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Fred Karlsson

THE LANGUAGES OF FINLAND 1917–2017

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Suomi Finland 100

Lingsoft® 30 YEARS OF LEADING LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT

THE LANGUAGES OF FINLAND

1917–2017

Fred Karlsson

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Content

A word from the publisher

This work, *The Languages of Finland 1917–2017*, written by Fred Karlsson, is publisher Lingsoft's jubilee publication in honour of Finland's independence. Lingsoft is proud to present the publication and its versions in different languages as part of Finland's centennial programme.

The Languages of Finland 1917–2017 is a succinct, integrative presentation of Finland's linguistic landscape over the period of its independence and the changes that have taken place: Finland's spoken and written languages, daily and official languages as well as its changing multitude of languages. Language policy and legislation that applies to languages are part of Finland's linguistic landscape. During the early decades of the 20th century, the status of our national languages was affected by social tensions. On the other hand, during the decades leading up to and following the turn of the millennium, the multitude of languages created by internationalisation, globalisation and growing multiculturalism has had the greatest impact. The linguistic landscape is in a constant state of change, and it is a key aspect of independent Finland's reality both then and now.

The Languages of Finland 1917–2017 will be published in three languages: in Finland's official languages – Finnish and Swedish – and in English for international distribution. The work can be read in each of the three languages in electronic format, both as a website and as an e-book.

The three-language social media campaign for the publication provides key facts on Finland's linguistic situation. As a high point of the centennial, an effort will be made to bring the content of the publication to the awareness of school pupils, young people, immigrants as well as anyone in the world who is interested in the development of Finland's language conditions and language policy.

Fred Karlsson, the author and Professor Emeritus of General Linguistics at the University of Helsinki, is a recognised expert in his field of study, an

internationally respected researcher and a pioneer in the Finnish language technology field. He founded Lingsoft in 1986 together with Kimmo Koskenniemi, Professor Emeritus of Language Technology at the University of Helsinki.

Lingsoft thanks the author and everyone else who influenced the work: Vesa Koivisto, who wrote the section on the Karelian language, as well as Okan Daher, Kimmo Granqvist, Ritva Takkinen and Jan-Ola Östman, who suggested improvements and corrections.

Lingsoft, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, is taking part in the Finland 100 project by publishing a series of titles on the languages of independent Finland. What better way than this to respect and honour the centennial.

The Languages of Finland 1917–2017 can be downloaded as an e-book free of charge from Lingsoft's subsidiary e-book store Ellibs at www.ellibs.com.

A website will be available in three languages at
suomenkielet100.fi finlandsspråk100.fi languagesoffinland100.fi

A separate campaign will be run on social media on the following Twitter accounts:
@Suomenkielet100
@FinSprak100
@FinLanguages100

Best regards to all our readers this centenary,

Lingsoft Inc.

Tervetuloa! (‘Welcome!’)

Helsinki in December 1917 (SLSA).

Välkommen (ruotsi) Bures boahtin (pohjoissaame)

Tiervâpuáttim (inarinsaame) Tiõrv pue´ttmest (koltansaame)

Tulgua terveh! (karjalan kieli) Rahim itegez (tataari)

Добро пожаловать (venäjän kieli) Mishto-avilian tú (romanin kieli)

Borekh-Habo ברוכים־הבאי (jiddish)

https://www.facebook.com/fiblul/about/?ref=page_internal

In January 1917...

[1]

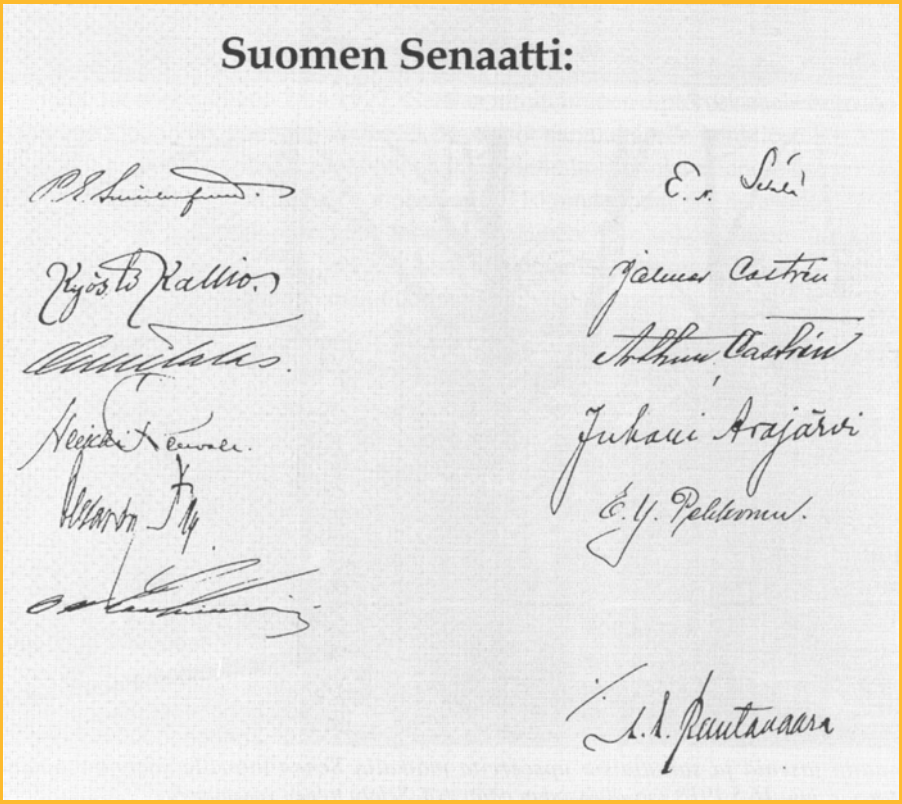
... Finland, the tiny Grand Duchy of the enormous Russian Empire, was unknowingly heading for the convulsions that were to follow her declaration of independence on December 6. The language fight between Swedish and Finnish had been going on for decades. However, in 1902 the Emperor Nicholas II had decreed Finnish to be a nationwide official language alongside Swedish. Courts and administrative bodies in monolingual municipalities were to use the official language of the minutes of the municipality. The citizens obtained the right to use their own language when dealing with the authorities. The language decree of 1902 had thus solved the most difficult language problem. Finnish became the main language of Finland.

But the dangers of continued Russification were lurking. The troublesome years following 1899 had displayed the Russian ambitions. In 1902 Russian also became an official language in Finland and a compulsory subject in schools. Already in 1899 Russian had been introduced as the working language of the highest branches of government.

Russia lost the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905. This led to considerable civil turmoil. A nationwide strike was called in Finland in 1905. In 1907 Finland obtained a new parliament with 200 members elected by direct universal vote. Nineteen women entered. In the 1910s Russification intensified. The age-old question of how the large class of tenant farmers would obtain some land was a source of large social discontent. In the general election of 1916 the Social Democrats obtained an absolute majority with 103 mandates.

After the March Revolution 1917, Emperor Nicholas II abdicated. The Bolshevists seized power in November. On December 6, 1917 Finland declared her independence under deep social splits. The first signatories of the Declaration of Independence were Protector ('Prime Minister') P. E. Svinhufvud and the very author of the text, Emil Nestor Setälä, Member of

1 Sincere thanks are due to Vesa Koivisto, the author of the section on Karelian, and to Okan Daher, Kimmo Granqvist, Ritva Takkinen and Jan-Ola Östman for their valuable comments. The Department of Modern Languages of the University of Helsinki and the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland have supported the project.



Signatures under the Declaration of Independence; uppermost Svinhufvud and Setälä

Parliament, Senator and professor of Finnish at the University of Helsinki

Only 52 days later, Finland's Civil War started on January 27, 1918.

SLSA. Svenska Litteratursällskapets i Finland arkiv.

Overview: Finland's language situation 1917–2017

Prior to 1917 there had never been a regulation at the level of law on the use of languages in Finland. The four-estate Diet (until 1907) was divided 2–2 on the language question, in other words on how the relations between Finnish and Swedish should be regulated. Nobles and burghers were Swedish-minded, priests and peasants Finnish-minded. Because three estates were needed in order to pass laws, the language question could not be solved. That is why the language decision of 1902 was issued as a decree.

The first parliament elected by universal vote (1907) immediately received three bills on the language question. One was that Finnish be declared the only 'official' language of the country, another that both Finnish and Swedish be declared 'national' languages. However, due to more pressing political problems, these bills were never discussed in session.

At the time, the prevailing laws in Finland were basically the old Swedish ones from times prior to 1809, especially the codification of 1734. Most of them had been abolished and replaced in Sweden 1810. In the new constitution of Finland of 1919, the status of the Swedish language could not be bypassed. Never in the history of Finland had the share of speakers of Swedish surpassed 18 %. After considerable political debate and bargaining, parliament adopted the new Constitution in July 1919. It contained the following important section on the languages of the country:

- The national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish. (§ 14)

This is still in force today (Constitution of Finland, 731/1999, § 17). Languages other than Finnish and Swedish were not mentioned in 1919.

World War 1 was coming towards its end. One of the innumerable international disputes was about the future status of the Åland Islands. It was at the kernel of both domestic and foreign policy. An overwhelming majority of the Åland inhabitants wanted to join Sweden. The Swedish government was highly sympathetic to accepting the bid. Similar separatism occurred in other parts of predominantly Swedish-speaking areas in Finland, especially Ostrobothnia.

The most radical pronouncements talked about founding a new state, Östsvenskland (Eastern Sweden) along the Ostrobothnian coastline.

In order to prevent this from happening, and to calm down the domestic political situation, the Swedish People's Party (Svenska Folkpartiet) demanded detailed rights for the future use of Swedish in Finland. These included Swedish's status as a national language, something that had already been granted in the 1919 constitution, plus a special language law to spell out the details. On the other side, a sentiment and political movement of ardent Finnishness (*aitosuomalaisuus*) was about to materialize. The newborn League of Nations had taken on the task of solving the Åland Islands question in a peaceful manner.

The flag of Åland – a self-governing island area.

For precisely these reasons parliament passed two laws in 1922 which were in force for 80 years. One concerned the linguistic rights of both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking Finns to use their own languages in various contexts. The other law specified requirements for language proficiency in the second domestic language, imposed on government-employed officials. E. N. Setälä made the blueprints of the laws. The constitutional stipulation about the two national languages remained in force. Two years later, in 1924, Setälä published an amazing book with more than 400 pages on precisely how the new laws should be enforced.

Just as in the constitution, no other languages were mentioned. Finnish and Swedish were the national

languages. The three Sámi languages and the other minority languages not only remained unnoticed but were also discriminated against until the 1970s, even until the 2000s.

Between the world wars there were fights between Finnish- and Swedish-speaking young males, sometimes even leading to (moderate) bloodshed. These animosities were unofficially settled in the course of the wars 1939–1945, where everybody was called upon to participate regardless of what language they spoke. In 1945 the official conclusion was arrived at. A government-appointed committee delivered its report called *The report of the committee for language peace*.

From the 1960s onwards the dominant linguistic-political dispute has concerned the obligatory teaching of the second national language (Finnish or Swedish) as a second language in primary and secondary schools (in Finnish: *peruskoulu*), especially the teaching of Swedish to Finnish-speaking pupils (almost all Swedish-speaking Finns regard it as important that their children learn Finnish). Since 1990 parliament has voted on the issue three times, each time clearly defeating the proposition to make such study optional. However, in 2004 Swedish was made optional in the battery of tests for Finnish-speaking pupils in the matriculation examination.

In April 2017 the government decided, as required by the Finns (*perussuomalaiset*) in the government platform, to start an experiment in August 2018 involving 2 200 Finnish-speaking pupils for finding out what the consequences would be of making Swedish as a second language optional in primary Finnish-speaking comprehensive schools.

In the old 4 + 4 -grade primary school system, which ran up to 1968, prior to the introduction of the comprehensive school system, there was no teaching whatsoever in the second national language or any foreign language. The comprehensive school was an enormous innovation in regard to the increase in the language proficiency of the whole population. Obligatory education was introduced for all pupils in one foreign language (mostly English) and in the second national language.

In 1973 the first post-war refugees came to Finland, 200 Chileans. The first Vietnamese boat refugees came in 1979 when Finland was still a fairly monolithical nation state. In the 1980s and 1990s Finland started opening its

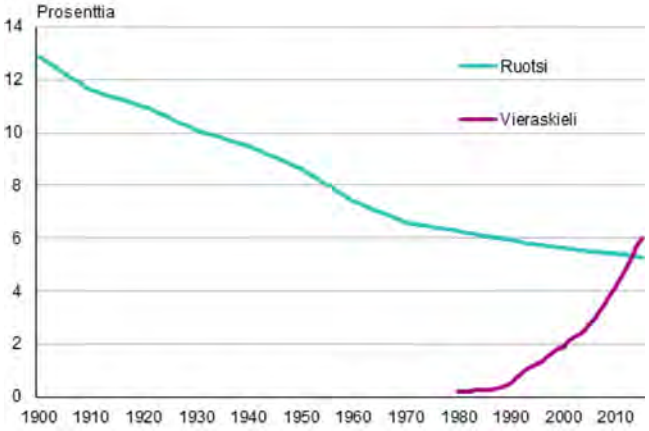
(physical and mental) borders. The growing influence of the European Union, the collapse of the Soviet Union, new alternatives in foreign policies, a strengthened parliamentarism, the gradual dilution of physical and even mental borders, globalisation, digitalisation and other megatrends created a new societal and political situation. A strongly affecting factor was the worldwide intensification of migration which came to affect Europe too, deeply and permanently.

