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**To cite this article:** Kjell Olsen & Albina Pashkevich (2023): Selling the indigenous in Nordic welfare states: examples from Norway and Sweden, Current Issues in Tourism, DOI: [10.1080/13683500.2023.2217352](https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2023.2217352)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2023.2217352>



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Published online: 26 May 2023.



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RESEARCH LETTER



# Selling the indigenous in Nordic welfare states: examples from Norway and Sweden

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## ABSTRACT

Indigenous peoples' right to control representations of their own culture and heritage is unquestionable, but in the case of tourism activities other stakeholders' understandings come into play. The nation-state is still an important organizational foundation for tourism. For the Indigenous Sámi people, who are located in four different nation-states, national destination management organizations (DMOs) have a crucial role in how their culture and traditions are represented. The current study examines the content of Visit Norway and Visit Sweden's visual marketing of indigenous Sámi tourism products. Using content analysis to sort electronic images and related texts, categories distinguishing natural, human, and other types of relevant symbols were created. The marketing strategies of both countries reinforce the traditional connection of the Sámi people to nature and their reindeer. Visit Sweden uses a distinct notion of what we call the artification of the Sámi, where young female artists contribute to the modern image of this indigenous people. Visit Norway continues to use more stereotypical representations of the Sámi, with a focus on colourful outfits and traditional buildings. Thus, tourism marketing continues to reinforce simplified images of the indigenous populations of the Arctic and their relation to the nation-state.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 27 October 2022


Accepted 18 May 2023

## KEYWORDS

Sami tourism; indigenous people; representations; Arctic tourism; visit Norway; visit Sweden

## 1. Introduction

The Indigenous Sámi people in Sápmi, a region which covers the northern parts of Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Russian Kola peninsula, have during the past centuries received attention from and been variously depicted by government officials, scientists, travellers, and explorers and, later on, the tourist industry. Their representation as the colourful and exotic 'last nomads of Europe' allowed many reindeer-herding Sámi to enter the evolving tourism industry in the late nineteenth century. For instance, the so-called Lapp camp became a familiar sight along summer tourist routes in the European north however, today, the use of 'Lapp' is considered a derogative term. Typically, visitors would see a Sámi or a Sámi couple dressed in *gakti* (traditional clothing) in front of a *goathi* (a turf hut) or a *lavvo* (a herders' tent) surrounded by grazing reindeer in the apparent wilderness. This image, which was based principally on settled/nomadic rather than ethnic divide but that came to dominate visitors' understanding of the world of the Sámi, can at best be described

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as a partial representation (Lethola, 2018) of a more economically and culturally heterogeneous culture (Axelsson et al., 2019).

This Sámi variant of what Bunten (2010, p. 294) labels '[t]he cultural tourism formula' for indigenous peoples was easily recognized by international tourists and can still be seen today. Simple souvenir outlets and more modern structures dominate in the marketing of Sámi tourism products.

The touristic advantage of this cultural formula is that it builds on a long-time historical depiction of the Sámi which, at least until recently, has been perpetuated by national DMOs (Olsen, 2003). Indigenous entrepreneurs selling other products based on cultural expressions, which are different to those found in the reindeer herding tradition, may find this a challenge because their own objects might not be visually recognized as Sámi by tourists.

The 'Lapp camp', as a formula for Sámi tourism products, seemed to lose some ground amongst those companies which entered the booming tourism industry in the pre-COVID-19 period. Many new tourism products began to be sold by Sámi people as Sámi products and paved the way for a more expansive interpretation of what can be labelled Sámi tourism (Olsen et al., 2019; Wright, 2014). In these new products, the old emblematic symbols of Sámi culture are less prominent or even absent or have been used in novel ways. This development coincides with political efforts on the part of the Sámi to reclaim control and fight the appropriation of their culture by the tourism industry (Olsen et al., 2019), as well as to make a breakthrough at an international level, sometimes by combining their art with political activism (Grahn, 2017).

In the current study, we consider tourism to be a worldmaking process shaped by other ordering forces and shaped by historical and political particularities, as well as being one of these orderings itself (Franklin, 2009). We draw attention to the paradoxes in the tourism industry's ordering of the Arctic where the product advertised seldom matches the heterogeneity encountered by tourists on-site. This is a paradox which well-educated and knowledgeable visitors are often aware of. They know that the traditional image of the Sámi cultural tourism formula seldom fits with the everyday life of the Sámi in the modern welfare states of Norway and Sweden, and some, therefore, may be reluctant to participate in what appears to be a staged indigeneity (Kramvig & Førde, 2020).

