

From the 13th century to the early 19th century – the era of the *Fellesdistrikt* (shared district)

- Joint administrative usufruct area of Sweden, Norway, and Russia
 - In the 13th century: a joint taxation area between Norway and Novgorod
 - In the 14th century: Finnish-speaking *birkarl* traders operated (Kola Peninsula – Arctic Ocean coast – Kandalaksha – Sodankylä – Kilpisjärvi – Lyngen)
 - Defined in official documents in 1613
 - Open borders until the year 1751
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- In 1329, the first written record of the Kemi parish appears, although the exact size of the parish is unknown. It belonged to the Diocese of Turku, meaning it was part of Finland, whereas Tornio belonged to Uppsala, i.e., Sweden. Kemi Lapland was located to the north and east of the parish. (*G.A. Andersson* writes that the founding date of the Kemi parish was **1250**, and the chapel of Alatornio was founded in 1340.) The second parish of Upper Ostrobothnia was Salo (present-day *Saloinen*, now part of the Raasepori parish).
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- **1340** – A letter from **King Magnus Eriksson**: “Tax exemption is promised to those who settle as pioneers in the remote frontier areas of the kingdom known as *Laplands*.”
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- **1384** – **Queen Margaret's** royal decree concerning a **mission to Lapland**
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- **1427** – On **Claudius Clavus' map**, the area is labeled *wildlappeladi* = “land of the wild Lapps”
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- By the **late 15th century**, **Kemi Lapland** begins to take shape as an **administrative entity**
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- 1532 – Gustav Vasa declared: “All uninhabited forest lands, both in Finland and in Sweden, belong to God, the King, and the Crown.” With great enthusiasm, the king began to settle areas still under Sámi control at the time, such as in Northern Savo, around Lake Oulujärvi, and beyond Northern Häme.
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- 1539 – Olaus Magnus published the Carta Marina. He had studied the Sámi and traveled through the Tornio River Valley, reaching as far as Pello. The Carta Marina served as a preliminary work for his later book *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (*The History of the Northern Peoples*, 1555).
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- By the 1550s, Sámi regions were roughly located within the area of present-day Lapland.
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- 1574 – John III demanded a Sámi-speaking priest for Kemi Lapland.
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- 1581 – Villagers from Peltojärvi complained about Matareni peasants fishing and hunting beavers on their lands.
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- In the 1600s, the Crown strengthened territorial control:
 - Judicial system
 - Intensified taxation
 - Provincial (county) system
 - More precise population records
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- 17th-century invention: The Service Obligation was a regulation in force in Sweden and Finland. According to it, people who did not pay taxes were required to be in the service of someone who did. Failure to comply with the obligation could result in a vagrancy conviction. The severity of this rule varied over time. The service obligation was abolished in Finland in 1883 when a new vagrancy law was enacted. It had an

impact in Lapland during the 18th and 19th centuries, leading people to migrate for work to Norway, Russia, Sweden, and across Northern Ostrobothnia, with documented cases of such relocations.

- 1602 – Duke Charles issued a letter of protection to residents “especially in the villages of Kittilä, Sodankylä, Peltojärvi, Kitkajärvi, and Maanselkä” against the Birkarls and Finns.
- 1604 – Charles sent the Sámi of Tornio their own measures and weights to protect them from being cheated by bailiffs and the Birkarls.

1624 – Olof Tresk’s map: He had been assigned the task of surveying the borders between Sweden, Norway, and Russia.

- Kittilä
- Peltojärvi
- Inari
- Sompio
- Sodankylä
- Keminkylä
- Kuolajärvi
- Kitkajärvi
- Maanselkä

— These villages, **except Keminkylä**, are listed in the **1553 tax records**. Keminkylä appears in records in the **1560s**.

1630–1643 – Johan Olai Pictorius as parish priest of Kemi Lapland.