Fundamental values changed. Human rights came to the fore and along with them the rights of minorities of various types. The promotion of language diversity became a positive value and the rights of language minorities were extended. At the same time the old notion of a homogeneous monolingual nation was eroded, at least for some time. Language awareness and language attitudes changed among (some) politicians. Important landmarks were the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) and the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995), both of which Finland ratified in 1998. All these developments created a new and (at least in principle) more favourable situation for Finland's small language minorities.

Work on reforming the Finnish constitution started in 1995. The new constitution (731/1999) came into force in 2000. Section 17 is entitled *Right to one's language and culture* and has three subsections:

- The national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish.
- The right of everyone to use his or her own language, either Finnish or Swedish, before courts of law and other authorities, and to receive official documents in that language, shall be guaranteed by an Act. The public authorities shall provide for the cultural and societal needs of the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking populations of the country on an equal basis.
- The Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Provisions on the right of the Sami to use the Sami language before the authorities are laid down by an Act. The rights of persons using sign language and of persons in need of interpretation or translation aid owing to disability shall be guaranteed by an Act.

The third subsection for the first time in the Finnish constitution mentions speakers of other languages. The speakers of Northern Sámi, Inari



The percentage (%) of speakers of Swedish (turquoise) and of foreign languages (purple) in Finland 1900–2015. (SVT).

Sámi and Skolt Sámi are lumped together as Sámi. The third subsection is pretty vague. The three other acts mentioned in the second and third subsections will be treated below in connection with the respective languages.

In 2001 the Ministry of the Interior introduced the post of Minority Ombudsman, later renamed as Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, dealing with all types of minority- and discrimination-related issues.

The gradual opening of borders made possible by the Schengen Treaty has greatly increased mobility. Almost all European countries are targets of immigration. In 1990 there were 25,000 native speakers of foreign languages in Finland. At the beginning of 2017 the number is 354,000, representing some 500 languages, as demonstrated in the final section. Already there are now more speakers of immigrant languages than there are of traditional minority languages (Swedish [national], Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi, Skolt Sámi, Romani [also spelled Romany], Yiddish, Tatar, Finnish Sign Language, Finland-Swedish Sign Language, Karelian). Their total number is a bit more than 300,000 (the number of Swedish speakers has lately been around 290,000). The above graph shows the relation between the speakers of Swedish and of foreign languages over a timespan of 25 years.

In late 2016 there were 90,000 speakers of foreign languages in

Helsinki, 14 % of the population. In the eastern parts of the city the share was 23 %. In early 2017 the total population size of Finland was 5.5 million. The nationwide population gain in 2016 was 16,000. However, the number of native speakers of Finnish and Swedish decreased for the third year in a row. The total decrease was 8,000 while the number of speakers of foreign languages increased by 24,000. Upon pondering these figures it should be kept in mind that it is not possible to register as bilingual or multilingual in Finland. The new language situation has already created tensions, amplified by the political headway made by the Finns Party. In some quarters the ideals of the monocultural and monolingual nation state have returned while reality is going the opposite way.

In the 1970s Finland was still a country with heavy emigration (especially to Sweden). Now the tide runs the other way.

English has long been the most popular foreign language choice in Finnish schools, especially among Finnish-speaking pupils. English is the obvious lingua franca in communication, science and scholarship, popular culture etc. in a way that already is causing domain losses for all of Finland's traditional native languages. In primary schools more than 90 % of the pupils pick English as their first non-native language, 5 % pick Finnish (in Swedish schools, and some immigrants) while German, Swedish (in Finnish schools) and French are picked by around 1 % each.

The main language-related challenges in Finland in 2017 are:

- the status of Swedish as a national or a minority language;
- the obligation to study the second national language in comprehensive schools;
- the language rights **in practice** for speakers of other languages than Finnish;
- the revitalization of Finland's small endangered languages, especially Inari Sámi, Skolt Sámi and Romani;
- the position generally and in school teaching of the languages of immigrants (esp. the biggest one, Russian);
- the supremacy of English as the first choice in foreign language teaching; diversification of the language choices;
- sufficient digital and technological language support for all nationally relevant languages;
- determining the optimal age for starting foreign-language

instruction in kindergarten / at school;
- utilizing the native language proficiency of immigrants;
- teaching Finnish and Swedish as second languages to immigrants and their descendants.

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SLS = Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland.

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http://oikeusministerio.fi/en/index/basicprovisions/perusoikeudetjademokratia/kielilaki.html [linguistic rights]

https://www.kotus.fi/kielitieto/kielipolitiikka/suomen_kielilainsaadanto [Finland's language legislation, in Finnish]

https://www.kotus.fi/kielitieto/kielipolitiikka/kielipoliittiset_elimet_suomessa [Finland's language planning authorities, in Finnish]

http://oikeusministerio.fi/fi/index/toimintajatavoitteet/perusoikeudetjademokratia/kielilaki.html [Language Act]

http://www.oikeusministerio.fi/material/attachments/om/julkaisut/6K2MUGLwd/language-legislation-2013.pdf [Report of the Government on the application of language legislation 2013]

http://www.kieliverkosto.fi/ [The Finnish Network for Language Education Policies – Kieliverkosto]

Finnish

Finnish, *(suomi, suomen kieli)*, is one of the two national languages of Finland and in practice the main language. Finnish is an *old domestic language* which (in its older forms) was spoken here for at least 1,000 years before the area became a part of Sweden in the thirteenth century. The concept of 'Finland' is a much younger construction. The Sámi people are Finland's *indigenous (autochthonous) population*, the first ones who are known to have lived here, hundreds of years before the Finnish speakers arrived.

In 1920 there were 2.7 million speakers of Finnish, 89 % of the population. The share grew until 1990 when 4.67 million speakers of Finnish constituted 94 % of the population. Since then the share has gone down. In early 2017 there were 4.86 million Finnish speakers, 88 % of the population of 5.5 million. Half a million people speak Finnish as a second language in Finland.

Finnish has been spoken in Sweden since the late Middle Ages. In 2000 Finnish was declared an official minority language in Sweden. Since 2010 Finnish has been one of Sweden's five official *national minority languages*. The form of Finnish spoken in Sweden is **Sweden-Finnish** (*ruotsinsuomi* in Finnish, *sverigefinska* in Swedish), spoken by Sweden Finns (*ruotsinsuomalaiset, sverigefinnar*). The number of speakers is 300,000. If all first-, second- and third-generation speakers with Finnish ancestry are included the number is 700,000, more than 7 % of Sweden's population.

Finnish and Swedish are both *pluricentric languages* with an official position in more than one country. Finnish and Sweden-Finnish both have terminological and other language-planning services of their own. In Finland this organization is the Finnish Language Board at the Institute for the Languages of Finland (founded in 1976). In Sweden it is the Sweden-Finnish Language Board, which in 2006 was amalgamated with the Language Council of Sweden, Språkrådet.

Since 2000 **Meänkieli** (literally: 'Our Language'), spoken in the northern region of Tornedalen, has also been an official minority language in Sweden, and since 2010 an official national minority language. Also the **Kven** language in northern Norway has been an official national minority language since 2005. In Finnish linguistics,

Meänkieli and Kven have been regarded as belonging to the group of Northern Finnish dialects.

The most important year in the history of Finnish in the 20th century was 1902, when Finnish became an official language alongside Swedish. Finnish soon became the dominating language in legislation, administration, politics, culture etc. The constitution of 1919 used the term *national language* for both Finnish and Swedish. The two language acts of 1922 were drawn up by the politician and professor E. N. Setälä. His 1924 book about the acts described how they should be applied in practice when determining the language rights of individuals in their dealings with courts and administrative bodies.

E. N. Setälä (1864–1935).

Setälä's The Language Act (1924).

The written variant of Standard Finnish had been determined by 1920. Finnish satisfied all criteria for being a fully-fledged principal cultural language, capable of expressing whatever one wanted to say even in the most complicated types of texts. The norm for spoken Standard Finnish was set in such a way that it was very close to the way words were written. The first generations of speakers of Standard Finnish acquired this way of speaking at school and it was the official spoken norm in both theory and practice until the 1960s.

The variants of spoken Finnish used in everyday colloquial situations, dialects, slang etc. were demoted to the background and not considered appropriate in more formal situations. After the 1970s there occurred a change and colloquial features are nowadays quite ordinary in situations where they would have been considered inappropriate in the early part of the 1900s. This has also entailed a change in the linguistic attitudes of speakers, and in literature and education.

The digitalization of the past 20 years, in conjunction with the breakthrough of social media, have given rise to chat language, or e-language – a hybrid between spoken and written language with many distinctive features of its own.

A principal cultural language needs a set of comprehensive dictionaries defining the vocabulary, especially the meanings of the words. Such projects stretch over many decades. In 1927 parliament requested the government to initiate work on a large dictionary of current Finnish. The Finnish Literature Society (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura [SKS]; founded in 1831), was contracted to undertake the project. In the course of the period 1951–1962 the six volumes of *Nykysuomen sanakirja (NS; 'Dictionary of Modern Finnish')*

appeared.

'*Nykysuomen sanakirja* starts a new era in the history of the Finnish language and is a foundational happening in the cultural life of Finland', a reviewer said in 1962 when the sixth and last volume had appeared. NS was decisively significant as a codification of the lexical resources of Finnish.

A couple of other resources followed: *Suomen kielen perussanakirja*, 1990–1994, and electronically as *CD-Perussanakirja* in 1997; *Kielitoimiston sanakirja* appeared digitally in 2004 and as a printed version in 2006, containing 100,000 lexical entries. The current version, *Kielitoimiston verkkosanakirja*, is continually updated. Here you see how it describes the meanings of the word *suomalainen* ('Finnish [adjective], Finnish person, Finnish-speaking'):

suomalainen[38] ***adj., subst.***
1. Suomeen kuuluva, Suomesta kotoisin t. lähtöisin oleva, Suomen asukkaille, oloille tms. ominainen; kansallisuudeltaan Suomen väestöön kuuluva; Suomen kansalainen. *Puhtaasti suomalainen ilmiö. Tyypillinen suomalainen koti. Suomalainen sauna. Suomalainen musiikki, kulttuuri. Suomalainen tautiperintö. Suomalainen sisu. Kokouksen suomalaiset osanottajat. Ulkomailla asuvat suomalaiset eli ulkosuomalaiset. Ruijan suomalaiset. Amerikan-, ruotsinsuomalaiset. Hän on naimisissa suomalaisen kanssa. Etelä-, itäsuomalainen. Peri-, supisuomalainen.* **2.** suomenkielinen. *Laulun suomalaiset sanat. Erityisen suomalainen* [= suomen kielelle erityisen luonteenomainen] *ilmaus.*

The dialect dictionary *Suomen murteiden sanakirja (*SMS*)* describes the words of all Finnish dialects. SMS is based on the world's largest collections of dialect materials, a giant project started in the 1870s. Thousands of professional language collectors and dedicated amateurs participated. Eight 1,000-page volumes have appeared so far. Nowadays SMS appears digitally on the net. There are 111,000 lexical entries and every year 6,000 more are added. Here is the description in SMS of what the word *kilju* ('moonshine, strong homemade brew') means, with genuine examples from several dialects:

kilju n. 1. maltaista, sokerista ja vedestä käyttämällä tehty väkevä, humalluttava kalja.
ne laìttivak kilju sièl saùnakamàris. Sauvo
minä ej juak kiljuu enää eläesäs. Vihti
Tekisin kiljuaki, mukko imelijaohot (= maltaat) on vissiin kaikki loppu. Mellilä

viätii viä mukana semmosta kiljukaljaa (joulukirkkoon), juatiin sitä kiljua koko ajjaan ko ämmät oli kirkos. Pomarkku
Oli se kiliju sellasta äpättiä, että se nousi hivuksiin. Virrat
Ei viinasta ni hassuks tu ku kiljusta. Kangasala
sitä kiljuva ku juopvat se puolhurjaks tekköö. Juva
Viinamiehet ne ajjaa sillä kiljulla mavot pois vattasta. Kittilä

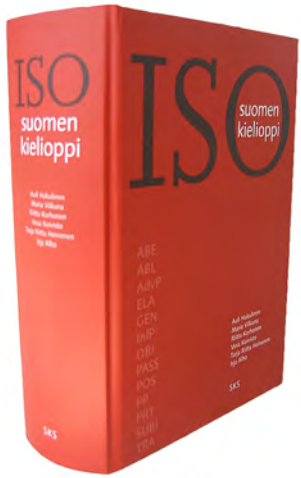
Vanhan kirjasuomen sanakirja displays the meanings and uses of Finnish words from Bible translations in the 1540s until 1810. Part of the description of the word *nainen* ('woman') is presented below, and it also tells a bit about how attitudes have changed over the years:

nain|en, -i s.
naissukupuolta oleva ihminen (miehen vastakohtana); aviovaimo; naimaton nainen; portto
VR aviowaimo, nainen uxor, hustru
F porto, nainen adultera, meretrix, scortum, hoorkona
J nainen foemina, qwinna
JlisP 224 pohjasell' on hyvä nainen hustru
G II 226c = J; ägta hustru; nainen sumitur et in bonam et malam partem; se wasta nainen on en ond qwinna; en gift karl eller qwinna, uxoratus, maritatus, -a, nuptus, -ta; woi sitä naista; joka naisesta syndynyt on född af qwinno; lijka nainen frilla; naisten kuolutten nawoille run.; naisten helmain alatek under kjortlarne; alla nawan naisten nauru prov.; nikker nakker naisten neuwwo qwinno råd duger ej; naisten lukkojen lumoja, lukia går under kjortlarne, run; 226d naiseta utan hustru
A I 254 pilkaijat, ja pirulaijset. Turilat, ja welhot naijset
A III 213 Rauni Ukon Naini härsky
A III 715 Yrtit, ia rohot moninaiset, quin miehet prucauat ia naiset
Lju 1601 39 ei mahda mies toista soimata huoruthen eli Naisen (Martti 37 huoris maannen, Koll 1648 61 huorudhesa maannexi)

There are also many bilingual dictionaries, for example Göran Karlsson's 3,000-page *Iso ruotsalais-suomalainen sanakirja* (1982–1986). It is probably the largest bilingual dictionary in the world.

