

Campaigning without media: Indigenous politics in a non- Indigenous setting

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Election campaigns



The importance of visibility

“You have to be visible. If not, the voters will not know that you are there”.

Interview with Norwegian local politician, quoted in Skogerbø, 2011.

Although politicians have a wide range of means to communicate with the public, appearing in the mass media still provides the best way for a politician to reach a large and diverse audience at once.

(Vos, Debby and Van Aelst, Peter, 2018: *Does the Political System Determine Media Visibility of Politicians? A Comparative Analysis of Political Functions in the News in Sixteen Countries*, [Political Communication](#) Volume 35, 2018 - [Issue 3](#)).

Researching Sami election campaigns

- How do concepts and methods used in election campaign studies comply with studying the Sami campaigning?
- How are Sami election campaigns different from the national parliamentary campaigns?
- What implications do the insights from the Sami election campaigns have?



'One people – four countries



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The screenshot shows the UNRIC website header with the United Nations logo and the text "United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe" and "UN in your language". Below the header is a navigation menu with links for "HOME", "ABOUT", "INFO POINT & LIBRARY", and "EMPLOYMENT AND INTERNSHIPS". The main content area features a "SOCIAL MEDIA" section with icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, and a link to "All our channels". To the right is an article titled "The Sami of Northern Europe – one people, four countries" with a "PDF | Print |" link. The article text discusses the Sami people, their distribution across Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, and their cultural and political status. A "Sámi UN Photo - John Isaac" placeholder is visible on the left side of the article.

United Nations
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**UNRIC
IN FOCUS:**

"Every few weeks UNRIC shines the spotlight on forgotten stories or themes that are on the UN's agenda."

The Sami of Northern Europe – one people, four countries PDF | Print |

Sámi UN Photo - John Isaac

There are over 370 million indigenous people in some 90 countries, living in all regions of the world. The Sami are the indigenous people living in the very north of Europe, in Sápmi, which stretches across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula. They are a minority in today's Finland, Russia, Sweden and Norway, but a majority in the innermost parts of Finnmark county in Norway and in the municipality of Utsjoki in Finland. However, although regarded as one people, there are several kinds of Sami based on their patterns of settlement and how they sustain themselves. Furthermore, their rights and general situation differ considerably depending on the nation state within which they live.



One people
– four
polities
- four
media
systems

Figure 1. Map of Sápmi (dark area), traditional homelands of the Indigenous Sámi people. Sápmi is from west to east spanning Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. This file is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) license. CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=53461>

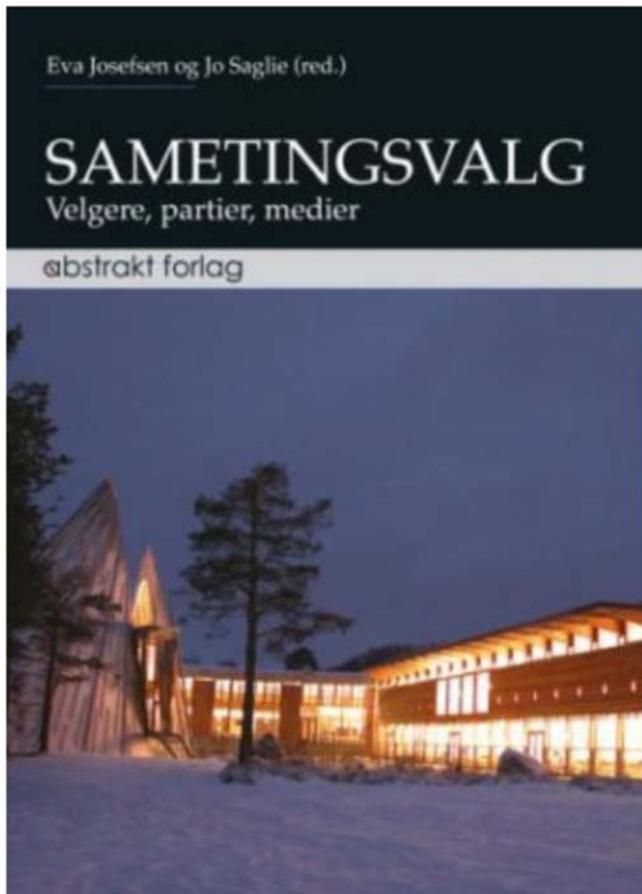
Indigenous political representation in Norway



