

Supporting Sámi languagesin digital services

Towards linguistic equality

Liber conference 6th July 2022, session 3

Riitta Koikkalainen, information specialist

Niko Partanen, information specialist

Contents

- Background: The world of languages (4)
- National Library of Finland (2)
- National Library of Finland Supporting North Sámi in digital services; Finna, Finto, Kotoistus (20)
- Unesco (1)
- References (1)
- Acknowledgements (1)
- Post Scriptum (1)

The world of languages

- **184** official languages in the World
- **~7 151** known living languages
- **~4 800** indigenous languages
- **3 045** endangered languages

Statistics & concepts: [Ethnologue](#)

The world of languages: Sámi

Ten Sámi languages:

1. North Sámi (20 000 speakers)
2. Aanaar Sámi
3. Skolt Sámi
4. Kildin Sámi
5. Lule Sámi
6. South Sámi
7. Pite Sámi
8. Ume Sámi
9. Ter Sámi
10. Akkala Sámi



Graphics: Marko Oja & Riitta Koikkalainen, 2022.

The world of languages: Sámi in Finland

Three Sámi languages used in Finland:

1. North Sámi (2000 speakers)
2. Aanaar Sámi (~450 speakers)
3. Skolt Sámi (~300 speakers)

References:

Bakró-Nagy, Marianne et al. (2022).

Ylikoski, Jussi (2022).



Graphics: Marko Oja & Riitta Koikkalainen, 2022.

Languages in Republic of Finland

- Principal & official languages: **2**
- Established languages: **15**
- Indigenous languages: **9**
- Institutional languages: **4**
- Unestablished languages listed : **33**

Language support in NatLibFi's digital services (2022):

- Finnish
- Swedish
- English

<https://www.ethnologue.com/country/FI>

Ministry of Justice, Finland:

<https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/linguistic-rights>

National Library of Finland



Finland's largest and oldest research library

- Responsible for the accumulation, description, preservation, and availability of the national published heritage.
- Function as the **service centre** and **guiding force** for the entire library sector and work closely with museums, galleries and archives.
- Services for public: **free** use for everyone, free of charge
- **International** co-operation in developing and maintaining

Services for the Library Network

IT-services for Finnish libraries and other memory institutions

- **Melinda** - Collaborative environment for national cataloguing
- **Finto** – Vocabulary and ontology service
- **Finna** – Common user interface for all Finnish libraries, museums and archives
- **FinELib** – National licensing of e-material
- **Library System Services** - Free and open-source Koha provided to several university and special libraries
- **Kotoistus** – Promoting the use of ICT products and services in the native language of the user
- **Repository services** – Centralised platform services for Finnish institutional repositories

National Library of Finland Supporting Sámi languages in digital services

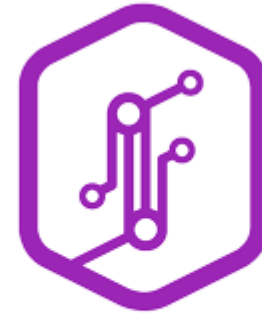
“We will **promote the availability of information resources and services** by developing compatibility solutions and related infrastructures through national and international cooperation.”
–National Library of Finland (NatLibFi) Strategy

The project promotes access to resources in the North Sámi language while **supporting the linguistic rights and equality of the Sámi culture** by developing the infrastructure of digital services.

Three digital services of NatLibFi in this project

Finna

Search service



FINNA

Finto

Terminology and ontology service



Kotoistus

Service promoting the use of ICT products and services in the native language of the user



Why support for North Sámi (only)?

The project will focus on **North Sámi**, the **most common** Sámi language in Finland and the one with the **most resources available**.