A principal cultural language needs a comprehensive grammar describing its morphology and syntax. After a decade of work the 1,700-page grammar *Iso suomen kielioppi* (ISK) appeared in 2004. Worldwide, ISK is among the top five largest grammar books ever written. ISK is not normative but descriptive – a scholarly description of what the

language structures are and how they are used in ordinary current Finnish. There is also a net version, VISK (http://scripta.kotus.fi/visk/etusivu.php)



Iso suomen kielioppi (Big Finnish Grammar, 2004).

Designing the norms for a standard language is not possible without systematic language planning. The Finnish Literature Society SKS has been instrumental in this work. From 1928 the SKS Language Board (*Kielivaliokunta*) was the official norm-giving authority, in collaboration with the editors of NS. In 1976 an act established that Finnish language planning henceforth was to be handled by the Institute for the Languages of Finland.

Early Finnish language planning dealt a lot with the notion of 'correctness'. A common aim was to eradicate foreign (mostly Swedish) loan words and sentence patterns that were considered un-Finnish in nature. From the 1980s the dominant principles of Finnish language planning have been functionality and communicative efficiency. An important aim has been to simplify the often complicated traditional syntactic patterns in legal and administrative texts and orient them in the direction of 'Plain Finnish'. The partial downfall of the overriding principle of rigid correctness has also been influenced by the fact that there is a growing number of people with a less than perfect command of Finnish (i.e. immigrants with highly diverse language backgrounds). Finns are getting accustomed to a growing array of spoken accents and various degrees of language proficiency.

In 1917 Finland had just one university, the University of Helsinki, where there was one professorship in Finnish (founded as early as 1850). Today Finnish is being researched and taught at eight universities in the following locations: Helsinki, Turku (the Swedish-speaking Åbo Akademi University and the University of Turku), Tampere, Oulu, Joensuu (Eastern Finland), Jyväskylä and Vaasa.

There are over 20 professorships in Finnish.

In one century Finnish has advanced from the position of a secondary vernacular to one of the 100 strongest languages of the 7,000 languages in the world. Finnish has 5.5 million speakers; its standard is well defined; it is an official language in Finland, Sweden and the European Union; the vocabulary covers all aspects of human knowledge and all conceivable communication situations; the whole population undergoes nine-year basic school; education extends to sophisticated research in most scientific and scholarly disciplines; more than 10,000 books a year appear in Finnish; there are hundreds of newspapers, magazines and a wide array of other media, including digital ones in Finnish; etc.

The changing global language situation, the improving knowledge of foreign languages by many Finns and the growing phenomenon of multilingualism pose no essential threats to the societal position and nature of Finnish. Still, alertness is called for in regard to the phenomenon of domain losses – English tends to take over as the language of science, scholarship and many other areas.

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http://www.sprakochfolkminnen.se/sprak/minoritetssprak/suomi-finska/kieliviesti.html

Swedish

Swedish *(svenska, svenska språket)* is Finland's second national language. Swedish has been spoken in Finland since the 1100s at least. Alongside Finnish, Swedish is thus an *old domestic language*. Swedish is mainly spoken along the southern and western coastline: in Uusimaa (Nyland), Turunmaa (Åboland), Ahvenanmaa (Åland) and Pohjanmaa (Österbotten). There are also speakers of Swedish in the 'language islands', cities in the interior of Finland like Tampere (Tammerfors) and Pori (Björneborg).

In 1917 the number of Swedish-speaking Finns was 340,000, 13 % of the population. Today the number is 290,000 and the share 5.3 %. During the past few years the absolute number has steadily been around 290,000. In the 1600s the share was at its greatest: 18 %. In Sweden there are 70,000 speakers of Swedish who have ancestry in Swedish-speaking Finland. The variant of Swedish spoken in Finland is **Finland-Swedish** *(finlandssvenska)*. In Swedish linguistics the forms of Swedish spoken in Finland (including the Åland Islands) have been called East-Swedish dialects (especially before the wars).

From today's perspective the term Finland-Swede (*finlandssvensk*) is somewhat inappropriate because its structure indicates that Finland-Swedes are primarily Swedes, in the same national or ethnic sense as the Swedes of Sweden. The term is an anachronistic reflection of the nationality conflicts in the early 1900s when there were indeed several natively Swedish-speaking persons born in Finland who considered themselves outliers of the Swedes in Sweden. After the wars the idea of an East-Swedish nationality or ethnic group has faded. Nowadays the great majority of Finland's Swedish-speaking population consider themselves unequivocally Finnish citizens and use the word *finländare* as a denomination for all citizens of Finland, regardless of native language. Some label themselves *Swedish-speaking Finns* in order to make clear the primary locus of identification and belonging. The Swedish-speaking Finns are a national (language) minority in Finland.

Like Finnish, Swedish is also a *pluricentric language*, being official in both Finland and Sweden. The term *national language* was introduced in the 1919 constitution as a concession to the large political faction of the Swedish-speaking population in the Swedish

People's Party (Svenska Folkpartiet) who insisted on being categorized as Swedish by nationality. The government bills at the time used the expressions *virallinen kieli* and *virkakieli* in Finnish, *officiellt språk* and *ämbetsspråk* in Swedish.

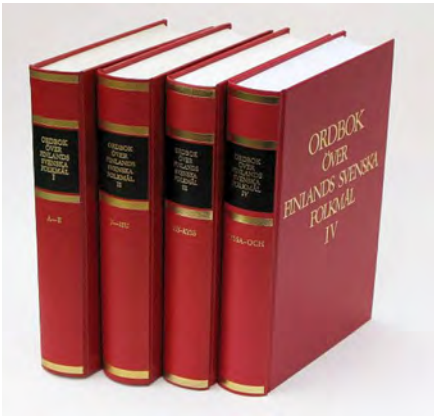
There is a difference between the status of Swedish in Finland and Finnish in Sweden. Swedish is a countrywide national language in Finland. In Sweden Finnish is an official minority language, tied to specific regions where there are sizeable numbers of Finns.

The norm-giving centre for Finland-Swedish is the Swedish Language Board at the Institute for the Languages of Finland.

In April 2017 the Swedish parliament started evaluating the minority language legislation. One of the topics discussed was whether Finland-Swedish should be given the status of national minority language, a status already given to Sweden Finnish. The Sweden Democrats opposed the proposition on the (unfounded) ground that the Finland-Swedes would be included in the Swedish nationality.

Pär Stenbäck and Pasi Saukkonen have raised the question whether it would be beneficial for the everyday use of Swedish to downgrade the status from national language in the whole country to minority language or regional language. However, the discussion has not gained real momentum. Today Finland-Swedish is a de facto minority language. Many members of the majority population shun away from speaking Swedish.

The Swedish spoken on the Åland Islands belongs to Finland-Swedish. Most of the legal and administrative vocabulary has its origin in Finland. As for pronunciation and intonation, the Åland dialects are closer to the dialects in mainland Sweden. Ethnically many Ålanders do not consider themselves Finland-Swedes. In several respects Åland is a special political and legal case due to the international treaties that were established after World War 1 under the auspices of the League of Nations.



The dictionary of Finland-Swedish dialects (photo: Institute for the Languages of Finland).

Standard Finland-Swedish is mastered by almost all Finland-Swedes due to the effective school system. Many (especially those in Ostrobothnia) also speak a local dialect, for example in cities like Kokkola, Kaskinen, Loviisa, Helsinki. This is the phenomenon of diglossia. There are more than 80 local dialects. The Institute for the Languages of Finland has compiled a large dictionary of their vocabulary, *Ordbok över Finlands svenska folkmål*, of which four volumes have appeared in print and more than 70,000 word articles are available on the net (http://kaino.kotus.fi/fo/)..

The Swedish-speaking area in Finland. (Wikipedia)

Swedish and Finnish have been in language contact in Finland for more than 900 years. There have always been bilingual individuals and intermarriages between persons speaking Finnish and Swedish. Influences have gone in both directions. Finnish influences on Swedish are most obvious in pronunciation, intonation and vocabulary. Finnish and Finland-Swedish do not have the musical word accents of mainland Swedish. The

word-initial consonants /p t k/ are pronounced without the h-like final aspiration which occurs in mainland Swedish in words like *pil, tak* and *karl*.

There are many differences in vocabulary. The Finland-Swedish word *läsordning* is *schema* in mainland Swedish. Also compare *låda – pudding*, 'pudding', *simhall – badhus*, 'public baths' and *huslig ekonomi – hemkunskap*, 'domestic science'. The administrative vocabulary of Finland-Swedish is strongly influenced by Finnish because laws etc. are first drafted in Finnish. For example, *ministerium* ('government department') is *department* in mainland Swedish. The normative *Svenska Akademiens ordlista* by the Swedish Academy lists some 350 lexical peculiarities of Finland-Swedish. *Finlandssvensk ordbok* lists no less than 2,500 such instances (http://kaino.kotus.fi/fsob/).

Most Swedish-speaking people in southern Finland are bilingual. Over 40 % of Swedish-speaking men and over 30 % of the women marry a Finnish-speaking person. The children of the next generation of such intermarriages are normally fully bilingual, that is to say, they have two naturally acquired native languages. The slang of such youngsters can be a pretty outlandish mixture of Finnish and Swedish:

Nyt tulee veedäri. Tuleksä kattomaan Väder? ('Now comes the meteorological forecast. Would you come and watch it?')

The differences have grown large between the Ostrobothnian and the southern dialects. The Närpes dialect is often mentioned as an example of an Ostrobothnian dialect that is next to incomprehensible for people from the south.

The relation between Finland-Swedish and mainland Swedish has been continually debated. One of the highlights occurred in 1917. That was when Hugo Bergroth's book *Finlandssvenska: Handledning till undvikande av provinsialismer i tal och skrift* appeared. He wanted to eradicate the morphological, syntactic and lexical peculiarities of Finland-Swedish that speakers from Sweden could not understand. These features were called 'Finlandisms'. Bergroth did not regard it as desirable that these features would become so numerous that Finland-Swedish would become a separate language. Finland-Swedish has indeed been called 'Moomin Swedish' in Sweden, implying that it is a somewhat archaic and comical language variant.

Swedish is being researched and

taught at the same eight universities that were referred to in the chapter on Finnish. There are some fifteen professorships in Swedish. Considerable collections of language specimens and cultural traditions are to be found both at the Institute for the Languages of Finland (founded 1976) and Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland, the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (founded in 1885).

The Swedish language has a strong administrative status in Finland due to the linguistic-political decisions that were taken in 1919 and 1922. There are many important institutions that have Swedish as the administrative and functional language: the Borgå (Porvoo) diocese (founded in 1923), Åbo Akademi University (founded in 1918 in Turku), Hanken School of Economics (founded in 1909 in Helsinki), the Nylands brigade in Ekenäs (set up in 1952 and the only military unit in the world using a minority language), and a Swedish unit at the Finnish National Agency for Education.

Much of Finland's cultural and organizational life is split up in parallel, based on language: Finnish on one side, Swedish on the other. This concerns schools, the Martha Organization (for home economics), sport organizations, authors and novelists, scientific and scholarly academies, student bodies at universities, scouting, youth associations, popular education, farmers, commercial guilds, the Finnish and Swedish literature societies, the Finnish Club and the Swedish Club in Helsinki (for socializing) etc.

The domains of use of Finland-Swedish have decreased, especially due to administrative reforms. The matriculation exam in the second domestic language was made optional in 2004. Today half of female students and one third of the males aspire to take the test. In 2005 the Finnish Broadcasting Corporation terminated the SVT Europa channel (SVT = mainland Swedish television), the programme *Morgonnytt* ('Morning News') (which was on TV1) in 2006 and in 2017 the channels Yle Fem (Swedish and Nordic) and Yle Teema (Finnish) were collapsed.

The prosecutor institution was reformed in 2007. Finnish and Swedish independent units were amalgamated. Local courts were amalgamated without due attention paid to the implementation of language rights. The same happened with the police administration and the emergency and rescue services.

In 2009 the number of Swedish municipalities was reduced from 43 to 34. In the same year large areas of the Sibbo (Sipoo) municipality were amalgamated with Helsinki despite strong protests by the inhabitants. The big nationwide reform of social and health services in 2017, SOTE, strives for administrative streamlining at the expense of language services. This became particularly obvious in 2016 when the central hospital of Vasa (Vaasa) was deprived of its right to full-time emergency duty.

In 2016 the language status of Närpes, the last monolingual Swedish municipality in mainland Finland, changed to bilingual.

Even if Finland's language legislation has at times been considered the most liberal in the world, its practical implementation in the 2000s is doubtful. This concerns Swedish as well as several of the languages that are treated in subsequent chapters.

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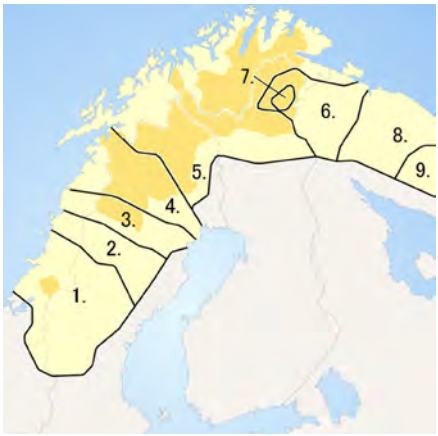
Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi

The generic term 'Sámi language', in the singular, is inappropriate because there are nine different Sámi languages. The terms 'Lappish' and 'Lapp' are out of date and derogatory.