Upon taking office, Pictorius “diligently began to undertake journeys into Lapland, the purpose of which was apparently both the spiritual care of the Sámi—who he saw as severely neglected—and the collection of tithes due to the parish priest” (Itkonen 1945).

At the suggestion of Bishop Isaacus Rothovius of Turku, the Privy Council transferred Kemi Lapland from under the authority of the pastor of Tornio to the parish of Kemi. In a letter dated March 16, 1633, the Privy Council described Pictorius as an energetic and capable man who tirelessly conducted inspection tours in Kemi Lapland. For these journeys, he was granted 12 barrels of grain annually.

By royal letter dated December 19, 1633, Queen Christina’s regency council officially appointed him inspector (visitor). Pictorius continued these often arduous inspection tours throughout the late 1630s with great diligence.

He fought fiercely against paganism, destroyed Sámi shaman drums and baptized Sámi children. However, his harsh and zealous manner of conduct also caused considerable resistance and led to complaints.

To investigate these grievances, Bishop Rothovius organized a bishop’s visitation in Lapland, and Pictorius was summoned to justify his actions before the clergy estate at the clerical Estate of the Realm of Nyköping in 1640.

In a letter dated March 30, 1640, the regency council referred the matter to the Cathedral Chapter of Turku, which—after hearing Pictorius’ explanation—issued a decision that could be considered a compromise.

The chapter “strictly advised Reverend Johannes to interact (gently) with the Sámi and to be careful not to drive them away from the land, but rather to treat them amicably; to which he willingly agreed, and it was permitted to him.”

The lasting impact of Pictorius as a preacher (particularly of repentance) and spiritual guide is reflected in surviving oral tradition, which tells that he inspired a powerful spiritual awakening among the people of Inari in repentance and forgiveness. Elsewhere in Lapland, it is said that “since the time of the blessed Pictorius, the people have renounced all the devil’s devices which they had inherited from their pagan forefathers, long deemed good, but now hated and rejected as the teachings of the devil.”

- In 1638, Governor Melchior Werenstedt issued a warning to Finnish peasants in Kemijärvi about harassing the Sámi. Kemijärvi was a summer fishing area for the Sámi from Kuolajärvi, Kitka, Maanselkä, Keminkylä, Sompio, and Sodankylä.
 - In 1642, Peltojärvi was transferred from Kemi Lapland to Tornio Lapland.
 - In the early 1640s, the Sámi of Kemi Lapland complained to Governor Frans Crusebjörn about Finnish peasants from Oulu and Savo treating them poorly on their own tax lands.
 - In 1648, the Pielpajärvi Church was built in Inari, and Esaías Mansueti Fellman was appointed as its priest. The current church on the site dates from 1760.
 - In the same year, the first church in Kemijärvi was reportedly built when Jakob Lapodius from Lapua was sent to Kemijärvi parish as a chaplain. However, this church was demolished in the 1690s and replaced with a larger one.
- In 1650, Professor Mikael Wexionius of the Royal Academy of Turku described the Kemi Sámi in his work *Epitome descriptionis Sueciae, Gothiae, Fenningiae et subsectorum provinciarum*.
- On June 21, 1673, King Charles XI issued a decree ordering the separation of Inari, Sompio, Kuolajärvi, Keminkylä, Kitka, Maanselkä, Sodankylä, and Kittilä from the main Kemi parish. These areas were to form a separate parish, and Gabriel Johannis Tuderus, who had been serving as assistant to the parish priest (his father) in the newly independent parish area, was appointed as its pastor.
- In 1673, by his father's request, Johannes Johannis Tuderus became pastor of Kemi. He was ordained in the Diocese of Turku in 1655 as assistant to the then-pastor of Kemi (his father). In this role, he conducted several inspection visits to Inari, the last in 1664. He likely became curate of Kemi around 1658 and succeeded his father as pastor in 1673. As dean of the Kemi deanery, he carried out deanery inspections in Kuusamo in 1685, and in Kittilä, Kuolajärvi, Sodankylä, and Sompio in 1686.
- In 1672, before Schefferus, a description of the Tornio and Kemi Lappmarks was written by Johannes Jonae Tornaëus, the vicar of Tornio. It was later published in an abridged version in 1772 under the title *Beskifning öfver Torneå och Kemi Lappmarker* ("Description of the Tornio and Kemi Lappmarks"), and the report *Berättelse om Lapmarckerna och deras tillstånd* ("Report on Lapland and Its Condition") appeared in **K.B. Wiklund's** work *Svenska landsmålen XVII, 3:1900*.
- **In 1673, *Lapponia* by Johannes Schefferus** was published. Schefferus (1621–1679) was commissioned by Sweden's Chancellor of the Realm, Magnus de la Gardie, to produce a report on the Sámi people for a continental European audience.
- In 1673, the first settlement decree, known as the *Kalmar Decree*, was issued. However, some settlement had already taken place near and slightly within the boundary between Lapland and the southern regions. The actual impact of the decree was limited. It granted 15 years of tax exemption and exempted settlers in Lapland from military conscription. A few years after the decree, land surveyor Jonas Gedda defined the boundary of the Kemi parish against the Sámi villages. The settlement decree established how far Finnish settlement could extend within the Kemi parish. The Sámi villages north of this boundary remained untouched, and the line became known as the border between settler settlements and Sámi settlements (Lapin ja Lannan raja).
- **In 1687**, a joint assembly (*yhteiskäräjät*) of the Sámi villages was held in **Sompio**. The Sámi from **Maanselkä** and **Kitka** complained that Finns had destroyed their means of livelihood. The people of the Sámi villages gave their own testimony regarding the village boundaries, as they considered **Gedda's border** to be incorrect.