The aims of the project

- To **promote access** to resources in North Sámi
- To enable North Sámi-speaking customers of National Library services to have an **effortless user experience in their own language**
- To **support the linguistic rights** and **equality** of Sámi culture

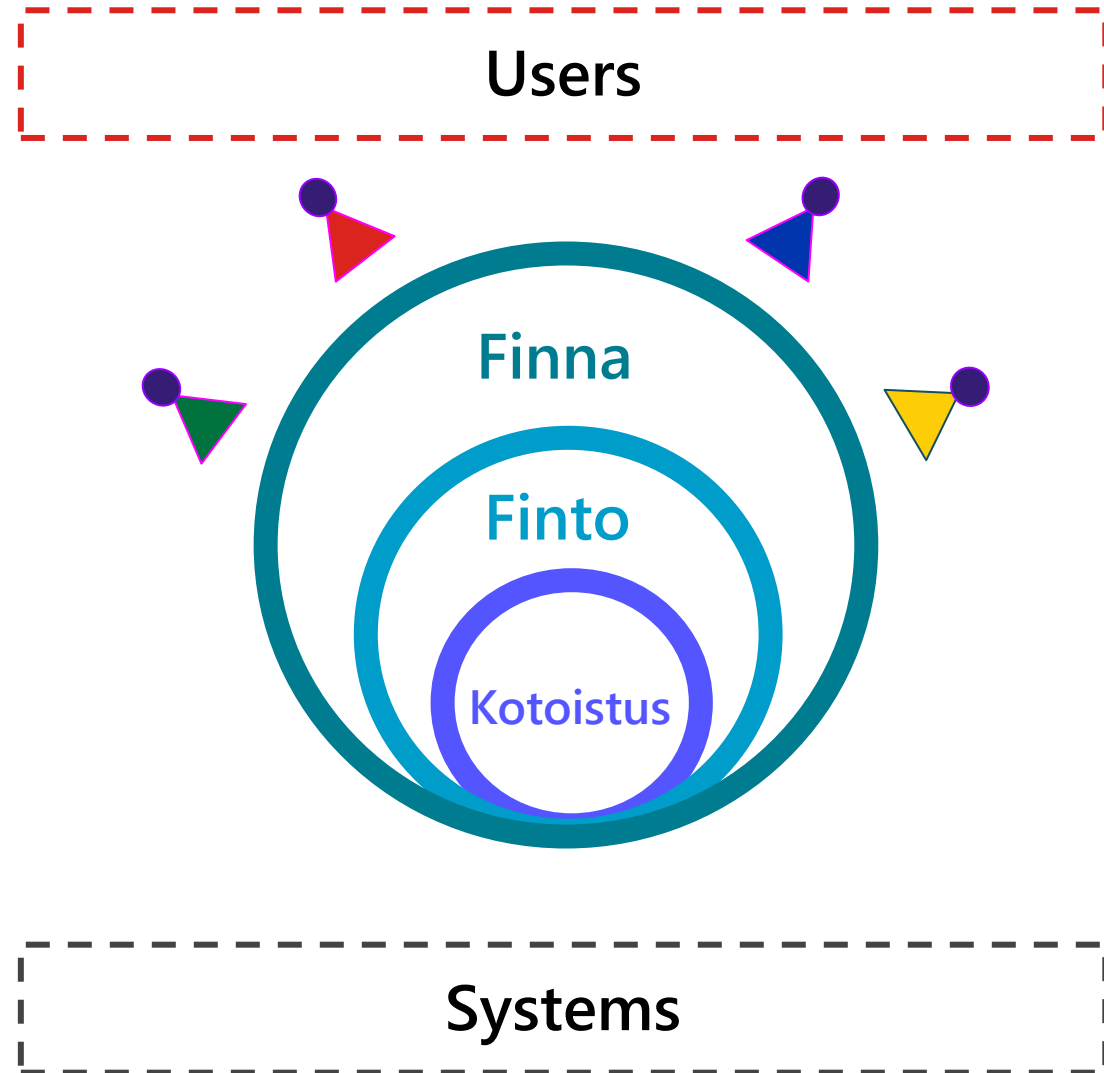
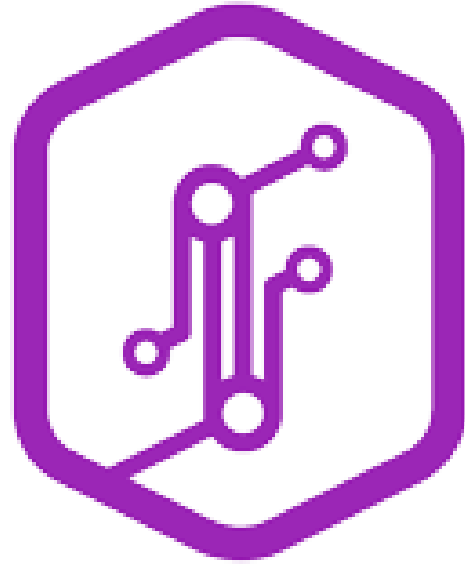


