



MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION AND CULTURE  
FINLAND



Nordic Council  
of Ministers

# Nordic Diversity Connections In Arts and Culture Seminar



OULU



Oulu2026  
European Capital  
of Culture



Taiteen edistämiskeskus  
Centret för konstfrämjande  
Arts Promotion Centre Finland



SÁMEDIGGI  
SÄMITIGGE  
SÄÄ'MTE'ĞĞ  
SAAMELAISKÄRÄJÄT



Kulttuurilla kaikille  
Kultur för alla  
Culture for All



GLOBE ART POINT



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**Keynote 1:**  
**From Oslo to Oulu: a cross-country perspective on  
diversity efforts and gaps in the Nordic-Baltic region**

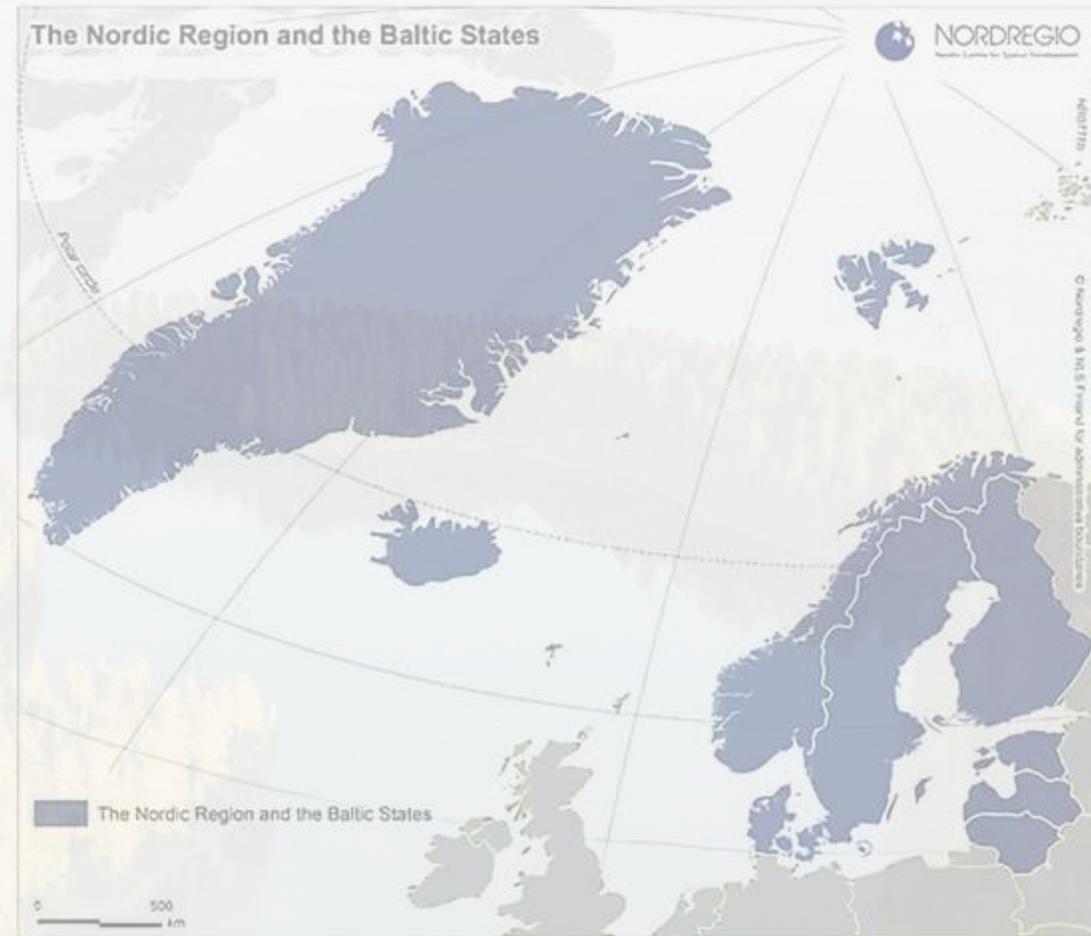
***Sadjad Shokoohi***, Independent Researcher, Dublin, Ireland