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- Norway: colonized for centuries by Denmark and Sweden and colonizing the traditional lands of the Indigenous – the Sámi - populations.
- Norwegian nation- and state-building took place 1814-1930s, strong assimilationist policies.
 - Sámi political mobilization and representation:
 - 1903: The first Sámi MP was elected for the Labour Party.
 - 1917: First Sámi convention/congress, led by the legendary political activist and midwife Elsa Laula Renberg.
 - 1970s-early 1980s: Conflict over the damming of the Alta/Kautokeino to build a hydro-electric power station in Finnmark.
 - 1988: Amendment of Norwegian Constitution to include the recognition of the Sámi as a separate people.
 - 1989: First election to the Sámediggi (Sámi parliament) in Norway, providing a structure of representation and an official voice with Norwegian government.
 - 2009: First election study, reported in Josefsen et al. 2011.

Researching Sami Elections and Politics 2009-2017



Vem röstar vid val till Sametinget? Vilka politiska skiljeliner finns inom väljarkåren? Och hur ser medias rapportering av val till Sametinget egentligen ut?

I denna bok presenteras resultat från den första väljarundersökning som genomförts i samband med val till Sametinget i Sverige: om väljare, partier och medias roll. De olika kapitlen berör alltifrån Sametingets tillkomst och politiska mandat, till valdeltagande, politiskt förtroende och om det finns några avgörande åsiktskillnader mellan kvinnor och män.

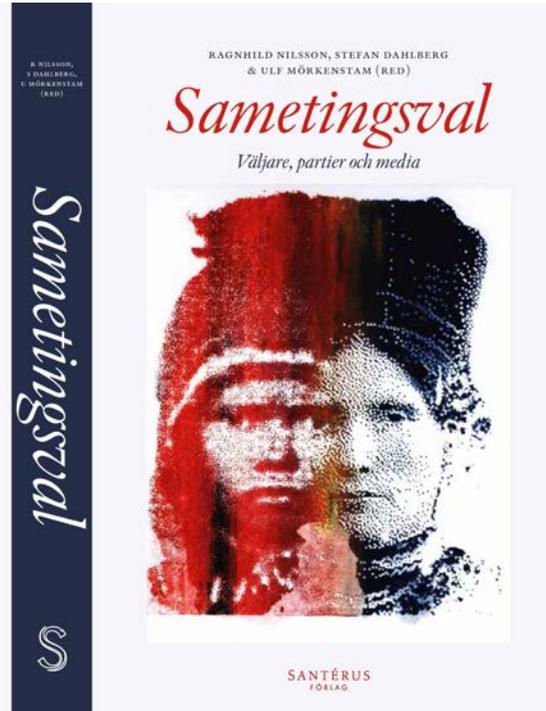
Gii jienasta go lea vágáat Sámediggái? Makkár politihkalaš erohusat leat jienasteaddjeovkkus? Ja makkár media diehtojuohkin vágáat Sámediggái duodain lea?

Dán girjis ovdanbuktojt bohtosat vuosttaš jienasteaddjeiskademis mii lea eadahuovvon Sámedikki vágáat oktavuođas Ruotas: jienasteaddjiid, bellodagaidd ja media rolla birra. Sierra kapihttalat gieđahallet buot Sámedikki ásaheamis ja politihkalaš mandáhtii, vágaoassilastimii, politihkalaš loahtrámuššii ja jus gávdnojjit makkárge dehálaš oavvirohusat nissoniid ja dievdudid gaskkal.

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Political journalism, information sources and campaigning

Norway

- Sami news media are the main arenas for the Samediggi election campaign, but mainly the northern constituencies.
- The main campaign events and the top politicians are located in the northern constituencies
- Norwegian regional and local media in the north have day-to-day coverage.
- Nationwide media have no regular coverage.
- Voters rely on family & friends, party programmes, the Sami media, local media, and online and social media.

