

**CASE STUDY REPORT //**

**HERIWELL – Cultural Heritage as  
a Source of Societal Well-being in  
European Regions**

Sami Cultural Institutions as a Source of Societal  
Well-Being in Norway

Annex VII // June 2022

This CASE STUDY REPORT is conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The ESPON EGTC is the Single Beneficiary of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The Single Operation within the programme is implemented by the ESPON EGTC and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States, the United Kingdom and the Partner States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

This delivery does not necessarily reflect the opinions of members of the ESPON 2020 Monitoring Committee.

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ISBN: 978-2-919816-64-4

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## **CASE STUDY REPORT //**

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Annex VII // June 2022

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## Abbreviations

ALM	Archive Library Museum
ARRAN	Árran Julevsáme guovdásj or in English, Arran Lule Sami centre.
CPR	Covenant of Civil and Political Rights
DI	Duodje Insituhtta, in English, Sami crafts institution
GG	Guovdageainnu gilišillju, in English, Kautokeino community museum
ICOMOS	International Council of Monuments and Sites
ICOM	International Council of Museums
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NNAM	North Norwegian Art Museum
RDM	Riddoduottarmuseat, In English, Museum from fjord to tundra.
SSS	Saemien Sijte, in English, Sami collective.
SVD	Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat in English, the Sami Collections.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

## Executive summary

This text reports on how cultural heritage is a resource for Norwegian Sami Archives, Libraries and Museums institutions, which legislative measures and policy initiatives that these institutions make use of, and how, cultural heritage in the efforts of these institutions contribute to different kinds of societal well-being. Heritage in this perspective is both intangible and tangible, and as the category of institution speaks to, it is available in a number of formats, including digital.

The report compares 3 Sami Archives, Libraries and Museums, their history, activities, focuses, their partners, their local constituencies, their uses of these institutions, indications of participation and appreciation. These institutions are Riddoduottarmuseat, Saemien sijte, and Arran. These institutions are situated in three Sami regions; Northern Sami, Southern Sam and Lule Sami.

The report details the international, EU and Norwegian legal instruments of relevance for these Sami institutions. Methodologically, this study is based upon long-term engagements including ethnographic fieldwork, collaboration on initiatives such as repatriation, and exhibitions, analysis of existing literature, and interviews. Second, comparison is itself a methodological strategy. Comparison provides perspectives on shared structures, mandate and ambitions, but also regional differences, enabling a closer view of differences in strategy and perspectives on connections between heritage and societal well-being.

As the report will show, these Sami institutions and their activities have strong similarities. They also share understandings of the need to maintain not only cultural history, the interconnectedness of tangible and intangible heritage, and the importance of maintaining living culture. At the same time, the report show that these institutions are flexible. Significant differences depends upon particular regional characteristics, such as being an institution within the core Sami area, or in an area where Sami are in minority. The institutions' focuses and particular activities relate to particular local histories, the severity of assimilation practices, the state of knowledge of language and Sami traditional practices, the level conflicts of land and resources, or the state of Sami primary subsistence forms in the area.

Identified forms of societal well-being are associated with a sense of capability, with a secure identity, with emotional and physical health, with life satisfaction, and with economic opportunities. The text concludes with a summary of the lessons learned, listing the particular conditions and activities that these institutions make use of. Generally speaking, initiatives associated with forms of well-being are related to: the institutions being ongoing present in their communities; ongoing activity available for all; continuous efforts to nurture local heritage activities; celebration of the local; recognition of local forms of expertise and knowledge; adaptability; ability to make use of the tools of political emancipation on offer, ability to engage difficult and painful subjects; and ability to create new economic opportunities.

Well-being moreover, is associated with being a safe space, not feeling like a minority, being able to speak ones' own language, a place to find pride in local culture, knowledge of culture and its practice, opportunities to learn such cultural practices, or learning ones history. A space to cultivate innovation with the aid of competent others, a space for politics and emancipation, a space for dialogue with non-Sami, and a space that creates opportunities for restitution and reconciliation.

# Introduction

This text reports on how cultural heritage is a resource for Norwegian Sami ALM (Archives, Libraries and Museums) institutions, and how, cultural heritage can contribute to different kinds of individual societal well-being. Heritage in this perspective is both intangible and tangible, and it is available in a number of formats, including the digital.

The report describes the legal instruments and subsequent policies, internationally, within the European Union as well as nationally, that have enabled their existence, but also their activities.

As demonstrated by the HERIWELL survey, connections between heritage and well-being, are comparatively speaking more differentiated amongst majority populations. The institutions described in this text are core institutions in small communities. This means that the percentage of people 'who consider themselves regular users of museums and other heritage institutions' or those 'considering themselves heritage activists' or finally those who can 'report on an awareness of that they live in a heritage landscape (urban or rural)' are, higher.

In this report, the question of relevance of cultural heritage to well-being is answered in a comparison of three Sami museum institutions. There are several reasons why Sami communities are in closer contact with their museum institutions. These museums often house other institutions, such as the local offices of the Sami Parliament, the Sami Radio, even school and kindergarten. These institutions might be central employers a community. There can be other pragmatic reasons, such as the fact that rural communities offer less choice in activities.

Sami have been exposed to generations of assimilation practices, their land is continuously under pressure, their primary industries and traditional subsistence activities are also under threat, their languages are listed as endangered. The feeling of being discriminated is general. At the same time, there are several positive developments, both aiding a general sense of emancipation, but also contributing to the protection and the development of the Sami culture. Many in Sami communities are interested in traditional crafts, or in family history. For youths in areas with marginal Sami populations, these institutions might be places where they do not feel different.

This report has been written making use of a range of sources including, scientific publications, available statistics, white papers, reports, webpages, and publications, both by Sami and non-Sami authors, along with interviews, and social media. In addition, the report relies on 20 years of ethnographic fieldwork within Sami areas, and ongoing relations with Sami heritage institutions, including collaborative exhibitions, and participation in the recent Sami repatriation. The comparative method employed makes evident both shared framework, but also differences, relating to regional contexts and particular challenges.



# 1 The context features

## 1.1 Territorial context

Generally speaking, Sami live in large parts of Norway, the number of people considering themselves Sami are in movement. According to the Sami Election Act, the requirements for being eligible to vote in the Sami Parliament involves considering oneself Sami, and having at least one Sami speaking parent, grandparent or great grandparent<sup>1</sup>. Given the long-term consequences of Norwegian assimilation processes, this definition of Saminess implies the existence of complex identity processes. Being Sami can involve different degrees of closeness to cultural practices, or being part of a family that through assimilation practices to some extent has lost its connection with Sami life worlds.

Scandinavia includes a number of Sami cultures and several Sami languages. **Southern Sami** live in Sweden and Norway. In Norway, Southern Sami live in the counties of Hedmark, Trøndelag and Nordland and represent a very small minority. On the Norwegian side, the estimation is that the language is spoken by 500-800 people, of whom 150 work within reindeer herding. There are Southern Sami schools, museums and other institutions in 6 smaller locations within this area. The total number of people considering themselves as Southern Sami are approximately 2000.<sup>2</sup> Southern Sami are spread over a large area, increasing the sense of being a minority. Sharing their landscape with a majority of non-Sami, Southern Sami landscapes are under constant pressure, reindeer herding as an industry is threatened by land developments, natural resource extraction, wind parks, and tourism developments<sup>3</sup>.

**Lule and Pite Sami** live in Norway and Sweden, in Norway, the Lule Sami live in Salten, in Nordland county. Most Lule Sami speaking people in Norway live in the Tysfjord area. About half of the 2000 estimated to have Lule Sami origins, speak the language. Pite Sami is a much smaller language, and is mostly considered spoken in Sweden<sup>4</sup>.

There are about 25 000 **North Sami** in Norway, North Sami also live in Sweden and Finland. In the municipalities of Karasjok and Kautokeino, 90 percent of the population speak Northern Sami<sup>5</sup>.

