

**Workshop:** Indigenizing Education: Historical Perspectives and Present Challenges in Sámi Education

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Abstract

## **Sámi Education Across Borders: Some Historical Lines**

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In my presentation, I will talk about Sámi education history from its early stages to the present day using a comparative pan-Sámi perspective. The very early modules of Sámi education history were comprised of civilisation ideology and conducted by the church beginning in the 1600s. From the 1800s onwards, the national folk school system produced continuing language loss and different kinds cultural colonialism through various policies in different nation states where Sámi people lived. The Russian context from the 1940s onwards was an era of traumatic events, while Swedish policy can be described as segregation. The Norway conducted written assimilation policy. In Finland, the Finnish language and Finnishness was centred so that minorities and Indigenous peoples were not given any special attention, and assimilation happened through this kind of nationalism. It was not until 1970 than the Sámi language was given official status in primary schools. Later, different acts and international instruments were created to protect Indigenous people's rights, including education. Now the accessibility of Sámi language teaching is important as many of the children are living outside core Sámi areas because of migration. This brings new challenges to Sámi education. Assimilation has produced a diverse situation among learners, so the concepts and pedagogy must be seen with new eyes.