As part of our examination of this paradox, we will analyse the online marketing of Sámi tourism products by Norwegian and Swedish national DMOs and try to identify how changes could be made. We compare national differences in the portrayal of Sámi culture and discuss how the paradox relates to other paradoxes in the contemporary discourse concerning what Keskitalo, Petterson, et al. (2019, p. 1) describe as the 'Old North of Europe'. This, in recent decades, has been used to refer to the Arctic, thereby integrating it into the North American discourse on what the Arctic is. This brings its own paradox; rather than being the northern part of the European mainland, the area is now presented as the Arctic, a pristine wilderness with an indigenous population endangered by climate change, as well as a hotspot for extractive industries, new transport routes, and the tourism industry. We aim to demonstrate how the tourism industry is a part of this general discourse, even if it contains its own particular paradoxes regarding how the Arctic is ordered by different nation-states.

### **1.1. The Sámi in a Nordic context**

The Sámi people have always been in close contact with neighbouring populations. Their involvement in the different eastern and southern trade routes can be traced back more than 1000 years, and shaped their rather heterogeneous culture (Hansen & Olsen, 2014). From the thirteenth century, they became increasingly integrated into the fiscal, legal, and administrative systems of the changing state formations which emerged in the European north. From the eighteenth century, policies were introduced which aimed to assimilate the Sámi population into the different colonial projects of emergent nation-states.

Due to differences in national policies, the Sámi in Sweden are more closely related to the reindeer herding industry than their counterparts in Norway (Albury, 2015; Andresen et al., 2021, pp.

340–341; Axelsson et al., 2019; Lantto & Mörkenstam, 2008). In Norway, a large coastal economically adapted Sámi population who did not differ greatly from their neighbours of different ethnicities are prominent. They are more heterogeneous than the Sámi in Sweden, even if the reindeer herding population, who constitute a minority, still have a strong symbolic function at the core of Sámi culture and in its survival. The tourism industry has presented the Sámi primarily as belonging to an exotic reindeer herding culture (Olsen, 2003). However, today, with the boom in winter tourism, there are indications that things have changed. As Wright (2014) claims, many individual Sámi and Sámi communities have gained so much confidence in their own culture that culturally based tourism is now an option. Sámi entrepreneurs are developing tourism products which do not always relate to the emblematic cultural traits. We were interested to discover whether such changes can be identified in the national DMO marketing of Sámi tourism products in Norway and Sweden. Furthermore, we aimed to establish whether these changes were attributable to the differences between the policies in these Nordic nation-states. As Jamal and Robinson state, even if '[t]ourists themselves are wonderfully bad at not recognizing boundaries and administrative divides', the industry is still 'built around the concept of the nation-state' (2009, p. 5). This certainly applies to the Sámi, who can be found in four nation-states.

A growing global interest in the Arctic over the past two decades has impacted both Norway and Sweden (Keskitalo, 2019). Increasing attention has been paid to the cultivation of Arctic tourism and the possibilities this presents to local societies, as well as its effects (Herva et al., 2020; Lundmark et al., 2020). Researchers are becoming aware of the complexity of the situation caused by the rapid development of tourism in the Nordic Arctic, thus the calls for a new research agenda based on more nuanced collaborative efforts (Ren et al., 2020). Research into tourism representations of indigenous peoples in the Nordic countries has followed a similar evolutionary path, from examining the stereotypical and simplified industry promotions (Niskala & Ridanpää, 2016; Pashkevich & Keskitalo, 2017; Pettersson & Viken, 2007) to efforts to develop a more refined understanding of indigenous practices and their use in tourism beyond traditional assumptions (Keskitalo, Schilar, et al., 2019; Kramvig & Førde, 2020).

Heldt Cassel (2019), Fonneland (2013), and Niskala and Ridanpää (2016) have explored representations of the Sámi as 'the other' or the 'non-Western other' and the appropriation of their spirituality. It was concluded that the commercialization of culture always highlights the necessity of its simplification despite current attempts in Sweden, e.g. to mitigate this process by engaging Sámi tourism entrepreneurs in place-making practices (Heldt Cassel, 2019). Even the Sámi's connection to nature, which they have in common with contemporary Nordic societies, becomes a manifestation of exoticism and otherness (Niskala & Ridanpää, 2016). Sámi tourism, often identified as an important element in the economic diversification of peripheral areas, does not always reflect the capacity of Sámi entrepreneurs to address inequality or gain agency over representations which are created by multiple sets of stakeholders (de Bernardi, 2019; Keskitalo & Schilar, 2017; Keskitalo, Schilar, et al., 2019; Pietikäinen & Kelly-Holmes, 2011).

