

The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy

Key priorities for youth policies answers on
Country information on youth policies



Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth policy, youth research and youth work.

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FINLAND, 2006

1 Statistics on young people

1.1 Total number of young people in global population

1186048 *young persons*

1.2 Percentage of young people in global population

22,6 %

1.3 Percentage of young people by age brackets

13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30
3,8 %	3,6 %	3,7 %	3,9 %	3,7 %	3,8 %

1.4 Percentage of young people by gender

Male	Female
51,1 %	48,9 %

1.4.1 Percentage of young people by gender and by age brackets

	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30
Female	1,9 %	1,7 %	1,8 %	1,9 %	1,8 %	1,9 %
Male	1,9 %	1,9 %	1,9 %	2,0 %	1,9 %	2,0 %

1.5 Percentage of rural young people in global population

3,8 %

1.5.1 Percentage of rural young people in rural population

19 %

1.6 Percentage of urban young people in global population

15 %

1.6.1 Percentage of urban young people in urban population

25 %

1.7 Percentage of young people with a different nationality in global population

1 %

1.8 Number of people working in the youth field (employees and volunteers)
3400 *persons*

2 Actors and structures

2.1 National public authorities

2.1.1 Ministry in charge of youth

Name of ministry

Ministry of Education (The Youth Policy Division is one of the sub-units of Ministry's Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy, also Department of Education and Science Policy is important for youth affairs)

Name of minister

Minister of Culture, Mrs. Tanja Saarela (responsible for youth) Minister of Education, Mr. Antti Kalliomäki (responsible for education)

Duration of mandate

48 *months*

Number of people working in the ministry working on youth

12 *persons*

Contact person in the youth department

Director Olli Saarela (olli.saarela@minedu.fi)

Function, role and competence of youth department

The aims of the Youth Policy Division are - to support young people's active citizenship - to enhance young people's social empowerment - to improve young people's living conditions To this end, the Division - devises national youth work development plans - coordinates youth policy in central government - subsidises national youth organisations, their district organisations and youth work organisations - supports local youth work by allocating statutory state aid - supports the development of new forms of action for young people - subsidises the operation and construction of national youth centres (10) - supports and carries out international youth work cooperation - supports applied youth research - supports after-school activities - subsidises regional youth service and steers it by target outcome - supports the activities and development of youth workshops - subsidises and develops young people's web media - subsidises and develops projects relating to young people's social empowerment and to drug and alcohol prevention - participates in the development of education and training relating to youth work

2.1.2 Other public or semi public bodies

The Advisory Council for Youth Affairs, Secretary General Tarmo Manninen. The Council monitors and assesses young people's living conditions and takes initiative for their improvement, it is appointed by the Government. (www.minedu.fi/nuora) The Youth Organisation Subsidy Committee,



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Secretary General Tuomas Kurttila, prepares annual proposals to the Ministry of Education for subsidies to be allocated to national youth organisations and youth work service organisations. It first consults youth organisations and on this basis proposes subsidies and generally develops the system. Finnish National Board of Education supplies development, evaluation and information services regarding education to owners and managers of schools, teachers, policy makers and working life. (<http://www.oph.fi/english/frontpage.asp?path=447> The Finnish Centre for International Mobility CIMO is an expert and service organization subordinate to the Ministry of Education. It coordinates and manages scholarship and exchange programmes. CIMO is also responsible for implementing nearly all EU education, cultural and youth programmes in Finland. (<http://www.cimo.fi/Resource.phx/cimo/mainpage/mainpage.htx>)

2.1.3 Parliament commission in charge of youth issues

There is not only one, but probably most often youth issues have been dealt in Education and Culture Committee (sivistysvaliokunta). In Parliament of Finland most matters decided upon in the plenary session have been prepared in a committee. As a rule each committee deals with matters that are the responsibility of a corresponding ministry. Chair: Mrs. Kaarina Dromberg.

2.1.4 Other national public authorities

The regular activities by the Church rally a large number of children and young people. Parishes have some 3 800 employees and 30 000 trained volunteers to work with children and young people.

2.2 Regional and/or local public authorities

2.2.1 Regional public structures with competencies in the youth field

The five provincial state offices are responsible for youth work at the regional level. The Provincial State Offices are part of governmental administration and steered by the Ministry of Interior. However, in sectoral policy issues they are accountable to the Ministry responsible for the particular sector in question- in case of youth issues the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education and the provincial offices conclude three-year regional action plans, which are reviewed annually. These include for example the allocation of the funds earmarked for the development of youth workshops or children's after-school activities, the evaluation of local youth work services and the regional monitoring of young people's living conditions and initiatives for their development. They also cover regional co-operation at the international level, training, preventive drug work and promotion of multiculturalism and tolerance.