Figure: Riitta Koikkalainen, 2022.



FINNA

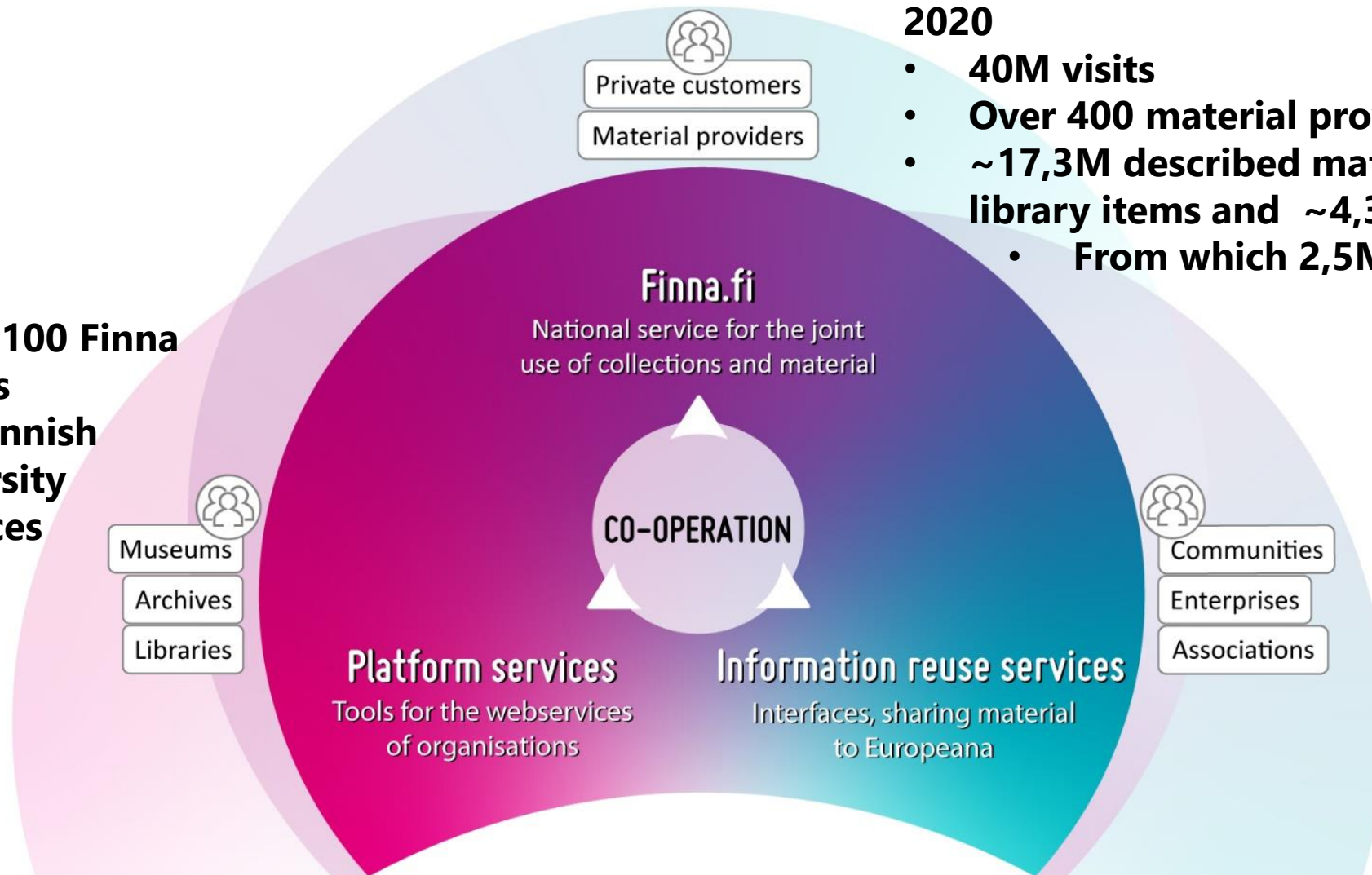
<https://www.finna.fi/?lng=en-gb>

Finnish cultural and scientific treasures from one address



Figure: Finna-team.

There are almost 100 Finna based search sites including most Finnish public and university library web services



2020

- **40M visits**
- **Over 400 material provider org.**
- **~17,3M described material (~13M library items and ~4,3M other items)**
 - **From which 2,5M available online**

Finna's work packages related to Sámi project

- 1) Translations of Finna's user interfaces
- 2) Continuous support for North Sámi in user interface translations
- 3) Enrichment of descriptive data in the cultural heritage organisations (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums; GLAM)

finto

<https://finto.fi/en/>

Finto – an overlook to the service



Graphics: Matias Frosterus & Mikko Lappalainen, 2022.

Finto's work packages related to Sámi project

- 1) North Sámi support for machine-readable ontologies
- 2) Translation of General Finnish Ontology (YSO) into North Sámi & standardization of new terms
- 3) Publishing new North Sámi terms of YSO on Wikidata
- 4) Continuous support for North Sámi in YSO



<https://kotoistus.fi/>

Promoting the use of ICT products and services in the native language of the user via close and intense interaction with Unicode Common Locale Repository (CLDR).

<https://cldr.unicode.org/index>



The work packages for Kotoistus related to Sámi project

- 1) To update Unicode CLDR locale Finnish-North Sámi
- 2) To define supplementary information into Unicode CLDR locale Finnish-North Sámi
- 3) Continuous update & support of CLDR locale Finnish-North Sámi

Future

In the future, the abovementioned services (Finna, Finto, Kotoistus) will feature **persistent support** for **North Sámi** through **relevant cooperation networks**.

Basic infrastructure will be built during 2022–2024.

Aim is to offer base strong enough for further usage and flourishing of North Sámi research, education and culture.

Strong network supporting the processes

The project is supported and actively steered by an extensive **network** of experts in the **Sámi languages and cultures**:

- the [Sámi Parliament of Finland](#),
- the [Sámi Museum Siida](#),
- the [libraries in the Sámi area of Finland](#),
- the [Giellagas Institute for Sámi Studies](#),
- the language authority [Sámi Giellagáldu](#),
- the [Department of Sámi languages](#) at the University of Tromsø – The Arctic University of Norway, and
- [Unicode](#).