## 1.2 Cultural heritage context

The institutions described in this case, Sami Archives, Libraries and Museums (ALMs), cannot be seen as a product of one cultural heritage policy, but rather many Sami rights improvement, including those pertaining to heritage, over a longer time period. Although serving similar purposes in their communities, these ALM institutions also have slightly different origins, depending on regional cultural and political conditions. At their establishment, these institutions relied upon local leadership, community enthusiasm and volunteer efforts. In part, their establishment should be connected with the interest in and subsequent emancipation of indigenous peoples in the 1970s and 80s. Some institutions have a longer history, but at this point many Sami institutions started to document history and collect material objects. In some areas, the School Act of 1959 enabled new focus on Sami language in schools, or new Sami schools, and provided an opportunity to build local institutions. Some ALM institutions were in part established in order to protect and document heritage, and were boosted by the heritage brought into focus by the Cultural Heritage Act (Lov om kulturminner or kulturminneloven) of 1978. This law automatically protects heritage older than the Norwegian Reformation in 1537, this act automatically protects Sami cultural heritage older than a 100 years. In its last revision it protects Sami heritage older than 1917. With the establishment of the Sami Parliament in 1989 the management of Sami cultural heritage was transferred from Norwegian institutions to Sami. These Sami

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<sup>1</sup> [Sametingets valgmanntall – Store norske leksikon \(snl.no\)](https://snl.no/Sametingets_valgmanntall)

<sup>2</sup> [Om sørsamer - Saemien Siite](https://www.saemien.siite.no/)

<sup>3</sup> [Fakta om samiske språk - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/fakta/samiske-spraak)

<sup>4</sup> [Fakta om samiske språk - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/fakta/samiske-spraak)

<sup>5</sup> [Fakta om samiske språk - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no/fakta/samiske-spraak)

institutions also have other origins. The establishment of Duodjeinstituhtta (DI) in 1995, to protect and further cultivate Sami crafts traditions and material culture, funded by the Sami Parliament and the Ministry of Culture, added new layers to the cultural heritage activities of such institutions. Further funding of immaterial heritage became available in the years after 2005. Section 2.2. provides an outline of all the, both material and immaterial heritage laws and policies that nourishes these institutions. These institutions were further empowered by the 2005 decision to maintain 6 regional Sami museum institutions. And finally, by the recent effort of repatriating Sami objects from the two capital museums; Cultural History Museum and the Folkmuseum, to the same 6 regional Sami museums. Overall, this case speaks to the number of heritage policies, actions and strategies that in the course of a longer time have contributed to an almost organic development of Sami ALM institutions. These multifaceted origins are also likely a source of strength, adaptability and resilience.

### 1.3 Societal well-being context

Little statistics exist with regard to Sami populations in Norway. As mentioned, due to long-term assimilation processes, it is difficult to identify ethnic identity. People are often both Sami and non-Sami, members of the Sami family might choose different ethnicities. The last time Saminess was a criteria in a national survey was in 1970 (Lund, Melhus and Hansen et al. 2007). In recent years, our knowledge of Sami populations have increased dramatically with the findings of the research projects SAMINOR 1 and 2.

This long-term population study of areas with both Sami and non-Sami populations considered health and living conditions in areas with both Sami and non-Sami populations. In all, 16,865 participated (36 to 79 years of age) both Sami, Kven (descendants of Finnish immigrants), as well as ethnic Norwegian populations. SAMINOR surveys describes several issues associated with well-being, both physical and emotional.

SAMINOR reports have noted systemic structural differences, in salaries, in education, and in health in the Sami vs the non-Sami population (Lund, Melhus, and Hansen et al. 2007). According to these investigations, Sami families earned less than those who were both Sami and non-Sami Norwegian, or only non-Sami Norwegian. Sami also had significantly lower levels of education. 50% of older Sami had 7 years of education or less. There is also a lack of jobs in Sami areas, particularly for men. The Sami Parliament currently focuses on the many young people, who move from rural to central areas. It has identified long-term efforts to enable people to stay in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> The level of education does however not necessarily mean a lack of meaningful work. Of those with a Sami background, a significant proportion is in some way involved in Sami primary industries (reindeer herding, fishing, farming). Participation in traditional Sami activities such as hunting, fishing and berry picking also improve food security for those with limited economic resources.

SAMINOR research reports that amongst Sami, one in 3 Sami have experienced discrimination. Research into the consequences of ethnic discrimination has made evident connections with psychological distress. Not unexpectedly, Sámi and Kven males reported greater levels of stress than ethnic Norwegians. Ethnic discrimination was strongly associated with elevated levels of psychological distress. Results suggest that ethnic discrimination is a major potential risk factor for poor mental health, and may contribute to ethnicity-related differences in mental health between Sámi and non-Sámi populations (Hansen and Sørli 2012).

Acknowledgement of the long-term consequences of assimilation processes for Sámi, Kven, Norwegian Finns and Forestfinns, did in 2018 lead to the establishment of the Norwegian Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Since its establishment the commission has collected personal testimonies of over 500 people. The commission is due to deliver their report in 2023<sup>7</sup>. According to the Commission's leader, Dagfinn Høybråten, a common denominator in peoples' stories is that ethnic background, cultural background and language have been associated with shame. Identity has been held secret or been denied. Høybråten describes 'When we invite people to tell their stories, it opens rooms within people or families that have been closed for lifetimes.' These stories divulge the vulnerability of children; 'they were handed to a school system and told that everything they have learned before school, of language and culture, was of no value. They

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<sup>6</sup> [Sápmi og Norge trenger en modig distriktspolitikk - Nationen](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Sannhets- og forsoningskommisjonen - stortinget.no](#)

were told they had to become Norwegian. We have received some very powerful testimonies, says Høybråten, about what this does to a child”<sup>8</sup>.

Both SAMINOR surveys and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission underline the many hardships of Sami through history, a history that also is of immense importance to Sami communities. To Sami communities, cultural history and cultural practices speaks to indigenous rights, to identity, to ways of overcoming structural discrimination and to improve ones’ future.

The statistics below provided indicate that people in the three areas included, are relatively speaking educated, even if there are a larger proportion of school leavers than in the national population. Still, the adult population in these areas participate in education and training to a similar extent as the national population. The unemployment rate seems lower than in the national population. The gender employment gap is about the same as in the national population. The gender employment gap does not indicate whether men or women are more or less unemployed. In my experience, it is harder for men than women to find work, in rural areas.

There are several significant factors that there are no data for, such as subjective health status, or level of volunteering. These could have an impact upon the analysis of well-being in this case study.

Given the Norwegian context, some of these unknowns can be generally commented on. Generally speaking, most people have internet access, the water quality is good, and in the general population there is a high level trust in national government institutions, as in all Scandinavian countries.

However, as these statistics do not differentiate on the basis of ethnicity, the numbers likely conceal significant differences. These are also indicated in 1.3. in this report. As the SAMINOR study described under this point reveals, Sami life expectancy is lower, as is the level of education, particularly in older generations lower. This is also true of the employment level, particularly with regard to men in rural areas. These statistics also reveal a substantially lower level of income. Many Sami regularly experience discrimination and racism, and for such reasons, the level of trust in national institutions are not the same.

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<sup>8</sup> [Sterke historier fra samer strømmer inn til sannhetskommisjon – Dagsavisen](#)

**Table 1.1. Societal well-being indicators (table filled in by the HERIWELL coordination team)**

Regional (Trøndelag - NO 06)		Regional (Nord Norge NO 07)		Regional (Innlandet - NO 02)		National		EU - 28	
2020	Δ% 2014	2020	Δ% 2014	2020	Δ% 2014	2020	Δ% 2014	2020	Δ% 2014
465.136	5,4	484.547	1,4	387.285	1,3	5.367.580	5,1	513.093.556	1,2
82.969	15,7	95.321	15,1	85.461	11,7	941.816	15,9	102.655.668	9,2
23.898	2,4	24.749	0,3	18.595	0,7	255.759	2,4	19.425.829	-11,6
11,7	0,6	14,5	-4,3	9,3	-4,6	9,9	-1,8	10,3	-0,7
44.361	12,6	24.994	7,2	18.559	9,2	290.014	9,8	18.438.720	n.a.
17,3	-1,6	16,1	-3,4	15,3	-3,9	16,4	-3,7	11,3	0,5
4,3	-2,6	-4,2	-8,5	3,1	-3,0	4,8	-3,0	3,2	1,1
54.700	4,8	53.600	6,8	44.300	3,7	69.700	-4,8	31200 (EU27)	17,3
302.445	4,3	310.891	-0,4	242.579	-0,3	3.495.637	3,9	330.714.969	-1,0
76,1	0,9	74,4	0,7	73	-0,9	74,7	-0,5	69,2	4,4
3,3	-0,6	3,6	0,2	3,9	0,9	4,5	0,9	6,4	-4,0
6,6	-0,3	6,5	-2,1	8,0	n.a.	6,6	-0,5	12,5	-2,9
4,6	3,2	5,3	0,5	5,7	2,1	3,9	0,3	10,3	-0,2
15,1	0,4	16,5	2,0	20,5	3,4	16,1	2,6	21,4	-3,0
1,5	0,6	2,7	2	2,3	1,3	2,0	0,8	5,5	-3,4
83,1	+0.8y	81,8	+0.1y	82,0	+0.8y	83,3	+1.1y	81,0	+0.1y
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	72,7	-5,8	69,3	1,8
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	34.1 (EU27)	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.8 (EU27)	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6,1	1,5	28,2	-8,5
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6,1	1,5	15,6	-1,1
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4,0	0,0	12,5	-1,5

	Last available data: 2019
	Last available data: 2018
	Last available data: 2016
	Last available data: 2015
	Last available data: 2017

## Case study information:

- Location:
- NUTS3 level:
- NUTS2 level: NO06 - Trøndelag, NO07 - Nord Norge, NO02 - Innlandet

Regional (Trøndelag - NO 06)		Regional (Nord Norge (NO 07)		Regional (Innlandet - NO 02)		National		EU - 28	
100	14	100	5	82	-3	96	3	90	9
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.86 (EU27)	n.a.
100	17	99	9	82	5	96	8	89	11
91	18	92	12	85	11	92	10	55	8
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.43 (EU27)	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	-0.01 (EU27)	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.82 (EU27)	n.a.
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.61 (EU27)	n.a.

