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Protection status of the Sami identity in Finland in the first years after accession

Introduction

The Europeanization process of Finland is taking a peculiar course due to its geopolitical situation. The current position of this state on the international arena and its model of democracy are the result both of the history and policies of other states, as well as politically neutral natural and geographical factors.

Finland became an independent state for the first time after the completion of the World War I; however, its political, social and economic system started to evolve much earlier than that. As early as in the Middle Ages, one may find the beginnings of the present-day ethnic structure of the society of Finland and of the administrative division of this state. The current membership of Finns in the Latin culture is the result of external historical factors. To fully understand the political processes that occur in Finland, one must study the history of this country. The contemporary ethnic structure of Finland is not homogenous, and this is for historical reasons. The Swedish language is the second official language apart from the Finnish language; the reasons thereof may be found as early as in the Middle Ages.

The notions of the Finn and the Finlander (just as those adjectives that derive from them) are not equivalent. A Finn is a person of the Finnish nationality, and a Finlander is a citizen of Finland. In turn, Swedish speaking citizens are known among others as Swedish speaking Finlanders, Swedish Finns or a Swedish minority in Finland. In the literature on issues related to this ethnic group residing in Finland, these notions are used interchangeably.

Due to the northern and peripheral location of Finland, natural and geographical conditions have a greater influence on the social structure and the policy of this state than in the case of the majority of other EU states. Considering extremely hard weather conditions, the northern areas enjoy specific treatment on the part of European institutions, especially with regard to the implementation of agricultural policies. One of the

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research areas comprised in this study is the situation of local communities in the north of Finland, whose part is constituted by the only one in Europe indigenous people, the Sami. In the colloquial language, the Sami are frequently referred to as Laplanders; however, this name has pejorative connotations in the Sami's opinion. In order to clarify the notions, the author will use the name of Laplander to define a resident of Lapland, regardless of their ethnic origin, and Sami for the members of the Sami people. It is also the notion of Lapland that is not explicit. This may be related to an administrative region in Finland, a cultural region (one that covers the areas resided by the Sami who live a traditional way of life) or a geographical region (that covers the northern parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula and the Kola Peninsula). In the case of an analysis of the policy related to the Sami, it would also be necessary to analyze the impact of the European integration on their traditional way of life, whose integral and most important part is reindeer husbandry. A description of the EU projects related to the protection of the Sami national identity involved the need to analyze the demographic and social structure of this ethnic group. Information related to this was acquired not only from official publications issued by the state administration of Finland, but also from meetings, talks and correspondence with the representatives of the Sami in Finland. During an analysis of the source literature, the author reached merely several analyses performed in Finland on the impact of integration processes on the communities of northern European regions. In the existing studies, researchers treat these communities as a subject of a larger concept. In Polish language, studies that the author found, an erroneous notion (according to the author and the Sami) of Laplanders was used in relation to the Sami. The present article will permit a systematization and a study of the impact of the European integration on the protection of the traditional way of life of the Sami people in Finland.

All the social and political processes (including Europeanization) that take place in Lapland are related to the Sami people that reside there; understanding the changes occurring in this region requires one to learn about the legal status of these people in the legal systems of Finland and of the European Union. As a result of the changes occurring in the world, the survival of this unique culture (including languages) requires a legal protection both on national and European level. Owing to the Europeanization of Finland (understood as changes occurring in this state that stem from the fact of being a European Union Member State), a part of the tasks related to the protection of the traditional way of life of the Sami has been transferred onto the European level. Studying the legal status of indigenous people and their changing lifestyle will permit a more insightful analysis of the impact of the Finland's membership on the residents of the most northward parts of the European Union. This study will furthermore permit an evaluation of the activities that are expected to counteract a depopulation of this region in the years of 1995-2015 .

1. Rights of Sami people in Finland

Sami people are the only indigenous people that reside in the European Union. The first legal provision that recognized the Sami as an indigenous population of Finland appeared in the year 1995 in an amendment to the Finnish constitution (Regional Information Centre for Western Europe UN, 2020). The following provision was added: “[...] Laplanders, who are indigenous inhabitants, as well as gypsies and other ethnic groups possess a right to preserve and develop their native language and culture. The right of Laplanders to use their native language in government offices will be regulated in separate acts [...]” (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 1999).