Steering group of the Sámi project

Tauno Ljetoff (chair)
Sámediggi

Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen
National Library of Finland

Nina Hyvönen
National Library of Finland

Riitta Koikkalainen
National Library of Finland, Kotoistus

Mikko Lappalainen
National Library of Finland, Finto

Oona Leppälä
Siida Sámi Museum

Kimberli Mäkäräinen
OpenGLAM

Tiina Mäntylä
Sámi Special Library of Finland

Niko Partanen
National Library of Finland

Päivi Pihlaja
National Library of Finland

Magreta Sara
Sámediggi

Erkki Tolonen
National Library of Finland, Finna

Trond Trosterud
UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Jussi Ylikoski
Giellagas Institute

Susanna Ånäs
OpenGLAM

Study group & Team Sámi NatLibFi

Study group

Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen
Director of Services (primus motor)

Nina Hyvönen
Information Systems Manager

Riitta Koikkalainen
Information Specialist (Kotoistus)

Mikko Lappalainen
Development Manager (Finto)

Erkki Tolonen
Head of Development (Finna)

Team Sámi NatLibFi = Study group &

Mari Guttorm
Information Specialist

Niko Partanen
Information Specialist (coordinator & project manager)

Päivi Pihlaja
Information Specialist



Unesco

The Sámi project is implemented in the spirit of the UNESCO Decade of Indigenous Languages ([IDIL](#) 2022–2032)

“The United Nations General Assembly (Resolution A/RES/74/135) proclaimed the period between 2022 and 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022-2032), to draw global attention on the critical situation of many **indigenous languages** and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their **preservation**, **revitalization** and **promotion**.” – Unesco, About the IDIL

References

Bakró-Nagy Marianne, Johanna Laakso, and Elena Skribnik (2022). *The Oxford Guide to the Uralic Languages*. Oxford University Press.

[Ethnologue](#)

Merivirta, Raita, Leila Koivunen, and Timo Särkkä (eds.) (2022). *Finnish Colonial Encounters: From Anti-Imperialism to Cultural Colonialism and Complicity*. Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies. Palgrave Macmillan Cham.

National Library of Finland.

- Sámi project: <https://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/en/projects/support-sami-languages-digital-services>
- Strategic plan of the National Library of Finland 2021–2030. Persistent address: <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2020042822711>
- Vision for Finna's services in 2025: Smart and participatory access to cultural and scientific materials for everyone. Persistent address: <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2020040914169>
- <https://www.kansalliskirjasto.fi/en/about-us/duties-and-strategy>

Tanner, S. (2012) *Measuring the Impact of Digital Resources: The Balanced Value Impact Model*. King's College London, October 2012. Available: kdl.kcl.ac.uk/what-we-do/consultancy/thinking-and-innovation/balanced-value-impact-model

Unesco.

- <https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-launches-world-atlas-languages-celebrate-and-protect-linguistic-diversity>
- <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/indigenous-languages.html>

Unicode CLDR. <https://cldr.unicode.org/index>

Acknowledgements

First and foremost:

Alfred Kordelin Foundation's generous funding enables us to build the basic support for North Sámi to Finna, Finto, and Kotoistus services.

Sámi Network

Alfred Kordelin foundation

Much appreciated also:



Tapio Nykänen

D.Scs., associate professor
University of Lapland

Team Sámi

National Library of Finland

Maritta Stoor-Lehtonen

Ph.D., associate professor
University of Jyväskylä

**Reeta Kuuskoski
& Emma Pietarila**

information systems specialists
National Library of Finland

Jussi Ylikoski

Ph.D., professor
University of Turku

Marko Oja

communications specialist
National Library of Finland

Post Scriptum

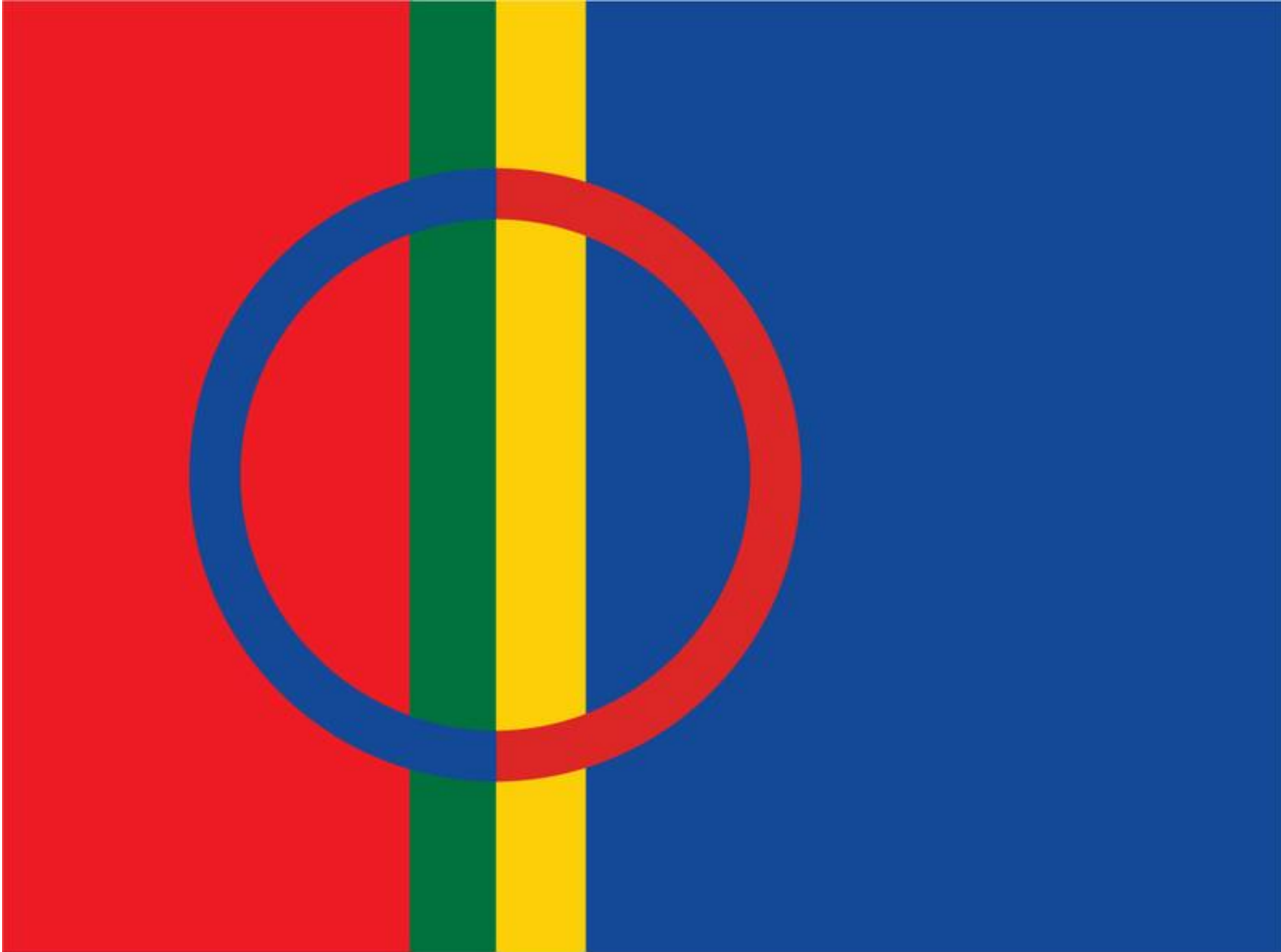
Some members of NatLibFi Team Sámi visited Lapland in June, having a proper kick off for the project.



Nina Hyvönen, Mari Guttorm, Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen, Niko Partanen and Mikko Lappalainen heading to Lake Inari, June 2022. Photo: Erkki Tolonen.



Visiting Siida museum. Mari Guttorm, Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen, Nina Hyvönen, Erkki Tolonen, Susanna Ånäs, Mikko Lappalainen and Niko Partanen. Photo: Unknown.



Thank you for your attention!



www.nationallibrary.fi

Riitta Koikkalainen, information specialist
riitta.koikkalainen@helsinki.fi

Niko Partanen, information specialist
niko.partanen@helsinki.fi