Source: HERIWELL Consortium

## 2 The analysed case: characteristics and policy features

### 2.1 Characteristics and history of the analysed case

This text describes the ambitions and activities of 3 Sami museums, these museums represent three Sami regions, each with its own Sámi languages; Southern Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami. The descriptions will focus on connections between cultural heritage and well-being will also involve analysis of the strategies these institutions engage in, to secure future societal well-being. In the description of each Sámi institution, I highlight some differences in the institutions' focus, which relate to particularly salient issues for the local populations, and hence to issues of particular relevance for both individual and societal well-being.

All these institutions are ALM institutions (Archive, Library and Museum). These collected activities emphasise inherent connections between tangible and intangible knowledge, and the material foundations for such knowledge, in traditional nature practices.

Of significant events behind the establishment of these institutions are the 1978 amendment of the Heritage Act to specify protection of Sami Heritage, the establishment of the Sami Parliament (1989) and the inscription of a Sami paragraph in the Norwegian constitution (previously §110a, now 108). In 2002, the Sami Parliament took over the responsibility for all Sámi museums.

The movement toward greater self-determination took yet another leap in 2012, when the Sámi Parliament, together with the two capital museums (the Norwegian Folk Museum, Cultural History Museum) agreed to return half of the capital Sámi collections to 6 regional museum institutions. The return process, called *Bååstede*, meaning 'return' in Southern Sámi, was came to in recognition of Norway's obligations towards the Sámi as an indigenous people, to enable Sámi self-determination over their cultural heritage.

#### 2.1.1 Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat Kárášjohka (SVD) (Sami Collections, Karasjok) and Guovdageainnu gilišillju (GG) (Kautokeino village museum)

They are both museums situated in the Northern Sami core areas in the county of Finnmark, Norway. They are both part of the larger museum administration, *Riddoduottarmuseat*, the *Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat* (SVD) SVD was also the first Sami ALM institution in Norway. The museum opened in 1972, but the local Sami museum association was established in 1939. At its establishment in 1972, with Sami philosopher Alf Ivar Keskitalo, as director (Horsberg Hansen 2020). What the local Sami museum association had collected in its' early days burned in WW2 due to the German scorched earth tactics. When the museum opened, the museum shared space with the Norwegian broadcasting company's Sami department, the Karasjok Association for Reindeer Herders, and the local branch of The Norwegian Sami Association.

According to the first president of the Sami Parliament, Ole Henrik Magga, this was the first place where Sami people did not need to 'bow and scrape'. The institution became extremely important in furthering Sami rights (Snarby 2017: 122 in Horsberg Hansen 2020:226). The museum's first cultural historical exhibition was ready in 1982. Following the museum reform in 2006<sup>9</sup>, a new umbrella organization named *RiddoDuottarMuseat* (RDM) (Horsberg Hansen 2020) was established to manage all the 4 museums located in Karasjok, Kautokeino, Kokelv and Porsanger. The name, *RiddoDuottar* means 'from coast to tundra'. These institutions represent a diversity of Sami cultures; reindeer herding, coastal Sami culture, river Sami culture, Sami agriculture.

**Collections.** With its 5000 cultural historical objects, SVD holds the largest Sami collection in Norway. GG in Kautokeino holds another 2500 objects after the *Bååstede* repatriation. Next to its cultural historic collections, RDM also manages a national Sami art collection, as well as archives at each of the museums. The *Bååstede* repatriation will add another 740 objects to SVDs collection. For now, the art collection has no physical exhibition space. The museum has also secured several prominent loans, most famously in

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<sup>9</sup> [St.meld. nr. 49 \(2008-2009\) - regjeringen.no](https://www.regjeringen.no)

Karasjok, the Anders Paulsson drum from the National Museum in Copenhagen. The drum of a Sami noaidi (religious expert) who was killed in 1692 in the Danish-Norwegian Inquisition. GG museum is negotiating the return of a series of miniatures from Bergen Museum (Norway), made by Sami rebel Lars Hætta while imprisoned for his participation in the 1852 Kautokeino uprising. Presently, SVD and GG are negotiating the repatriation of these objects, and both ownership institutions have recently become positive to these initiatives. These are objects of the high symbolic importance for both museums.

Next to the 1400 art objects in its contemporary art collection, the museum also includes an outdoor museum, with Sami traditional building structures from different periods including hunting pits. Its collections are in the process of being digitized on [digitaltmuseum.no](http://digitaltmuseum.no), as well as being translated into Sami. SVDs efforts to translate its digital catalogue to Sami has also involved a larger initiative to collect relevant Sami language words. Next to entries of cultural historical objects and the collection of historical photographs, their platform on [digitaltmuseum.no](http://digitaltmuseum.no) also includes photographs of events, such as courses in for example the making of *Ladjogaphir*, a historically significant hat for a female Sami costume, or turf hut or riverboat making.

In Karasjok and Kautokeino a significant number of museum audiences are also tourists; however locals also represent a solid and continuous presence. Johan Aslak Hætta, the leader of GG in Kautokeino describes how objects often are associated with families, and families often return to visit the objects associated with their families. Families also regularly ask to see objects in storage, to investigate traditional crafts techniques, or just be with objects from ones' own family (Hætta, pers.com).

### 2.1.2 Saemien Sijte (Southern Sami centre) is in Snåsa, in the county of Trøndelag

Saemien Sijte was the second Sami institutions to be established museum in 1964. At that time, 35 people met at Snåsa, with the ambition of creating a language and cultural center, to collect Southern Sami artefacts, photographs, historical documents and oral histories. While in the Sami core areas, Sami schools and crafts organisations are separate institutions (still close collaborators), outside of the core area, Sami ALM institutions tend to also host these. The Sami ALM institutions also collaborate closely and with language institutions, and may share premises with these. SSS also work closely with the 4 regional Southern Sami language institutions. SSS also shares its building with the other regional Sami institutions, such as the Reindeer Herding Administration, the local division of the Sami Parliament, the *Duedtie Instituhta* (Southern Sami spelling). Here, *duojarat* (artisans) are employed to teach schoolchildren, to hold crafts courses and work alongside those who wish to develop their crafts into a living or an industry.

**Collections.** The Museum holds 500 artifacts, primarily of objects of vernacular use. In addition, the museum received another 350 in the aforementioned Bååstede repatriation. SSS has for the last 20 years digitized existing historical photographs of Southern Sámi. Aided by local experts its local constituency, the organisation has made a large-scale investment in identifying people, places and events in existing photographs. Along with the institution's cultural historical objects, these pictures and their information are digitally available on [digitaltmuseum.no](http://digitaltmuseum.no). SSS are also involved in the shared effort to translate the catalogue to Sami languages, for now the catalogue is in North Sami, but the ambition is to translate the catalogue into Southern Sami.

### 2.1.3 Árran Julevsáme guovdásj (Arran Lule Sami centre), Arran

It is located in Drag, in Hamarøy municipality, Nordland county. Established in 1992, with the ambition to 'secure, develop and further Lule Sámi culture, language and social life', by 'collect, document, protect and disseminate past and contemporary Sami cultural history in the Lule and Pite Sami area, and to stimulate and secure and inspirational environment in line with Sami values and tradition, in with respect for Christian cultural heritage'.<sup>10</sup> Arran includes a language centre, a museum and cultural centre. As other Sami institutions, Arran also Lule Sami offices of the Sami Parliament, as well as *Duodji Instituhta*, it also includes a kindergarten. The building also offers offices to the Nord University, University of Tromø Arctic, and NRK Sapmi.