It was also in the year 1995 that the Parliament of Finland passed the Act on the Sami Parliament (Bonusiak, 2011: 13). In this Act, the Sami Parliament was specified as an official authority that represents the interest of the Sami before the central authorities of Finland. This institution is financed from the state budget. The Sami Parliament is not a part of the government administration of Finland, yet it holds the right to give opinions on any activities conducted by the government administration related to the Sami (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 1995). In § 3 of the Act on the Sami Parliament, there are also the criteria of the Sami national status. A person can be considered a Sami or regard themselves as a Sami on the following conditions:

1. this person, or at least one of their parents or grandparents, uses the Sami language as their native language; or
2. this person is a descendant of a person who led a traditional Sami style of life in Lapland; or
3. at least one of their parents possesses an electoral right to the Sami Parliament (meets the aforementioned conditions) (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 1995).

The aforementioned Act, furthermore, specifies those areas of Lapland that belong to the Sami. These include the entire districts of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki, as well as a part of the district of Sodankylä (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 1995). The boundaries of these areas determine at the same time the territory covered by the Sami Parliament.

The right enjoyed by the Sami to use their own language in the public sphere is included in § 17 of the Constitution of Finland that was passed in the year 1999: “[...] Laplanders, who are indigenous inhabitants, as well as the Romani people and other ethnic groups possess a right to preserve and develop their native language and culture. The right of Laplanders to use their native language in government offices is regulated in a separate act [...]” (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 1999). At the same time, the provision contained in § 121 of the Constitution determines the status of the Sami languages as official languages in some parts of Finland: “Within the territories of their residence, Laplanders are entitled to a language and cultural autonomy, that is specified in the Act” (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 2003; Bonusiak, 2011: 219).

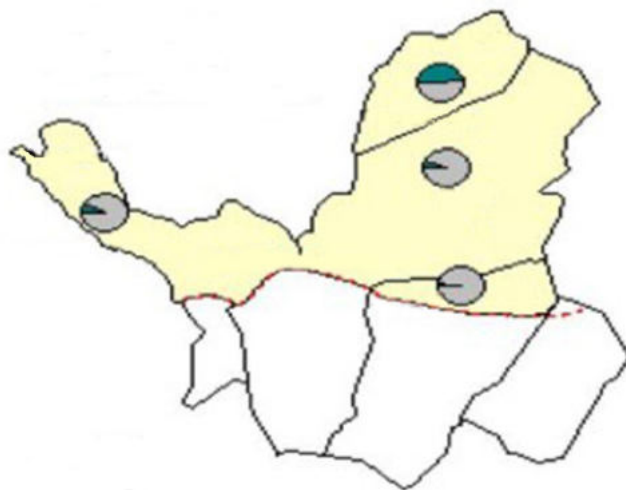


Figure 1. Map of Sami territories in Finland

Source: (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Finland, 2003).

The status of the Sami languages was determined in the Sami Language Act that was passed in the year 2003. The provisions of this Act are related to three Sami languages: skolt, inari and northern Sami. In § 2, the Act specifies that the Sami languages constitute additional official languages in the districts of Enontekiö, Inari, Utsjoki and Sodankylä, as well as in the Lapland Province Council. These languages may be used before courts of law, regional and district authorities, as well as government administration units whose jurisdiction covers the aforementioned districts or their parts (Ministry of Justice of Finland, 2003).

Indigenous people in Finnish Lapland enjoy smaller rights than in neighbouring Norway. Contrary to their neighbour, Finland did not ratify Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization in relation to indigenous and tribal people. This Convention offers to autochthonous people the right to decide about the way in which natural resources are to be used in the areas where they reside (General Conference of the International Labour Organisation, 1989). It was this regulation that gave rise to concerns on the part of Finnish authorities as to the way of the future use of natural resources in Lapland (Heinämäki, 2015: 203).

On the international arena, Finland plays a leading role in the development of international standards of human rights protection, yet it is delaying action in the case of the implementation of ILO Convention No. 169 in their own legal system in spite of pressure on the part of the UN Human Rights Council (Kraus, Kivisto, 2005: 234). Work is in progress only in relation to opinions and reports concerning the possibility to ratify the aforementioned Convention (Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Finland, 2020).

