



Photo: [Carl-Johan Utsi](#)

The Saami Council Charter



The current charter of the Saami Council was adopted by the 19th Saami Conference in Rovaniemi, Finland, in 29.-31.10. 2008.

§ 1 SAAMI COUNCIL

The Saami Council is a voluntary and independent cultural political and political cooperation organization for the main Saami organizations in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The Saami Council is a non-governmental private organization.

§ 2 GOALS

The Saami Council's primary objective is to safeguard the Saami interests as a people,

work to ensure that the Saami also in future are recognized as one people and indigenous people, whose cultural, political, economic, civil, social and spiritual rights shall be ensured through each country's laws, agreements between the States concerned and the Saami representative bodies, and the international law in general. The Saami Council is also working internationally to promote and ensure the Saamis' and other indigenous peoples' interests and rights.

§ 3 SAAMI COUNCIL COMPOSITION

The Saami Council has fifteen (15) members, of which five (5) are from the Norwegian side, four (4) from the Swedish side, four (4) from the Finnish side, and two (2) from the Russian side.

The Council members with personal substitute members are appointed by the Saami Conference based on proposals from the member organizations' delegations to the Conference.

If a Council member during ongoing mandate term ceases to be a member, or no longer can fulfill his/her duties because of death, prolonged illness or other personal circumstances, the Council selects a new member on the proposal from the relevant organization.



A Council member ceases to be a member of the Saami Council if:

- a) His/her organization ceases to be a member of the Council because of the organization's dissolution or loses his/her membership in the Council in accordance with § 9,
- b) The Council member himself/herself resigns his membership in the Council,
- c) The Council member resigns his/her membership in his/her own organization,
- d) The Council member is excluded from his/her own organization,
- e) The Council member otherwise resigns or is forced to resign as a member of his/her own organization.

§ 4 SAAMI COUNCIL'S PRESIDENT

The Saami Council elects its president from among the Executive Board members. The President is elected for a term of office of two (2) years. His/her term of office can be extended by up to two years; the issue shall be decided through voting. The other members of the Board are the Council's Vice-Presidents.



obligations due to death, prolonged illness or other personal circumstances, the Saami Council itself elects a new President for the remaining mandate term from among the Council's Vice-Presidents. The Saami Council selects a Vice-President from among its Council members from the country, which after this has had neither President, nor Vice-President in the Council.

Just as the other Council members, the Saami Council's President ceases to be a member of the Saami Council if:

- a) His/her organization ceases to be a member of the Council because of dissolution of the organization or loses its membership in the Council in accordance with § 9,
- b) He/she himself/herself resigns his membership in the Council,
- c) He/she himself/herself resigns his/her membership in his own organization,
- d) He/she is excluded from his/her own organization,
- e) He/she otherwise resigns or is forced to resign as a member of his/her own organization.



§ 5 SAAMI COUNCIL'S MANDATE TERM AND DECISION MAKING

The term of office for the Saami Council members begins and ends in accordance with the Saami Conference's decision. The Saami Council constitutes itself as soon as possible after the Saami Conference has appointed it.

The Council should seek to achieve consensus on issues it handles. If no agreement is reached, decision shall be taken by voting. Each Council member has one vote. The Council has a quorum when more than a half of its members is present.

The Council makes decisions by simple majority. If the outcome of a vote is a tie vote, the matter is settled by the President through casting vote. A tie vote in personal elections is settled by drawing lots.

The Saami Council adopts its own Rules of Procedure, as well as guidelines for its own financial obligations.

§ 6 SAAMI COUNCIL BODIES

The Saami Council's permanent bodies are the Executive Board and the Culture Committee.

Beyond these permanent bodies the Saami



Council can also have national sections where this is appropriate: Finnish, Norwegian, Russian and Swedish section.

§ 7 SAAMI COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Saami Council shall have an Executive Board. The Council President and Vice-Presidents form the Saami Council Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall carry out tasks entrusted to it by the Saami Council. The Executive Board shall take care of the Saami Council's assignments and common issues between the Council meetings.

The Executive Board shall seek to achieve consensus on issues it handles. If no agreement is achieved, the issue should be referred to the Council for a final decision.

§ 8 GRANTING OF MEMBERSHIP IN SAAMI COUNCIL

The Saami Council decides whether new organizations that have applied for membership in the Saami Council, shall be suggested to be included as members of the Council. The Saami

Saami Council's proceedings.

§ 9 TERMINATION AND LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP IN SAAMI COUNCIL

Membership in the Saami Council ceases if the member organization itself resigns as member organization of the Saami Council or the member organization is dissolved.