Speaking of the first years at Arran, Oddmund Andersen, research leader at the institution said: 'we didn't have a single history book that included the answers we wanted, nor what we wanted to tell others. We

<sup>10</sup> [Aktuelt \(arran.no\)](http://Aktuelt(arran.no))

spent most of our time walking around in the community, asking people what it was like (Schønning 2021:70). Andersen knew that locals held a lot of knowledge. Arrans mission was to keep this knowledge for the future generation, ‘to strengthen Sami cultural identity, to provide pride and security in one’s own culture, and protect and disseminate Sami cultural Heritage’ (Schønning 2021:73), there was also an awareness of the need to recover what was lost. Many of the non-Sami locals in these areas were surprised when Arran opened, about how many in the community who considered themselves Sami. This expresses the significant and long-term efforts of assimilating Sami, undertaken by the Norwegian state, and how efficient these were, particularly outside of the core Sami areas.

**Collections.** From the Bååstede repatriation, Arran received ownership of 368 cultural historical objects. As news of Bååstede spread, the local constituency was also inspired to contribute to their museum’s collections. Since Bååstede began, locals have contributed with another 600 cultural historical objects to its collection (Harrieth Aira pers. com). In addition to this collection, Arran was recently bequeathed a substantial art collection, 15 000 art works, from Sami artist Hans Ragnar Mathisen. The institution also holds a substantial photo collection (18 000) in the process of becoming digitized, as well as a library and archive. A number of elders have been interviewed to collect information on the photographs. The photographs will also become involved in the ongoing documentation of Sami practices. The cultural historical objects from Bååstede are also published online in digitalmuseum.no, with Northern Sami names, however, the institution plans to also add Lule Sami names, as well as additional locally gathered information on each object. As SSS, Arran is currently expanding their building mass, to make room for new storage facilities, new language centre and kindergarten facilities as well as more office space.

## 2.2 Policy features: policy strategies under analysis

### International legal instruments and documents protecting Sami heritage

In the recent Supreme Court Judgement (Fosen case, October 2021)<sup>11</sup>, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights gained new significance. In the Fosen case, a group of reindeer herders won against the state and a windpark, on the basis of Norwegian obligations to this Covenant, article 27; stating, ‘in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.’

Within the same time period as Sami politicians worked to have Sami rights inscribed into the Norwegian constitution, there was also a significant effort to have Norway ratify the ILO 169, the Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, was ratified by Norway in 1990.

International Council on Monuments and Sites, established in 1964, with the Venice Charter, works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places around the world. ICOMOS (and the IUNC) advises UNESCO on the management and listing of World Heritage sites. Along with ICOM (International Council for Museums), ICOMOS also has a special responsibility to advocate the safeguarding of cultural heritage against destruction, or trafficking of cultural heritage, ICOM also offers ethical guidelines for museums, on issues such as repatriation.

UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and was developed with a long growing awareness of that the 1972 convention favoured European and tangible heritage, while intangible heritage left was without protection.

UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) also has meaning for traditional knowledge. The preamble states that cultural diversity is a characteristic of humankind and that such diversity is an important source for sustainable development of societies, peoples and nations. The preamble points to the significance of traditional knowledge as a source of spiritual and material wealth, particularly in relation to indigenous systems of knowledge.

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (2007). The preamble acknowledges the importance of traditional knowledge, and the necessity of respecting and promoting indigenous inalienable rights, to

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<sup>11</sup> High Court judgement 11. October, 2021.



political economic, social structures, culture, spiritual traditions, to history and world view, and the right to own lands, territories and resources, as well as to acknowledge respect for indigenous knowledge, culture and traditional practice to secure a sustainable and faire development, and a management of environment.

### The Sami and the EU

In 1993, Norway ratified the European Union's Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, the law became enacted in 1998. This charter sought to secure the survival of minority languages, and thereby secure and develop Europe's cultural wealth and traditions. More, specifically, as part of the agreement on Swedish and Finnish membership of the European Union (1995), resulted in the Sámi protocol recognising the obligations of Sweden and Finland in relation to the Sámi people, in accordance with both national and international law<sup>12</sup>. The protocol states that Sweden and Finland is committed to preserving and developing the Sámi people's living conditions, language, culture and way of life. Sweden and Finland and the EU have also jointly observed that the Sámi culture and lifestyle are dependent on primary sources of income such as reindeer herding in areas where the Sami traditionally live. Sami's contacts with the EU have led to increased opportunities for cultural heritage associated initiatives. The long-term goal has been to develop Sámi commercial sector, with a recognition of the close ties between the natural environment, culture and tradition. There has been an emphasis on utilising and developing traditional Sami knowledge, higher education and research adapted to Sami conditions. During the EU 2000-2006 programming period, around EUR 195 billion to structural funds. For Sweden, this meant a financial contribution of around SEK 19 billion (EUR 2.186 billion). In the first period, Sami EU programs, which the Swedish Sami Parliament was responsible, turned over around SEK 252 million. Contributions from the EU's structural funds also required Sweden and Finland to contribute between 35-50 percent of the total cost of the projects. These Sami programs have also involved Sami people in Norway. In the next program periods, as new nations have joined the EU, the number of program types have been reduced, however Interreg<sup>13</sup> continues to fund flagship Sámi research, such as lately, the *Sámi Allaskuvla* (Sámi University College) project, AIDA II Arctic Indigenous Design Archives, or Beavnardahke II, mapping Southern Sami coastal culture, both building on previous Interreg-financed research projects.<sup>14</sup>

### Sami in Norway

Prior to 1978, Norwegian law automatically protected cultural heritage from the year 1537. As many Sami remains were made of organic perishable materials, this law offered little protection. In 1978, however, the Cultural Heritage Act was revised to include the automatic protection of Sámi Cultural Heritage objects and sites more than 100 years old (Ween 2006, 2011). At first, cultural heritage, registration was managed regionally by non-Sami museums. Upon its establishment, in 1989, the Sami Parliament took over heritage management, and with time established regional offices. From a Sami perspective, this was an important political milestone (Ween 2005, Myrvoll et al. 2012).

The Norwegian Constitution was formally amended to include what is called the Sami paragraph (§108, later revised to become §110)<sup>15</sup> this law established the Sami Parliament, State economic responsibility for the Sami Parliament, the equality of Sami and Norwegian languages, parliamentary elections. The Sami Paragraph also includes mechanisms to protect and develop Sami language, culture and social life (§ 1-1). Counties and municipalities can decide to become a Sami language area.

The same paragraph also describes state obligations to Sami language (§3.1.). A municipality can decide to become a Sami language area. In such Sami language area, Sami and Norwegian are equal. This means that in public correspondence, everyone has the right to be answered in Sami language; people also have the right to have health care provided in Sami, and to receive a full education in Sámi languages, both in kindergarten and in the overall education system. Northern Sami area was included already in 1992, while

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<sup>12</sup> [EUR-Lex - 11994N/PRO/03 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Arkiv for Prosjektbank - interreg.no](#)

<sup>14</sup> The Sámi and the EU - Samer.se.

<sup>15</sup> [Lov om Sametinget og andre samiske rettsforhold \(sameloven\) - Lovdata](#)

Southern Sami and Lule Sami regions became included in 2006, so far 13 municipalities have decided to become Sami language areas.

The UNESCO Intangible Heritage Convention (2003) has enabled the Sami Parliament to successfully argue against new land developments, with reference to such matters as past reindeer herding migratory routes or the cultural landscapes created by grazing reindeer in the past (Ween 2010). Interestingly, the proposition emphasises that 'the aim is not to freeze the intangible heritage at a certain historical point, in such a way that it remains as unchanged as possible, but rather to see intangible heritage in a dynamic and meaningful interaction with contemporary people' (KUD 2010:65).

Efforts to fulfil such stated obligations to Sami intangible heritage has been piecemeal, but the Directorate of Cultural Heritage channeled funds to the Sami University College in Kautokeino, as well as to *Duodje Instituhtta* (DI). The Sami Parliament have ambitions to develop duodji as an industry, and to enable the industry to adapt to changes and challenges, to increase professionalism and profitability. DI holds agreements with the Sami Parliament, providing funding for artisans, investment and development arrangements, welfare arrangements, assistance with marketing, and sale.

Duodji is all-encompassing in Sámi traditional knowledge, the term describes all Sami crafts and material production. Its' intangible aspects include traditions for knowledge transference and pedagogics. As such, duodji is also therefore a significant space for the articulation of Sami epistemology and ontology (Guttorm 2011). Duodji is important for strengthening Sami identity, and it is often included as a component in the local work to 'take back the culture' (Marit Myrvoll, pers.com). Because of its all-encompassing qualities, promoting duodji represents an effort to strength Sami identity and way of life. Many learns duodji from parents to children, but long-term assimilation practices have also caused duodji traditions to be less practiced in many parts of the country.

In the three Sami areas described, duodji is taught at school at all levels. DI are present and active, working closely with ALMs, providing supervisors, courses and guidance for those interested in learning. The supervisors also support local business developments, project applications, marketing and production methods. For those who aspire to become professionals, there are apprenticeships available, and Sami Allaskuvla in Kautokeino students from all over Sápmi can enroll in a bachelor program in Traditional and Contemporary duodji.