According to some people from the Finnish society, these activities are a farce and a disgrace to the entire state.

The fact is alarming that in Finland, membership in the Sami nation may be determined on the grounds of a judicial verdict and not ethnicity. According to the representatives of the Sami people, this is a continuation of the many years of the assimilation of this nation and putting their interests above the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities (*Ex-Sámi Parliament head quits voter's register...*, 2015). Based on the decision of the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland, a person can be recognized to be a Sami when they claim that they have at least one (even very distant) Sami ancestor (*Ex-Sámi Parliament head quits voter's register...*, 2015). As a result of these actions, there is a divergence between the statistical data from government administration institutions and the actual number of people who belong to this group (Nisula, 2015). At the same time, those who do not belong to the Sami people may use the sources and tools aimed at a preservation of the traditional lifestyle and cultural identity of the Sami people (Paasikunnas, 2013).

2. Sami people in EU policy

The European Union treats the cultural identity of the Saami as a cultural heritage of all European residents (Commission of the European Communities, 2008a). Due to the small population and little economic potential, the Sami people enjoy a special treatment in the European Union (Nisula, 2015). The first regulations in the EU law related to the autochthonic residents of the Arctic regions of the European Union appeared after the accession of Sweden and Finland. Protocol 3 of the Treaty of Accession 1994 obliged the Member States to take all the efforts required to support the traditional lifestyle of the Sami people, including reindeer husbandry, the use of the Sami languages and the protection of the natural resources of those regions that are traditionally resided by these people (Commission of the European Communities, 2008a; Member States of the European Union, 1994). The protection of the traditional means of subsistence of the indigenous residents of northern Scandinavia was determined in Art. 1 in the aforementioned Protocol: "Notwithstanding the provisions of the EC Treaty, exclusive rights to reindeer husbandry within traditional Sami areas may be granted to the Sami people" (European Commission, 2020).

A special treatment of the areas resided by those Sami people who lead a traditional lifestyle was confirmed in Article 174 in the consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union amended by the Lisbon Treaty, which reads as follows:

In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Union shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic, social and territorial cohesion. In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions. Among the regions concerned,

particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions (Member States of the European Union, 2007).

At present, the EU policy towards the Sami people is based on an inclusion of any aspects of its internal and external policies of the content contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007).

The regions resided by the Sami people are the most untouched regions in the European Union with regard to nature (Kaczmarek, 2013: 103). They have not been as yet destroyed by human activity (Ratcliffe, 2005: 289-300). At the same time, nature forms a part of the cultural identity of the Sami people; therefore, the policy of the protection of the identity of the Sami is closely related to the natural environment protection in the European Union (Ratcliffe, 2005: 285-300). The EU policy towards the Sami people forms a part of the policy of sustainable development in the Arctic (European Parliament, 2011).

3. Society of Lapland

The unfavourable demographic changes that are occurring in Lapland are much stronger in this region as compared to the remaining parts of Finland. What is the most acute for this region is the progressing depopulation of regions with an extremely low population index (understood as the number of residents on a per area unit) and society ageing that is progressing faster than in the other parts of Finland. Considering the above-mentioned factors, it is widespread accessibility to the Internet and information technologies that is a significant factor that has an impact on the quality of the society's life. Owing to an access to this media, a faster access is possible not only to information, but also to medical care. Considering large distances in Lapland, the transmission of information is of a far greater significance there than in urbanized areas. A characteristic feature of the entire education system in Finland is that it is on one of the highest levels worldwide. There is a similar situation in Lapland, which is a part of Finland. However, in this region, there is an additional possibility to receive education in Sami languages. These activities correspond with the European activities aimed at the protection of languages and cultural identities in danger of extinction. While attempting an analysis of the Europeanization of Lapland, one needs to study its features that make it distinct from entire Finland, such as: demographic characterization, access to the Internet and education.