# Introduction

## The Policy Distance Travelled

### Our lenses for today:

1. Evidence & Knowledge
2. Competence & Dialogue
3. Resources & Gaps



United in Diversity

# Norway

## Evidence, Coordination, Reconciliation

### Timeline (2020-2025)

**2020:** National coordinator mandate established

**2021:** Preliminary diversity work plan implemented

**2021:** Three commissioned studies on cultural diversity

**2021-2022:** Kultur-Sápmi think-tank active

**June 2023:** Truth & Reconciliation final report published

**2023-2024:** Government follow-up actions on diversity initiatives



# Norway

## The Integration Gap

**Policy mandate** → Done

**Evidence** → Strong

**Challenge** → Integrating reconciliation into all cultural policy

**Requires** → Long-term structural change



How can cultural institutions ensure their work truly supports Norway's reconciliation process instead of treating it as a side project?

# Sweden

## Rights Frameworks & Artistic Freedom

### Timeline (2020-2025)

**2021:** "Så fri är konsten" debate on artistic freedom

**2022-2025:** Gender-equality strategy implemented

**2022:** Accessibility implementation plan toward 2031 launched

**2022-2024:** Children's rights work ("Barnrätt i praktiken")

**January 2025:** LGBTQI+ action plan "Stolt och trygg" launched



# Sweden

## The Tension Gap

**Strong equality policy** ↔ Freedom of expression

**Tension Gap** → Balancing equity with independence



How do we strengthen diversity without making artists feel their independence is at risk?

# Estonia

## Crisis Agility & The Accessibility Gap

### Timeline (2020-2025)

**March 2022:** ERM free access for Ukrainians established

**July 2022:** "Settle in Estonia" register opens

**December 2022:** Legal basis for Ukrainian-language support approved

**2023-2025:** Ukrainian cultural support funding calls

**2022-2024:** Permanent platforms established (Cultural Council of National Minorities, Ida-Viru Roundtable)

**January 2024:** Accessibility function established at the Ministry

**2025-2027:** Baseline funding secured

**2024-2025:** National accessibility indicator methodology in development



# Estonia

## The Resource Gap

- **Ambition** ↔ Capacity
  - Severe lack of staff & funding
  - Policy impact limited by resources



What happens when ambition is high, but the resource architecture is not yet fully in place?

# Finland

## Mainstreaming through Dialogue

### Timeline (2020-2025)

- 2020:** Ministerial working group on diversity established
- 2021:** Final report of the ministerial working group
- 2021:** Sámi Truth and Reconciliation Commission appointed
- 2021-2022:** Language Policy Programme developed
- 2023:** Action Plan "Art, Culture and Diverse Finland" published
- 2023:** Equality statement to Parliament delivered
- 2023-2030:** Roma Policy (launched)
- 2024:** Dialogue Cards staff workshops
- 2022-2025:** National Dialogues series (various dates and themes)
- 2025:** Anti-racism dialogues scheduled
- 2025:** €185,000 municipal diversity project grant allocated



# Finland

## The Evaluation Gap

- **Strong frameworks** ↔ Need stronger measurement
- **Evaluation Gap:** Lack of independent impact studies
- Inclusion must be **measured, not assumed**