## 2.3 Results of the analysed case: the contribution to societal well-being

As with other indigenous Arctic communities, the Sami have undergone, and are continuing to undergo, dramatic economic, social, health, cultural, political, and ecological changes, with its obvious consequences for personal and societal well-being. Cultural heritage may provide remedial well-being, and numerous connections are made between cultural heritage and well-being:

**Cultural heritage may open for access to human rights:** rights to culture, to speak ones one language, to have ones traditional livelihood protected, including rights to land and resources. Cultural heritage might also empower as it offers tools and opportunities to renegotiate colonial appropriations of landscapes and practices (Ween 2005, Ween & Ruud 2019). Legislation may provide opportunities of co-management (Ween 2010). Hodder (2010) broadens such insights. Referring to works of Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen's approaches, comparing the well-being of people and nations, Hodder points out that the resources available also have an impact upon how satisfied people feel, but on what they are actually able to do, their capabilities (Sen 1993, Nussbaum 1997 in Hodder 2010).

Villaroya and Wiesand (2021) emphasizes a sense well-being provided by having a **secure identity**. Cultural pride, associated museums, monuments, cultural or natural heritage sites can provide cultural capital, both for individuals and populations. Identity can be associated with place, with the network of people that one calls kin in an extended form, it can be associated with skills, such as language, but also other skills associated with culture, livelihood and customary practices. Practice, also closely associated with moral and ethical values, furthermore speaks to individual feelings of integrity and social capital, but also to social cohesion.

Villaroya and Wiesand (2021) also points to what UNESCO identified has identified as a growing body of studies that demonstrate the importance of participation in cultural activities **to emotional and physical health**. In a European Union context, cultural heritage is considered a driver for more innovative and resilient

societies and for social cohesion, as stated in the New Agenda for Culture adopted by the European Commission in May 2018 (2021) (Villaroya and Wiesand 2021). Also, a wide range of indigenous health research emphasise links between heritage and well-being (Kirmayer et al., 2009; Bals, Turi, Skre, & Kvernmo, 2011; Kral & Salusky, 2014).

Even if identity connections are not so prominent, pride and well-being can be associated with enjoyment of the experience, such as the aesthetics, or other affective elements of the experience. Even living close by, engaging digitally with heritage initiatives, and volunteering in heritage initiatives and museums adds to **life satisfaction** (Villaroya and Wiesand 2021). Similar ambitions are also expressed in communication based on social media or online initiatives, such as digital catalogues, online exhibitions, and knowledge banks (Gowlland & Ween 2018, Ween & Wachowich 2018).

In an indigenous life world, such satisfaction can also come the **sharing of knowledge**, teaching majority society populations and other tourists about indigenous life styles and life worlds (Ween & Riseth 2017). In such cases, more kinds of well-being can be involved, such as new culturally appropriate **economic opportunities** (Ween & Riseth 2017).

### **Sami museums contribution to societal and individual well-being: Mechanisms hampering/favouring the success of the interventions**

The following makes use of examples of activities engaged in by the aforementioned 3 Sami museums speaking to particular forms of societal and individual well-being; including as 'capabilities', as associated with identity practices, as associated with emotional and physical health, with life satisfaction, and with economic opportunities. The examples made will illustrate that such a differentiation as just made is illusory. **Every activity serves more than one purpose.**

#### **Museums. Crafts, traditions and innovation**

All three museums work closely with local duodji institutions, in the case of the Southern Sami and the Lule Sami institutions; these are also in the same building. The museum in Kautokeino also regularly work together with the Sami University College, making use of museum objects to teach traditional duodji techniques, also for the purpose of aiding innovation within duodji. **SVD** in Karasjok also emphasises revitalisation of cultural practices, such as the riverboat tradition. As Sami river fishing is under increasing threats, the art of riverboat making is becoming endangered (Ween 2017). In 2021, this tradition was also listed on the List of Intangible World Heritage, together with other Scandinavian forms of clinker boat traditions.<sup>16</sup>

All three institutions focus on the connections between heritage and language. This work is multi-dimensional. It is apparent in the translation of digital museum catalogues, but also in heritage revitalization practices. At **SVD**, this work involves revitalisation practices, with awareness of that acts of making **bring new memories of words lost for lack of use** (Guttorm 2011 in Ween 2021).

As illustrated by the effort to focus on river boat making as endangered intangible heritage, RDM has also focused on collecting and exhibiting elements and art pieces that emphasize unbreakable connections between heritage and access to land and natural resources. For example, the GG museum exhibits pieces that speak to the traditional duck hunt made illegal by the Norwegian Nature Directorate.

The director of RDM, Anne May Olli, a trained technical conservator, has focused on the problem of pesticides in the objects returned in the Sami repatriation. Pesticides restricts local peoples access to the objects returned, particularly the intimate access sought by local craftspeople. Olli has also been a vocal proponent of efforts to innovate conservation techniques on the basis of traditional knowledge, particularly from duodji traditions (pers.com) (see also Klokkernes and Olli 2007, Olli 2019).

**RDM** museums have over 3700 regular users on Facebook. Related sites, such as Old Pictures from Karasjok, Kautokeino etcetera, have altogether 6000 regular users. Photographs from the museum catalogue are prominent on these related sites. This indicate the significance of history for local inhabitants in the area. RDM museum staff also stay in conversations with these sights, and update their information if

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<sup>16</sup> [Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices - intangible heritage - Culture Sector - UNESCO](#)

new knowledge is produced at other sites. The museums also are actively engaging the photographic collection in relation to local audiences, making prints, and sharing with relatives when asked.

**SSS** has also continuously held a broad focus on a number of cultural practices. The DI that the culture centre shares its premises with, are in regular use by children of all ages, as well as adults. Documentation of Sami practices has involved both film and photography. The institution runs an autumn festival, *Tjaktjen Tjåanghko*, celebrating southern Sami culture, and well-visited café selling Southern Sami food. SSS continuously involves locals in Interreg projects, recently, in such as *Beavnardahke 1* and *2*, aiming to create awareness of Southern Sami cultural practices and landscapes together with local populations. A second Interreg project, *Muittut, Muitalusat*, involves an effort to articulate Sami ways of disseminating history. Interest in the historical work from Southern Sami indicated by Saemien Sijte's Facebook page, with 2200 followers, who enthusiastically like and comment upon arrangements, seminars, conferences, and information regarding objects returned in Bååstede. Although not related to SSS, the FB page 'Old pictures from Southern Sámi areas', with its 2600 members emphasise the local interest in local history. Many of the pictures that appear on this site are also originally from the digitalmuseum.no site where SSS post there pictures and information on pictures.

Of other history-related activities, together with Sami University College in Kautokeino, **Arran** partake in a national research grant regarding Sami knowledge of collecting practices and place names speaking to silent traditional knowledge. They focus on particular traditional activities, in the initiative 'Living Landscapes', for different kinds of dissemination practices, directed at different audiences, ranging from local digital to tourism activities. The institution is also part of an Interreg project with Swedish Lule Sami institutions and museums, *Viesso duobddága* that by use of crowdsourcing develops an application that will provide information about Sami place names and practices, where you are, in a map.

Arran also publishes books and publications in Lule Sami (similar activities also take place at SSS but outside the framework of the institution). The institution aspires to describe a wide range of Lule Sami culture (Lars Magne Andreassen, pers.com) including coastal Sami history and culture. The institution has also made a particular effort to rewrite the history of local Lule Sami that risked their life to guide persecuted Norwegians across the border into Sweden during the war. After WW2 this history was manipulated by Norwegian authorities, condemning the efforts of local guides.

As with the other Sami institutions, Arran too actively uses its webpages, along with its Facebook page to advertise events and communicate with its constituency. Its FB page has 2000 followers, the page is in regular use, also a discussion forum, by local audiences. There is also a smaller, but very active group discussing local Sami place names.

### **Museums. Language and identity.**

For the **SVD** and **GG**, located in the Sami core areas, language activities, as described above include more specialised activities. For the other two Sami museums in this investigation, language is a central activity. Museum employees have together with local constituencies made a substantial list of very nuanced Sami words of relevance for the digital database. This list is not only collected with local audiences and other Sami museums (Myrvoll et al.2018). These lists were also on display in the collaborative exhibition, *NewArctic* (2020).

**SSS** works closely with the Sámi kindergarten and school. The school also offers boarding, as the Southern Sámi area is large, is also closely connected with the center. With a population of less than 500 speakers, Southern Sámi is a language under threat of extinction. The school caters for Southern Sámi children both in Sweden and Norway, to help children to become actively bilingual. At SSS, the kindergarten and the school works closely together with DI, to teach children language, through engaging in the activities that the language where part of, such as reindeer herding, duedtie, hunting, fishing, and gathering activities, such activities also providing a space for storytelling, and local Sámi histories.