4. Demographic changes in Lapland in the years 1995-2015

Demographic changes in Finnish Lapland, similarly as in the remaining regions of the European part of the Arctic, are mainly connected with migrations and changes in the

Table 1. Changes in the numbers of residents in Lapland in the years 1995-2015

Year	Number of residents
1995	201 411
1996	200 579
1997	199 051
1998	196 647
1999	194 352
2000	191 768
2001	189 288
2002	187 777
2003	186 917
2004	186 433
2005	185 800
2006	184 935
2007	184 390
2008	183 693
2009	183 748
2010	183 488
2011	183 330
2012	182 844
2013	182 514
2014	181 748
2015	180 751

Source: own study based on (ArcticStat, 2020; Statistics Finland, 2020).

economy. The main directions in which people migrate are as follows: from north to south and from rural areas to urbanized areas. At the same time, small rural communities, which frequently live in isolation, transform into modern, urbanized society, one that is dependent on information technologies (Banul, Stępień, Scheepstra, van Dam, Latola, Koivurova, 2016: 216).

Since 1 January 1995, when Finland accessed the European Union, the number of the residents of Lapland has been systematically decreasing. The main reason of the depopulation of this region is migration of young people to southern Finland.

Within twenty years of Finland being a member of the European Union, the number of Lapland's residents has decreased by over 20 thousand, which is an over 10% drop. This demonstrates the ineffectiveness of the regional policy in Lapland, whose chief objective was to stop the decline in the number of residents in this region (OECD, 2005). It is only in urbanized regions in Lapland (Rovaniemi, Tornio and Kemi) that the numbers of residents are on a constant level (Statistics Finland, 2020).

At the same time, the Lapland's society is ageing faster than in the other parts of Finland (European Commission, 2020).

