



## **Indigenous Navigator in Sápmi: “Statistics would be of particular importance in mapping the rights of indigenous peoples”**

The Indigenous Navigator in Sápmi project is a collaboration of three different organizations: the Saami Council (Sámiráđđi), Saami University of Applied Sciences (Sámi allaskuvla) and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). This collaboration is facilitated for example by research work and through regular meetings of the project’s steering committee.

- *Within the framework of this project, we are mapping the legal situation of the indigenous Sámi people in Finland, Sweden, and Norway. In Autumn 2021 we started implementing national surveys for Norway and Finland. Now we have finally published both surveys, says Nikita Bulanin, advisor of IWGIA.*

The Indigenous Navigator tool assesses the realisation of the rights of indigenous peoples. The national questionnaires assess the level of recognition and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in the respective countries. These questionnaires look particularly at laws, policies, and programs. There are more than 100 questions in the national questionnaire and topics include self-determination, land rights, education etc.

- *In the Saami context it is important to map the differences and similarities on the implementation, or should I say the level of implementation, of the indigenous rights in nation states since Sápmi, the area traditionally inhabited by the Sámi, is divided by the borders of the four nation states Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia, says Oula-Antti Labba, lawyer of the Human Rights Unit in Saami Council.*

The data provided by the Indigenous Navigator can help indigenous Saami communities to monitor the level of the implementation of their rights both on the local level and national level, and to identify the gaps in the implementation in the future.

The project also tries to identify where the data is still missing. During the project it has been clear that it is difficult to find reliable and appropriate statistical data on the Saami. For example, Statistics Finland produces statistics on persons living in Finland according to their nationality, language and country of birth, but not ethnicity. Also, Norway does not include ethnic identifiers in their national censuses.

- *The Indigenous Navigator tool and the questionnaires illustrate what kind of statistics we could obtain from Saami and other indigenous peoples if national legislation allowed us to produce such statistics. Statistics would be of particular importance, for example, in mapping the economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous peoples. I therefore hope that the information mapped so far on these theoretical statistical possibilities could contribute to the development of the statistical work, says Labba.*

*The Saami Council led the research work for national surveys for Finland and Sweden, as well advocacy work among Saami institutions and entities.*

*Sámi allaskuvla - Sámi University of Applied Sciences* is a co-funder and academic partner of the project, providing inputs to the surveys. It is expected that the project will contribute to strengthening the role of *Sámi allaskuvla* as the center of learning on Indigenous Peoples rights in Sápmi.

*IWGIA* is the overall coordinator of the project, as well as responsible for methodological support and linking the project to the broader Indigenous Navigator framework.

The project is implemented with financial support of the Nordic Arctic Co-operation Programme of the *Nordic Council of Ministers*.

National surveys Norway and Finland can be found from here: <https://indigenousnavigator.org/data-explorer/2?rc%5B%5D=region443&sf%5Bsum%5D=sum&sf%5Bsub%5D=sub&sf%5Bcom%5D=com&sf%5Btoq%5D=toq>

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