Similarly, **Arran** is aware of how access to language also depend upon continuity in nature practices and uses of landscape. The institution seeks to document both tangible and intangible practices, 'as they are our history', says Lars Magne Andreassen. 'We do not want to document something lost, but rather point out that our history is woven into the present, like in *avve*, the woven belt of our costumes' (Schøning 2021:77). All our cultural work is based on the contemporary, we do not remember our culture, we engage it in the present. This gives us a sense of well-being' (pers. com. Lars Magne Andreassen).

Arran also has duodji areas that are used on a daily basis. Sissel A. Mikkelsen, a local resident and the leader of the museum says that to her it is inspiring that there is light and activity at Arran from eight in the morning until late at night. The institution holds courses in craftwork as well as product development. There is also important knowledge transfer between duodji experts and the museum. The artisans are looking forward to exploring past traditions and further future ones through access to the repatriated objects. New insights brought from the artisans can also be added to the digital catalogue, and made available for the entire community (Sissel Mikkelsen pers.com).

As in Southern Sami areas, the centre arranges language activities for children. Where the activities focus both on fun, but also on cultural activities and nature practices (Mikkelsen pers.com). The point is to have a space where Sami language and culture is part of everything. A home arena, where the children do not have to be different. Language is also otherwise a central focus. The institution also focuses on such as producing children's books, translating popular literature both for adults and for children, for example for children, Donald Duck. The institution moreover has projects mapping and documenting landscape terms and place names.<sup>17</sup> As well as terms associated with duodji, in collaboration with Sami University College and its' long term project, *Arbediehtu*, first financed through intangible heritage funds.

Traditional cultural practices are also made use of to develop tourism related initiatives. For example in Kautokeino, the company *Ailo Matki* runs a tourism operation 'based upon cultural principles'. It is about being Sami, showing traditional activities, reindeer herding, the tundra, fishing, spending a night in turf huts or a lavvo, a Sami tent, sauna, making use of the museum. The business is small scale, the company collaborates with local reindeer herders, and seeks to ensure that tourism stays sustainable'. As part of the tours, guides describes significant political events, such as the 1852 Kautokeino uprising, as well as the 1979-82 massive demonstrations to stop the hydro-electric dam of the Alta-Kautokeino river, as well as the flooding of the Sami village of Maze. The company also shares equipment with others, lately, the Sami activists demonstrating against the proposed Copper mine in Repparfjord.

Also in **Southern Sami** areas, cultural practices cultivated by SSS, as intangible heritage, are also traditional skills that can become newsources of income. As one interviewee here reported 'Besides being lived in step with the reindeer our lives always have been stamped by Sámi handicrafts. The inspiration for our design come from moments in our lives – it can be the first reindeer calf born in spring, or the atmosphere around the campfire a summers' night. The primordial power is transferred from tradition to exciting new design of clothes and jewelry produced of what nature gives' (anonymous interview in Ween & Riseth 2017:12). Another operator asserted 'a reindeer herder that always has had cooking as my big passion' and that he has developed cooking and hospitality to become a stable secondary source of income' and 'Instead of selling one kilo reindeer meat for a wholesale price I develop it into four portions of delicious food creating added-value.' (Ween & Riseth 2017:12). In Southern Sami areas, the firm *Vaegkie*, a tourism and information project, have built a reindeer corral and facilities for accommodation, cultural performance, and a nature information path, and more is underway (Brennli 2014 in Ween & Riseth 2017:12). All activities are motivated by an ambition to pass Sami culture on to others.

Similar connections are found in Lule Sami areas. In the words of Lars Magne Andreassen; 'at **Arran** people, want to further activities, based on Sami principles and understanding, people want a place where language and history can be visible'. Returned objects make it possible to have a fuller understanding of the variety of material culture, both in terms of the range of traditionally produced objects, but also in terms of variety, within for example costumes (gápte in Lule Sami) (Aira 2019). Institution also wants to make use of returned cultural heritage objects to help people make new livings. Currently there are two local firms that produce duodji, seeking to innovate for small-scale commercial production, encouraging people to make duodji an occupation. There are efforts in institutions related to Arran that have duodji courses, teach techniques, focusing on youth, but also specifically on men (Andreassen pers. com). Similarly, there are efforts to help people establish new livelihoods, develop Sami tourism.<sup>18</sup>

**Both individual and societal well-being are associated with political entrepreneurship.** In Northern Sami areas, on recent highly successful political initiative was instigated

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<sup>17</sup> [Sanking.stedsnavn.spraak.og.fortellinger\(arran.no\)](http://Sanking.stedsnavn.spraak.og.fortellinger(arran.no))

<sup>18</sup> [Reiseliv\(arran.no\)](http://Reiseliv(arran.no))

by the North Norwegian Art Museum (NNAM) in collaboration with **RDM/SVD**. The collaboration produced an art performance called '*There is NO*'. This was designed to draw attention to the fact that there are no Sami art gallery in Norway. Jeremie McGowan, then director of NNAM and RDM director Anne May Olli, '*There is NO*' emptied the entire NNAM building, to fill it entirely with Sami art from SVD, literally renaming the institution *Sámi Dáiddamusea* (literally, Sami art museum).<sup>19</sup> The performance received vast attention and was visited by large audience groups. Subsequently, NNAM and SVD won the award 'Museum of the Year' by the Norwegian Museum Association, as well as several other prizes. The attention arguably contributed to SVDs visibility, to such an extent that the museum now for the first time in 15 years of continuous efforts have moved up on the list of museums buildings to be prioritized funding on the coming National Budgets.

**SSS history** describes a **long-term heritage activism**, originating with the leadership of Sverre Fjellheim, who pioneered a peoples' movement, making use of the amended Cultural Heritage Act 1978. At this point there were little public awareness of Sami cultural heritage. Entrepreneurs and large-scale developments also continuously threatened southern Sami lands (and heritage). By training locals as registrars, to identify Sámi heritage sites Fjellheim enabled previously invisible Sámi landscape to re-emerge. This work was obviously, of importance for local feelings of identity and belonging, but also a source of emancipation, as a **new form of self-determination, as well as a recognition of local expertise**. Fjellheim has argued; 'I have thought that Sámi cultural conservation work can and should be a process where registration, documentation, research, dissemination, administration and protection, cultural self-activity and identity-creating activities are closely linked, and that this can work in interaction between professional institutions and local communities' (...)(Fjellheim 1991: 56, Haga 2004: 14 in Grenersen 2020).

The cultural heritage site registration also represents historical documentation material that can be important in purely concrete, formal rights issues. The political craft behind the establishment of these centers could have been a textbook in how ethno-politics and ordinary realpolitik (Gælok 1992 in Grenersen). As Fjellheim argued, 'previously in legal cases involving land development and land use, the Sámi have always had the burden of proof. In such a context, the cultural heritage registrations can of course prove to be important, even crucial as documentation' (Fjellheim 1991: 57). With time, a Southern Sámi presence would become documented much further south in Norway than previously had been recognized. This ongoing heritage work directly contributed to win a highly significant Supreme Court Selbu case (2001) against farming interests (Ween 2005), and recently in the aforementioned Supreme Court Fosen case.

**Political challenges vary from one Sami area to the next.** As the other Sami institutions in this report, Arran hosts meetings with the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission, enabling their constituency to tell their stories to the working Commission. Arran has arranged a number of activities directed at improving conditions for Sami locally. For example, the institution has taken the initiative to teach Sami cultural awareness to public employees working for institutions that offer services interfacing with Sami lives, such institutions could be social services, municipal and county administrations, or nature management institutions. The institution has trained more than 1000 public employees (pers.com. Lars Magne Andreassen).

At Arran, reconciliatory efforts have emphasised the close connections between colonization, assimilation, and the existence of shame. Arran director, Lars Magne Andreassen, has on several occasions spoken about the shame of being Sami, growing up in this part of the country. Such efforts have been focused the Sami guides, celebrated for their efforts to aid refugees that during WW2 escaped across the Swedish border. On an off, in the last few decades, these have been accused of profiteering, accusations that were very hurtful to already traumatized peoples. Arran has made effort to rehabilitate these guides, by investigating their histories. These efforts were also successful, the war time efforts of these guides were publically recognized in 2019 when the Minister of Defense unveiled a memorial in Musken in their honour.