- In 1689, the old church of Sodankylä was built.

- In 1695, the **second settlement decree** (*asutusplakaatti*) and a **Lapland tax reform** were enacted. The **Lapland tax** (*lapinvero*) was paid for reindeer grazing, fishing, and hunting. The regulations that came into force at this time remained fundamentally the same until 1928. Additionally, to the terms of the first decree were added a **ban on slash-and-burn agriculture** and a **requirement to clear fields and meadows**. The impact on migration to Lapland remained limited.

- 1696–1697 THE GREAT FAMINE YEARS – About 25% of the Finnish population died, as cold weather destroyed the harvests.

- For example, in Keminkylä, out of 14 taxable households, 9 were marked as dead, beggars, or having emigrated in the 1699 tax register.

- In the same list, in Sompio, 4 out of 25 taxable households had moved to Norway. The effects were still significant even a few years later.

- 1700–1721 THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR – The Greater Wrath (*Isoviha*) was the period of Russian occupation of Finland during the Great Northern War (1713–1721), which ended with the Treaty of Nystad. Contemporary sources referred to it as the period of Russian dominance.

- Numerous hostile Russian stories (*vihavenäläistarinoita*) are known in the Kemin Lapland area, including tales of hiding places and caches spread throughout the land.

- 1710 – The earliest known record of reindeer ear-markings from Sompio.

- 1737 – Johan Bartholdi Ervasti wrote *Descriptio Lapponiae Kiemiensis* (*Description of Kemi Lapland*).

- 1739 palkollissääntö (*legostadgan in Swedish*) – Idleness was criminalized, and helping someone unemployed was also forbidden.

- 1747 – A regulation was issued to replace Sámi siidas with parishes, which by the early 1800s caused clear breaks in traditional siida boundaries.

- 1747 – Sodankylä and Inari separated from the parent parish of Kuusamo.

- **1750 – In Kemi Lapland, there were:**

- 9 siidas

- approximately 3,500 reindeer

- 295 households

- about 200 tax-paying Lapps.

- **1751 – The Treaty of Strömstad** between Sweden and Norway:

The Sámi people on the Finnish side were guaranteed free fishing rights on the Norwegian coast. In addition, trading, transferring reindeer, and hunting were permitted.

