

CoE anti-discrimination and minority-rights experts, Sami representatives and government officials
share knowledge and good practices on indigenous peoples' rights in Lapland

Members of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) brought their expertise together in Inari, Finland to discuss how the Council of Europe human-rights monitoring mechanisms can address a question of concern to several neighbouring member States: the situation of the Sami people, their culture and languages.

During a seminar, which was also attended by Sami representatives from Finland, Norway, the Russian Federation and Sweden as well as Government officials from CoE countries, the anti-discrimination and minority-rights specialists were provided with ample opportunity to consider genuine democratic participation, education and access to services in Sami languages, initiatives to promote their use, gender and youth issues and the role of the media. Coping with change, dealing with diversity within the communities, using modern technology and preserving culture outside the traditional Sami areas were, inevitably, the main cross-cutting issues.

The experts from the three monitoring mechanisms focused on enhancing synergies to ensure effective respect of the right to equality in all its facets. They also examined the need for further CoE action in the field of indigenous peoples' rights.

The seminar and side events which started on November 27th and finished on November 29th 2014 were organised by the Council of Europe, as part of the activities of its new Steering Committee of Social Cohesion, Equality and Human Dignity, as well as by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sami Parliament of Finland.

Link to the programme: [Link](#)

For more information on ECRI: www.coe.int/ecri

For more information on the FCNM: www.coe.int/minorities

For more information on the ECRML: www.coe.int/minlang

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