Moreover, the phrase indigenous peoples is now more understood in terms of its social, political, and institutional heterogeneity and how these underpin its representations in the tourist context (Keskitalo, Schilar, et al., 2019; Viken & Müller, 2017). Following Zhang and Müller (2018), who relate the special status of the Sámi to the experience of indigenous populations in other parts of the world, we explore the official channels of Nordic tourism as they shape and mirror current narratives which position the Sámi and thus contribute to the ordering of contemporary identities in the European north. Using context-specific comparisons based on Sámi tourism in Norway and Sweden helps illuminate the current state of tourism in northern European areas, which are struggling to develop economically because they are heavily reliant on natural resources or international tourism, both of which often override Sámi interests in both countries (Herva et al., 2020; Keskitalo & Schilar, 2017). Last, but not least, we demonstrate the continuous impact of nation-states as an ordering global force. Therefore, attention to national DMOs is important since they also have a wider audience than those interested in Indigenous tourism. Tourists with a particular interest will

probably attain a more nuanced image from brochures available on site, which contain information on contemporary culture while still highlighting the traditional (de Bernardi, 2022). The wish for an emphasis on contemporary everyday life was also pointed out by local stakeholders in Sámi areas (Olsen et al., 2019, pp. 34–35) both to counter the exotic image as such and also as potential for the development of new products and experiences for visitors. Nevertheless, such a potential change in national DMOs' marketing will probably have to be aligned with the respective national Sámi Parliaments' efforts against appropriation of indigenous culture and for a responsible and ethical sustainable Sámi tourism (Sámediggi.fi, n.d.).

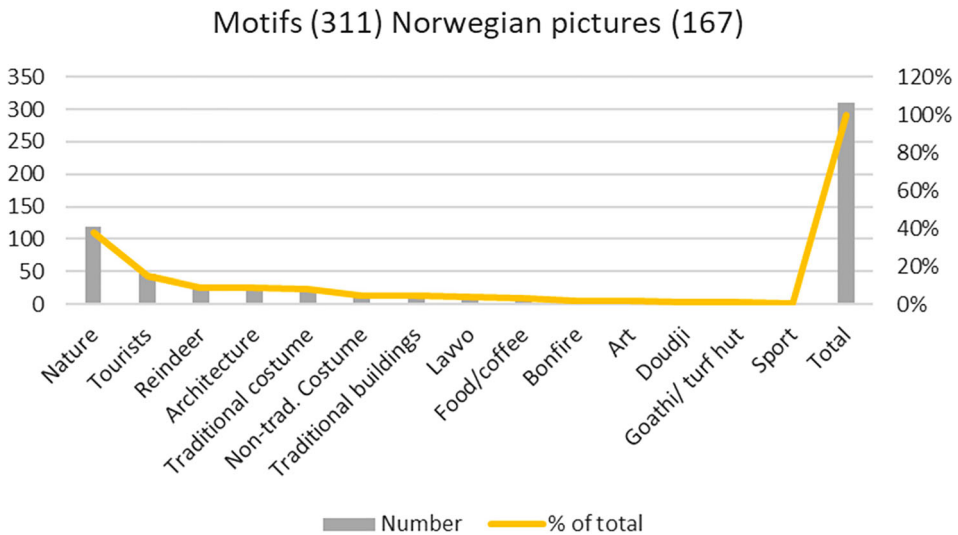
## 2. Materials and methods

The analysis of the webpages of the respective organizations is based on Dann (1996), wherein the author assumes that tourism practices are learnt and that marketing materials have an impact on the process of learning. Such materials influence how, where, and in what situations the Sámi people and their culture are recognized as tourist attractions. The reason for following Dann's approach is that indigenous people are usually observable tourist subjects, but the Sámi in their everyday lives are barely distinguishable from other Norwegians or Swedes. Therefore, an attempt is made here to establish how national DMOs locate the Sámi people and their culture (and within which contexts). A search for the word Sámi was carried out on 6 December 2018 and 28 September 2021 on <https://visitnorway.com>. The second search was carried out to see if there had been any major changes; only one was noted – a company offering several experiences based on traditional pre-Christian religion. The Swedish search on <https://visitsweden.com/> was carried out on 13 December 2021.