- Known as the **Lappekodisillen**, also referred to as "*Første Codicil og Tillæg Til Grendse-Tractaten imellem Kongerigerne Norge og Sverrig Lapperne betræffende*" or "*The Sámi Magna Carta*" – this was the first formal recognition of Sámi rights as citizens.

- **1754 – Henric Wegelius' writings:**

- "*Animadversiones nonnullae de oeconomia et moribus incolarum Lapponiae Kimiensis*" and
- "*Om möjligheten och nyttan af beqvämare båt fart i Kimi elf*"

During the years **1730–1750**, **Henric Wegelius**, a priest in Sodankylä, observed that the Sámi were prosperous but were driven into poverty by settlers. He also opposed the use of the Sámi language in church services.

In the same year, an epidemic, known as the "*Sudden Death*," devastated **reindeer herds**.

- **1760** – A proposal to tax new homesteads in Lapland was made, based on the 1749 settlement regulation, with the goal of clarifying the taxation system.

- The Sámi farms were not surveyed for tax assessments (*veromanttaalit*).

- The Lapinkylä (Sámi village) division is also considered to have been discontinued in the same year.

- **1763 – Tax records from Kemi Lapland:**

Those paying the **Lapland tax** were, with a few exceptions, **marked as settlers** rather than as indigenous Sámi.

- **1776 – Kuolajärvi** was transferred from the **Kuusamo mother parish** to the **Kemijärvi parish**.

- **1780s** – An outbreak of **anthrax** decimated **reindeer herds**. The same decade also saw **four consecutive years of crop failure** and a **smallpox epidemic**.

- **1796** – The **Norwegian government supported the settlement of Finns in Finnmark (Ruija)**.

- By **1865**, **Finns were increasingly seen as a burden**.
- This gave rise to the **Kven subculture**.
- Many people from the **Kemi Lapland region** migrated to the **coasts of Finnmark**. In population records, some were marked as **Kvens**, some as **Finns**, and others as **Lapps (Sámi)**—the classification seems to have depended on the **family's home language**.

- **Late 1700s – Fishing rights in Kemijärvi were denied to the Sámi.**

- **19th century:**

The importance of reindeer herding grew among the Sámi as hunting and fishing opportunities diminished.

- **Example 1: Beavers** disappeared from Finland in the early 1800s. The species was saved by protecting the remaining population in Norway in 1845, and it was reintroduced to Finland in the 1930s.

- **Example 2: Forest reindeer** vanished from Finland by the end of the 1800s. The nearest population was in White Karelia (Vienan Karjala), from where it began spreading back to Kainuu in the 1940s–50s. Later, forest reindeer were also reintroduced to Suomenselkä.

- Additionally, the **early 1800s** saw seven consecutive years of crop failure, partly due to the **Finnish War**, which are also known as the "Great Catastrophe Years".

- In the **early 1800s**, scientific consensus holds that the Kemi Sámi assimilated into southern settler families.

In many memoirs, for example, the **Suikki family**, originally from northern Sweden, was still regarded in the **1890s** as descendants of the "last pure" Sámi in Sodankylä.

- In 19th-century documents, the term "Lapp" (lappalainen) becomes more specific, meaning a Sámi person / reindeer nomad, and not anyone practicing the same livelihoods (like hunting or fishing).

- 1804 – Vagrancy Act (*irtolaisasetus*)

- 1805 – Servant Act (*palkollisasetus*)

- 1800–1806 – Heavy migration to Finnmark (Ruija)

- **1808–1809 – The Finnish War**

The **Truce of Olkijoki** on November 19, 1808, required the Swedish-Finnish army to withdraw behind the Kemijoki River.

The war ended with the **Treaty of Fredrikshamn** on September 17, 1809: the historic Västerbotten County was divided in two when the eastern side of the Tornio-Muonio River was ceded to Russia as part of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

From that point on, **Finnish Lapland** belonged to **Oulu Province** (1809–1938), until the establishment of

Lapland Province in 1938.

