ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Expert Mechanism,
the Office of the High Commissioner Expert
Mechanism

Your ref	Our ref	Date
	24/4121-4	29 January 2025

Input - Indigenous Peoples right to data, including data collection and disaggregation

Dear Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

On behalf of the Norwegian Government, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the study on Indigenous Peoples right to data, including data collection and disaggregation on the situation for our Indigenous community.

Norway has a longstanding official policy of not recording citizens' ethnicity, rooted in historical considerations.

Statistics Norway (SSB) is the institution responsible for coordinating the collection, analysis, and dissemination of official statistics in Norway.

Generally, SSB exercises great caution in producing statistics based on personal information that could be perceived as sensitive or that could contribute to stigmatizing vulnerable groups in society, cf. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Article 9, Section 1. Both Norwegian population statistics and periodic censuses are based on register information.

As much of Norway's personal statistics are register-based, there is no general data foundation for creating individual-based statistics on people with Sami ethnic affiliation, i.e., thematic statistics on the Sami as a group or on groups of Sami individuals.

SSB continuously works to improve Sami-related statistics. However, SSB has chosen not to advocate for self-identification, believing that it should emerge as a desire and initiative from the Sami communities themselves.

The National Population Register produces statistics on the number of people who use Sami languages (North Sami, Lule Sami, and South Sami). The purpose is to develop statistics on the number of people using Sami languages, aiming to contribute to the protection and

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preservation of Sami as endangered languages. The National Population Register shares data from these statistics to allow society to study language development and implement measures that promote Sami culture and language. To our knowledge, this is rarely utilized.

The Sami Parliament's Electoral Register is a registry of people eligible to vote or stand as candidates in elections to the Sami Parliament. To be eligible for registration, one must self-identify as Sami, have Sami as a home language, or have parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents who had Sami as a home language, or be the child of someone already registered. Additionally, one must be at least 18 years old or turn 18 in the election year and be registered as a resident in Norway. The rules for the Sami Parliament Electoral Register are outlined in the Sami Act § 2-6 and a specific regulation concerning the electoral register. The register is updated in election years, coinciding with parliamentary elections and local/regional elections. It is maintained for each municipality.

Population-based studies – SAMINOR is a large population-based health and living conditions survey and one of the most important sources of knowledge about the health and living conditions of the Sami and northern Norwegian populations. The SAMINOR surveys visit municipalities where the population historically has Sami, Kven, and Norwegian affiliation. SAMINOR has a particular focus on the health and living conditions of the Sami population, and this Indigenous perspective makes SAMINOR a unique data resource both nationally and internationally. It also includes the Kven and Norwegian-Finnish populations, recognized as one of Norway's national minorities. The goal is to promote good health, prevent illness, and improve healthcare services for all. The third survey, SAMINOR 3, began in October 2023.

In general, the subject of the study is one that would be open for consultations. When policies are developed in Norwegian society, involvement and dialogue are important elements. The Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament) is the representative political body for the Sami in Norway. The Sámediggi is an important dialogue partner for the central government. Under ILO Convention No. 169 Article 6, Norwegian government authorities are obligated to consult Sami interests in cases that may directly affect them, in order to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent. Several formalized consultations take place annually. Rules for consultations with Sami interests are codified in a new chapter of the Sami Act, which came into force on 1 July 2021. The numerous consultations have strengthened the Sámediggi as a representative voice for the Sami people and enhanced awareness and knowledge of Sami issues within government ministries and agencies.

Further, we would like to refer to The combined twenty-fifth to twenty-seventh periodic reports of Norway to the Committee that monitors the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which also address this topic.

Yours sincerely

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Adviser

This document is signed electronically and has therefore no handwritten signature