

# Nordplus, and my travel to the heart of the Sami people



^The northern lights above a Sami camp, Kautokeino

**How the Nordplus express mobility scholarship enabled me to go to Kautokeino and make a photo story about the indigenous Sami population in Norway.**

As a Norwegian living close to the capital of Oslo, it's surprisingly easy to forget the fact that we're also sharing our country with an indigenous population in the north. I've always been fascinated by Sami culture, but my understanding of it has also been very limited. This is something that I also believe applies to a lot of my fellow countrymen. It often seems that the version that is presented to us in the media is the 'Sami archetype' - reindeer, traditional Sami clothing and Joik. This does not nearly show enough of the nuance and diversity which exists within the Sami population today.

Hence, I have for a long time wanted to travel to Kautokeino with the purpose of increasing my own knowledge about Sami language, culture and daily life. Furthermore, I've also had the idea that I wanted to make a journalistic product from up there, in order to document and present a more 'authentic' image of how the Sami population in Norway

is living. This is something I believe could be both interesting and important to the general public.

Luckily, I was able to get a scholarship thanks to the Nordplus organisation and the Danish School of Media and Journalism, which enabled me to travel to Kautokeino for 8 days for a school project. I spent my time there photographing and talking to a variety of people from the village. Since I was making a school project up there, I eventually decided to focus my project on a local reindeer herder.



^reindeer being herded by snowmobile, a little bit outside Kautokeino.

Naturally, 8 days is not nearly enough to get a good grasp on Sami culture. This is also the reason why I chose to selectively spend half of my days up there with the reindeer herder, and do my project about him. Documenting the broader aspects of Sami life in such a short time was simply too ambitious to carry out.

However, if anything the trip to Kautokeino has motivated me to go back and take more photos of the Sami people living there. Not only am I interested in it personally, I think it would also be valuable for others. The contacts and friendships I have acquainted now will thus be very nice to have for me in the future.



^Me petting one of the reindeer.