English

Summaries

1. The numbers that cannot remain silence – the systemic invisibility of children with Sámi affiliation in residential care

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The truth- and reconciliation commission concluded that indigenous'- and minority perspective have been lacking in child welfare practice. Although the child welfare system was not explicitly intended as a tool of Norwegianization, it nevertheless had assimilatory effects. Legislation and regulations should help prevent such occurrences, and the rights of Sámi children have therefore been explicitly addressed in the Child Welfare Act. At the same time, the truth- and reconciliation commission pointed out how lack of implementation of admitted politics have created an implementation gap. The article looks in to how many children with a Sámi affiliation are registered in residential care and how the safeguarding of their rights and needs are institutionalized after the child welfare law § 1-8. The research builds on the quantitative survey amongst 13 residential child welfare institutions in the northern region, where twelve institutions are represented in the answers, qualitative interviews with the Norwegian Child Welfare Services (Bufetat) unit responsible for placement and approval, the National Sámi Competence Centre (NASAK) and the State administrator of Troms and Finnmark and also in- dept interview with an institution. In addition, we went through institution plans and Bufetat's template for applications of placement in residential care institution. The findings show that inadequate registration and discrepancies in the available data contribute to making children with Sámi affiliation invisible and weaken the basis for targeted measures. The responsibility to map out the sense of belonging to Sámi culture is distributed among municipal child welfare services, Bufetat and the residential child welfare institutions, without the participants having a shared or systematic practice. The registration is often conditioned to if the child is, or if the parents themselves proclaim their sense of belonging to Sámi culture as important. Institutional plans show general cultural sensitivity, but contain few concrete, institutionalized routines to preserve the rights for children with a sense of belonging to Sámi culture. The plans have undergone little change after the implementation of a new child welfare law. There are no formal requirements for Sámi language and cultural competence when recruiting staff to residential child welfare institutions.

The findings highlight the responsibility of the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir), both as the professional directorate for child welfare services and as the agency responsible for the governance of Bufetat. Bufdir has a central role in developing national professional frameworks, guidelines, and recommendations, while Bufetat is responsible for ensuring that residential child welfare services are of adequate quality. The findings suggest that clearer national guidelines, systematic routines for mapping and documentation, and requirements for Sami language and cultural competence should be considered if the rights of children with Sami affiliation are to be effectively safeguarded. The challenge is therefore not primarily about a lack of rights, but about insufficient resources, routines, competence and governance structures to realise the rights in practice.

2. The truth and reconciliation commission and the majority population's understanding of reconciliation

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Reconciliation is a central term in the public debate on the truth- and reconciliation commission's report and the parliament's handling of it. Already in the parliament's mandate to the commission, reconciliation was part of the commission's short name, "Truth- and reconciliation commission". The commission's report was intended to lay the foundation for reconciliation between the Indigenous Sámi, and the National Minorities, the Kven/Norwegian Finns, the Forest Finns, and the majority population.

The question we are proposing in this article is how the commission and the majority population's understanding of reconciliation coincide, a question that is discussed considering perspectives on reconciliation as justice.

The article discusses different perspectives on reconciliation understood as restorative, affirmative, and transformative justice. We discuss which perspectives of the term reconciliation are expressed in the commission's report on one side, and amongst the majority population on the other side.

We find that it is partial correspondence between the understanding of the Truth and reconciliation commission and the majority population when it comes to what describes a reconciled society, through what emphasising the symbolic dimensions that an apology (and forgiveness) entail. However, the commission's emphasis on trust and truth to a small degree matches with the majority population's understanding. There are nevertheless few traces of a clear definition of the term reconciliation, or an understanding of reconciliation with different aspects of justice tie to a reckoning with the Norwegianization politics.

3. Sámi learning material in LK20S-SKOLEN - A situational description based on the teachers experiences in primary school

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This chapter presents the results of a survey amongst 123 Sámi speaking teachers dealing with the access of Sámi learning materials after the introduction of the Knowledge Promotion Reform – Sámi (LK20S) (Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet Samisk, LK20S). The purpose of the survey was to research the teacher's experience with printed and digital learning materials and their recommendations for improvements. The survey includes teachers who teach Sámi as a first- and second language and as teachers in other subjects taught in Sámi. Access to relevant Sámi speaking learning materials is crucial to realise the students right for education in and with Sámi and to promote linguistic equality, in line with the truth- and reconciliation commission's recommendations (SFK, 2023).

The background of the ongoing lack of Sámi learning materials, documented in public records and evaluations. The results show that the situation still is not satisfactory. In early education 37 percent of teachers states that they have a supply of suitable printed learning materials developed in line with the LK20S. Just as many develop their own resources to compensate for the lack of materials, but close to a fourth still use older learning materials. The access to digital materials is even worse: only 20 percent states to have access to web-based resources that are developed in line with LK20S, while 80 percent states to lack of access. For the other school subjects, the majority considers the access to both printed and digital learning materials as insufficient. The situation is very challenging for subjects that is taught in Sámi and Sámi as a secondary language.

The teachers prioritize the development of new learning materials in line with the current curriculum instead of theme- and workbooks. They also calling for more financial support for developing learning materials, better coordination and better resources to translate and adjust to Sámi from Norwegian learning materials. The study concludes that both short term and long-term measures are needed to secure Sámi student's relevant and qualitatively good learning materials.