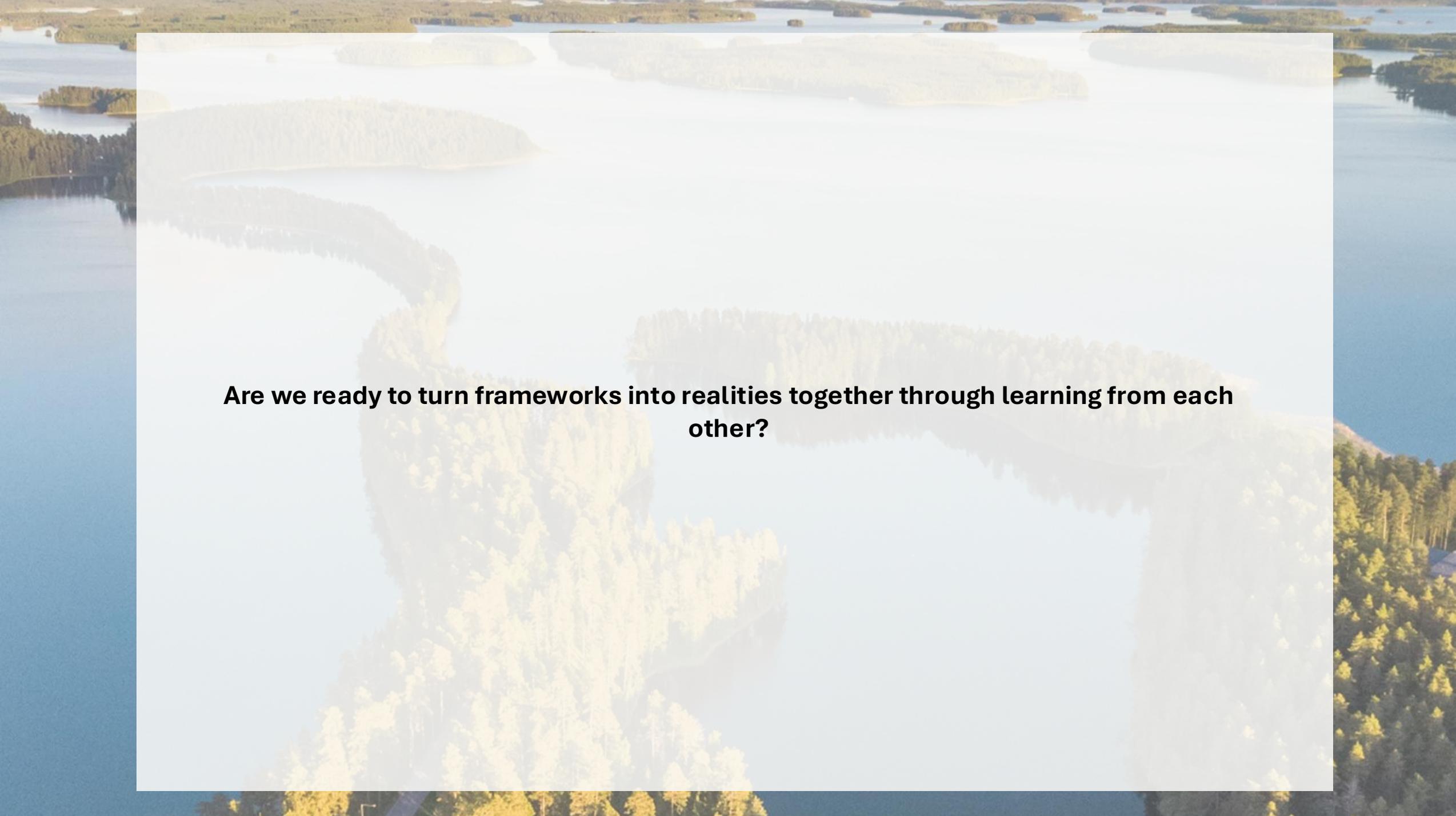
What changes when diversity becomes the norm, not the exception, in cultural policy?