Petsamo belonged to Finland from October 14, 1920, to September 19, 1944.

- **Annexed areas:** Tornio, Alatornio, Karunki, Ylitornio, Turtola, Muonionniska, Kolari, Enontekiö, Kittilä, Sodankylä, Inari, Utsjoki

(total population approx. **10,000**, of whom **around 900 were Sámi**)

- Starting in 1809, Finns needed a passport to travel on the Russian side, e.g., in Kola.

- The Finland–Russia border negotiations took a long time. Final markings were completed in 1850, and the borderline was cleared in the terrain in the years 1861, 1870, and 1874.

- Several issues arose during the demarcation. For example, in **1829**, the chairmen of the border delegations felt there **was** no need to mark the border north of Vaatimenoiva in Kuusamo, as only around 80 Russian Sámi and a few Finnish farmers lived in the area.

However, the Senate had ordered that the border should be drawn based on old usage areas and oral tradition.

- In the 1820s, there was **another anthrax epidemic** among reindeer.

- 1824–1828: The inhabitants of Kuolajärvi built their own chapel and petitioned for an independent parish due to the long distances to existing churches.
- 1828 and 1832: **The Norwegian Crown** issued decrees to repatriate "undesirable elements" back to their home countries. This mainly affected the poor, criminals, and those without passports or clerical certificates.
- 1830–1850s: Several years of crop failure occurred.
- In the 1830s, the presence of migrants from Finland and Sweden became a topic of public debate in Finnmark (Ruija).
 - 1832–33 and 1839 saw another significant wave of migration to Finnmark.
 - Some sources mention a cholera epidemic in 1835 in central Lapland municipalities, but this is highly questionable, as its spread has not been confirmed.
- 1831: The reindeer population north of the Kemijoki River was nearly wiped out.
- 1843: Sweden and Norway implemented a border closure for reindeer herding.
- 1847: Reindeer owned by Norwegian Sámi caused problems in Finnish Lapland.
- 1851–1921 – Finnefondet: A Norwegian government fund *"to teach the Sámi the Norwegian language"*.
 - Part of Norwegian assimilation policy aimed at Norwegianizing the Sámi and Kven peoples.
- 1852: Russia closed the border between Finland and Norway, due to disputes following the 1826 dissolution of the Näätämö joint-use area.
 - Norway reinforced the closure in 1854.
 - Sámi reindeer herder families from Enontekiö (e.g., Jomppanen, Kitti, Aikio, Länsman) moved to Inari in search of new pastures.
 - The border closure was poorly enforced; Swedish Sámi were charged a 5-penny reindeer tax for grazing in Finland.
- 1852: Only one person remained who spoke Kemi Sámi as a native language.
- 1854: The municipality of Kittilä was established.

- 1857: Kuolajärvi's chapel parish was separated from Kemijärvi (this year is also considered the founding year of the municipality).