Other efforts in recent years have been made to address the consequences of a number of cases of sexual abuse that have taken place within in an area with a majority of Sami belonging to a Pietistic Christian Congregation. Andreassen has been a central actor in the work to address this trauma, both on an individual and on a community level. Speaking of the effect of such violations on an already traumatized population,

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<sup>19</sup> [Sámi Dáiddamusea | Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum \(sdmx.no\)](https://www.sdmx.no/)

Andreassen has said; for many, there was for a long time, and might still be a sense of shame associated with being Sami. Sexual abuse in these Christian communities become so difficult to deal with,' Sami who are survivors of sexual abuse, do not ask for help'. In these situations, trust is of vital importance. Arran has been at the core of ongoing work to rebuild trust, to enable the Sami community to have faith and trust in each other, and in our culture. To rebuild dignity.<sup>20</sup> Arran also successfully secured funding for a position dedicated to the building of trust, both within the community, and between community and public services, police and social services, called *Jasska*, or 'safe'.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.3.1 Outcome

Sami ALM institutions are used on a regular basis, for a number of purposes by their local constituencies. 'Our culture centre is significant for us as it mirrors our background, our culture, what it means to be part of society, our history is visible and accessible' (Sissel Ann Mikkelsen, pers.com.). 'To open archives and cultural historical collections makes me feel whole' (Karen Elle Gaup, pers.com). 'Being close to culture, and to cultural historical objects are emotionally meaningful' (Marit Myrvoll pers.com). 'This **emotional effect**, is both related to objects from our region, but also particularly, I am extremely touched by the look and feel of an object that has belonged to my great grandfather' (Karen Elle Gaup, pers.com). At the same time, objects of the past are also of the present, this feeling of that culture is both of the past and in the now, provides a strong sense of well-being' (Lars Magne Andreassen, pers.com).

Sami ALM institutions are used in new ways. 'Historically speaking, museums were a place for the higher classes, those with social and cultural capital. But, our museum institutions have changed. They have **become a meeting place, they do not simply speak to people with a particular level of education, but rather to a broad range of different groups of people**. Not all people might want to discuss history, but maybe they will participate in a duodji activity, or a discussion about tourism' (Birgitta Fossum, pers.com). The sign of a living institution is for me that light is on from early morning till late at night (Sissel Ann Mikkelsen, pers.com.)

The case of Saemien Sijte and Arran, as being minority groups, places where Sami speakers are in a clear minority, speak to well-being of speaking one's own language. Also, of the importance of a **shared meeting place, to cultivate a strong shared identity, to develop leaders and provide these with time and capacity for strategic thinking**, to develop political strategies, build insights into capabilities.

Their collections and archives are also digitally popular, and regularly engaged. The ability to participate and be able to transform past descriptions of Sami histories, is transformative, both as a contrast to past invisibility in national histories, but also in terms of the ability to historically re-describe past acts of violence and discrimination (Fjellheim 2019, Pedersen 2019), and particularly when such new descriptions can **contribute to local rights situations** (Ween 2005).

Also **digitization enhances feelings of well-being**, by **creating a space for discussions of history and heritage**. Online museum catalogues as such are of a useful, but basic format. Often social media sites such as Facebook or are more widely used, also for commenting on such as photographs or crafts, tangible heritage (see also Wold & Ween 2019, Ween & Wachowich 2019). The **significance and the potential of social media platforms to engage heritage** in various ways is indicated not just by the many users of such sites, but also by the **cross-references between Digitaltmuseum.no, and Facebook sites such as 'Old photos' from different Sami areas**.

Well-being is associated with **competence and skill, in crafts and language**. The significance of language for identity was recently illustrated in this statement made by Ruth Bech to the Truth and Reconciliation commission: 'My grandparents on my father's side had to let go of their family name in order to buy a piece of land. Our family name used to be a beautiful Sami name. Today we have a different name, a Norwegian one. My grandmother and her siblings, proud people, became tired of being looked down upon. In the end, they took off their Sami clothing and resigned to becoming Norwegian. You could say that the state took our

<sup>20</sup> [Den store skammen – Museumsnytt](#)

<sup>21</sup> ["Tillitsbygging" \(arran.no\)](#)

language, so much of our identity was associated with that. But they also took our names, and caused division amongst our people.<sup>22</sup>

At the Sami ALMs, the involvement of children of all ages, in nature and cultural practices, and in language work **contributes to the sense of a community, and builds a healthy self-esteem**. A healthy self-esteem, is connected with **a grounded sense of identity, individual well-being and societal support**. From Southern Sami areas, decades of practice of sending children to Southern Sami run boarding schools, rather than to local schools where they are in minority, and possibly with limited opportunity to speak their own language, emphasizes the local communities' understanding of such connections (Ween 2005). 'Language is a very prominent part of a cultural practice, as is obviously the case with duodji, but also in other nature practices. There are nuances of knowledge that only those who speak the language understand. These are subtle, and are learned through growing up with language, when this take place within a context, in ways that are accumulative and expanded regularly with repeated participation of customs and traditions' (Karen Elle Gaup, pers.com).

The case of RDM, situated in locations such as Karasjok and Kautokeino, in the Sami core areas, has enabled other significant political contributions, such as **asserting the close connections experienced between nature and culture, and the necessity of maintaining ties to nature, in order to protect intangible heritage, language and identity** (see also Ween 2017).

Institutions built upon recognition of other kinds of expertise, 'our constituency are engaged on the basis of equality, local expertise as valuable, or even more valuable than museum expertise, or archaeology. To be recognised as an expert, provides well-being in all kinds of ways' (Birgitta Fossum, pers.com).

These institutions also contribute to well-being by **contributing to restitution of past wrongs**. There is well-being involved in a community's awareness of that institutions and leaders are capable of managing difficult leadership jobs. The case of Arran speaks to that **a strong cultural institution can help renegotiating traumatic histories**. Provide a space, outside of the public eye, where a community speak about trauma, without shame, where the past can be renegotiated, retold from peoples own experience. In the case of Arran, as described, this has involved readdressing stories where elders in hindsight, have been accused of being traitors during WW2. Also at Arran, in the case of the revelations of sexual abuse in local Sami religious communities (Pers.com. Lars Magne Andreassen, pers.com Sissel Ann Mikkelsen).

Particular symbolic moments of restitution are mentioned by numerous people as **nourishing and healing**. One such moment was the abovementioned recent Supreme Court judgement (last in the Fosen case, 2021), against the Ministry of Oil and Energy and the Windfarm, represented an overwhelming victory for Southern Sámi culture and livelihoods.

Bååstede, to some, is another such salient moment. For all institutions, the return of Sami drums and other religious paraphernalia has been reported to involve **high levels of emotions** (Ween 2022). Many leaders have emphasised how much they are looking forward to involving the community in the drums when they return. For more than one museum, moments like the Sámi return also provided new opportunities. The return arguably brought new urgency to the need for a new museum building. For example the SSS has sought funding to expand their museum since the 1980s. Towards the end of the 6-year repatriation initiative ending in 2019, and possibly aided by requirements of new climate controlled storage and exhibition facilities for the repatriated artefacts, SSS in 2018, succeeded in securing funds. The new building is due to open mid-2022. The director of **SSS**, Birgitta Fossum have stated, 'that to have the artefacts returned, to have all our collections properly taken care of that is meaningful for so many. It provides a **feeling of pride that can strengthen Southern Sámi identity**.'<sup>23</sup>

The new building will also likely provide aesthetic satisfaction, but also the satisfaction of having new space from within which, new conversations and meetings can take place, and where 'formerly colonised objects can come to rest' (Karen Elle Gaup, pers.com).

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<sup>22</sup> [Sterke historier fra samer strømmer inn til sannhetskommisjon – Dagsavisen](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Saemien Sijte får nytt bygg etter over 30 år: – Nesten så man ikke tror det – NRK Sápmi - Sámske nyheter, kultur og underholdning.](#)



In terms of Bååstede, holding the objects in our hands, physically, and holding them in our new storage facilities will **be emotionally significant**. To have cultural objects available, not in another museum in the capital, but where you live, is so satisfying. 'For so long I have dreamt about making a room for the duojarat (artisans) in the exhibitions, so that they can be close to, learn from and work with objects from their own pasts', 'making patterns from these cultural historical objects is so valuable, because so much is lost' (Marit Myrvoll, pers. com, see also M. Myrvoll 2017). The Sami museologist Liisa-Ravna Finbog (2021) writes about these objects as **archives of very complex knowledge, involving genealogies, legal understanding, knowledge of animals and materials, understandings of care and morale**, and that the practical art of making these objects can never be seen as separate from these.

The return **entails a recognition of equality and respect between Norwegian and Sami culture**, and is one contribution when it comes to the Sami right to make decisions with regards to their own culture. This, the well-being involved with having control of one's own culture, have been a frustration with observed conditions in the repatriation process; 'As the Kautokeino museum does not yet have proper storage and exhibition facilities, according to the standards set in the repatriation process, highly valued objects have not yet returned. With objects of such symbolic significance, 'to not yet be able to have the objects come home', he says, thereby yet again confirming their importance; 'it feels as a wound is reopened, for local audiences' (Johan Aslak Hætta, pers.com).