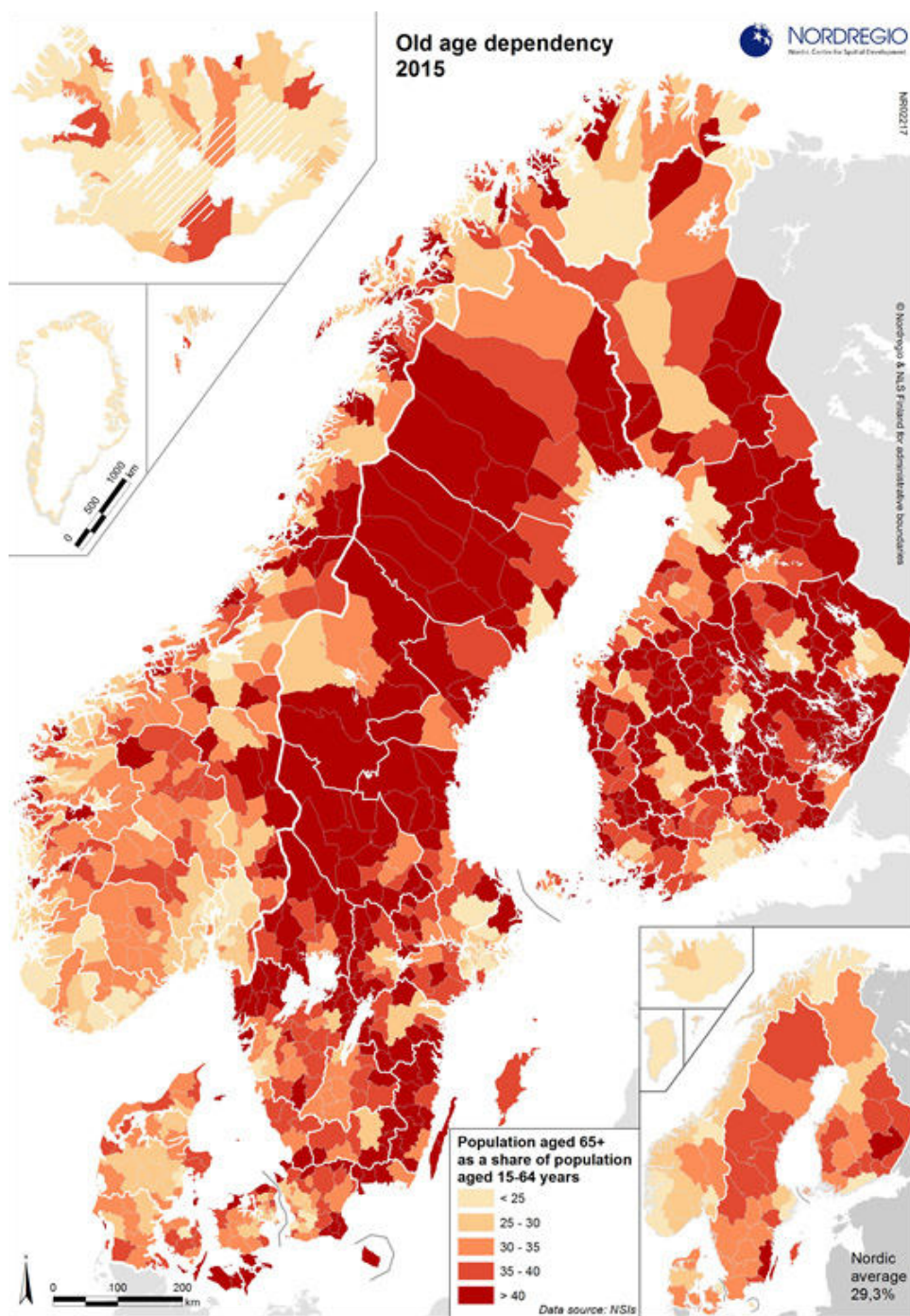


Figure 2. Number of people over 64 in relation to the number of population 15-64 in the year 2015
Source: (Nordregio, 2015).

The greatest percentage of people of 65 and older is noted in northern and eastern Lapland. The decline of the number of the residents of the entire region is curbed by immigrants from other EU Member States and the regions of the former Soviet Union. The reason of the inflow of people from abroad are attractive working conditions as compared to the countries of their origin (in Finland, there is no notion of minimum wages; however, in Lapland in the year 2012, the average monthly earnings were 2,813 Euro, with the median amount of 2,592 Euro [Statistics Finland, 2012]). Not all foreigners who work in Lapland are covered by official statistics. Some of them are seasonal workers who are employed in agriculture, or those who harvest undergrowth (income from the sale of undergrowth is not taxable in Finland). Less than 4,000 foreigners have permanent residence in Lapland, which is ca. 2% of the entire population of the region (Moninet, 2020). Some foreigners with permanent residence in Lapland are researchers who conduct research projects in the region.

5. IT technologies in Lapland

In Finland, the Internet access is considered to be one of the primary civil rights (Ministry of Transport and Communication of Finland, 2010). The greatest challenge is to build and maintain an infrastructure to permit the Internet access in the most remote corners of Lapland (Moninet, 2020). It is predicted that ultimately every resident of Lapland will have access to broadband speeds of at least 100 Mb/s. Owing to this, all the residents of the region will have a possibility of teleworking, and this will facilitate running businesses (Regional Council of Lapland, 2016d). Considering large distances between settlements in Lapland, the Internet makes it easier to contact authorities to a greater extent than in other parts of Finland and Europe. In Lapland, the Internet means a better access to education (e-learning) and medical services. Almost all development strategies in Lapland are based on the assumption that the Internet is a key tool (Regional Council of Lapland, 2016c). Owing to the Internet, the numbers of the potential purchasers of local products and of potential tourists who would visit Lapland are growing.

In the years 2009-2015, 66 million Euro was assigned from the government budget and 24.6 million Euro from EU funds (for the development of rural areas) for the building of a fibre optic infrastructure. At the same time, every Internet user may deduct up to 558 Euro from the tax per annum in connection with fees related to the access to landline Internet (*Miksi liittyä valokuituverkkoon nyt?*, 2020).

At present, entire Lapland is covered with mobile networks that offer access to mobile Internet (Ruokangas, 2013). Nevertheless, in most of the area, its speed is not stable and is not sufficient to run an Internet based business.

In Lapland, investments in the Internet are included in almost all projects conducted as part of EU structural funds. Creation of professional websites, applications and databases is co-financed.

At present, the residents of Lapland, similarly as the entire society of Finland, are a modern information society. Tourism, which is the fastest developing branch of Lapland's economy, is based on the Internet.

6. Characteristic features of education in Lapland

Just like in entire Finland, education in Lapland is on one of the highest levels worldwide. According to PISA research, the students at Finnish schools are in the global forefront in almost every respect (OECD, 2012). In Europe, they are the best in calculus, reading comprehension, they possess the highest knowledge of natural sciences and solve practical problems best. What is characteristic of the education system in Lapland is the possibility to receive education in Sami languages.