The Sámi flag.

The **Sámi** languages are spoken by the Sámi people, in Northern Sámi they are called *sápmelaš*. The Sámi people is, along with Greenland's Inuits, Europe's only *indigenous (autochthonous) populations* and the Sámi are the first population known to have lived in an area, hundreds of years before the Finnish speakers arrived. The place name *Noux* (Noux being in Espoo, southern Finland) is an old Sámi name, showing how the Sámi were spread over almost all the present area of Finland. The Sámi languages are the nearest relatives of the Finnic languages (Finnish, Estonian, Karelian and others). They have all developed from a common ancestor language 3,500 years ago.

The Sámi speech area (*Sápmi*) in the Arctic area of the Nordic countries is split up into nine different languages:



The Sámi languages. 1 Southern Sámi, 2 Ume Sámi, 3 Pite Sámi, 4 Lule Sámi, 5 Northern Sámi, 6 Skolt Sámi, 7 Inari Sámi, 8 Kildin Sámi, 9 Ter Sámi. (Wikipedia)

The differentiation of the Sámi languages took place in 300–800 AD. The Sámi languages spoken in Finland are **Northern Sámi** *(sámegiella)*, **Inari Sámi** *(sämmilaš, sämikiela)* and **Skolt Sámi** *(sä´mmlaž, sää´mkiöll)*. In 2016 these had almost 2,000 native speakers

in Finland (Northern Sámi 1,300, Inari Sámi 300 and Skolt Sámi 300). The total number of Sámi speakers in Finland is 8,000. Many of these have another native language, mostly Finnish. Almost all Sámi speakers in Finland are multilingual and most of them live outside the Sámi speech area.

sápmi *s.* saamelainen, *sámi* (g.sg.) saamelainen, saamen, saamelais-; saame, saamen kieli'; lappi, Saamenmaa, Lapinmaa; (poro)saamelaisten elinolosuhteet (pl.)

sámáiduvvat *v.* saamelaistua[x]
sámás *ad.* saameksi
sámástit *v.* puhua[x] saamea
sámebárdni *s.* saamelaispoika, saamelaisnuorukainen, lapinpoika. **-biktasat** (pl.) *s.* saamelais-, lapinvaatteet (pl.). **-čieguščalbmi** *s.* lapinsilmäruoho. **-eanádat** *s.* saamelaisenemmistö. **-eanetlohku** *s.* saamelaisenemmistö. **-fáldi** *s.* lapinvouti. **-gáhkku** *s.* lapinkakku, rieska (nostattamaton leipä). **-giel** *at.* saamenkielinen. **-giella** *s.* saame, saamen kieli'
sámeļeana(n),-tn-:m *s.* sammalikko. **-lavdnji** *s.* sammalturve[x]. **-oaivi** *s.* pölkkypää. **-ruvdorássi** *s.* sammalvarpio
sámeļmánná *s.* saamelais-, lapinlapsi'. **-nieida** *s.* saamelais-, lapintyttö. **-nisu, -sso-:n ~ -nisson** *s.* saamelais-, lapinnainen. **-politihkalaš** *a.* saamelaispoliittinen. **-politihkka** *s.* saamelaispolitiikka. **-searvi** *s.* saamelaisseura, saamelaisyhdistys. **-timoteija** *s.* pohjantähkiö. **-uvdna** *s.* takka (lapintalossa)

From the dictionary Sammallahti (1989).

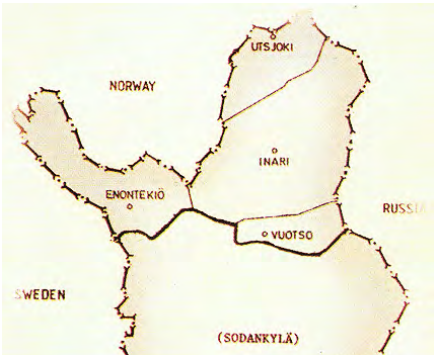
A Sámi is a person who either himself or herself speaks Sámi, or a person whose parents or grandparents (at least one) speaks or spoke Sámi natively.

Northern, Inari and Skolt Sámi all have their own writing systems. In the spoken mode they are not mutually understandable. Skolt Sámi is the most distinct. The following three texts with the same content are from a presentation on the webpages of the Inari municipality. In translation: 'The Inari municipality is the largest in Finland, its area is over 17,000 km². The water area exceeds 2,000 km², half of which is Lake Inari. Between the thousands of lakes and islands there are hundreds of hills whose profiles leave their mark on the landscape.'

- **Northern Sámi**: Anára gielda lea Suoma stuorámus, badjel 17,000 km². Čáhceviidodat lea badjel 2,000 km², mas Anárjávrri oassi lea sullii bealli. Duháhiid jávrriid ja sulluid gaskii čáhket čuođit duoddarat, mat hábmejit duovdaga profiilla.
- **Inari Sámi**: Aanaar kieldâ lii Suomâ stuárráámus, paijeel 17,000 km². Čäcivijđodâh lii paijeel 2,000 km², mast Aanaarjäävri uási lii suullân peeli. Tuháttij jaavrij já suollui kooskân šiettih čyeđeh tuoddâreh, moh hämmejeh profiilijnis enâduv.
- **Skolt Sámi**: Aanar kå´dd lij

Lää´ddjânnam šõõrmõs, pâ´jjel 17,000 ќm². Čää´vu´vddoolâž lij pâ´jjel 2,000 ќm², ko´st Aanarjää´ur vuässõs lij nu´tt pie´ll. Doohhti jääu´ri da suõllui kõ´sќќe šeâ´tte čue´đ tuõddâr, kook tävva kue´stelm luâđmie´lddsânji.

Northern Sámi is the strongest Sámi language. It is spoken in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Some 75 % of the 65,000 Sámi in the Nordic countries speak Northern Sámi. It has native speakers in all four municipalities that form Finland's Sámi native region, which is mentioned in Section 121 of the Constitution of Finland (731/1999). These municipalities are Enontekiö, Inari, Sodankylä and Utsjoki. Utsjoki is the only municipality in Finland with a Sámi majority. In their current native region, the Sámi have linguistic and cultural self-government.



The Sámi native region.

The native region of Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi is the municipality of Inari, the only one in Finland with four official languages: the three Sámi ones and Finnish. Inari Sámi is only spoken in Finland. It is endangered. Since 1997 Inari Sámi has been systematically revitalized. 'Language nests' (in Finnish: *kielipesä*) have been arranged for young children, offering natural immersion. This project has led to good results (Pasanen 2015). There is a growing number of young speakers of Inari Sámi, professionals included: teachers, nursemaids, journalists, priests, officials.

The 600 Skolts have suffered a hard fate. They used to live in the far north – in Petsamo by the Arctic Ocean – but this area was lost to the Soviet Union in Word War II. Under great endurances, the Skolts were relocated to Sevettijärvi and Nellim.

The Finnish government has far too long discriminated against the Sámi people, striving for cultural assimilation and offering minimal possibilities to pursue the traditional Sámi way of life, culture and subsistence. Sámi children were placed in Finnish schools and dormitories far

away from home. Speaking Sámi was forbidden. The attitudes towards the Sámi have long been condescending and even racist. A sad example is the actors Pirkka-Pekka Petelius and Aake Kalliala trying to make caricatures at the expense of Sámi habits and culture. They, and the whole of the Finnish tourism trade in the North, have appropriated the national Sámi costumes and headdresses.

The Finnish government has been much slower than those of Norway and Sweden in providing rights to the Sámi people. A conspicuous fact about Finland is that the government has not ratified Convention number 169 of the International Labour Organization, which is entitled the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 1989. ILO-169 specifically deals with the economic, land-owning and cultural rights essential to the long-term survival of the population.

Current political Sámi activism.

In 2003 parliament enacted the Sámi Language Act (1086/2003). Here are some excerpts:

> The purpose is to ensure the constitutional right of the Sámi to maintain and develop their language and culture. The Act contains provisions on the right of the Sámi to use their own language before the courts and other public authorities, as well as on the duty of the authorities to enforce and promote the linguistic rights of the Sámi. The goal is to ensure the right of the Sámi to a fair trial and good administration irrespective of language and to secure the linguistic rights of the Sámi without them

needing specifically to refer to these rights.

This sounds good but says little about the implementation. Due to minimal funding, the service is often nothing more than translation or interpreting. Today 10 % of the officials in the Sámi native area are capable of delivering service in Sámi languages.

The Sámi Parliament (*Sámediggi*) is the self-governmental body of the Sámi, legislated at the beginning of 1996. Its main purpose is to plan and implement the cultural self-government guaranteed to the Sámi as an indigenous people. One of its most important tasks is to promote the status and use of the Sámi languages.

The municipalities in the Sámi native area cater for teaching in Sámi to pupils proficient in Sámi. Sámi can be the language of instruction at all levels of education. All three Sámi languages are in instruction use, mostly Northern Sámi. Sámi languages are not used as languages of instruction outside the Sámi native area.

In 1978 the Northern Sámi of Finland, Norway and Sweden agreed on a common orthography for Northern Sámi. The Inari Sámi orthography is from 1996 and that of Skolt Sámi from 1972.

The Sámi Language Council represents all three Sámi languages. The activities include maintaining and developing the Sámi languages used in Finland; giving instructions and recommendations on the issues concerning the correct use of language, names and terminology; advancing language research; providing information on Sámi languages; and participating in Nordic co-operation on linguistic issues.

One can study Sámi in an upper secondary school both as a native or as a foreign (second) language. Matriculation tests can be taken in all three Sámi languages as a native or foreign (second) language. Most of the instruction is in Northern Sámi (otherwise Finnish is the language of the matriculation tests).

In 1994 the first Sámi students took their native language test in Sámi in matriculation. There are 500 students in Sámi-oriented education and 150 are taught in Sámi.

Northern and Inari Sámi are possible major subjects, and Skolt Sámi is a possible minor subject at the University of Oulu where the Giellagas Institute is the most important hub for the teaching of Sámi in Finland. The institute has a professorship in Sámi and Sámi Culture since 1977. In Kautokeino in Norway, the Sámi College (in Northern Sámi: *Sámi allaskuvla*) was founded in 1989. The Nordic Institute for Sámi Studies (*Sámi Instituhtta*) was amalgamated with the Sámi College in 2005.

Publications from the Giellagas Institute.

Sámi studies is a minor study subject at the Universities of Helsinki and Lapland.

One of the major problems today for Sámi languages is the loss of several domains of use because the languages are not extensively used in legislation nor in dealings with administrative officials. In 2006 no more than 26 % of the Sámi spoke a Sámi language as their first language. All Sámi languages are endangered, the small ones gravely endangered.

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Finnish Sign Language and Finland-Swedish Sign Language

Sign languages exist because there are people who do not hear at all or do not hear sufficiently well. They need another channel of communication than that provided by ears and air. If you have trouble hearing, but do hear something, you are hard of hearing or deafened. Such persons have often acquired a spoken language. If you hear nothing you are deaf. You can become deaf at any time in the course of your life. The most important category is that of those born deaf. They have never had acoustic impressions of spoken languages nor of other sounds.

A widespread misbelief is that there is one universal sign language. On the contrary, more than 300 different sign languages have been attested, and many more are likely to exist.

Up to the 1970s the deaf were strongly discriminated against, in Finland and in many other countries. Society had not understood the nature nor the varieties of deafness. Therefore the social consequences of deafness were not understood by society in general either. During the long period of *oralism*, running up to the 1970s, the objective was to make the deaf talk and speak the dominant spoken language in the region they lived in. At school (including schools for the deaf) pupils were forbidden to use (the local) sign language, and they could get punished if they did. During the past three decades the situation has improved.

The most widespread variant of sign language in Finland is **Finnish Sign Language** (FSL, in Finnish: *suomalainen viittomakieli*). It has been used by those born deaf since the latter half of the 1800s, occasionally as first language if the social surroundings have made it possible. Many a deaf-born person has acquired FSL later in life, after first having learned Finnish with greater or lesser success.

The origins of FSL are in the 1850s. The Finn Carl Oscar Malm returned to Finland after having studied at the Manilla School in Stockholm, the first School for the Deaf in Sweden. Malm founded the Deaf School in Porvoo/Borgå in 1846 and started using Swedish Sign Language (SSL) in the form he had acquired it. This turned into FSL that started spreading in the Finnish deaf community. This explains why still today one third of the signs in

FSL resemble the corresponding ones in SSL. But FSL and SSL are not mutually comprehensible any longer.

Today FSL is used by 5,000 deaf persons (one per mille of the population) and by 8,000 hearing persons who are mostly close relatives of persons born deaf. Deafness is partly hereditary, but 90 % of those born deaf have hearing parents. Similarly 90 % of the children born to two totally deaf parents have normal hearing. In 2014 more than 500 persons registered some sign language as their first language.

If you are born deaf, your most natural language is the sign language of the local deaf community. Paradoxically it would be best to be the child of two deaf parents, who could communicate with you in sign language and thereby give you a basic conceptual system at the normal age. However, most infants born deaf have hearing parents who do not initially master sign language. This is often the second most tangible problem. It takes time for the hearing parents to invest time and effort into learning sign language themselves to an extent that they can start mediating it to their child.

Nowadays many deaf people want to emphasize their language. They would rather define themselves as sign language people, as a cultural and ethnic group. They talk about the world of the deaf and emphasize the fundamental differences in world perception between deaf and hearing people.

A secondary variant of FSL is **Signed Finnish** (in Finnish: *viitottu suomi*). The simple common signs are the same, but Signed Finnish follows the grammar and word order of spoken Finnish. FSL is not linear in the same way but based more on a holistic grasp of whole situations and unfolding situation sequences. It is more difficult to acquire FSL than Signed Finnish.