One of the issues regarding the analysis is that the webpages are dynamic. The returns in the different categories change daily and differ across the different language sites. Furthermore, the searches were carried out at different times; the Norwegian search, pre-pandemic and a few days after pandemic restrictions were lifted, and the Swedish search, during the pandemic itself. In addition, the two countries took two different approaches during the pandemic, e.g. Norwegian restrictions on entry to the country were much stricter than those for Sweden. Nevertheless, the tourist industry in both countries faced essentially the same challenges, e.g. lower visitor numbers.

We use descriptive statistics to give a general rather than detailed picture because we are interested in the overall image tourists receive when visiting the sites. This image will influence their idea of the Sámi people when they meet with them. We apply Barthes' (1977) claim regarding the conjunction of the image and text and do not simply reproduce an image of the Sámi based on the visual recognition of emblematic signs, thus leaving out pages which just contained the word Sámi without any other relationship with the people themselves. The sites often refer to the Sámi when explaining the term *lavvo*. The *lavvo* and to a lesser degree *bidos*, a traditional Sámi dish, seem to have become associated with Norwegian *friluftsliv*, outdoor life, and nature-based tourism in general. In addition, an architect with the first name Sámi appears several times in the text. As Barthes states, text and image 'stand in a complementary relationship' and 'are fragments of a more general syntagm and the unity of the message is realised at a higher level, that of the story, the anecdote, the diegesis' (1977, p. 41). This means that a caption, a headline, or a body of written text are key elements in the meaning-making which takes place when someone looks at an image. An image of a scene becomes a Sámi scene when described as such in the text. Therefore, we use the written text which appeared with the picture in the search to decide whether this was an expression of something Sámi-related.

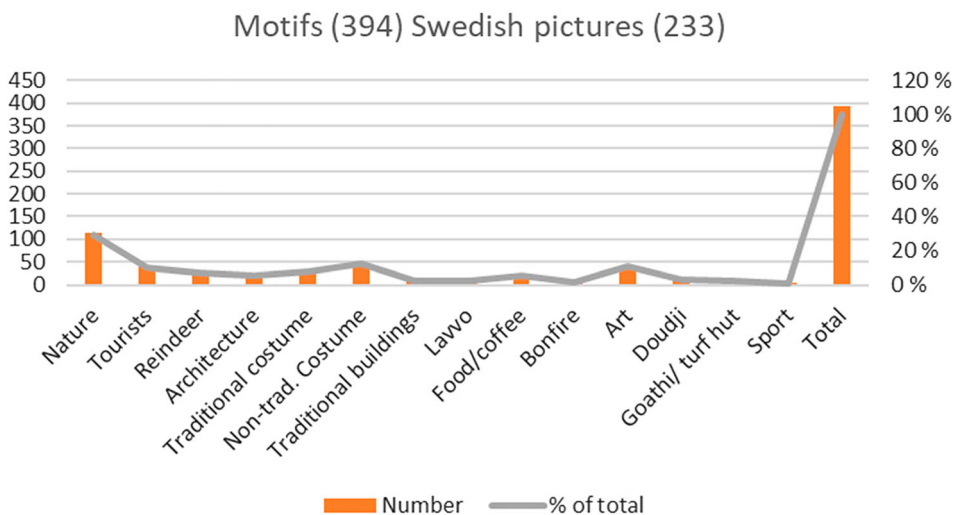
To obtain an overview of the motifs found in the pictures, we went through the two sites with the aim of categorizing the motifs based on previous research and adapting them to Dann's (1996) settings. The Swedish site contained 233 pictures with 394 identified motifs and the Norwegian, 167 pictures and 311 motifs (Figures 1 and 2).



**Figure 1.** Distribution of visual images according to categories from Visit Norway electronic promotion materials. Graph showing the number of analysed images within fourteen categories and their relation in percentage to the total number found on the Visit Norway website. Predominant images were found in the categories, such as nature, tourists, reindeer, architecture, and traditional costume. (Source: authors).

