



The Sami are the only formally recognized indigenous population in Sweden. The general knowledge of social and economic differences between the Sami population and the majority population is limited. However a number of Nordic studies has shown that there are no major differences in health condition between the Sami population and the national majority. However the studies have revealed that Sami perceive a lower quality of life including health, mental health and various social factors, compared with the national majority. The studies also highlight a major difference between Sami involved in reindeer husbandry a traditional Sami occupation, and other Sami. Sami involved in reindeer husbandry are more exposed to risks for mortal and non mortal incidents and accidents than other Sami. The incident of suicide is also higher in this group. Sami involved in reindeer husbandry are generally having a notable lower income than other male workers. The differences in income have slightly increased the last decades. The explanation would probably be that it is more difficult today than earlier to maintain reindeer husbandry as a profitable business.

During a visit in Sweden in 2007 the UN Special rapporteur Paul Hunt highlighted the psycho-social conditions among Sami including abuse of alcohol and drugs, incidents of assault and work related accidents. In his reports the Child ombudsman are also claiming that a high number of Sami children are perceiving discrimination due to their ethnic background. The Equality ombudsman are also receiving an increasing number of notification of discriminating related to Sami. Still it is difficult to know whether this increase is due to increasing incidents of discrimination or on improvement and increased information efforts directed to the Sami community.

Sweden has a number of international law obligations in relation to the Sami population. As the Sami also are defined as a national minority they are enjoying a special protection within the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. There is also national legislation protecting Sami rights to land, water, education, etc. There is a legal protection against discrimination including special requirements on the state and local authorities to ensure equality for the Sami.

The Sami parliament possesses funds for Sami culture, language and economy. A number of European Union development programmes are also containing special budget lines to develop the Sami enterprise

and Sami rural development. Through its minority policy the government is also supporting the development of Sami rights within the local community.

| The children ombudsman, the equality ombudsman and the Institute of public health together with the Sami community are conducting mappings, information campaigns and jointly developing action proposals to increase national knowledge about the conditions of the Sami and to promote their development. The Sami parliament as a as an democratically elected body are also working to promote development, increase awareness and to promote equal rights and opportunities for the Sami.

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During 2010 the Sami parliament was commissioned by the government to promote awareness raising about Sami directed to the other national minorities in Sweden.

The Sami parliament are yearly reporting on activities and achievements carried out. This information in combination with different international reports are key instruments to continuously evaluate and compile information concerning the support to and the development of the Sami groups.