Finland's second sign language proper is the **Finland-Swedish Sign Language** (FSSL, in Swedish: *finlandssvenska teckenspråket)*. It too originated in C. O. Malm's pioneering activities around 1850. FSSL has some 200 active users, most of whom were born deaf and are older than 55. FSSL is gravely endangered because the only Finland-Swedish deaf school, the Deaf School in Porvoo/Borgå, was closed in 1993. This destroyed the possibility to uphold a sufficiently strong community of users of FSSL. FSSL differs from both FSL and SSL and is a separate language even if there are similarities in the repertoire of basic signs.

VIITSIÄ [2])
kielteisenä:
OLLA VIITSIMÄTTÄ,
"EN VIITSI"

VIITTOA

VIIVAIN,
VIIVOTIN

VIKA
(nenännipukan edessä
ruuvaamisliike)

VILJA
(myös yhdysviittomana:
Viljа + Kasvaa [2])

VILKAS

VILLA
(keritsemisliike)

VILUSTUA
usein etuliitteenä viittoma
Kylmä

VIOLETTI □

From the Pictorial Dictionary of [Finnish] Sign Language (1973).

A special group among the deaf are the deaf-blind. The most important of their means of communication is the method of signing hand to hand. In Finland there are 800 persons with reduced capabilities of both hearing and eyesight.

The Finnish Association of the Deaf was founded in 1905. The association guards the overall interests of the deaf but is also involved in lexicological work, compiling sign language dictionaries. Two of the chairpersons of the association, Liisa Kauppinen and Markku Jokinen, have advanced all the way to the Presidency of the World Federation of the Deaf.

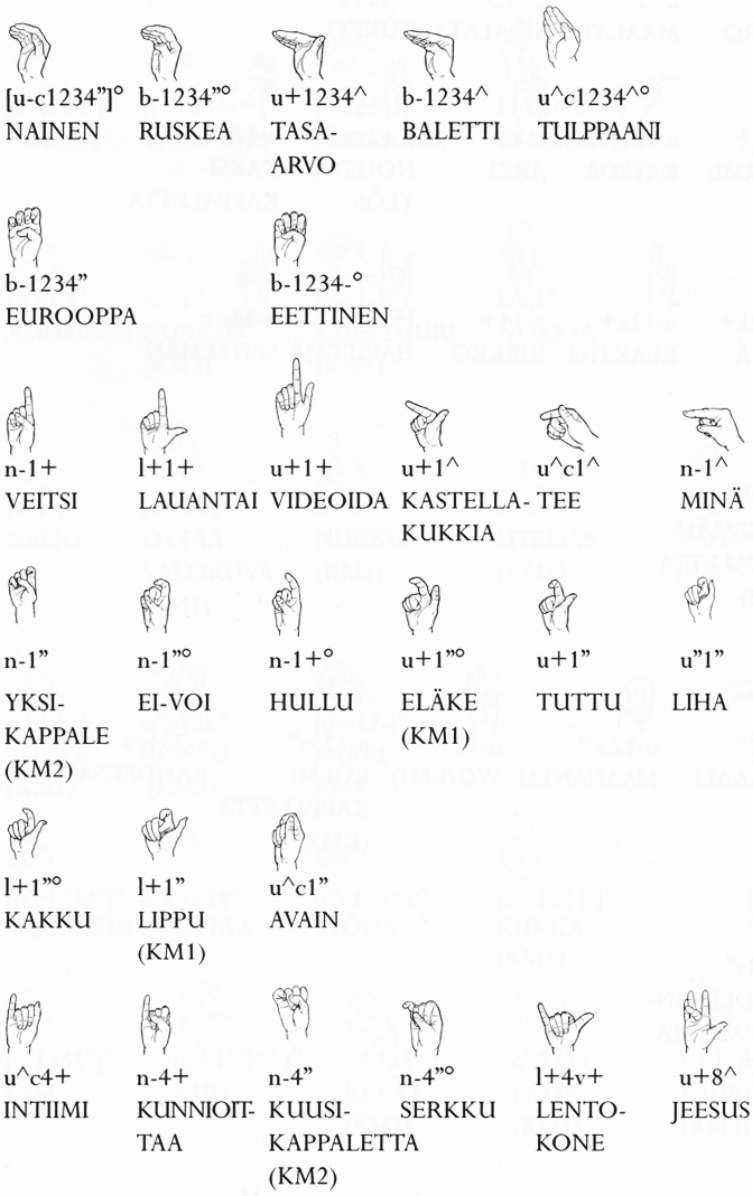
In 1973 the Finnish Association of the Deaf published its *Viittomakielen kuvasanakirja* ('Pictorial Dictionary of [Finnish] Sign Language') which was very significant in laying down the central vocabulary in a permanent form.

In the 1970s linguists started realizing that sign languages are natural languages along with the spoken ones. In 1982 the Department of General Linguistics at the University of Helsinki started a research project for describing FSL. The main result was Terhi Risssanen's (1985) book on the structure and morphology of the signs in FSL. Later, sign language research has grown considerably. Several doctoral dissertations have been defended: at the University of Jyväskylä Ritva Takkinen (2002), Bertold Fuchs (2004), Tommi Jantunen (2008) and Maartje De Meulder (2016); at the University of Helsinki Päivi Rainò (2004) and Karin Hoyer (2012).

A Centre for Sign Language was founded at the University of Jyväskylä in 2010. It educates sign language teachers. Since 2004 Jyväskylä University has a professorship in sign language, the only one in Finland.

In 1998 *Suomalaisen viittomakielen perussanakirja* ('The Basic Dictionary of Finnish Sign Language') appeared and also its net version, **Suvi**, *Suomen viittomakielten verkkosanakirja* ('The Net Dictionary of Finland's Sign Languages'). The net pages on FSSL were opened in 2015. The three-year project Corpus and SignWiki (2013–2015) has been completed and the results are available on the net (http://finsl.signwiki.org/).

The insight that sign languages are natural languages also led to activities in language policy. From 1983 many formal proposals were delivered to the Ministry of Education on how to improve the situation of the deaf and of



Some of the hand forms used in Finnish Sign Language (from Takkinen 2002).

The White House of the Finnish Association of the Deaf in Helsinki (photo: WikiMedia Commons).

sign languages. The Finnish word *viittomakieli* ('sign language]' was included in the Basic Education Act (476/1983). In 1991 FSL got the status of a native language. In 1995 sign language was added to the constitution; likewise it was included in the new constitution (731/1999, § 17). Finland was the second country in the world recognizing sign language at the highest constitutional level. From 1998 sign language could be language of instruction in compulsory schooling.

In 2015 the Sign Language Act (359/2015) was enacted. Here is Section 1:

- In this Act sign language means Finnish and Finnish-Swedish sign language.
- A sign language user means a person whose own language is sign language.

The act defines the rights of deaf people to obtain instruction and information in their language and makes the authorities more aware of these needs. However, nothing concrete is said about how it should be implemented.

At the Institute for the Languages of Finland there is an expert body, the Board for Sign Languages, charged with the task of giving advice and regulations concerning the use of FSL and FSSL.

Since the 1980s there has been an intense discussion on cochlear implants. This is an electrical device intended for persons with severe hearing loss. The implant makes it possible to receive vocal stimuli and thereby obtain sound impressions. The first ones for children were installed in

Finland in the 1990s. Some 90 % of those born deaf in Finland get the implant. It has decreased the number of deaf users of FSL. It has correspondingly decreased the number of pupils in schools for the deaf. However, the device does not lead to a normal hearing capability. For achieving optimal results the implant should be installed as early as possible even if the child is not yet capable of making decisions of his or her own. The best results are achieved for those who have acquired some spoken language proficiency.

Many have been satisfied at the results, both deaf individuals themselves and their family. Some deaf fare almost normally in speech communication after having adopted the implant.

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Romani

Finland's **Romani** (also spelled **Romany**) **Language** belongs to the northern group of the European Romani dialects. Romani is an ancient Indian language spoken by migrants from India at the beginning of the first millennium. It is ironic and tragic that the 'Aryan features' so adored by the Nazis derive in part from the original Roma people, of whom half (perhaps 500,000) were killed in the Holocaust. Finland's Roma people call themselves *kaalo* (plural *kaale*).

Roma people came to Germany in the 1400s and to Sweden (and Finland) in the 1500s. In other words, Romani has been spoken in Finland for 500 years. For a long time Romani was a group-internal, more or less secret language. The language was the only substantial property of the group and so members did not like to reveal it or share it with somebody else from outside the group. In tight situations you could benefit from your secret language. Romani has always been a spoken vernacular for everyday situations.

In Finland there are 12,000 Roma. Many are bilingual with Finnish as their main language; many also speak Swedish. Some 3,000 live more or less permanently in Sweden and move between the countries. Finnish Romani has many loanwords from Finnish and Swedish. The situation for Romani started deteriorating after the wars when social cohesion increased due to obligatory school teaching and other social processes. At the same time many of the traditional Romani occupations disappeared.

Finnish Romani has taken strong influences from Finnish in terms of pronunciation and syntax due to low status, extensive language contact over time and translation loans in the vocabulary. The genuine basic vocabulary comprises 2,500 words. Swedish has also affected the vocabulary: *kväll*, 'evening', is *kvella*; *vänta*, 'to wait', is *ventavaa*.

Two Romani men in Finland in the 1960s (photo: Ismo Hölttö).

Literary use of Romani started late. By 2007 thirteen books in Romani had been published in Finland, amounting to 2,000 pages. The first item, in 1939, was a book of spiritual hymns. Half of the books are textbooks in basic Romani. The most productive author is Viljo Koivisto, of Roma descent himself, who has written several textbooks and dictionaries, for example a Finnish–Romani dictionary in 2001, *Finitiko–romano laavesko liin*. Pertti Valtonen, Viljo Koivisto and Henry Hedman have all translated gospels from Finnish into Romani. A few novels have appeared.

Romani missio is a national child welfare and social service organization. Since 1970 it has published the newsletter *Romano Boodos* ('Romani News'), a means for creating cohesion within the community and practicing writing skills.

Finland's Roma newspaper.

The development of written Romani has been slow. The speech community

is heterogeneous and there has not been a commonly accepted standard. Nowadays the writing system is established. Of course, overall sufficient expression in writing is important for supporting Romani identity, saving the language, raising its status and extending the number of domains where it is used. An established tradition of going to school is essential, backed up by adequate coursebooks and other relevant materials.

Instruction in Romani started in the 1970s. Compulsory primary school in Romani took its first steps in the 1980s, especially in Helsinki and Espoo. At the end of the 1990s, out of 1 700 Romani children 250 were taught in Romani in ten different places. Romani can be the language of instruction in comprehensive schools. In the 2000s this mode of teaching has regrettably been retarded.

Here is an excerpt from a welcoming address in Romani (*Romano Boodos* 3/2015) at the start of grade 1 in upper secondary school, with a translation into English:

- Tšiňko diives saare sikjiboskiire ta saste aaven aro gymnasia. Me som N.N. ta me aaňňaa tumengo iego klassosko sikjiboskiiri. Rakkaven kutti tumenna kokarenna, soske tumen kamjate te aaven aro dai skoola ta sar tumengo niijal hin džeelo.
- Good day students, and welcome to upper secondary school. I am N—. N—. and the teacher of your grade. Please tell me a little bit about yourself, why you wanted to come to this school and how your summer was.

At the University of Helsinki there has been the option of taking a minor (60 credits) in Romani Language and Culture since 2012.

Research on Finnish Romani has traditions. In 1902 Arthur Thesleff published an important Romani dictionary. In 1961 Raino Vehmas defended his PhD dissertation on the acculturation of Finnish Roma. In the 1960s Pertti Valtonen wrote his Licentiate's thesis on the historical development of Romani. In 2007 Kimmo Granqvist published a voluminous description of Romani phonology and morphology. In 2012 Panu Pulma edited and committed to print a 500-page volume on the history of Finland's Roma from the earliest times up to the 2000s. Pia Brandt-Taskinen and Helena Pirttisaari have written master's theses about the morphology and syntax of Finnish Romani.

romani romano *m.* {romanesko, romane, romanengo}, roma(n)seel *m.* {roma(n)seelesko, roma(n)seele, roma(n)seelengo}
romanikieli romano tšimb
romanikielinen romano tšimbakiiro
romanikulttuuri romano kulttuures
romanilaisittain romanes, roma(n)seel
romanimies rom *m.* {rommesko, romma, rommengo}
romaninainen romni *f.* {romjako ~ romnijako, romja ~ romnijako, romjengo ~ romnijengo}

The Finnish–Romani eddictionary by Koivisto (2001).

Section 17, subsection 3 in Finland's constitution (731/1999) states:

- The Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Provisions on the right of the Sami to use the Sami language before the authorities are laid down by an Act. The rights of persons using sign language and of persons in need of interpretation or translation aid owing to disability shall be guaranteed by an Act.

The language rights of the Roma are weaker than those of the Sámi and the users of sign languages. Speakers of Romani are treated as being equivalent to 'other groups'.

There is a National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs (founded in 1956), charged with the task of enhancing the equal participation of the Roma population in Finnish society, improving their living conditions and socio-economic position, and to promoting their culture. This is also a cutting-edge project of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's government (2015–). Since 1995 the radio channel Radio Suomi has broadcast the newscast *Romano Mirits* (15 minutes every Tuesday). The first church service in Romani was arranged in Turku in 1995.

At the Institute for the Languages of Finland there is an expert body, the Romani Language Board, charged with the task of giving advice and regulations concerning the use of the

Romani language.

From 2005 to 2008 the society Elämä ja Valo ('Life and Light') administered a revitalization project for Romani, targeting pre-school children by the method of language nests. Some headway was made but the results do not seem to be enduring.