In 1970, teaching of Sami languages was commenced in six schools; nevertheless, these languages began to be formally used at all the levels of education starting from the year 1991. In 1993, Sami languages obtained the status of native languages in schools in Sami region and in one school in Helsinki. The number of children who learnt in Sami languages was ca. 600 in 33 schools. There are no Sami secondary schools, yet all of twenty four secondary schools that operate in the Sami area offer the possibility of teaching in one of Sami languages. It is possible to obtain higher education in the Sami language in Norway. Most of materials in Sami languages (especially in northern Sami) are common for schools in Finland and in Sweden. Those who teach in Sami languages obtain their qualifications in the Oulu University, the Lapp University in Rovaniemi and Sami College in Norway (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, 2019).

7. Lapland's economic potential

The most important mineral resources in Finnish Lapland include chromium, copper and gold. Chromium deposits in the district of Keminmaa, assessed to be ca. 150 million tons, are one of the richest ones discovered so far in the world (*Natural resources in the region*, 2020).

The greatest growth of interest in mineral resources (especially metal ores) in Lapland occurred in the year 2000, when metal prices on world markets began to grow. In the first period, activities focused above all on geological examinations and exploration of deposits as well as studies of the environmental impact of mining works. The representatives of the government, mining industry and science participated in the creation of the minerals extraction strategy in Lapland (Karlsson, 2016).

Most of profits generated by mining go out of Lapland abroad. This is permitted by legal regulations, which guarantee profits from the extraction of minerals to those who have found and extracted them. These regulations are aimed at an improvement of

the Lapp labour market; however, a high degree of the automation of work allows few workers to be employed. Apart from this, most of labourers do not come from Lapland but from those states where the mining companies are registered (Soininvaara, 2013).

Access to mineral resources in Lapland is of a strategic significance to the entire European Union (Commission of the European Communities, 2008b). The current raw materials policy of the Community is based on the following pillars:

- ensuring access to resources on international markets on the same conditions as for other industrial competitors,
- setting the right framework conditions inside the EU to support stable supplies of resources from European sources,
- support of an overall growth of the efficient use of resources and promotion of recycling to limit the consumption of primary resources in the EU and to decrease a relative dependence on their import from outside of the EU (Galos, 2009: 84).

The development of the mining industry is also financed from the EU structural funds. What is chiefly financed is research into new mining technologies and support in the exploration of new deposits (Stępień, 2015).

Deposits of uranium, which commonly occurs with gold, may have a potential impact on the development of the mining industry in Lapland. In Lapp deposits, there are from 20 to 40 grams of uranium per 1 gram of gold (Kuusalu, 2012). Uranium is not currently being mined in Lapland, whereas the accurate sizes of the deposits of this element in this region is being assessed.

Gold that occurs in this region is of a great significance to the development of Lapland. Gold deposits in Lapland are important chiefly to industry. Depending on the region, gold contents in ores is from 0.001 to 85 grams per ton (*Uusi suuri kultalöytö* Suomesa..., 2012). However, gold can also be found in the form of nuggets all over Lapland. This is one of the factors that generate tourist traffic in this region. Over the past 150 years, ca. 2,160 kg of gold has been found in Lapland in the form of nuggets. In 2004, a nugget weighing 282.6 g was found in Lapland. On average, over 19 kg of gold is found in this region annually (Haaksluoto, 2013). At the same time, on the world markets, the price of Lapp gold is even ten times as high as the average price of this material.

Lapland does not possess any known deposits of crude oil, natural gas or hard coal (OECD, 2013). Production of electricity is based in 90% on renewable resources, with the greatest participation of energy from hydropower plants. The main source of heat energy is peat as well as by-products of wood and paper industries. Lapland is self-sufficient with regard to energy. All surpluses support the national energy grid (Regional Council of Lapland, 2016b).

There is a network of small hydroelectric plants. Most of these are safe for the natural environment (UNIDO, 2013). Apart from the environmental aspect, a combination of numerous independent sources of energy into one network increases its reliability. Any failure (or lack of conditions for the operation) of a part of these power plants does not result in any problems in the provision of electricity to the society.