2.2.2 Local public structures with competencies in the youth field

According to the Youth act, youth work belongs to the self-governing municipalities (in 2006 431). Municipalities decide independently on the methods and implementation of youth work. They receive a state subsidy from the Ministry of Education, which covers about 4,5 % of their total expenses. About 20 municipalities have a separate youth board. In the other municipalities, youth



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work is assigned to boards responsible for other sectors such as sports, culture and education. About 150 municipalities have an own policy programme for children and youth and about 180 municipalities have their own youth councils or parliaments. The task of these councils is to promote young people ideas, opinions and action proposals for the youth boards.

2.3 Non public actors/structures - compulsory consultation

2.3.1 Names of bodies that must be consulted in the youth field

The Advisory Council for Youth Affairs, which takes initiatives on the budget proposal, development projects, and assists ministries in preparing their action and economic plans. The Youth Organisation Subsidy Committee, which prepares annual proposals to the Ministry of Education for subsidies to be allocated to national youth organisations and youth work service organisations.

2.4 Non public actors/structures - non-compulsory consultation

2.4.1 Names of bodies that can be consulted in the youth field

There are great number of bodies - youth organisations, youth researchers, regional and local youth work authorities which can be consulted, e.g. the following ones: Finnish Youth Co-operation Allianssi ry is a national youth council # an interest organisation which has some 100 member organisations. Finnish Youth Research Network, independent state funded scientific society, network of multi-disciplinary youth researchers. Local Youth Councils. (Not compulsory, in cooperation with Youth Affairs Committees of Municipal Councils) Student Councils (in matters concerning their schools, in cooperation with Youth Affairs Committees of City Councils)

2.4.2 National and regional youth councils

Finnish Youth Cooperation Allianssi is a national youth council # an interest organisation which has some 100 member organisations, including nearly all national youth, interest, hobby and political organisations, as well as other youth work partners and professionals. Some 180 local authorities have established youth councils, youth parliaments and other democratic schemes.

2.4.3 Large youth NGOs

Finnish Youth Cooperation Allianssi # an interest organisation which has some 100 member organisations, including nearly all national youth, interest, hobby and political organisations, as well as other youth work partners and professionals. www.alli.fi KEPA, or the Service Centre for Development Cooperation, is a service base for Finnish NGOs interested in development work and global issues. Over 200 such organisations belong to KEPA. These organisations vary greatly in character - large and small, local and national, professional and ideological. KEPA itself is a politically and ideologically non-aligned organisation that operates with funding from the Finnish foreign ministry. www.kepa.fi In terms of membership, the largest youth organisations are the Scouts and Guides of Finland, various student organisations (the largest being The National Union



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of Students in Finland), political youth organisations and schoolchildren's organisations. The Ministry of Education grants annual subsidies to national youth organisations and youth work organisations.

2.4.4 Expert groups, round tables, consulting groups in the youth field

Advisory Council for Youth Affairs (Nuora) is an expert body attached to the Ministry of Education. (www.minedu.fi) Finnish Youth Research Society (Nuorisotutkimusverkosto), independent state funded scientific society, network of multi-disciplinary youth researchers. (<http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/>) Working group for new Youth Act

2.4.5 Contacts of permanent networks in the youth field

Finnish Youth Research Network, independent state funded scientific society, network of multi-disciplinary youth researchers. (<http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/>) Youth and Work (<http://www.ttl.fi/Internet/English/Thematic+pages/Youth+and+work/>)

2.4.6 Other non public actors/structures

No answers available

3 Legislation

3.1 Constitution (articles that concern youth)

Chapter 2, basic rights and liberties Section 14, Electoral and participatory rights: A young person aged 18 is legally an adult and has the right to vote and stand in national and local elections. A young person aged 18 who is an immigrant residing permanently in Finland has the right to vote in local elections and local referendums. Section 6, equality: Children shall be treated equally and as individuals and they shall be allowed to influence matters pertaining to themselves to a degree corresponding to their level of development.

3.2 Application and transposition of the United Nations Declaration of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

Finland ratified the treaty on May 1990. The Finnish legislation is in accordance with the principles of the declaration such as freedom of thought, expression, conscience and religion etc.