Romani in today's Finland is utterly endangered because Romani parents rarely pass the language on to their children. One third of the potential users speak Romani sometimes.

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Tatar

Among the Russian troops in Finland in the 1830s there were Turkish-related Tatars from the Volga and Ural regions. Some of them participated in the fortification works in Sveaborg (Suomenlinna), outside Helsinki and Bomarsund, on the main island of Åland. These first Tatars either died or returned to Russia. In the 1870s there were Tatars living in Helsinki.

A new wave of migration started in the 1870s. Merchants from the Tatar villages in Nizhny Novgorod moved first to St Petersburg and then westwards. Soon there were Tatar peddlers and market sellers all over southern Finland. Often they were farmers who had been set on the move because land-owning conditions had deteriorated. Tatars arrived also after 1917 (when the border had been closed) until 1925. Due to influx over time, the group homogeneity was reinforced. Occasional Tatar families came also in the early 1930s and early 1940s. Peddling soon changed into market- and shop-based commerce, especially in the cities. The products typically sold were furs, blankets, textiles and later mats.

The Tatars are a stable religious, cultural and linguistically distinct group. It is well integrated. The name of their association (founded in 1935) is *Finlandiya Türkleri Birligi* (FTB; the Society of Finland's Turks). There is no mention of the Tatar language in the bylaws of FTB.

After freedom of religion had been declared in 1923, the Finnish Mohammedan Congregation was founded in 1925, called Finland's Islam Congregation from 1963. A separate congregation was founded in Tampere in 1943. In 1990 the total number of members in the congregations was over 800. Now they have some 700 members: 600 in Helsinki, 100 in Tampere. After the wars the professions of Finland's Tatars have diversified due to continued education, just as in the society in general.

The **Tatar** language *(tatar tele, tatarça)* spoken by Finland's Tatars is a Mishar dialect of Kazan Tatar, which belongs to the northwest branch of the Turkic languages. Its speech areas in Russia include Tatarstan (especially Kazan), Nizhny Novgorod, Mordovia, Chuvashia and Bashkortostan. The total number of Tatar speakers today is around seven million. The Oguz branch of the Turkic languages includes Turkish, Azerbajani and Turkmen.

The Tatar population in Finland, currently some 700 members, are predominantly Mishar Tatars. Finnish Tatar is, and has always been, a predominantly domestic language, used at home, among close relatives and at cultural events. No full-scale official recognition has ever been aimed at.

The logo of the Society of Finland's Turks.

There is much variation in Finnish spoken Tatar, especially in pronunciation. Earlier there were influences from Russian phonetics, later from Finnish. The consonant system of Finnish is simple and this has levelled Tartar pronunciation. For example, the phonemes /b d g z/ have lost their voicing and turned into their Finnish equivalents /p t k s/.

Finnish Tatar has been written in two ways, which has hindered language acquisition. Arabic letters were largely used until the 1950s. Finnish society would prefer Latin letters and pressure from the Finnish language supports this, but choosing an orthography has been difficult. In the 1950s Finland's Tatars decided in favour of Latin letters.

Instruction in Tatar was already arranged in the 1920s. There was a four-year Tatar comprehensive school in Helsinki from 1948 to 1969, with instruction given in Tatar and Finnish. In the 1960s Turkish was occasionally used instead of Tatar. In 1969 this school was discontinued, having been the last Tatar comprehensive school in the Western world.

Since 1925 there has been manifold literature published in Tatar: history, biographies, memoirs, religious literature, stories, novels, poetry, children's books, song books etc. Many coursebooks have appeared in Tatar. Since 1948 the FTB introduced above has (somewhat irregularly) published an information leaflet. From 2004 the Islam Congregation has published the news bulletin *Mähallä Habärläre*, which appears once or twice a year. Here is an extract from an editorial written by the native language teacher Hamide Çaydamin in 2016 (with subsequent translation):

- Agımdagı yılda küp yañalıklar buldı. Alarnıñ kübesen bez sezgä jurnalıbızıñ bitlärendä citkerergä

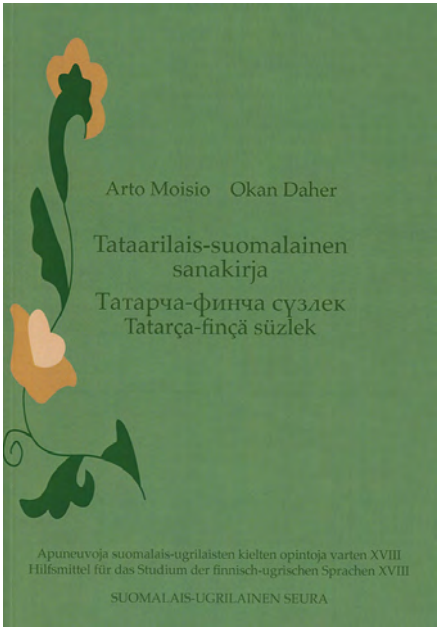
tırışabız. Yañalıklar arasında berniçä mäsälä jurnalıbıznıñ tomışına kagılganga kürä alar turında ayırım söylise kilä. (*Mähallä Habärläre* 2/2016, s. 1)

• Now this current year we have had many pieces of news. We try to communicate most of them to you on the pages of our news bulletin. Among the news there are some relating to the contents of our bulletin about which we want to inform you separately.

Harry Halén, Okan Daher and Feride Nisametdin have described the linguistically distinct features of Finnish Tatar. Moisio and Daher (2016) is a recent Tatar–Finnish dictionary. It is based on Kazan Tatar but also serves as an introduction to the vocabulary of Finnish Tatar. Daher (2016) describes the culture, history, and integration of Finland's Tatars.

According to estimates by the community, there are several hundred speakers of Tatar. In 2016, 189 persons had registered Tatar as their native language. In the 1960s there were pressures on individuals to register as speakers of Turkish, but lately the Mishar identity has been strengthened and there is even some influx from Kazan leading to fresh marriages. In today's Tatar community multilingualism is very common and Tatar proficiency is declining among the younger generations.

In the 1960s cultural bonds to Kazan and elsewhere were strengthened. The interest in Tatar language and culture and in Mishar Tatar started growing.



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http://www.ftb.fi/alku/ [Society of Finland's Turks]

Yiddish

There were no Jews in Finland prior to 1809, under Swedish rule. Swedish law only admitted Jews to live in Stockholm, Göteborg, Norrköping and Karlskrona. But Jews came to Finland along with the Russian army after 1827. A military decree in 1858 gave all soldiers retired from the Russian army the right to settle down in Finland together with their families. In 1872 there were 500 Jews in Finland.

Finland's Jews became naturalized in 1918. In the 1930s there were more than 2,000 Jews in Finland: 1,300 in Helsinki and 500 in both Viipuri and Turku. They had emigrated from western Russia, especially Pähkinälinna, Tver, Novgorod and areas of present-day Lithuania and northeast Poland. In 1930 half of the Jews living in Finland had been born in Finland.

Their most common language was **Yiddish**, a Germanic language with origins in German *(jiddisch-daitsch,*

The synagogue in Turku/Åbo (Wikimedia Commons).

jüdisch-deutsch), especially its northeast Lithuanian dialect. The German noun *Jude* 'Jew' is pronounced *jid* in Yiddish, and therefore *Jiddisch* is the native name of the language. Yiddish came into being in the Rhine Valley in the tenth century and Jewish migrants introduced it to Eastern Europe in the 1200s.

Yiddish has been strongly influenced by Hebrew as well as by Slavonic, Romance languages and other languages. Yiddish is written from right to left, originally with Hebrew letters. This might create the impression that Yiddish is related to Hebrew, which is not the case.

The early Jewish migrants to Finland spoke Yiddish. But Yiddish has never been taught in Finnish schools nor has it been an official language of Finland's Jews. Not much has been written in Yiddish in Finland, but the language has been used in synagogue services in Helsinki and Turku. After the wars Yiddish has been spoken to some extent. In Turku the language was used in a kindergarten in the 1950s. Of course the overall scanty use was affected by the discrimination that the Jewish community experienced. Another factor was the opinion (also held among some Jews) that Yiddish is an inferior mixed language. All of this negatively affected the attitudes towards the language.

In the course of 20 years the Jews in Helsinki and Turku switched their main language to Swedish, which still had a strong position in both these cities in the early 1900s. At the end of the nineteenth century 600 out of the 700 Jews (86 %) in Helsinki had Yiddish as their main language. But already in 1900 the share had dropped to 40 % (262/626), and in 1924 to 14 % (136/954). The year 1930 was the last in which the statistical yearbook of Helsinki lists the number of speakers of Yiddish (77), out of whom many were bilingual with Swedish as their second language. In Viipuri, the Jews switched to Finnish directly.

Numbers do not tell the whole story. Multilingualism is typical of small minorities. Finland's Jews have switched between Yiddish, Russian, Swedish, Finnish and Hebrew. Yiddish was spoken among elder Jews in Finland in the 1960s. There are still Jews in Finland who speak and read Yiddish.

When the Jewish coeducational school was founded in Helsinki in 1918 its languages of instruction were Swedish and Yiddish. However, Yiddish was not a subject that was taught.

Already in 1933 the school started changing its language of instruction to Finnish. In 1942 the Finnish name Helsingin Juutalainen Yhteiskoulu was introduced. Thus, languages were switched for the second time. Of course, good knowledge of Finnish was essential because many Jews were merchants. Swedish nevertheless long remained a domestic language. Today the oldest Jews in Finland still often speak Swedish, middle-aged ones are bilingual in Finnish and Swedish, younger ones are usually monolingual in Finnish.

In 1977 the name of the school turned into Juutalainen koulu, today it is Helsingin Juutalainen Yhteiskoulu, a comprehensive school catered for by the Jewish congregation. The subjects taught are Jewish religion and traditions as well as Hebrew. The number of pupils is around 100.

Not much has been written in Yiddish in Finland. In the early 1920s experiments were made with Hebrew, but the texts were difficult to print. Latin letters were also tested. Publications appeared after the wars in Hebrew and Yiddish with Hebrew letters, but these activities faded in the 1980s.

In 2004 Simo Muir defended his doctoral dissertation *Yiddish in Helsinki: Study of a Colonial Yiddish Dialect and Culture* at the University of Helsinki. It contains a description of Yiddish and has been one of the main sources on Yiddish for this section.

There are highly diverging opinions about the number of Yiddish speakers in Finland today. Due to recent influx from many directions, the Jewish population in Finland is very heterogeneous. Presently the Jewish congregation in Helsinki sends out its newsletters in five languages: Finnish, Swedish, English, Russian, and Hebrew – but not in Yiddish. It is clear that the younger Jews normally do not know Yiddish and that Yiddish in Finland is a strongly endangered language. In Finland's language statistics of 2016 one person is registered as a speaker of Yiddish.

A concert programme in Yiddish from 1930 (Muir 2004).

Most of the millions of East-European Jews executed during the Holocaust were speakers of Yiddish. In Sweden today there are 20,000 Jews and 4,000 speak Yiddish, which is an official national minority language in Sweden since the year 2000.

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http://jchelsinki.fi/sv/node/217978

https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2515876

Karelian

(Written by Vesa Koivisto, translated by F. K.)

Karelian denotes a totality, **Karelian-Olonets**, with two main variants. One is **Olonets (livvi)** (number 2 on the map), the other, **Karelian proper** (number 1 on the map), has two variants: the northern dialect **Viena** and **South Karelian**. In Russia **Lude** (number 3 on the map) has been considered a Karelian dialect, but in Finland Lude is considered a language on its own. Some scholars consider Olonets a distinct language.

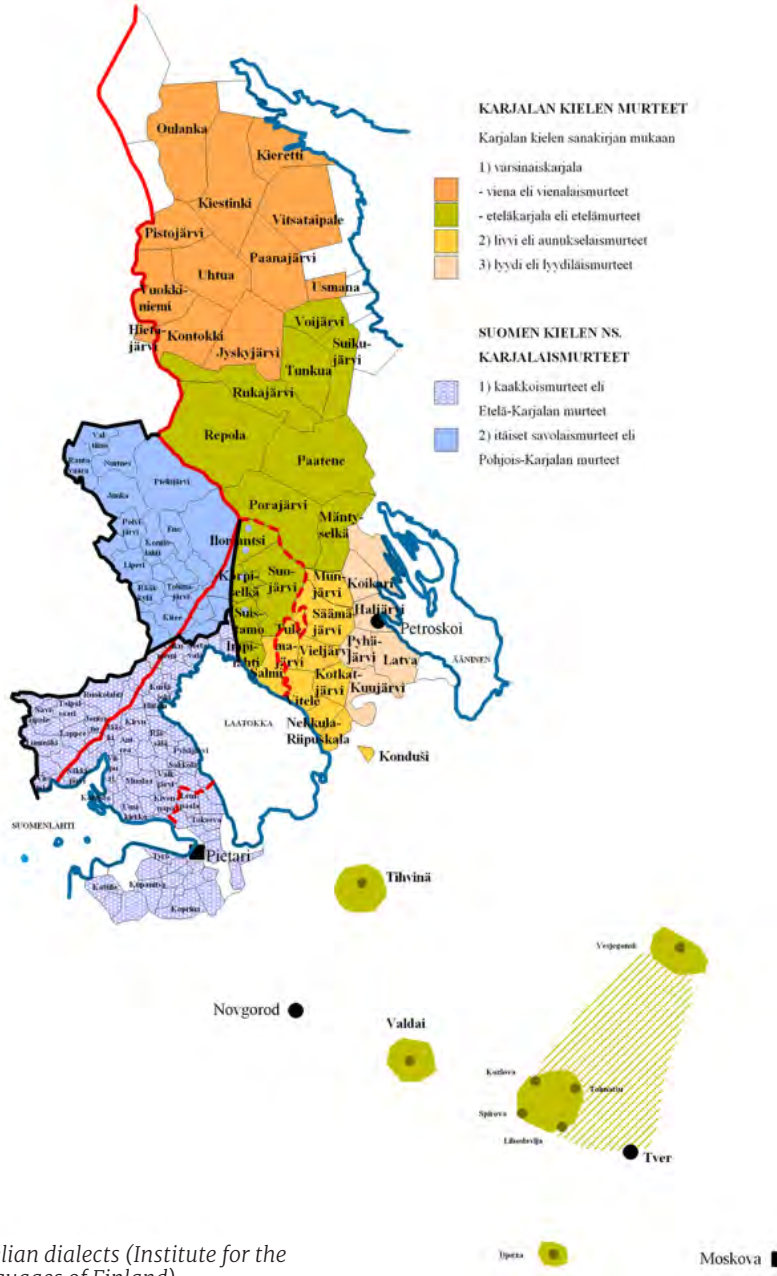
Karelian is spoken in two states, Russia and Finland. Karelian is an *old domestic language* in its area where speakers of Karelian lived before any state borders were institutionalized.