### 3. Results

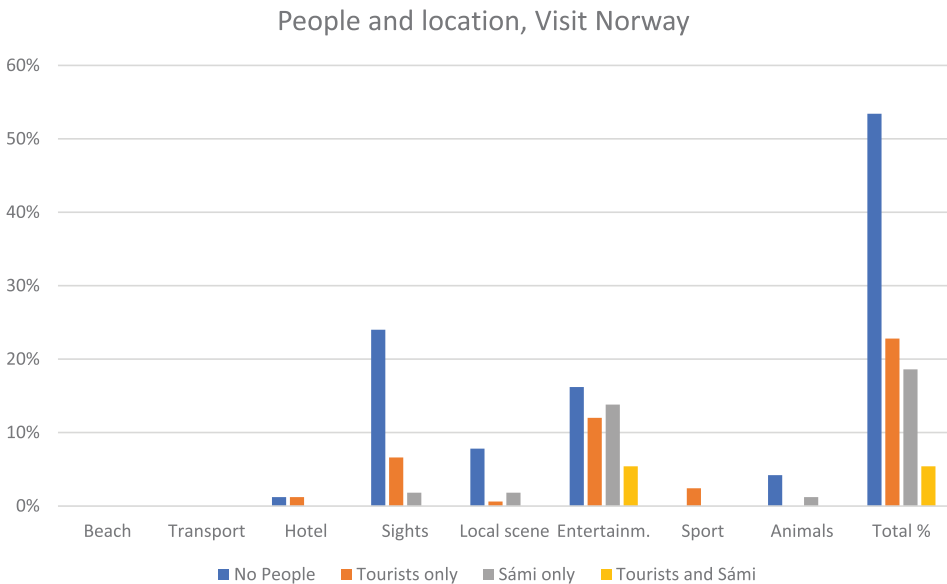
Both sites show a preoccupation with the promotion of nature-based experiences connected to tourism in the northern areas where the Sámi people make up the greater or lesser parts of the population (Norway 38%, Sweden 29%, see Figures 1 and 2). The landscape-related representations are similar in both countries – uninhabited territory covered with snow and highlighted with different colours during the autumn. Images depicting tourists (Norway 15%, Sweden



**Figure 2.** Distribution of visual images according to categories from Visit Sweden electronic promotion materials. Graph showing the number of analysed images within 14 categories and their relation in percentage to the total number found on the Visit Sweden website. Predominant were found in the categories, such as nature, tourists, reindeer, and traditional costume. (Source: authors).

10%) present them as facing the landscape away from the spectator, silhouetted against magnificent low-lying mountains, or interacting with reindeer as they participate in Sámi-related activities. Moreover, the connection to reindeer seems to be equally important in depictions of the unique character of the Sámi semi-nomadic culture on both sites (Norway 8%, Sweden 7%). The implication here is that reindeer herding still plays a decisive role in the lives of the indigenous Sámi, which serves to highlight their traditional culture. Touristic experiences include practices involving domesticated animals (often calves which have been rejected by their mothers) and visitors learning about reindeer survival strategies, predators, and migration routes by engaging in either feeding activities (similar to a moose safari, or in the current case, a reindeer safari) or walking with the reindeer.

The emphasis on nature is more apparent on the Visit Norway website, see Figure 3. One reason for this might be that access to nature is the main motivator for most tourists. In many images, other emblematic symbols of Sámi culture are set in the landscape. For example, reindeer are portrayed in a barren landscape and this connection between animals, landscape, and people is enhanced by the text, e.g. when a product selling access to the animals' and herders' annual migration from the inland to the coast is promoted: 'The tour starts from the inland, the heart of Sámi culture, and heads north towards the Arctic coast' (Visit Norway, 2021). The use of the expression which situates the inland as 'the heart of Sámi culture' differentiates Sweden and Norway. In contrast with Sweden, Sámi identities in Norway are not connected to reindeer herding alone and there are more Sámi living outside than inside what are usually labelled the core areas of the interior. Traditionally, the coastal Sámi have had occupations which are quite similar to their non-Sámi neighbours and, due to colonizing policies, the overwhelming majority of them do not speak any of the Sámi languages. The inland as 'the heart of Sámi culture' also goes straight to the heart of contemporary Sámi politics. In the 2021 election for the Norwegian Sámi Parliament, one of the major planks of the platform of the second-largest party, *Nordkalottfolket*, was how Norwegian legislation and the Sámi Parliament's politics disadvantage fisheries, farming, and outfield industries (all areas in which Sámi was



**Figure 3.** Distribution of images in the categories 'people and location' found in the electronic marketing from Visit Norway. Graph showing the share in per cent of total images found in the specific category 'people and location' found on the Visit Norway website. Images in this category are further subdivided in relation to the specific location. Images within categories such as sights, local scene and entertainment show no people present in relation to them. (Source: authors).



traditionally occupied) relative to the reindeer-herding industry. The common and longstanding link between the land, reindeer, and their owners are erased in the Visit Norway promotional material.