3.3 Application and transposition of the European Convention on Children's Rights

No answers available

3.4 National legislation on youth

The new Youth Act repealed the Youth Work Act of 1995. It has come into force on March 1st 2006. The purpose of the Youth Act is to support young people's growth and independence, to



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promote young people's active citizenship and empowerment and to improve young people's growth and living conditions. The implementation of the purpose is based on communality, solidarity, equity and equality, multiculturalism and internationalism, healthy life styles, and respect of life and the environment. Guardianship Services Act (a young person aged 18 can dispose his or her property and sign contracts and other legal instruments Marriage act (a young person aged 18 can get married) Traffic act (a young person aged 18 can get a driving license) Associations Act stipulates that a 15-year-old can be a full member of an association, but may not take responsibility for financial matters until the age of 18. The Child Protection Act (683/1983, 10) binds authorities to hear the child in issues concerning him or herself.

3.5 Regional or local legislation on youth

Youth Act, Part 3 concerning local youth work and youth policy states that youth work and youth policy are part of the local authority's responsibilities. The implementation of youth work shall be the responsibility of local authorities, youth associations and other organisations doing youth work. Youth services may also be produced by local authorities in cooperation.

3.6 Guidelines

According to the Youth Act, youth work belongs to the local authorities. The local youth work and youth policy shall comprise educational guidance of young people; facilities and hobby opportunities; information and advisory services; support to youth associations and other youth groups; sportive, cultural, international and multicultural youth activities; young people's environmental education; and, when needed, youth workshop services or other forms of activity suited to the local circumstances and needs. Youth work and youth policy shall be implemented in multi-professional cooperation with local authorities and with young people, youth associations and other organisations doing youth work.

4 Programmes

4.1 European programmes

Socrates/Erasmus, Leonardo, YOUTH Programme, Eurodesk

4.1.1 National Agency for YOUTH Programme (Contact person)

Centre for International Mobility CIMO. Mrs. Ulla Naskali (www.cimo.fi)

4.1.2 Eurodesk

Centre for International Mobility CIMO Mrs. Sari Rehell (www.cimo.fi) eurodesk@cimo.fi

4.1.3 Implementation of the YOUTH Programme

In Finland there is a advisory group, which gathers together to plan implementation of youth policy. Advisory group has representatives of three sectors of youth field - administration (ministries, regions, local authorities), youth research and NGOs. The National Agency for the European Union



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Youth Programme in Finland is Centre for International Mobility CIMO. It belongs to the administrative sector of the Ministry of Education, although it operates as an independent governmental organisation. The personnel of the Youth Unit of CIMO include the Head of Unit and six Programme Coordinators. Eurodesk is part of the Youth Unit and in total it employs one person full-time. The duty of the Youth Unit is to administer the Youth Programme and related tasks. The National Agency uses Youthlink as their main administrative tool for processing the applications. The Youthnet-website is used as an overall daily administrative tool. All applications are subjected to the same administrative procedures and the applicants are guided throughout the whole application process. The coordinators have an important role in the processing of the applications, as well as in the guidance and counselling of projects. The National Agency will make on-site visits to one in ten projects that receive funding from the Programme. Through the visits, the National Agency wants to support ongoing projects, and also to ensure the quality of the funded projects, as well as to ascertain that the information presented in the applications is true. Visits will also be used to discuss possibilities for further projects.

4.1.4 Other EU programmes implemented in an important way for youth

Socrates/Erasmus, Leonardo The Ministry of Education contributes actively to the development of youth cooperation within the Baltic Sea and Barents region as part of the EU Northern Dimension. The aim is to promote knowledge-based decision-making in youth matters, develop cross-sectoral cooperation with a view to taking youth aspects into account in other policies, develop dialogues with young people, and look upon young people as an asset in the promotion of regional competitiveness and sustainable development.

4.2 National Programmes on youth

Youth policy development programme. The Government shall adopt a youth policy development programme every four years. The development programme shall contain the national objectives for youth policy and provide guidelines for youth policy programme work at the provincial and local levels. The development programme shall be revised according to need. The development programme shall be prepared by the Ministry of Education together with the other ministries concerned. During the preparation, they must hear major stakeholders in youth work and youth policy. AVARTTI (The International Award Programme for Young People) supports young people (aged between 14 and 25) growth into members of society. Avartti is one of the development projects of the Ministry of Education in 2003-2007. Youth participation project 2003-2007 initiated by the Prime Minister in 2002 aims to develop permanent practices and models of operation in order to promote youth participation by intensifying local and regional co-operation and increasing collaboration between administrative bodies. The project promotes young people's opportunities to influence and participate and its target group is primarily pupils in the final stages of their compulsory education and young people who have had difficulties in being admitted to educational institutions or in launching a career. 70 municipalities and 39 plans are involved the project. The project is also included in the Government's Civic Participation Policy Programme. Name of non youth specific programmes but which have a direct impact on young people The Government's Policy Programmes: Information Society Policy Programme, Employment