- 1858 – Decrees:
 - The language decree changed the official language to Finnish in church and municipal meetings.
 - Census records were written in a way that obscured ethnic identity, with only a few exceptions.
- December 3, 1858: An Imperial proclamation was issued to increase settlement in Lapland.
- 1860: The Russian government issued an order allowing Norwegians, Finns, and other foreigners to settle along the Kola Peninsula coast,
 - provided they accepted Russian citizenship.
 - They were granted tax exemption under the terms for settlers.
 - By 1867, 61 Norwegians and 114 Finns had migrated.
- 1865 – Vagrancy Act and Municipal Law:
 - Section 82: Sámi were given the right not to establish municipal governance.
 - Poor relief was transferred from parishes to municipalities. The 1852 Poor Relief Act required work in return for aid.
 - In 1865, Finnish-speaking families in northern Sweden were recorded without surnames in church books to obscure their ethnic origins (source: *Suometar*, David Skogman).
- 1866: The National School Act was passed.
- 1867–1868 – THE GREAT FAMINE YEARS: approx. 150,000 deaths; cold weather destroyed the crops.
- 1868 – Settlement Act / Plan for settling the Murman Coast (modern-day Murmansk region):
 - Norwegians were granted the same trade rights as the Pomors.
 - Six-year customs exemption for goods intended for personal use and for sale within the settlements.
 - State loans for new settlers for 6 years.
 - Permission to take timber from state forests for houses and boats.
 - Loan and purchase rights from state grain storage.
 - Hunting and fishing rights in residential areas.
 - Three years' exemption from military service, nine years' tax exemption.
 - Right to use one's own language in official matters.
 - Right to sell bread locally.
 - The same rights were guaranteed to Sámi who committed to permanent settlement.
 - Promises were not kept, and people became dissatisfied — e.g. in 1882, 70 people emigrated from Kola to America.
- 1868: Kuusamo municipality was founded.
- 1860s–1870s: Third and most active wave of migration to Ruija (Norwegian Finnmark).
 - In the early 1800s, approx. 700 Kvens; by the 1890s, around 7,000.
- 1870–1875: “New Lapps” (Sámi) came from Norway, after the older Sámi families had assimilated.
- 1870s: The start of major logging operations in Lapland, which lasted until the 1960s. Large numbers of lumberjacks migrated to Lapland for work.
- 1876: Inari municipality was established.
- 1878: Sámi were taken to be exhibited at the Paris World's Fair.
- 1881: The assassination of Tsar Alexander II changed migration patterns from Kola, and nationalist ideology began to rise in Russia. **Foreign policy hardened:** From the 1890s onward, Russian migration to the region was supported.

1888: Border closures between Finland and Sweden

- o At the same time, the Finland–Norway border was also closed. For example, in Enontekiö, reindeer numbers collapsed as the reindeer herding Sámi were forced to relocate their herds.

1888: Use of crown common and excess lands was initiated

1893: The municipality of Sodankylä was established

1898: The Senate ordered the establishment of reindeer herding cooperatives (*paliskunta*), i.e. designated reindeer herding areas

- o Reindeer ownership had begun to concentrate, and people even spoke of "reindeer capitalism"
- o According to a calculation from 1864:
 - 49% of residents in the Lapland district
 - 28% in the Kemi district
 - 23% in the Oulu district
 - and 0.5% in the Kajaani district
 owned reindeer

Late 19th-century nationalism in Norway:

- o "*Immoral Kvens and unfit Sámi*" were common stereotypes
- o Economic depression and cultural oppression were prevalent
- o In Finland, too, map names in Central Lapland began to drop endings like "*Lappi*" and "*Lapinmaa*", signaling the start of cultural erasure
- o There were approx. 14,000 settlers from Finnish areas living in Sweden, 7,000 in Norway, and about 300 in Russia

By 1900, Sámi population:

- o Finland: approx. 1,400
- o Norway: 19,677
- o Sweden: 6,983
- o Russia: 1,832

1900: Principles for state forestry were established

Early 1900s: 67 reindeer-herding Sámi moved from Sweden and Norway to Finland with their herds.

- January 17, 1901 – The Lapland Committee:

The committee's task was to produce a report on the economic conditions of the inhabitants, the state of agriculture, and the situation of livestock and reindeer husbandry in the Lapland district, as well as reindeer herding in those municipalities of the Kemi and Oulu districts where it was practiced. The committee was to issue a statement and make proposals for improving the situation based on the findings of its investigations. The committee was chaired by **Otto Savander**. It initially convened in Helsinki, but in **November 1903**, it was granted permission to meet in Oulu, as Savander had been appointed acting governor of the Oulu Province.

The committee's work concluded in **1904** when the final report was completed. The report was published in **1905** under the title *Committee Report No. 3: A Study of the Economic Conditions in Lapland*.

- **1904 – Subcommittee on the Landless Population:**

Focused on the settlement of crown forest lands and the establishment of **crown tenant farms** (*kruununtorpat*).