### 3.1. Differences between Norway and Sweden

A small difference between clothing representations which have no reference to Sámi culture was observed in the analysis (Norway 5%, Sweden 12%). For Visit Sweden, both Sámi tourism entrepreneurs and Sámi designers are depicted wearing functional outdoor wear, usually by famous Swedish brands. This corresponds closely with its strategy of promoting Swedish design and functional wear in particular; Houdini, Häglöfs, and Fjällräven are promoted worldwide alongside brands such as Acne and Fillipa K. Thus, depicting Sámi people wearing expensive outdoor clothing gives the impression of them being or looking like ordinary Swedes to visitors, whether international or domestic. The Sámi people presented in this way become 'one of us', despite them having other unique features in connection to traditional knowledge, landscape utilization, heritage, and so on (see images on Visit Sweden at <https://www.swedishlapland.com/stories/the-mindset-of-geunja/>). This may be seen as a positive sign in terms of the refinement of marketing strategies which are designed to defocus traditional clothing as a marker of someone's cultural identity, as cultural belonging and self-identification are not dependent on the clothes which one wears. However, when attempts are made to convey the atmosphere of Jokkmokk's oldest traditional Sámi festival, images are presented of Sámi wearing colourful outfits symbolizing celebration and cultural belonging alongside reindeer drawing tastefully decorated sledges containing products which are available for purchase by visitors. Images showing traditional costume are for specific events, which is when most Sámi wear it nowadays. By implication, the Sámi are presented as being part of modern Nordic society.

Traditional Sámi buildings such as the *goahti* and *lavvo* are marketed similarly in both countries. Norway seems to be more preoccupied with them (Norway 5% and 4%, Sweden 2% and 2%, respectively), which reflects the idea of traditional being responsible to explain the essence of the unique Sámi culture. Following the same line of reasoning, the traditional Sámi *lavvo* is used to take care of visitors to Sámi touristic experience camps, but also by many non-Sámi entrepreneurs and private people as well. Nowadays, *lavvo* is a modern construction built to entertain rather than to provide a sense of the real Sámi experience, as Sámi themselves today live in conventional Norwegian and Swedish houses (though they may still use *lavvos* when camping or attending to their reindeer). Occasionally, the *lavvo* is used as part of the performance, the storytelling of Sámi culture, traditions, and a means of introducing visitors to traditional food. Thus, it serves as both visitor accommodation while they rest, eat, and listen to tales, and a living illustration of a traditional way of life. What is also noticeable is that the Sámi tourism entrepreneur is depicted wearing clothes which place them on the same level as the visitors, while their performance, knowledge, and stories make them unique.

Another noticeable difference between the countries is how Sámi art objects are presented (Norway 2%, Sweden 11%). This difference can be explained as the result of a temporary pronounced focus, on the part of Visit Sweden, on local artists and designers and the country's strong global position as one of the leading design nations. By contrast, Norway is traditionally associated with raw material exports such as fish, oil, and gas. However, the respective countries' DMOs may simply choose to concentrate on certain themes which ally with their marketing campaigns. In light of the discussions above, e.g. the use of traditional versus non-traditional clothes, a focus on local artists presenting both traditional and modern interpretations of Sámi symbols is entirely natural. It also recognizes the atmosphere of creativity which can be found within a younger more gender-diverse Sámi generation and the appropriate commodification of Sámi culture through the producers of the culture themselves (see Figure 4). They operate more on their own terms, which strengthen their cultural identity. The Sámi in general, meanwhile, are less concerned with producing precious silver and gold art objects than with making affordable clothes, souvenirs, and food which can be easily consumed by domestic and international tourists.





