes the days very long.

As for the future of Sami teaching, Mr. Musta was quite optimistic for Inari Sami where the revival work, especially language nest activity, has already now shown very good results. However, the children do not necessarily have enough natural speaking situations in future when moving outside Sami area, for example. There is also need for curricula that take Sami culture and language properly into consideration.

After the discussions the Members of the delegation had the opportunity to visit a pre-school class where the Sami children presented a song to the delegation.

Visit to the Sami Education Institute (SAKK)

Mrs. Liisa Holmberg, Rector of the SAKK, welcomed the delegation and gave a short introduction on the administration, structure and purpose of the school. She explained that SAKK, promoting Sami culture in the whole of the Sami region. The institute's main site is located in Inari but it provides education also in other municipalities.

The school specialises in indigenous livelihood and traditions. The main subjects at the school are Sami language, reindeer husbandry, handicrafts, tourism, business and media. There are both two- and three-year programmes, depending on the student’s educational background.

The school has created close contacts and cooperation with other indigenous peoples, especially in the Arctic areas of North-Russia, Canada and Alaska, promoting and developing projects involved in reindeer husbandry and the livelihoods which support it (for example, nature tourism and handicrafts). SAKK is also a member of the Arctic University, which acts a cooperation network for education institutes in the Arctic area.

Mrs. Holmberg guided the delegation through the class rooms, and the Members saw students preparing traditional reindeer skin shoes and tools, rings, scarves and belts, and to discuss with the students.

In the Skolt Sami class, the delegation met again with Mrs. Tiina Sanila-Autio, 1st Vice-President of the Sami Parliament, who works as a Skolt Sami teacher in SAKK. For the moment, Mrs. Sanila-Autio has in total eight Skolt Sami students. Mrs. Sanila-Autio and Mrs. Holmberg also explained about an adult learning project called “Language camps for families” initiated by Mrs. Anna Morottaja, Member of the Sami Parliament: each Skolt Sami student meets up with a family in the evenings in order to speak Skolt Sami and teach the language to those Skolt Sami adults who never had the possibility to learn the language in their childhood, due to the lack of educational possibilities for Sami people at that time.
After the guided tour, the delegation had lunch in the canteen together with the students and got to know that in Finland, the students always have free lunch in all primary and secondary schools.

**Presentation in SAKK of Sámi language nest activity**

Mrs. Varpu Falck, administrative secretary, Anarâškielâ-Servi

Anarâškielâ-Servi is an Inari Sami organisation that promotes learning of Sami languages. It was founded in 1986 by Mr. Matti Morottaja, father of Mrs. Anna Morottaja, Member of the Sami Parliament. The organisation produces publications in Inari Sami, mainly children books, it produces e-newspaper “Kierâš”. It has nine collaborators in three Sami language nests where the staff speaks only Inari Sami with the children. Two of these nests are located in Inari. The language nests have “produced” approximately 50 new Inari Sami speakers. In addition, these children have been able to teach the language to their parents.

**Visit to Kielipesä ("Sami language nest")**

After the introduction made by Mrs. Falck, the Members had the opportunity to visit Kielipesä, Sami language nest. Ms. Riitta Vesala, Anarâškielâ-Servi teacher, introduced to the Members her pupils who sang for the delegation.

**Guided tour in Sami Museum and Northern Lapland Nature Centre SIIDA**

*The word “siida” comes from North Sami, meaning a Lapp village or a reindeer village.*

The Sami Museum SIIDA is the national museum of the Sami and a national special museum in Finland. It stores the culture of the Finnish Sami in its collections and presents it to the public through its exhibitions and publications. Its main purpose is to support the identity and the cultural self-esteem of the Sami.

The Sami Museum has its main premises at Siida in Inari. Its offices, collections, exhibition production and other central activities are also located at Siida. The Sámi Museum has sister museums that document Sami culture in other Nordic countries and in Russia. The Sami Museum is also part of the museum network of the indigenous peoples of the world.

Siida is a window into Sami culture and the diverse nature of Northern Lapland. Every year, the Nature Centre Siida arranges a number of temporary exhibitions and events on the characteristics of Arctic nature, conservation, environmental education and nature photography.

**Working dinner with Inari Municipality**

Discussions on the Sami languages and Sami culture continued over a working dinner hosted by the Inari Municipality, in the presence of Mr. Jari Huotari, Chair of the Municipal Board, Mrs. Eeva Harmanen, Vice-Chair of the Municipal Council, Mrs. Eila Rimpiläinen, International Coordinator and Mrs. Ulla Hynönen, Vice-Director of Education Department.
Thursday, 4 April

Visit to YLE Sámi Radio and Press point

The last meeting of the delegation was held in YLE Sámi Radio in Inari where Mrs. Pirita Näkkäläjärvi, Head of Sami Radio and responsible editor in programmes in Sami, gave a short introduction to the history and functioning of the radio station.

The idea of an independent Sámi Radio station emerged in the 1970s when YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, recognised the increasing demand for making programmes in the Sami language. The Sámi Radio's broadcasting centre in Inari was completed in 1987, and the independent radio channel of the Sámi began there in 1991. At the same time, a link system between the Sámi editorial offices of Norway, Finland and Sweden was completed. In this new situation, the number of Sami programs on the air increased further.

YLE Sámi Radio is very important for the promotion of Sami languages, as 65 % of the Sami in Finland live outside the Sami area. It also has joint productions with Sweden and Norway, such as Ođđasat: the news programme broadcast five days a week in North Sami, with either Finnish, Norwegian or Swedish subtitles, depending on the country. Also the children's tv-programme Unna Junná is a joint production between YLE Sámi Radio and SVT.

Mrs. Näkkäläjärvi mentioned also that a new youth radio programme had been launched in March, entitled Sohkaršohkka (sugar shock).

After the introduction made by Mrs. Näkkäläjärvi, the Members of could assist a live radio broadcasting. This was followed by a lively discussion after which Mr. Ailu Valle, rap artist that raps in North Sami, interpreted one of his raps to the Members.

At the end of the event, there was a press point in the presence of a journalist from Lapin Kansa and YLE journalists.

***
### Members of the EP (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Political Group</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Doris PACK, Chair*</td>
<td>EPP</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Helga TRÜPEL, 1st Vice-Chair</td>
<td>GREENS/EFA</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Liam AYLWARD</td>
<td>ALDE</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Hannu TAKKULA*</td>
<td>ALDE</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Sabine VERHEYEN</td>
<td>EPP</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CULT Committee Secretariat (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Eeva Eriksson</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Kirsti Paakkola</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EP Information Office in Helsinki (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Minna Ollikainen</td>
<td>Press officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Political groups' advisers (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Political Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms Rosario Galofre-Gomez</td>
<td>ALDE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Frédérique Chabaud</td>
<td>GREENS/EFA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Interpreters (DE, FI, EN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>Ms Irinja Iso-Iломаки</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Mr Ralf Kleinworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>Mr Andrew McIlroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Steffen Heieck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Andrew Lightfoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Marko Perkiömäki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conference technician:** Mr Matti Kankaanpää

### Abbreviations:

- **EPP**: Group of the European People's Party
- **ALDE**: Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
- **GREENS/EFA**: Group of the Greens / European Free Alliance
- *****: accompanying member travelling 'hors quota'