8. Tourism potential of Lapland

Currently, tourism is the fastest developing branch of economy in Lapland (Saarinen, 2007: 41). The development of tourism industry offers to the residents of Lapland a diversification of the sources of their incomes. Starting from the early 1990s, tourism began to generate more jobs in this region than any other branch of economy (Kaján, Saarinen, 2014: 191-203).

Tourism in Lapland is chiefly oriented onto contact with nature (Tuulentie, 2008: 224). The components of the tourism potential are presented in Figure 3.

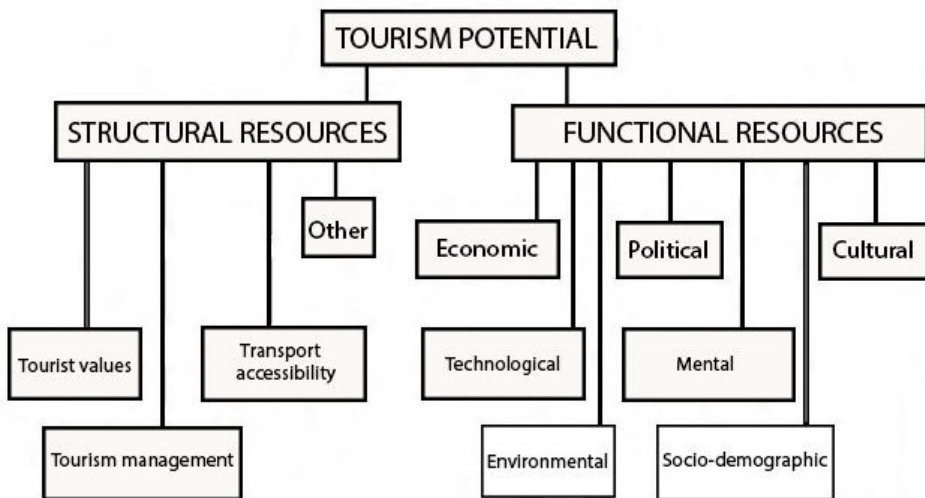


Figure 3. Elements of tourist potential

Source: (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk, 2005: 52).

Tourist values, which may be included in structural resources, divide into anthropogenic and natural ones (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk, 2005: 53). In the case of Lapland, it is natural values that dominate (Regional Council of Lapland, 2016a). Accessibility in terms of transport is diversified depending on a region in Lapland. The main tourist centres can easily be accessed by air.

Tourism management is also diversified in terms of regions. In tourism and sporting centres (winter sports above all), tourist accommodation is well developed, while it does not exist in more remote and deserted areas of Lapland. Nevertheless, it is also lack of such facilities that is attractive to potential tourists (this is a different target group than those that visit tourist centres).

Other structural resources of the tourist potential of Lapland include common access to mobile networks and to the Internet, which is true even of the most remote areas.



Figure 4. Tourist infrastructure in Lapland

Source: (Regional Council of Lapland, 2020).

In the case of functional resources, the political factor is the least stable. According to statistical data, until 2013, tourists from Russia constituted the largest group of foreigners who visited Lapland. In a later period, as a result of a sharp decrease of the value of the Russian currency and diplomatic tensions between Moscow and Brussels, the number of Russian citizens visiting Lapland dropped abruptly (*Lapland tourism...*, 2015). The tourist branch did not experience any significant decline in incomes as there simultaneously occurred an increase of the numbers of tourists from Far East and Italy (*Slide in Russian tourists has little effects on Lapland*, 2015)

The strengths of the tourism industry in Lapland include the following:

- tourism based on natural resources,

- eight seasons of the year (additional four seasons between summer and autumn, autumn and winter, winter and spring, as well as spring and summer),
- clean natural environment,
- diversified high quality tourism services,
- safety (*Lapland tourism...*, 2015).

Challenges related to the development of tourism in Lapland that require constant analysis include the following:

- mining industry and its coexistence with tourism,
- global warming (hot summers and mild winters),
- seasonality of tourism products,
- global safety and resistance to international crises (*Lapland tourism...*, 2015).