4. Planners and Sámi, Kven and Northern Norwegian fishers' understandings of fairness in the coastal planning

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In May 2021, we conducted a survey of coastal planners and commercial fishers in coastal municipalities in Northern Norway to examine their views on fairness in the management of local fisheries. Municipal coastal zone planning impacts fishers through regulation of human activities by the coast. Local fisheries are challenged simultaneously by a declining number of fishers, reduced landings, limited infrastructure at landing sites, and conflicts with industrial fishing vessels and aquaculture operators over access to resources and coastal areas. We aimed to understand the perceptions of distributional-, procedural and recognitional justice amongst 705 fishers (Sámi, Kven and Norther Norwegian) and 41 planners. The results show small differences between the fisher groups, but clear differences between the fishers and the planners. The planners largely considered the allocation and use of coastal areas to adequately uphold principles of justice, while many fishers experienced the opposite. The majority of fishers perceive a lack of recognition of the significance of coastal culture and fishers' knowledge. Sámi fishers report more often than others that the Sámi's concerns don't get sufficiently recognized. In the light of Truth- and Reconciliation Commission's description of Sea-Sámi retaliation against Norwegian fishing politics, the findings are not surprising. As the commission points out, more Sámi people asked themselves if the adverse fishing politics are related to their ethnical background. The planners deemed that the fishers had good opportunities to influence decisions, and that the processes are characterized by responsibility and trusting relationships. Many fishers did not agree and concluded that both procedure- and distributive justice as low. Many planners were unsure about whether coastal area usage impacted local fisheries negatively.

5. How journalism affected Fosen: Injustice of the past and future conflicts

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In 2023, Nature and Youth (NU) and NSR Nuorat (NSR-N), the youth organization of Norgga Sámiid Riikkasearvi (NSR), organized the Fosen demonstrations that brought several hundreds of protesters to the streets of Oslo. The demonstrations sought to draw public attention to the Norwegian government's lack of accountability for its failure to implement the 2021 Norway's Supreme Court ruling, which stated the construction of wind turbines in Fosen breached the Sámi reindeer herders' human rights. This article examines the media coverage of the Fosen case between 2015-2024 in the Sámi and Norwegian media to ask the following research question: How was the Fosen case framed by the media and which interpretive framework(s) can be identified in the media coverage? The LLM-assisted framing analysis of 316 news and other editorial items revealed nine different frames that were present in the media. Two dominating frames were: 1) the rule-of-law conflict narrative, which focused on how the government breaks the law, and 2) colonial continuity, which addressed the long-standing unfair practices that impede protection of the rights of the Sámi people. Our further analysis of frames in accordance with Van Gorp's concept of cultural packages (2007), further revealed that the Fosen coverage was organized around two deeply anchored tales that collectively appear in 60 percent of the media articles. Finally, the study also revealed that the 2021 Norway's Supreme Court conviction and the 2023 truth and reconciliation commission's report were anchor points to discuss past injustice, which limited journalists to report on possible ways to solve similar tensions in the future. We conceptualize this phenomenon as "past/future asymmetry," referring to the ways in which journalistic norms of neutrality positioned the Fosen conflict primarily as a past event that was easier to cover than future conflicts where no such anchor points exist.

6. Sámi numbers – Background to Sámi Statistics and Commentary on Tables from SSB

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This article presents a selection of Statistics Norway's (SSB) key statistics on Sámi relations. These statistics are to a large extent, though not exclusively, based on the Sámi Parliament's grant schemes for business development, the so-called STN-area. Together they provide an insight, albeit a limited one, into Sámi conditions in Norway.

53 208 persons lived in the STN-area at the beginning of 2026. The area is characterized by sparse and scattered settlement. Compared to the rest of Northern Norway north of Saltfjellet a relatively higher proportion of the workforce is employed in the primary sector, industry, and construction. The levels of education and income are furthermore lower. A larger share of upper secondary students pursues vocational programs, and the proportion of the population with higher education at university or university college level is lower than in other parts of Northern Norway north of Saltfjellet.

The article also presents a comparative analysis of demographic trends, comparing the development in the STN-area since 1990 with the development in other areas in Northern Norway north of Saltfjellet. Since the early 1990s, the population in the STN-area has declined by 18,3 percent. At the same time, there are substantial local and regional variations. These trends are partly driven by local and regional urbanisation processes. Both within and outside of the STN-area, there is a tendency toward densely populated areas to grow or maintain a relatively stable population, while sparsely populated areas decline. However, in several coastal municipalities a general decline in population is observed across sparsely and densely populated areas. It is reasonable to attribute this trend to changes in the fishing industry, which have led to population loss in many fishing villages.

SSB's statistics related to Sámi language do not follow the STN-area classification. This article presents statistics at three levels, kindergarten, elementary and high school, as well as for self-reported proficiency in Sámi languages in the National Population Registry. We find Northern Sámi to be the most common language, both as first or second language in elementary school, and among those reporting proficiency in Sámi languages in the National Population Registry. Statistics related to reindeer husbandry from the Norwegian Agriculture Agency (Landbruksdirektoratet) indicate relatively stable reindeer numbers since the mid-2010s, a period marked by a reduction of approximately 15 percent compared to previous years.