Sweden

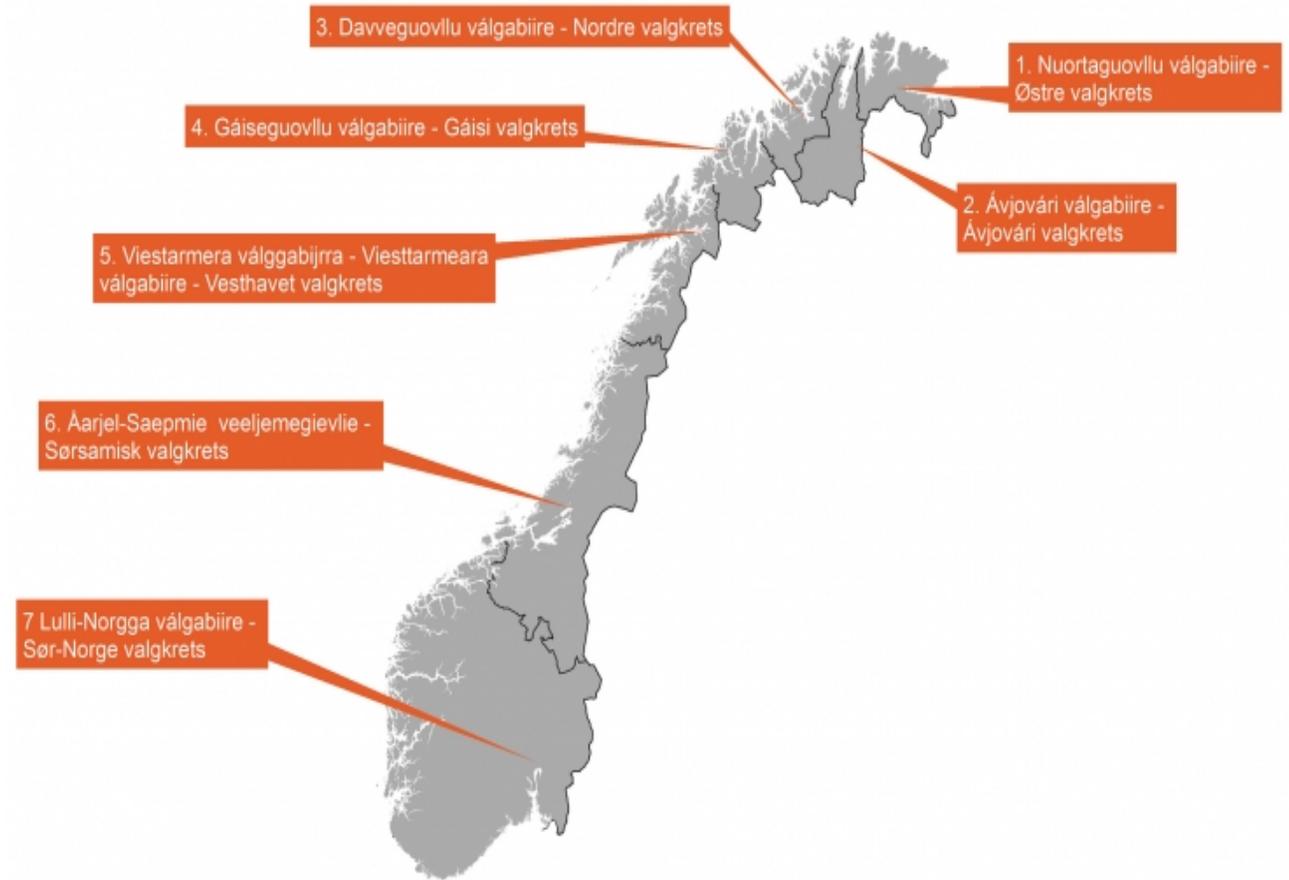
- The Sami public broadcaster covers the election, not quite as extensively as on the Norwegian side.
- Some coverage in local newspapers in the north, more in a Sami monthly magazine.
- Campaign events are located in the north.
- No regular coverage in nationwide media.
- Voters rely on family & friends, party programmes and the Sami public broadcaster

Important information sources. Percent. 2013.

	Sverige	Norge
Samefolket	39 (N=2071)	
Regionale og lokale aviser	32 (N=2246)	39 (N=1238)
Nuorat	21 (N=1667)	
Riksdekkende aviser	20 (N=2159)	19 (N=1229)
Ságat		32 (N=1175)
Ávvir		19 (N=1127)
SVT Sápmi	52 (N=2107)	
SR Sameradion	45 (N=2022)	
Sametingsvalet.se	44 (N=2001)	
Andre tv og radiosendinger	31 (N=2070)	22 (N=1201)
NRK Sápmis tv-sendinger		51 (N=1246)
NRK Sápmis internettside		35 (N=1160)
NRK Sápmis radiosendinger		30 (N=1199)
Diskusjoner med venner og familie	68 (N=2370)	54 (N=1258)
Partiinformasjon og partiprogrammer	64 (N=2259)	51 (N=1254)
Andre internettkanaler **	24 (N=1906)	36 (N=1189)
Direkte kontakt med kandidater til Sametinget	40 (N=2034)	34 (N=1218)
Valgdebatter	49 (N=2109)	***

South Norway – campaigning without media

- Most populous area in the country, no Sami traditional lands
- Votes for the Sami electoral roll are registered in the +100 municipalities
- No municipality has a Sami presence that generate routine media coverage in local, regional or nationwide news media.