Natural conditions constitute the most important part of the tourism potential in Lapland. The current regional policy related to Lapland assumes that no industrial use of natural resources may cause losses in the natural potential. The possibility of the current sustainable tourism being transformed into mass industry constitutes the worst threat.

In the year 2015, the sale was registered of 1,024,964 nights to foreigners (an increase by 2.3% as compared to the previous year). The largest income was generated by tourists from Japan, China (chiefly from Hongkong), France, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain and Russia.

Table 2. Number of tourists in Lapland according to their country of origin

Year	Number of nights sold							
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total (thousand)	2 348	2 233	2 225	2 286	2 399	2 403	2 354	2 355
Finns (thousand)	1 416	1 418	1 416	1 410	1 404	1 376	1 352	1 330
Foreigners (thousand)	931	814	809	876	995	1 027	1 001	1 024
Europe	842 476	745 274	732 832	785 288	868 975	879 746	841 877	841 922
EU-28	664 310	577 546	555 353	569 268	598 661	611 408	600 427	644 267
Scandinavia	80 466	73 418	84 274	90 093	97 660	100 832	108 625	108 634
Asia	48 549	45 565	55 055	64 366	94 388	112 286	116 803	135 989
America	11 006	9 616	10 512	12 447	10 829	12 344	13 923	17 293
Russia	85 169	83 438	86 592	113 761	155 992	150 371	116 832	67 428
Sweden	21 882	22 147	26 743	26 644	28 889	34 273	37 735	36 116
Germany	114 041	107 314	109 902	119 187	129 633	124 835	117 971	129 882
Great Britain	244 996	192 366	153 201	147 586	171 607	185 810	183 049	187 635
France	95 390	90 758	86 448	88 611	87 596	97 370	92 830	105 395
Estonia	12 749	11 903	11 228	12 004	11 163	9 195	9 471	9 991
Japan	27 605	27 593	28 380	35 718	56 036	59 551	47 024	43 498

Source: own study based on (*Tuoreimmat majoitustilastot ja kehitystrendit*, 2020).

The greatest increment of tourists can be observed from Asian directions, while the greatest decline has been observed in the case of neighbouring Russia. The total numbers of foreigners visiting Lapland are growing and, what follows from that, the receipts generated by them are growing. Tendencies demonstrate that the numbers of tourists and profits from tourism will be growing in the coming years. Therefore, a hypothesis can be made that an increase of receipts from tourism causes a rise in expenditures on tourist infrastructure. This will in turn generate new jobs or will significantly diversify sources of income for the residents of Lapland, while at the same time slowing down the depopulation of this region.

9. Prospects of the development of Lapland

As part of the “Programme of smart specialization and economic development of Europe”, regional authorities in Lapland have developed the Arctic Smartness concept with five development clusters:

1. Arctic Project: its objective being an increased competitiveness of local products and services by promoting cooperation between businesses and scientific and research environment;
2. Arctic Industry and Economy: the objective of the cluster is finding new models of cooperation between forestry, mining and other industries on the territory of Lapland;
3. Arctic Environmental Development: its objective being an increase of the scientific potential of Lapland and its use in the future for the economic development of the region.

Conclusions

In spite of numerous activities undertaken by local and national authorities, as well as international organizations, the expected effects have not been gained. Fiscal incentives and real property prices were not effective, either. Another fact that is worth analyzing in the future re-search is the impact of climatic changes on changes in the natural environment, which determine the traditional lifestyle of Sami people. It is probable that the terrains where the Sami reside include deposits of mineral resources. Attempts will soon be taken to reach these. At the same time, the population balance in Lapland has permanently been decreasing since the early 1990s until this day. A more thorough analysis seems to be desirable into the cause of the perception of not only Lapland, but of entire Finland as one of the safest places in the world, as a state with one of the most effective diplomacy in the world and one that is a leader of sustainable development.

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Abstract: The Sami people are the only native people in Europe. Their identity and culture are related to the nature of the northern part of the Scandinavian peninsula. Due to the difficult natural conditions occurring there, the Sami identity is subject to special protection both in Finland and in the European Union. The activities of external institutions mainly consist in multi-faceted activities aimed at improving the quality of life in those areas and counteracting the depopulation of regions traditionally inhabited by the Sami people.

Keywords: Finland, Sami People, cultural identity, EU funds

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