Membership in the Saami Council is lost immediately after the Saami Council's decision if:

- 1) Member organization decides that it can no longer accept the Saami Council's Charter, Saami political objectives, political programs and activities;
- 2) Member organization in its practical politics or political activities acts and makes statements against the Saami Council's political objectives or programs;
- 3) Membership organization's structure or objective is changed so that these are no longer in conformity and harmony with the Saami Council's Charter, objectives and political objectives.

The Saami Council's decision on forfeiture of membership may be appealed to the Saami

the Saami Conference has taken a final decision on the issue.

§ 10 COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Saami Council convenes at least once a year at a time and place decided by the Council.

If the Council has not decided itself on time and place for a meeting, this decision is taken by the Executive Board.

The Saami Council's President calls a meeting of the Saami Council at least one month before the scheduled meeting time. The Council can be convened at shorter notice for handling of urgent issues.

The call of meeting shall be accompanied by an agenda prepared by the Saami Council's Executive Board. Final agenda is determined by the Saami Council when the meeting begins. The Council meetings are chaired by the Saami Council's President. If the President cannot attend the meeting, the Council meeting shall be chaired by that Vice-President who is appointed by the Saami Council as a chairperson. At the Council meetings, the minutes should be kept that are to be sent to the Council's President, Vice-Presidents, other members, possible committees, member



shall be adjusted and approved by the persons the Council has imposed this responsibility upon.

§ 11 SECRETARIAT AND SECRETARY GENERAL

The Saami Council shall have a secretariat headed by a Secretary General. The Secretary General is hired by the Council.

§ 12 SAAMI CONFERENCE

The Saami Conference is held once every four years. The Saami Council is responsible for preparation and implementation of the Conference. The call to the Conference shall be sent at least two (2) months prior to holding of the Conference.

Beyond this, the Saami Council can call to an extraordinary Saami Conference. The call to the extraordinary Saami Conference shall be sent out at least one (1) month before the holding of the Conference. The call shall include information about the reasons for holding of the extraordinary Saami Conference and agenda.

The plenipotentiary delegations to the Saami Conference are comprised of representatives from



delegations are composed with 18 delegates from each country.

The delegates to the Saami Conference are entitled to handle all matters and vote on all issues that are presented at the Saami Conference. Each delegate has one vote.

The Saami Conference has a quorum when a majority of at least three (3) delegations is present.

The ordinary Saami Conferences shall:

- a) Select a chairperson and secretary of the Conference,
- b) Decide on how the Conference protocol will be adjusted,
- c) Consider the Saami Council's and its bodies' activity reports and the Council's audit report,
- d) Appoint members of the Saami Council,
- e) Consider the issues communicated to the delegations a month before the Conference and the issues that the majority of each delegation agrees to consider.

The Saami Conference can also consider other issues by its own decision on which one does not take a final decision.

the Conference.

§ 13 SAAMI COUNCIL CULTURE COMMITTEE

The Saami Council Culture Committee has the responsibility for the Saami culture fund that are channeled through the Saami Council in accordance with separate decision-making and rules of procedure adopted by the Saami Council. The Saami Council or Executive Board can also delegate assignments to the Culture Committee to prepare and / or arrange culture-related events.

The Saami Council Culture Committee is appointed by the Saami Council. The Committee shall have five members. One member from each country and the fifth member shall be from the Saami Council. The term of office for members and substitute members is two (2) years with shifting at the calendar year shift. The Culture Committee's chairperson is appointed by the Saami Council.

The Saami artists' and cultural organizations suggest their representatives themselves. The seats from the artists' and cultural organizations should alternate between the organizations to eventually gain the broadest possible representation within the different arts and

organization suggests a new person for the remaining term.

§ 14 AMENDMENT OF CHARTER

When amending this Charter, the following applies:

- a) Following a decision of the ordinary Saami Conference with support of the majority in each country delegation and at least two thirds (2/3) of all present conference delegates, or
- b) Following a decision of two successive ordinary Saami Conferences supported by the majority of all delegations during both Conferences.

§ 15 DISSOLUTION OF SAAMI COUNCIL

The Saami Council may be dissolved by a decision of dissolution at two successive ordinary Saami Conferences with two-thirds (2/3) majority at both Conferences and where a majority in each delegation has given its support to the dissolution.

§ 16 ENTRY OF CHARTER INTO FORCE

The Charter is drafted and adopted in Finnish,



force.

The Charter comes into force when it is approved by the Saami Conference.



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