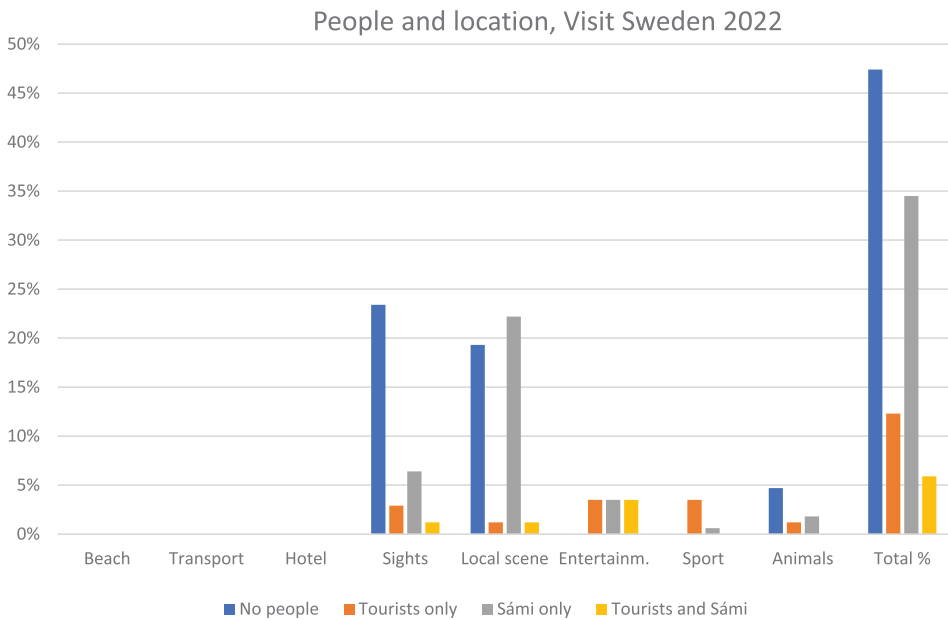
**Figure 4.** One of the examples of modern accessories using traditional inspiration from Stoorstålka, a Jokkmokk (Sweden) based company. A photograph showing two examples of modern woollen scarfs beside each other, inspired by traditional Sámi dresses and produced by the Stoorstaelka company which is based in the town of Jokkmokk in Sweden. (Source: author's own).

In terms of landscape and location, major differences were observed between the DMOs' representations of tourists and the Sámi related to the Sámi culture. In the case of Norway, most tourists were depicted in sites of particular interest while in the Swedish case, they were occupied by the Sámi themselves, i.e. images of local scenery featured tourists in Norway and Sámi in Sweden. Another difference between the two countries concerned images connected to entertainment. On the Visit Sweden website, Sámi tourism entrepreneurs and their guests were represented equally, while in Norway both categories were overrepresented. In the Norwegian case, the images complement the findings of Kelly-Homes and Petikäinen (2014) regarding Finland, where fixed locations are often used for the provision of organized encounters between visitors and Sámi cultural representatives (Figure 5).

Other categories which were analysed contained images representing sports/outdoor activities (such as hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, and so on), and the use or presence of animals. Both categories were equally significant, which reflects the DMOs' notion that nature-based activities and the presence of reindeer herds as a colourful and exotic backdrop to their marketing images would entice potential visitors.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

The current study has examined whether changes amongst businesses selling Sámi tourism products can be identified in the national marketing in Norway and Sweden. Furthermore, we



**Figure 5.** Distribution of images in the categories ‘people and location’ found in the electronic marketing from Visit Sweden. Graph showing the share in per cent of total images found in the specific category ‘people and location’ found on the Visit Sweden website. Images in this category are further subdivided in relation to the specific location. Images within categories such as sights and local scene show no people present in relation to them, but also higher occurrence of Sámi in them. (Source: authors).

aimed to discover whether any changes were traceable to differences amongst the Sámi themselves in two Nordic nation-states. Even if the Sámi appear as one nation within the home region of Sápmi and the Sámi parliaments in Finland, Norway, and Sweden emphasize such unity, the Sámi are equally embedded in different national systems and policies. An analysis of national DMOs in Norway and Sweden revealed national differences and point to the crucial role of nation-states in ordering processes. Still, we found evidence of a rather exotic and emblematic image of the Sámi (Olsen, 2003) where nature, the *gakti*, and, to use Bunten’s (2010) conceptualization, what we might label a Sámi version of the cultural tourism formula are combined. Nevertheless, there are also some important differences in the images promoted by the two national DMOs.

First, in the case of Sweden primarily, non-emblematic (and also high-tech) outdoor living and specific situations are characterized by a particular juxtaposition of image and text. The *gakti* is no longer a necessary component of images where Sámi people are guiding tourists in the vast and apparently empty northern landscape or interacting with tourists around a fire in a *goahti* or a *lavvo*. Sáminess is increasingly implied by text rather than by emblematic signs.

The Sámi have for a long time been associated with ecological awareness (Mathisen, 2004), and this is something which allies them with the general idea of the indigenous in Western society. However, they are becoming more modern and less identified with emblematic symbols. In addition, while the contemporary ecological Sámi in Sweden is represented in male form, the old Sámi cultural tourism formula often depicted a woman in *gakti* making coffee or cooking reindeer meat on a fire inside or outside a *lavvo* (Olsen, 2003). Contemporary male Sámi are also used to educate visitors about the Arctic and the Sámi lifestyle.

