



Suomen alkuperäisten saamelaisten yhteistyöjärjestö ry

Parliament of Sámi villages in Finland Salla 17.7.2025

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THE PARLIAMENT OF SÁMI VILLAGES IN FINLAND AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, HAS THE RIGHT TO CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC SELF-GOVERNANCE

Suomen alkuperäisten saamelaisten yhteistyöjärjestö ry's Parliament of Sámi villages in Finland convened for its extraordinary annual meeting in Salla on Thursday, 17 July 2025.

Around fifty representatives from all six Sámi village organizations participated in the meeting: Keminkylän ja Sompion Lapinkylä ry, Kuolajärven Lapinkylä ry, Sodankylän Lapinkylä ry, Kuivasalmen Lapinkylä ry, Peltöjärven Lapinkylä ry, and Inarinmaan Lapinkyläyhdistys ry.

The strategic priorities of the Parliament of Sámi villages in Finland include strengthening the position of the parliament itself, as well as enhancing the rights, culture, and language of the Forest Sámi and Inari Sámi as Indigenous peoples. The Forest Sámi possess a distinctive traditional clothing, craft heritage, and their own Kemi Sámi language with its dialects, whose revitalization has already progressed significantly.

The central role of culture is evident in current activities: at present, four exhibitions highlighting Forest Sámi history and culture are on display in Salla. These are: Maddârek – Ancestors, telling the stories of nine founding families of the Kuolajärvi Sámi; Jieggâm – Spiritual Landscape of the Forest Sámi, showcasing works by nine artists inspired by nature and ancestral heritage; From Moitapyynti to Uurtokeino, presenting the traditional subsistence culture of the Kuolajärvi siida; and The Cousins' Exhibition at the Forest Sámi museum *Noiti Viessu*.

During the Forest Sámi Days on 18 July 2025, three new publications will be released. We do not tolerate the appropriation of our culture in any form.

As its most important decision, the General Assembly declared that the Parliament of Sámi villages in Finland, as a representative of an Indigenous people, is entitled to cultural and linguistic self-governance. This must also be recognized and affirmed by the governmental authorities.

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