The area where Karelian is spoken is multilingual. Karelian, Finnish, Lude, Vepsian, Sámi and Russian have long been in contact with and influenced one another. The closest relative of Karelian is Finnish. The eastern dialects of Finnish share their origins with Karelian. Karelian started developing into a language of its own 1,000 years ago. The most notable difference between Finnish and Karelian is the influence that Russian has exerted upon the latter.

Karelian has survived as a vernacular used in the immediate surroundings of its speakers, in villages and families. It has not been used for extensive communication with the more distant outer world nor with political or administrative authorities. It has not been used as a language of instruction in schools and its use in writing is limited. This concerns both Finland and Russia.

Lately Karelian has been the means of face-to-face communication of a mostly decreasing and ageing population. On the other hand Karelian has been used for literary purposes. There have been attempts at increasing its domains of use and getting the speakers to use it in different situations. It is typical of Karelian today is that its speakers are bilingual or multilingual but Karelian is not their strongest language.

The number of speakers has declined rapidly during the past 100 years. Now Karelian is, by UNESCO's terminology, definitely endangered. Children do not speak Karelian any more and rapid linguistic and ethnic assimilation is under way.



Karelian dialects (Institute for the Languages of Finland).

In Finland the number of speakers of Karelian has fallen from 40,000 during World War II to some 4,000. By a twist of fate the Karelian speech community in Finland was totally split up all over the country when the speakers, under more or less tumultuous conditions, were forced to quit their original geographical speech areas in Border Karelia (see the map) during WW II. The consequence was a language shift from Karelian to Finnish. In older Finnish language statistics there are no figures on the numbers of speakers of Karelian. However, from 2011 it has been possible to register Karelian as one's native language.

According to Matti Jeskanen there were some 5,000 speakers of Karelian in Finland in the year 2000. Based on data from registration of population and religion, Tapio Hämynen has estimated that in the year 2009 there were 1,700 speakers of Karelian with their ancestry in Border Karelia. Anneli Sarhimaa has estimated that there are 11,000 pretty good speakers of Karelian and another 20,000 who understand the language. These figures include all Finnish speakers of Livvi and South Karelian.

In today's Russia an estimate gives 20,000–30,000 speakers of Karelian. There might be more but the numbers cannot be corroborated.

Karelian does not have an official status nor is it a language of education or administration in Finland or Russia. Karelian has often been regarded as a variant of Finnish, or as a Finnish dialect. The status of Karelian in Finland is much inferior to the status of all other old domestic languages. Karelian is not mentioned in the current constitution nor in the language laws even if all the other national and old domestic languages are mentioned there.

Karelian was mentioned for the first time in 2009 when it was included among the languages subsumed in Finland by decree under the 1992 *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. However, Finland only commits itself to reporting every fourth year to the European Union about the current status of the relevant languages. Karelian was indeed included in the 2009 and 2013 reports about the application of language legislation.

The question about writing in Karelian is a timely one. Karelian has been written for two hundred years. Matthew's Gospel was already translated into Tver Karelian in 1820. The number of publications in Karelian

Bearers of Tver Karelian culture in 2016 (photo: Vesa Koivisto).

has started growing during the past 20 years. In Russia two writing systems have been developed during the last two decades: one in Livvi and the other in Viena Karelian. Both are used on a regular basis. Items have also been published in Tver Karelian and in Lude. Writing in Livvi has been preferred in Finland. The question about one (or more) writing systems for Karelian remains moot.

Important channels for written Karelian are the regular newspapers and journals. *Karjal Žurnualu* is important for Finland's speakers of Karelian (verkolehti.karjal.fi). It appears mainly in Livvi on the net and four times a year as a paper version. An important supporter of Karelian and a link uniting Karelians is the newspaper *Oma Mua* appearing once a week in Russia both in Livvi and in Viena Karelian. Oma Mua is also on the net (www.omamua.ru). In Tver Karelia the newspaper *Karielan šana* is published in Tver Karelian and Russian about once a year.

The Institute for the Languages of Finland has published the dictionary *Karjalan kielen sanakirja* (also available on the net). In the 2000s there have appeared grammars for Livvi and Viena Karelian as well as Finnish–Livvi and Livvi–Finnish dictionaries.

A dictionary of Karelian (photo: Institute for the Languages of Finland).

In 2008 a professorship in Karelian language and culture was founded at the University of Eastern Finland (Joensuu campus). In the 2000s Karelian has got more publicity and visibility outside the university. Importantly, the Finnish Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts news in Karelian. Wikipedia in three Karelian dialects are under construction. In 2017 a sizeable revitalization programme for Karelian started under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Oma Mua (photo: Vesa Koivisto).

The village of Jyškyjärvi in Viena Karelia 2013 (photo: Vesa Koivisto).

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Russian

Like Tatars and Jews, ethnic Russians also came to Finland in the 1800s, often as peddlers with their products in a big bag. There is a Finnish word for these peddlers, *laukkuryssä*, literally 'bag Russian'. There also came Russian orthodox priests, monks, soldiers, stonelayers, fortification workers and of course officials working in the Czar's bureaucracy. Sveaborg (Suomenlinna) outside Helsinki was a Russian enclave under the Czar's jurisdiction. In 1917 there were 125,000 Russian soldiers in Finland. On the Karelian Isthmus there could be 100,000 summer guests from St Petersburg.

Russian refugees started coming to Finland after the October Revolution of 1917. For example, after the rebellion in Kronstadt in 1921 some 8,000 fled to Finland, most of whom continued onwards to other parts of Europe. In 1918–1943 some 13,000 Russians obtained Finnish citizenship. Prior to 1990 the number of Russians peaked in 1930 with 7,600 persons, and it was at its lowest in 1980, at 1,500.

The years of Russian oppression, 1899–1905 and 1908–1917, had left their marks on the Finnish mindset. In June 1900, the Czar gave the infamous *Language Manifesto* (initiated by Governor General Nikolai Bobrikov). In the course of a 10-year period Russian was to become the language of higher administration in Finland, including the courts. The governor started using Russian in 1901 and the senate had its first session in Russian in 1903. Teaching of Russian at schools was intensified. But the implementation of the manifesto was discontinued after the general strike in 1905.

Later, a mentality of Finnish revenge was not unheard of in some quarters. In May 1918, the senate (Finland's government) decided that all Russian citizens should leave Finland within five days. Another example is the discontinuation of Finland's only professorship in Russian Language and Literature, at the University of Helsinki, in 1919. Certainly the discontinuation was in part due to the less than impressive performance of the last incumbent of the chair, a Russian citizen. The professorship was re-established in 1947, as prescribed by the Paris Peace Treaty with the Soviet Union.

More than 600 Russian-speaking Finns took part in the wars 1939–1944 on the Finnish side. Many served in the radio intelligence. Substantial results were achieved, especially in the

1900 **SUOMEN** N:o 22

SUURIRUHTINANMAAN

ASETUS-KOKOELMA.

(Julkaistavaa saamastuolista).

Keisarillisen Majesteetin Armollinen Julistuskirja

venäjänkielen käytäntöön ottamisesta asiain käsittelyssä eräissä Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaan hallintovirastoissa.

Annettu Pietarhovissa, 20 (7) pnä Kesäkuuta 1900.

Me NIKOLAI Toinen, Jumalan Armosta, koko Venäjänmaan Keisari ja Itsevaltias, Puolanmaan Tsaari, Suomen Suuriruhtinas, y. m., y. m., y. m. Teemme täten tiettäväksi: Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaan yhdistettyä Wenäjän Keisarikuntaan päätettiin Keisari Aleksander I:sen, muistossa Korkean-autuaan, tahdosta että venäjänkieli olisi, pääkielenä, vähitellen otettava käytäntöön maan hallintoa koskevia asioita käsiteltäessä. Tätä Armollista määräystä, jonka aiheutti huolenpito valtakunnan yhteyden vahvistamisesta, ei ole tähän asti pantu täytäntöön sen tähden ettei venäjänkieli ole ollut tarpeeksi levinnyt Suomessa. Tämän vaikeuden poistamiseksi on ryhdytty erilaisiin toimenpiteisiin, ja on myöskin hiljakkoin valtakunnankielen taito julistettu pakolliseksi maan korkeampiin virkoihin pääsemistä varten. Kun Me nyt olemme katsoneet ajan tulleen omistaa venäjänkielelle sille kuuluvan arvon virallisessa kirjevaihdossa ja asiain käsittelyssä Suuriruhtinaanmaan virastoissa, olemme Me antaneet tämän asian sitä varten asettamamme erityisen Konferenssin harkittavaksi. Konferenssin antama lausunto, joka vastaa Meidän aikomuksiamme, tarkoittaa niiden toteuttamista asian laadun

The Language Manifesto (1900).

Suomussalmi battles.

After the wars the Allied Control Commission did just what their name suggests, they 'controlled' all aspects of life in Finland. For example, the Culture-Democratic Alliance (*Kulttuuridemokraattinen Liitto*, which still exists today) arranged a concert in Helsinki on 10 November 1947 offering highlights such as the Stalin Cantata and Chant about the Soviet Fatherland. While the Agreement on Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance between Finland and the Soviet Union was in force 1948–1992, it was impossible for Soviet citizens to obtain asylum in Finland. The few who came were defectors or women with a Finnish husband.

In 1990 there were 3,800 speakers of Russian in Finland.

The collapse of the Soviet Union around 1990 brought about a fast change. In a television interview on 10 April 1990 president Mauno Koivisto pronounced that certain Ingrians were ethnical Finns and therefore entitled to return to Finland. These were descendants of settlers to Russia from Eastern Finland (Savo and Karelia) who moved to areas occupied by Sweden in the wars preceding the peace in Stolbova in 1617. The optional repatriation of Ingrians ended on 1 July 2016. Some 30,000 people had moved from the Ingrian areas around St Petersburg to Finland. Forty per cent of the arrivals had some or perfect knowledge of Finnish.

In early 2015 there were 69,000 speakers of Russian, at the end of 2016 some 75,000, two thirds of whom were women.

Russian is not considered an old domestic language in Finland. Speakers of Russian enjoy no further rights above those that the new immigrants have. For historical and geopolitical reasons the situation is sensitive, even taboo. If the same quantitative criteria were applied to the Russian-speaking population as to speakers of Finnish and Swedish, Russian could be an official language in Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa. Helsinki could have street signs in three languages: *Mannerheimintie* / *Mannerheimvägen* / *Prospekt Mannergeima*.

You can take a major in Russian Language and Literature at six Finnish universities. The Finnish-Russian schools in Helsinki and Imatra/ Joensuu/Lappeenranta offer study options leading to matriculation.

There is a prognosis that there will

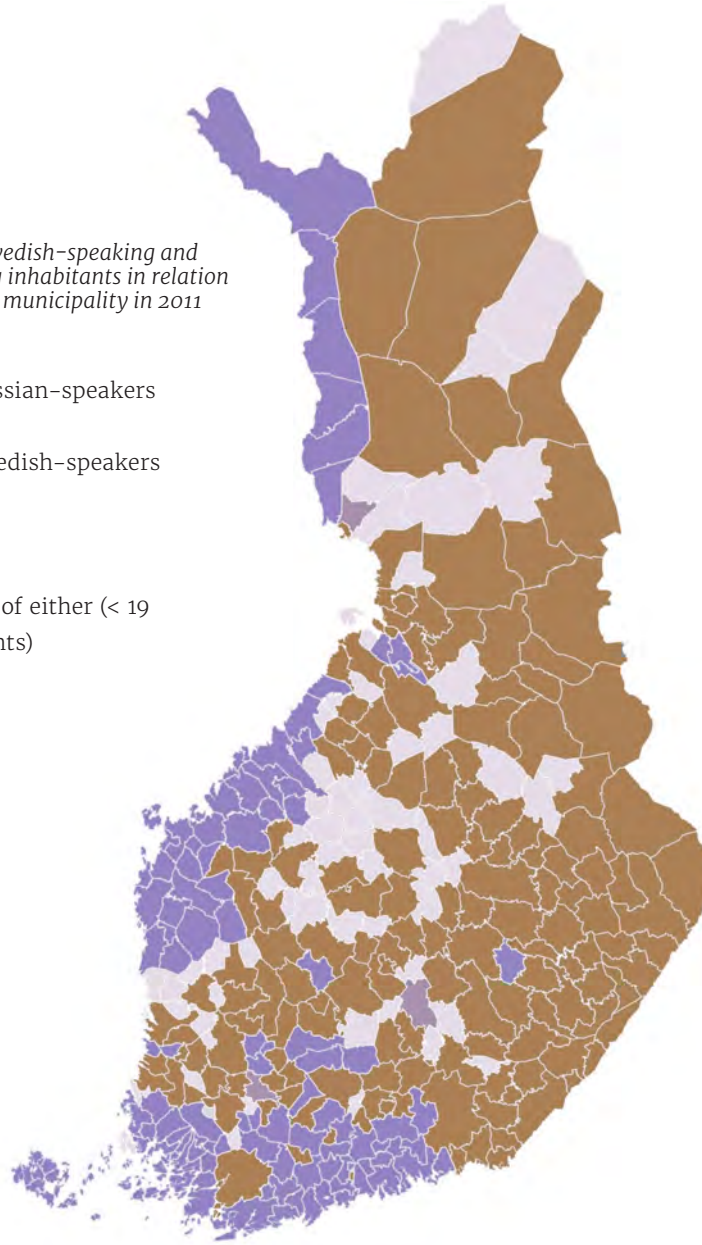
The number of Swedish-speaking and Russian-speaking inhabitants in relation to one another by municipality in 2011

more Russian-speakers

more Swedish-speakers

equal

very few of either (< 19 inhabitants)



Municipalities with more speakers of Swedish (blue) or of Russian (brown).

be 240,000 speakers of Russian in Finland in 2050. President Putin's policy of 'fellow-countrymen' (*sootetšestvennik*) has already shown its claws as the Russian Ombudsman for Children has repeatedly interfered with decisions made by Finnish childcare officials. The outspoken aim of Russian language legislation is to strengthen the ethnical and cultural identity of the Russian diaspora. Currently the status of 20,000 persons with dual Finnish-Russian citizenship is being discussed.