Another change, which is perhaps more peculiar to Sweden, is the growing importance of art in representations of Sámi culture. A process of what has been termed artification (Shapiro, 2019) can

be observed in images of items which build on, without replicating, the Sámi *Duodji* (handicraft) tradition. Once more, this can be seen as a perpetuation of some of the ideas on the indigenous which are found in Graburn's (1976) seminal discussion of tourist art. The arty Sámi is female, and as is the case with the modern ecological male Sámi, she is presented without the traditional emblematic signs, even if art and design objects seemingly often build on traditions and relate to the northern European landscape and ecology. Therefore, as with guiding and outdoor-related activities, artification can be seen as reinforcing the idea of a strong connection between indigenosity and nature which has long been apparent in DMO marketing of the Sámi.

The analysis of images presented here reveals that the marketing of Sámi culture is preoccupied with accentuating its connection to nature. The most obvious connection is via animals, in particular the reindeer which tourists can see roaming in Swedish Lapland or along the coast in Norway during summer. Visitors are also able to pet and feed animals and eat Arctic food, the main ingredients of which are reindeer meat, game, wild berries, and herbs local to the region. It seems that the Sámi, at least in Sweden, no longer need to prove their cultural belongingness by wearing traditional clothes, while the knowledge they possess of the natural landscape makes them perfect guides. The national DMOs concentrate on nature-based experiences where the Sámi are given a central role due to their profound knowledge of survival in these landscapes, which is based on their actual knowledge but is also assumed to be a result of their indigeneity. Furthermore, their relationship to the landscape and its ecology is often emphasized through their artification by the tourism industry. While this is most prominent on the Visit Sweden website, probably because of the strong link between semi-nomadic reindeer herding and Sámi identity in Swedish society (Axelsson et al., 2019), it is also found amongst tourism companies in Norway (Olsen et al., 2019), though it is not readily apparent in Visit Norway marketing. The tendency to give less prominence to what might be called emblematic symbols of Sáminess, which are most evident on the Visit Sweden website, is a result of the wish to furnish national segments with more knowledge of contemporary Sámi society. Nevertheless, in the Norwegian case, the national DMOs seem to keep to the old dichotomies of a traditional Sámi living close to nature.

Tourism is regarded as one of many worldmaking processes and is itself shaped by other such processes. In contemporary northern Europe, all of these have been incorporated into discourses of the Arctic. As Keskitalo (2019, p. 247) states, the northern part of Europe has become embedded in a colonial North American imaginary which does not always suit regions 'with more varied population groups, developing in relation to long-term established institutions – state, regional and local municipality' (Keskitalo, Schilar, et al., 2019, p. 2).

The tendency, which we have observed, of trying to find new ways to connect the Sámi to nature in tourist marketing can therefore be regarded as perpetuating policies that mean to diminish their heterogeneity and differentiate them from other groups. These policies have come under pressure as a consequence of the development of Sámi parliaments where new groups in Sweden (outside the reindeer herding communities) and Norway (outside core areas) have claimed ownership over policies which regulate relationships between the majority and the minority, thereby being a way of contesting the conventional view of the Sámi as a reindeer-herding people (Axelsson et al., 2019). Several groups with identities which do not correspond with the DMOs' images of the Sámi have entered the tourism business. In addition, the Sámi have become increasingly urbanized, and other groups with a long history in the area have a relationship to nature which prevents them from being easily separated from the indigenous population. Such complexities make it difficult for DMOs to make readily understandable and saleable images and for governments to develop policies which are shaped increasingly by international legacies and the northern American Arctic discourse.

The present study has examined national tourism marketing in two Nordic states. If our view of tourism as one of the ordering processes in modernity which shapes and is shaped by other ordering processes in the new Arctic holds some truth, the next step would be to see how representations of the indigenous population create and/or delimit new opportunities for Sámi tourism entrepreneurs. Furthermore, and most importantly, will the Sámi gain more influence in other ordering processes in

the Arctic or will they just become part of a new cultural tourism formula in national DMOs' advertising?

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express a deep appreciation to Nina Smedseng, PhD candidate in Sustainable Sami Tourism, Department of Tourism and Northern Studies, UIT The Arctic University of Norway for her the valuable comments in preparation of this article.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Funding

This work was supported by the Regionale Forskingsfond (Regional Research Fund/Northern Norway) 'Sami entrepreneurs and research collaborations: The effect of socio-cultural dimensions on entrepreneurs scope of action' Grant [269717].

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