The settlement efforts were especially carried out in the areas of Inari – Sodankylä – Turtola – Kolari – Ylitornio.

- **1916:** The municipality of Sodankylä was divided into Sodankylä, Savukoski, and Pelkosenniemi.
- **1917:** Border closure between **Finland and Russia**.
- February 6, 1917: **General Sámi Assembly** held in Trondheim.
- January 27 – May 15, 1918: Finnish Civil War.
- **1926:** The municipality and parish of Posio were established, mainly from areas formerly belonging to Kuusamo. Smaller parts were annexed to southern Posio from Taivalkoski, to the western part from Pudasjärvi, and to the northwestern corner from the **parish of Rovaniemi**.
- November 30, 1939 – March 13, 1940: Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union, ended with the Moscow Peace Treaty.
- June 25, 1941 – September 19, 1944: Continuation War – Finland/Germany vs. Soviet Union.
- **September 15, 1944 – April 27, 1945: Lapland War – Finland vs. Germany.**
- **Spring 1945:** Construction began on the Isohaara hydroelectric power plant, completed in **1949** – this marked the end of salmon in the Kemijoki River.
- **1952:** Helmer Tegengren published "*En utdöd lappkultur i Kemi lappmark*" ("*An Extinct Sámi Culture in the Kemi Sámi Region*").

- **1962:** Interview study on the Sámi people by **Karl Nickul**, secretary of the **Nordic Sámi Council**. Interviewers were tasked with interviewing every resident of the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari, and Utsjoki, as well as the northernmost areas of Kittilä and Sodankylä, whose parents or grandparents had or have Sámi as their first language.
- **1967:** The **Lokka reservoir** floods the old Sompio villages of Korvanen, Riestola, and Mutenia. That same year, filling of the **Porttipahta reservoir** also begins.
- **1968:** **Erkki Nickul** publishes "*The Sámi of Finland in 1962: Report on the Population Study Conducted by the Nordic Sámi Council*", based on the data collected by **Karl Nickul** for his Master's thesis in statistics.
- **1970s Sámi movement:** Defined Sámi as an ethnic identity, with traditional livelihoods including reindeer herding, fishing, and hunting — a subsistence economy.
- **824/1973:** Decree on the establishment of the **Sámi Delegation**.
- **1973:** Finland establishes the **Sámi Delegation**, which is later transformed in **1996** into the **Sámi Parliament** (*Saamelaiskäräjät*).

The Sámi Delegation was the **first political body** for the Sámi in the Nordic countries.

For comparison:

- Norway's Sámi Parliament was established in **1989**
- Sweden's in **1993**
- In **Russia**, there is **no official representative body** for the Sámi; instead, several independent organizations operate.
- **253/1975:** Amendment to the **Decree on the Sámi Delegation**.
- **988/1990:** Further **amendment to the Decree** on the Sámi Delegation.

- **1534/1994:** Decree on amending the Decree on the Sámi Delegation – Upon the presentation of the Minister of Justice, the following sections of the Decree on the Sámi Delegation of 16 November 1990 (988/90) were amended: section 1 subsection 1, sections

5 and 6, section 8 subsection 2, section 9, section 10 subsection 3, section 14 subsection 1, and sections 17 and 19.

- 17 July 1995/974: Act on the Sámi Parliament. This act has been updated seven times so far, mainly due to amendments in related legislation.
- 7 December 1995: Lappalaishistoria- ja perinneyhistys ry is founded.
- 13 January 1997: Suontavaaran Lapinkylä yhdistys ry and Peltojärven Lapinkylä yhdistys ry are founded in Enontekiö.
- 14 April 1997: Kyrön Lapinkyläyhdistys ry is founded in Kittilä.
- 7 July 1997: Kuivasalmen Lapinkyläyhdistys ry is founded in Kittilä.
- 8 August 1997: Inarin Lapinkylä ry is founded, now known as Inarinmaan lapinkyläyhdistys ry.
- 23 November 1999: Keminkylän ja Sompion lapinkylä yhdistys ry is founded in Savukoski.
- 29 November 2000: Sodankylän Lapinkylä yhdistys ry is founded.