Since the 1990s Russian has frequently been heard in Finnish cities. Many shops and health centres offer services in Russian. Libraries have Russian literature and newspapers in stock.

Some future challenges can be induced from the map on the preceding page (sourced from to Statistics Finland). It shows, municipality by municipality, where there are more speakers of Swedish (blue) or of Russian (red), when these two minorities are compared to one another. There are many more municipalities where the number of Russian speakers exceeds that of Swedish speakers.

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http://www.hs.fi/sunnuntai/a1370662540973

Foreign languages

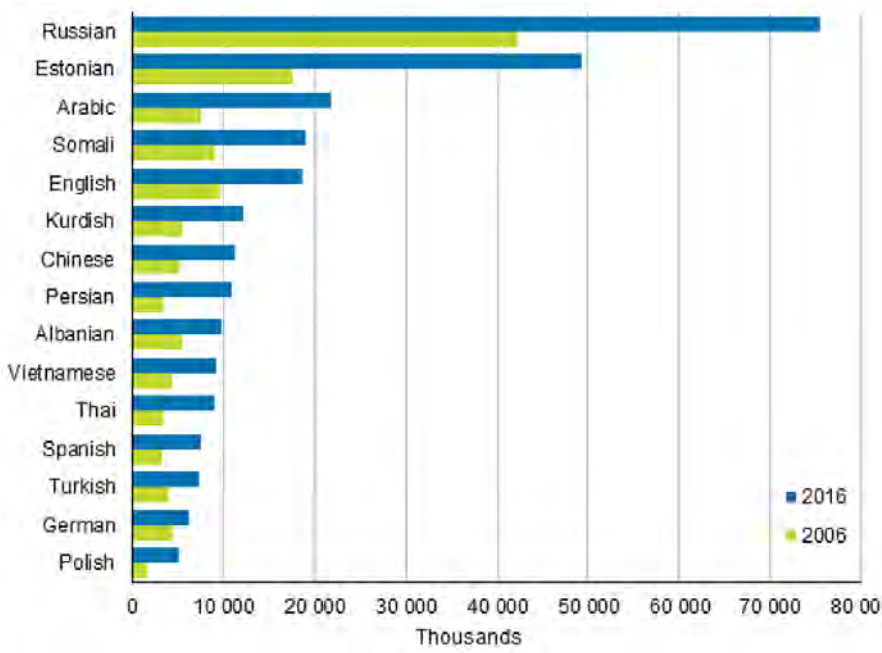
Speakers of languages other than those treated so far speak **foreign languages**. In 1990 Finland had 25,000 residents born abroad. Then immigration intensified, in the beginning especially from Estonia, Russia and Somalia. In 1990–2015 the nationwide share of immigrants grew from 0.8 % to 6.4 %. In early 2017 there were 354,000 primary speakers of foreign languages. The official population register has data on the 'language' (Finnish: *kieli*; Swedish: *språk*) of all residents, based on individual reports (with parents reporting on behalf of their children).

The following table shows data (provided by Statistics Finland) on the 16 languages with most speakers (N) in 2015 and 2016, with an indication (%) of the one-year change.

	N/2015	N/2016	%
Finnish	4 865 628	4 857 795	−0,2
Swedish	290 161	289 540	−0,2
Russian	72 436	75 444	4,2
Estonian	48 087	49 241	2,4
Arabic	16 713	21 783	30,3
Somali	17 871	19 059	6,6
English	17 784	18 758	5,5
Kurdish	11 271	12 226	8,5
Chinese	10 722	11 334	5,7
Persian	8 745	10 882	24,4
Albanian	9 233	9 791	6,0
Vietnamese	8 273	9 248	11,8
Thai	8 582	9 047	5,4
Spanish	7 025	7 449	6,0
Turkish	7 082	7 403	4,5
German	6 168	6 256	1,4

The only languages with declining numbers are Finnish and Swedish, both dropping 0.2 %, and notably both dropping in absolute numbers for the third year in a row. All foreign languages are growing, Arabic and Persian so strongly due to the exceptional immigration in 2015. Russian is clearly the third most-spoken language in Finland, after Finnish and Swedish, Arabic the fifth in order, Somali the sixth.

The speakers of the three Sámi languages have increased by some tens, reaching 1,969 in 2016. Officially Tatar has 184 speakers. In addition to the sixteen languages in the table the statistics show another 143 languages. As curiosities one can note in passing that the languages with one single speaker in Finland include Esperanto,



The foreign languages with most speakers at the end of both 2006 and 2016 (Statistics Finland).

Frisian, Yiddish, Greenlandic (Kalaallisut), Welsh, Latin (!) and Romansh.

The official Finnish statistics just quoted contains only those 159 languages that have an ISO 639-1 code (there are altogether some 180 living languages with such a code). Speakers in Finland of all other languages, almost 7,000 speakers in total, are lumped together in the category 'other languages' (to be analyzed in the following section entitled Finland's 500 languages).

The above graph by Statistics Finland shows the ten-year development of the most spoken foreign languages from 2006 to 2016:

The main language and cultural rights of immigrants are found in the constitution (731/1999), the Nationality Act (359/2003), the Language Act (423/2003) and the Act on the

Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010). They state the principle of multilingualism and the right to study Finnish, Swedish and one's 'own language' or 'their language', whether indigenous or foreign. According to the constitution, Section 17:

- The Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture.

This is of course a very diffuse pronouncement. The Act on Immigrant Integration states in Section 3 that:

- integration means interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language.

Further on in the same act:

- When determining a child's opinion or hearing a child, the language used shall be one that the child understands. (§ 4)
- An authority shall arrange interpretation or translation in a matter if the immigrant does not possess any skills in Finnish or Swedish, which are the languages used before the authorities under the Language Act (423/2003) or if, on account of his/her disability or illness, he/she cannot make himself/herself understood in a matter referred to in this Act that may become pending at the initiative of an authority.
- The matter may be interpreted or translated into a language that the immigrant may be deemed to know adequately in view of the nature of the matter. (§ 5)
- The initial assessment is the preliminary assessment of the immigrant's preparedness concerning employment, study and other aspects of integration and the need for language training and other measures and services promoting integration. (§ 9)
- The linguistic objective of integration training is to provide the immigrants with the basic language skills in Swedish or Finnish required in daily life. (§ 20)
- The aim is also to promote good ethnic relations and dialogue between cultures and participation of immigrant groups and to support the opportunities of immigrants to preserve their own language and culture. (§ 29)

A lot of latitude is left to the municipalities to exegetically interpret

how these general pieces of binding advice should be implemented.

In 2011 the Institute for the Languages of Finland started a dictionary project with the purpose of creating basic dictionaries between Finnish and the most common immigrant languages. The first volume is about to be completed in 2017, a Finnish–Somali dictionary with 30,000 lexical entries. It will be followed by dictionaries for Finnish and the two main Kurdish dialects, Kurmanji and Sorani.

The curricula for teaching Finnish and Swedish as second languages to immigrants demonstrably have problems: entrance levels for courses are diffuse, entrance queues are too long, instruction groups are heterogeneous, the methods are not always up to date, the teaching substance is not precisely enough in line with local workplace requirements etc.

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SVT = Suomen virallinen tilasto.

Finland's 500 languages

The Finnish population register contains details on all citizens, and all foreigners with permanent residence. Every person reports his/her language which is then coded according to the standard ISO 639–1 with a code that contains two characters. Finnish is coded "fi", Swedish "sv", and so on. Statistics Finland obtains the codes from the Population Register Centre. Language reports not included in ISO 639–1 are delivered to Statistics Finland in plain language, for example "Ingush".

In the official statistics the third most common language after Finnish and Swedish is Russian, the tenth one Chinese 11,334, the twentieth French 4,096, the fiftieth Ibo (mostly in Nigeria) 735, the seventieth Indic Marathi 323 and the hundredth Lao with 47 speakers. 36 languages have 10 speakers or less. 16 have just one (officially reported) speaker in Finland, including Esperanto, Greenlandic (*Kalaallisut*), Yiddish, Welsh, Latin (!) and Romansh (Switzerland).

The standard ISO 639–1 contains the names of 182 living languages. This is just 2.6 percent of the world's 7,000 languages (which certainly covers over 90 percent of the world's population). Of these 182 languages twenty lack (officially reported) speakers in Finland, e.g. the Inuit languages Inuktitut and Inupiaq, Cornish, Corsican, Maori, Navajo, Ojibwa and Occitan.

But there are another 6,800 languages in the world that are not covered by the restricted standard ISO 639–1. Speakers in Finland of all these 6,800 languages are lumped together in the category "other languages" and their number at the turn of the year 2016/2017 was almost 7,000. In relation to the 5.5 million population of Finland the number 7,000 is a mere one per mille but nevertheless it is relevant for a realistic overall assessment of the language situation in the country.

Statistics Finland provided me with the details of the language reports in the category "other languages". There are 1,000 orthographically unique types of reports. There is a lot of orthographic variation. For example, the Caucasian language Ingush has been reported in 25 different ways. Another problem is the classical one concerning the difference between a language and its dialects. The single person who reports Savo as his/her language cannot reasonably be

considered speaker of a distinct language as all experts agree that Savo is a dialect of Finnish. Even more so this is true of the singleton person who (humorously?) claims to be a speaker of Kalevala. Yet another problem is the widespread existence of dialect continua in the third world, especially Africa and Asia. There are many multilingual situations of language contact where the same vernacular has many different names.

The database *Ethnologue* (2017) strives to be a complete catalogue of the languages of the world. It presents the current standard ISO 639–3 for language documentation. Every language has a three-character code, for example Finnish "fin" and Swedish = "sve".

As distinct languages among the 7,000 reports of "other languages" I have regarded those that unequivocally are listed in *Ethnologue* (2017). It turned out that on top of the 159 languages listed by Statistics Finland according to ISO 639–1 there are speakers in Finland of at least another 350 languages. That makes a sum total of (at least) 500 languages.

The biggest group among the "other languages" is the 1,250 speakers of the Tibeto-Burman Kayah-Karen dialect continuum. Other languages represented in Finland in the hundreds are Mandinka 416 (West-Africa), Ingush 393, Assyrian/ Neo-Aramaic 280 (Iraq and Syria), Dinka 258 (South-Sudan), Cebuano 252 (The Philippines), Edo/Bini 249 (Nigeria), Jarai 239 (Malayo-Polynesian, Vietnam), Tamazight/Berber 169 (North-Africa), Karelian 161, Moro 145 (Sudan) and Chaldean 117 (Iraq).

There are ten languages within the magnitude 50–100 speakers, for example Ingrian 53. Sixty languages have 10–49 speakers, for example Udmurt 16. Furthermore 140 languages have 2–9 speakers, such as Mordvin 6, Veps 4 and Hanti (Ostyak) 2. No less than 120 languages are represented in Finland by just one speaker, for example Lude.

Some 400 people have reported a language that cannot be spotted in *Ethnologue* (2017). Typical problematic instances are unclear references to geographical areas ("Cameroon") or to language types ("Creole"), or names of languages that cannot be found in other standard sources or even on the internet.

It is not literally correct to say that 500 languages are *spoken* in Finland today. If you are the only speaker of

your language in a foreign country you can only speak to yourself. Monologue is of course not the basic function of language. As noted, 120 of the 500 languages have just one speaker. 300 languages have less than 10 speakers. If there are just a few speakers of a language, and they are geographically dispersed over a vast area, they do not necessarily know one another. If so, the prerequisites for the existence of a genuine language community are not at hand and there are no possibilities for natural language use.

Suppose that the minimal size of a working language community would be 50 individuals. In the official statistics there are 99 languages above this limit, and among the "other languages" 23, sum total some 120 languages. If the critical mass were 100 speakers, the figure would be 88 + 14 = some 100 languages. If the limit were 1,000, we get 43 + 1 = some 40 languages. These figures are hypothetical but they surely implicate that tens of the newer languages are going to live on in Finland for generations, changing the overall linguistic landscape.

Ethnologue 2017. The Languages of the World. https://www.ethnologue.com/.

Latomaa, S. 2012. Kielitilasto maahanmuuttajien väestöosuuden mittarina. – *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka* 77 (5).

2017

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