# Shared Gaps & Future Action

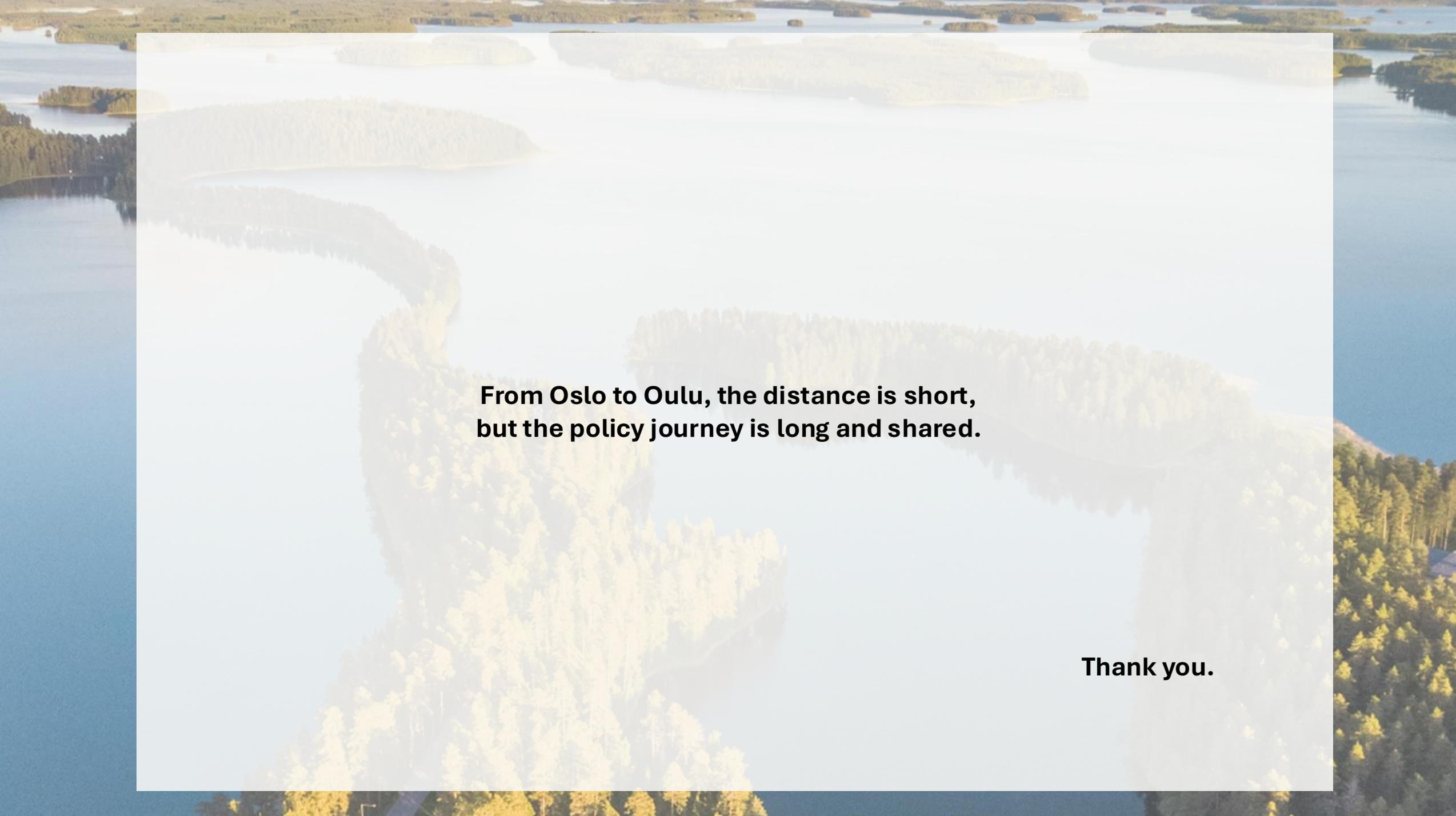
## United in Diversity

- **Across the region:** Three shared challenges
  1. Knowledge Gap: Need for data & indicators
  2. Competence & Resource Gap: Capacity vs. ambition
  3. Maintaining Challenge: Inclusion as standard practice
- **Shared learning potential:**
  1. Norway: reconciliation & coordination
  2. Sweden: rights framework
  3. Estonia: agility & resilience
  4. Finland: dialogue & competence



An aerial photograph of a large, calm body of water, likely a lake or a wide river, surrounded by numerous forested islands and peninsulas. The water is a deep blue, and the surrounding land is covered in dense green trees. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day. The text is centered over the middle of the image.

**Are we ready to turn frameworks into realities together through learning from each other?**

An aerial photograph of a vast, calm lake with numerous forested islands of various shapes and sizes. The water is a deep blue, and the islands are covered in dense green trees. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

**From Oslo to Oulu, the distance is short,  
but the policy journey is long and shared.**

**Thank you.**