- There is a Sami public space in which elections and election campaigns are visible in north Norway, less so in Sweden
- Sami elections and campaigns are (almost) invisible in the south – where the number of Sami voters increase



Foto: Per Heimly (fotorettsinnehaber) / Samefolkets parti

SAMEPOLITIKKENS FARGEKLATT: OSLO-DOSATTE Ann Finbog (ytterst til venstre) var Samefolkets partis førstekandidat i Sør-Norge valgkrets til høstens sametingsvalg, og ble valgt inn på Sametinget. Valgkamphjelp fikk hun av parti- og kandidatkollegene Inga Anna Helene Fossli, Tatjana Kolpus, kjendisfotograf Per Heimly, Birgit Somby, og skuespiller Mikkel Gaup (sistnevnte ikke avbildet).

FOTO: PER HEIMLY (FOTORETT SINNEHAVER) / SAMEFOLKETS PARTI

2017: Interviews and media analyses

- What resources exist for campaigning and how were they allocated?
- How did the parties plan the election campaigns?
- How did the top candidate campaign?



Structural and contextual factors

- Size of the constituency
 - *We did not have any funding for travelling*
- Scarcity of resources and candidates
 - *We had some funding and we used it for mailing the party programme*
- Voters concentration to the capital, Oslo, scattered outside
 - *So few voters live outside Oslo, we did not do any campaigning outside the capital*
- In the media shadow:
 - of Sami media
 - of Norwegian media
 - *We know people*

The parties' campaigning strategies

- All parties had a party programme or Sami political programme, and most parties mailed them to all voters.
- All parties were represented at the main campaign event in Oslo.
- One party had a social media strategy; most party had an Fb page.
- One party had a formulated strategy for media presence.
- No party had a party outlet.
- One party had a campaign event outside Oslo – in Bergen
- No party group had a party secretariat; spin doctors or consultants



Candidates' campaigning activities

Bearašárbevierrun šaddan Sámediggái válljejuvvot

Sihke áddjáróhkis ja eadnis leaba guktot sámediggeáirasat leamašan. – Lean hui čeavlái.



SÁMEDIGGÁI: 25-jahkásaš Moss-ássi Aili Guttorm lea Norgga Sámiid Riikkasearvvi nubbievttogas Lulli-Norgga válgabires.

FOTO: MARIE I OLUISE SOMRY



Tor Emil Schanche
Journalista

Publisert 12. sep. 2017 k

- All top list candidates were interviewed by NRK Sápmi in Sami or Norwegian at least once.
- Scarce or no other journalistic attention.
- Most candidates had a Facebook account, mostly private.
- Few had Twitter accounts, rarely used.
- None had any form of assistance or support except for the party group

Methods work, hypotheses do not

Methods

- Surveys
 - interviews
 - media analyses
 - Social media analyses
- Work with adaptation

Findings

- Election campaigns in the south are not mediatised – there is hardly any political journalism
- They are less about visibility, more about trust?
- Parties and candidates did not replace lacking news media presence with social media presence
- Politicians and parties *know* their voters; - and the journalists

Sami elections vs national elections

- Large variations in visibility and journalistic attention
 - Sami and local media of little importance in the south, important in the north. Nationwide media unimportant.
- Social media of less importance for Sami parties and politicians, more important for Sami voters.
- Social media strategy successful when applied.



«Samekjendispartiet» trolig historisk i Norge

Conclusions

- Sami election campaigns are similar – and different
- Should be included in routine political communication research
- Hypotheses need to be refined and adapted according to the growing body of knowledge.



SÁMEDIGGERÁÐÐI: Mikkel Eskil Mikkelsen (NSR), Berit Marie Eira (Johttisápmelaččaid lista), Aili Keskitalo (NSR), Silje Karine Muotka (NSR) ja Henrik Olsen (NSR).

FOTO: DAN ROBERT LARSEN / NRK