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Policy Programme, Entrepreneurship Policy Programme, Civic Participation Policy Programme. The Civic Participation Policy Programme aims to develop mechanisms of representative democracy and to improve the participation opportunities of NGO's as well as overall participation of citizens. Special attention will be given to less advantaged young people. Cooperation with political parties and NGO's will be intensified to find ways of developing the electoral system in order to increase voting, especially among young people and other groups that tend to vote less actively. AVOT is a program financed by European Social Fund. Its objectives are employment and supporting equality of opportunities of disadvantaged groups.

5 Action plans

Main characteristics and action plans in other horizontal policies directly related to youth Action Programme of the Government 2003-2007 contains four cross-sectoral policy programmes, which are steered by ministerial monitoring groups and run by their respective programme managers. These policy programmes concern employment, entrepreneurship, information society and civic participation. All these programmes deal with youth issues, especially the latter: The civic participation policy programme aims to develop mechanisms of representative democracy and to improve the participation opportunities of NGO's as well as overall participation of citizens. Special attention will be given to less advantaged young people. Cooperation with political parties and NGO's will be intensified to find ways of developing the electoral system in order to increase voting, especially among young people and other groups that tend to vote less actively. Elections should be made more attractive and the process facilitated (for instance, e-voting options will be assessed). The prerequisites for NGO activities will be strengthened by developing new forms of participation to complement existing structures. Participation and influence of citizens will be promoted by improving knowledge of the electoral system and existing forms of participation as well as by developing participation opportunities in both formal and nonformal settings. Development Program for Youth Policy, which supports youth policy carried out in municipalities and regions, is prepared every fourth year by Ministry of Education in cooperation with other Ministries. Development Program for Youth Affairs, is a follow-up program for Development Program for Youth Policy, which is prepared annually by Advisory Council for Youth Affairs (Nuora) for the Government.

6 Budget

6.1 Amounts allocated to youth policies/actions in the youth field

Euros

6.2 Main beneficiaries

6.3 Tendencies



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7 Changes foreseen in the youth field and new developments especially linked to the four Open Method of Coordination priorities.

The Government shall adopt a youth policy development programme every four years. The development programme shall contain the national objectives for youth policy and provide guidelines for youth policy programme work at the provincial and local levels. The development programme shall be revised according to need. The section of Youth Act concerning participation of young people, states that young people shall be organized opportunities to take part in the handling of matters concerning local and regional youth work and youth policy. Further, young people shall be heard in matters concerning them. The criteria for state support of youth organisations have been renewed with a view to better take into account new forms of youth participation and to develop, in cooperation with youth organisations, different kinds of systems for voluntary activity. Ministry of Education has budgeted more in the area of youth information and youth participation. Young people themselves are increasingly participating in the youth information in the communities.

8 Forthcoming events/conferences in the youth field, especially linked to the Open Method of Coordination priorities

No answers available

9 Useful links

Ministry of Education: <http://www.minedu.fi/minedu/youth/> Youth Research Society: http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/index.php?lk_id=4 Finnish Youth Co-operation Allianssi: <http://www.alli.fi/indexeng.html> Youth living standard indicators: <http://www.nuoret.org/> Provincial State Offices: http://www.laaninhallitus.fi/lh/home.nsf/pages/index_eng Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities: http://www.kunnat.net/k_etusivu.asp?path=1;161;279

10 Context of national youth policy (achievements, problems, obstacles, tendencies)

In Finland, youth work falls under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Youth work and youth activities in Finland are subject to national legislation which defines young people as everyone under 29 years old. Under this law, the State provides support for national youth organisations, national (residential) youth centres as well as youth research. At local level, state funding for youth work and youth activity is distributed to the municipalities proportionally according to the number of young people. According to the Youth Act, youth work belongs to the local authorities, each of the choosing the forms and methods itself. In Finland very important feature of youth policy is the advisory group, which gathers to draw together the guidelines of the



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implementation of youth policy, e.g. White paper or YOUTH Programme. Advisory group has representatives of three sectors of youth field - administration (ministries, regions, local authorities), youth research and NGOs.



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