Others again have emphasized that 'there is a dignity to it all, **it feels as if we are acknowledged as equal partners**, able to accept the responsibility for holding and managing our own artefacts' (Lars Magne Andreassen, pers.com). '**Our culture is not something others should enrich themselves from, it should not be an exotic spice in a nationalist context, it should be placed in our context**. This in itself is reconciliatory; the process has been transparent, thorough, based upon principles. The day we took over ownership of our own objects was very important' (pers.com. Lars Magne Andreassen). To **achieve self-determination over one's own culture provides a sense of dignity that contributes to a sense of reconciliation** (Aira 2019). Other institutions expressed more ambivalence with regard to the repatriation project. Harlin and Olli, for example speaks of the necessity of Sami museums setting the conditions for the repatriation, and for the repatriation to be based upon ongoing dialogue (2014). Speaking to Bååstede as an act of reconciliation, there are therefore also hesitation, as one former museum leader answered: 'it is not an act of reconciliation if it is not called an act of reconciliation from the beginning. But it is very nice to get these objects back, everyone feels that' (Marit Myrvoll, Pers.com.).

## 3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

### ALM institution activities

- Safe space, not being a minority
- Speaking ones' own language
- Secure identity, self-esteem, pride in local culture
- Space for cultural practices, sharing of skills of traditional and cultural value
- Space for speaking about past trauma
- Training and participation in cultural practices
- Ability to investigate historical, geographical and cultural information, critical reflection
- Economic opportunities
- Awareness of political capabilities

In sum, Sami ALM institutions represent a safe space, where a minority can relax, be comfortable with speaking their own language, and with practicing their own culture, regardless of level of expertise. In these institutions, histories that are not valued or that have been made visible by majority society, can be taken care of, protected, articulated, and further developed. For indigenous peoples who have suffered long-term assimilation practices, discrimination and structural violence, to have a place where one can relearn skills that previous generations were forced to give up is, as the local use of these institutions emphasise, of immense value. Next to the emancipation brought by activities involving protection and cultivation of all kinds of cultural heritage, emancipation can also be a product of shared awareness of historical loss. As these institutions demonstrate, restitution can become a possibility by the engagement of a wide range of activities, ranging from concrete demands of majority society institutions, but also on new focus on skill, on pride, new learning opportunities, also involving new rights developments and new economic opportunities.

### Mechanisms involved:

- Open space, availability.
- Long-term persistent presence, generational efforts.
- Room for local participation, local constituency being heard.
- Egalitarian knowledge production, recognition of alternative forms of expertise
- Broad range of tangible and intangible heritage made available for conversations.
- Multi-vocal and long-term efforts involving a number of cultural practices
- Appreciation of local initiative and success, inviting celebration of the local.
- Willingness to innovate, develop, support, provide new economic opportunities
- Willingness to engage difficult or painful subjects.
- Observing new forms of political emancipation

In sum, these institutions are empowered by a long-term presence and persistence. Their strength is communicated by their generally openness, reliability, they are long-term participants in community life, and able to communicate and cater for many aspects of local lives. The institutions represent a service to people of all ages, from kindergarten to senior. These institutions also clearly indicate an ability to listen to, and take their constituency seriously and, as is important to become political force. As described in section 1.2, it is my opinion that this long term persistence, the many forms of expertise that each institution houses, in people, in positions, networks, the many kinds of heritage engaged, in other words, the multifaceted skills and practices they represent, altogether creates a flexibility that contributes to their resilience and continued importance.

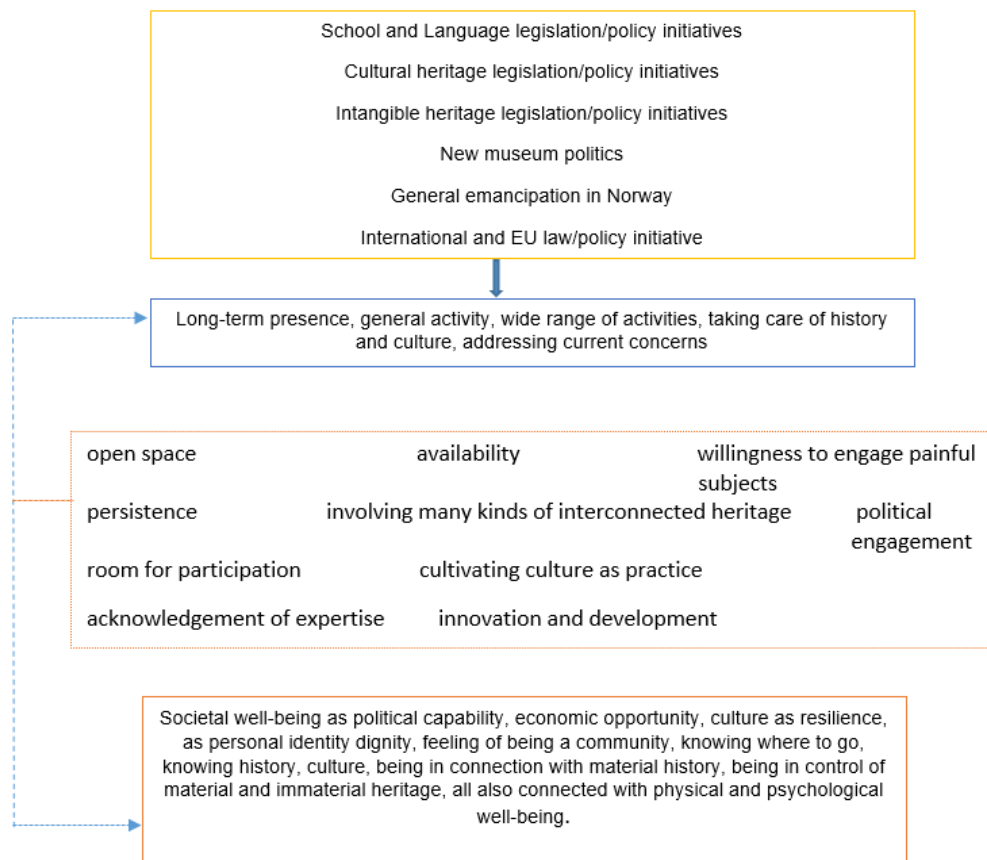
### Societal wellbeing:

- Culturally appropriate education, opportunity to learn cultural skills and language.
- Making visible previously invisible histories and landscapes.
- Engagement with rights discourses, and experiences of emancipation based upon the existence of Sami rights.
- Improved economies
- A space to engage in dialogue also with non-Sámi
- Particular gestures of restitution and reconciliation, forms of ‘home-coming’
- producing feeling of being a society, social cohesion, identity.
- Individual well-being:

In sum, through their long-term presence, these institutions represent a ‘shared space’, the feeling of being a community, of having a place that embraces many kinds of everyday life activities, apart from majority society. Here, there is not only opportunity to come together to do activities that are discriminated by majority society, to relearn past skills, in culturally appropriate ways. Well-being here is awareness of political capability, economic opportunity. It is having recognition of expertise, being connected with material history, being in control of both material and immaterial heritage. Such shared platforms also offer a very different opportunity for dialogue with majority society, making demands, coming together in a position of strength, built on shared experience, and knowledge. Altogether, such initiatives can offer experiences of both social and individual well-being.

The following figure sum-ups the relations between inputs, outputs and outcomes of the analysed museums.

**Figure 3.1. Case theory of change**



Source: the author

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# ANNEX

## Interviews:

Harrieth Aira, former museum leader, Arran.

Lars Magne Andreassen, director of Arran, Lule Sami Centre.

Johan Aslak Hætta, museum leader, GG

Birgitta Fossum, director of Saemien Sijte

Karen Elle Gaup, senior conservator Norwegian Folk Museum, Oslo, former director of RDM

Anne May Olli, director of Riddoduottarmuseat

Sissel A. Mikkelsen, museum leader, Arran museum,

Marit Myrvoll, former museum leader, Vardobaiki, former leader of Sami Museum Association, expert on heritage and Sami health, ICOMOS expert.

This study would not have been possible without long-term participation with Sami ALM institutions. Such long-term participation has involved collaborative exhibition projects (NewArctic, a travelling exhibition), long-term repatriation initiatives (Bååstede), long term interest in both Sami tangible and intangible culture, and in Sami World heritage.

The quantitative information offered is cited from SAMINOR 1 and 2, a population-based study of health and living conditions in regions with Sami and non-Sami populations, at the Centre for Sami Health Research, UIT.



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