- **1999:** A total of 1,128 individuals applied based on claimed Lapp descent. Of these, the Sámi Parliament's election board accepted 20 based on language. A total of 765 people requested a review, and the board accepted an additional 25.

726 individuals submitted appeals to the Board of the Sámi Parliament, which accepted 1 person into the electoral roll.

712 appealed the board's decisions to the Parliament's plenary session, which approved 26 people for the electoral roll.

There were 656 appeals to the Supreme Administrative Court (KHO); the KHO accepted 7 people into the electoral roll.

- **2003:** The Sámi Parliament's election board sought to revoke the decisions concerning 16 individuals from the previous elections, citing the high number of applications (over 700 cases). The Supreme Administrative Court rejected the annulment requests and accepted 8 individuals related to the 16 in question into the electoral roll.

- **2007:** The KHO accepted 12 close relatives of the individuals whose cases the Sámi Parliament's election board had attempted to annul in 2003, referring to mistakes made in 1999.

- **2007:** *Anarâsah rs, Inarinsaamelaiset ry* was founded. The purpose of the association is to preserve and promote Inari Sámi culture, improve the status and rights of the Inari Sámi, and safeguard their interests.

- **2011:** The KHO introduced a policy change: so-called holistic consideration (*kokonaisharkinta*) was adopted. The KHO based its decisions on an overall evaluation in which the criteria in Section 3 of the Sámi Parliament Act were used more as elements in weighing a person's Sámi identity rather than strictly defining it. Greater emphasis was now placed on an individual's self-identification and the supporting justification.

- **2 October 2012:** *Vuovde-, guolásteaddji- ja duottarsámit rs / Metsä-, kalastaja- ja tunturisaamelaiset ry* was established, based in Savukoski.

- **25 September 2014:** The Government submitted a proposal to Parliament to amend the Sámi Parliament Act. The goal of the reform was primarily to improve the functioning of Sámi cultural self-government and the operational capacity of the Sámi Parliament.

- **2015:** The Supreme Administrative Court (KHO) accepted 93 new voters into the electoral roll. A total of 182 appeals were submitted. KHO was criticized for inconsistency in its decisions.
- **7 May 2018:** *Metsälappalaispäivät ry* was established. The first *Metsälappalaispäivät* event was held in 2017 in Savukoski.
- **1 August 2019:** The Sámi Parliament's election board removed the 93 individuals added by KHO from the electoral roll, citing a self-correction process in July. However, KHO ordered the Sámi Parliament to re-add them to the roll.
- **2019:** KHO received 171 appeals regarding the electoral roll; 10 of these were deemed late and not processed.
- **1 December 2020 – 15 May 2021:** The Ministry of Justice appointed a committee led by Pekka Timonen to propose amendments to the Sámi Parliament Act.
- **23 April 2021:** KHO accepted 37 new voters into the electoral roll based on appeals from 2019.
- **17 September 2021:** *Kuolajärven Lapinkylä ry* was established in Salla.
- **27 December 2021:** *Suomen alkuperäisten saamelaisten yhteistyöjärjestö ry* was established in Sodankylä.
- **13 June 2022:** The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issued a decision stating that Finland violated the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The violation pertained to the actions of the Supreme Administrative Court (KHO) in the 2015 and 2016 Sámi parliamentary elections concerning entries into the electoral roll.
- **6 September 2023:** KHO received 95 appeals regarding the electoral roll. According to current estimates, the decisions on these appeals will be made only after the elections.
- **19 June 2025:** The Finnish Parliament approved the Sámi Parliament Act, which included the removal of the so-called "Lapp criterion" (*lappalaispykälä*) from the law. All MPs from Lapland who were present voted against the law.