



# Child and Youth Policy Programme 2012–2015

Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2012:8





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## Foreword

Dear reader, you are holding a copy of the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015, adopted by the Government of Finland on 8 December 2011. The programme is based on the guidelines and goals set for child and youth policy in the Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government.

The preparation of this programme began in the spring of 2011, before my term as the minister responsible for youth affairs. As part of the preparation, children and young people were heard in various forums. A large number of people in the field of child and youth work and youth policy were asked for their opinion on the programme, which was circulated for comments. Specific seminars were also organised for this purpose. Moreover, the development programme is based on international agreements, the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs' evaluation of the implementation of the previous programme (2007–2011), research information about children and young people, and opinions collected from young people themselves. The goal was to make this programme more concise and practical than the previous one, which included more than 300 draft measures. The purpose of a more concise programme was to increase clarity in both the implementation and monitoring of measures. The next four years will show the level of success in achieving these goals.

Currently, the future is shadowed by the financial crisis in Europe, which will weaken the economy also in Finland. Unfortunately, the Government will be forced to make cuts that also affect children and young people. Such cuts, however, are short-sighted and unsustainable solutions, particularly in difficult times. Therefore, as the minister responsible for youth affairs, I will do all I can during this Government term to ensure that funding will meet future needs.

This programme has three focuses: participation, non-discrimination and everyday life management.

The Child and Youth Policy Programme stresses the significance of participation. Children and young people must be offered more opportunities to influence their own lives, participate and to be socially included in Finnish society. In addition to organisational activities, which continue to be important, young people's innovative forms of active citizenship are increasing constantly. Decision-makers can support these activities by, for example, assigning facilities to young people or negotiating with them on new and creative solutions for their leisure activities. Opportunities to participate in hobbies must not depend on the parents' economic situation. All children and young people must have equal opportunities to enjoy experiences offered by culture and physical activities.

In 2008, the number of young people who had only completed basic education and who were outside the labour market and education system was 40,000. This number has not decreased since. A lack of education and insufficient life management skills causes social exclusion. More and more excluded young people stay at home. In the Government Programme, the social guarantee for young people is the most important measure to prevent and decrease social exclusion. From the beginning of 2013, the social guarantee measures will be implemented: Each person younger than 25 years, and each recent graduate under 30 years of age, will be offered work, a traineeship, or a study, workshop or labour market rehabilitation place, within three months of becoming unemployed.

Not a single young person must be left out. When preparing and implementing the social guarantee, however, it must be ensured that young people will not be used as free labour and that they will not be forced to accept a student place or a job that they do not want. In other words, they must also have the right to refuse an offer.

Racism and narrow-minded attitudes towards sexual and gender minorities as well as hostility towards gender equality have increased alarmingly in Finland in recent years. With no exceptions, youth policy must be based on the values set in the Youth Act. The Government Programme also states that the key principles in youth work are communality, non-discrimination, mutual respect and equality as well as local, regional and global solidarity. All funding decisions for youth organisations must be based on these principles. As the minister responsible for equality issues, I also believe that it is important that youth policy concerns, such as the implementation of the social guarantee and gendered pathways to social exclusion, are considered when preparing the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality.

School unites all children and young people. In Finland, learning results have been excellent, but school satisfaction rates are among the lowest in Europe. Closer collaboration between schools and municipal youth departments could increase well-being at school. Interest in school has also increased in the field of youth research. More and more researchers select the development of school life as their topic. Partly for these reasons, the Child and Youth Policy Programme was prepared in close conjunction with the Ministry of Education's development plan for education and research for 2012–2016. Both programmes stress the significance of educational equality and active citizenship among children and young people, to name just two examples.

I hope that, in keeping with the goals of the Youth Act, this Child and Youth Policy Programme will serve to strongly support the growth of children and young people into autonomous adults, as well as promote active citizenship, social empowerment and better growth and living conditions among children and young people. I also hope that the programme will facilitate broad-based discussion among citizens on youth issues as well as new initiatives in youth policy. Children's and young people's issues concern everyone, and all issues concern children and young people.

Helsinki on 8 December 2011

Paavo Arhinmäki, Minister of Culture and Sport

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Youth Act

In accordance with the Youth Act,<sup>1</sup> the Government of Finland adopts a youth policy development programme every four years. This programme is called the Child and Youth Policy Programme, as it also includes goals and measures related to children's growth.

The Youth Act is a population act that concerns all people under 29 years of age. This age group numbers 1,825,661, constituting 34 per cent of the population.<sup>2</sup> The Youth Act takes generations policy as one of its starting points. Justice and intergenerational solidarity are an integral part of the Child and Youth Policy Programme.

The purpose of the Youth Act – as well as the development programme – is to support the growth and independence of young people, promote active citizenship and social empowerment among young people, and improve their growth and living conditions. The starting points for reaching this goal are communality, solidarity, non-discrimination and equality, multiculturalism and internationalism, healthy lifestyle choices, and respect for life and the environment. The Child and Youth Policy Programme shares these bases.

## 1.2 Three focuses: participation, non-discrimination and everyday life management

The growth and living conditions of children and young people can be described and approached in many ways. The preparation of the development programme has proven that, in the current social situation, the lives of children and young people should be approached through three focuses in child and youth policy: participation, non-discrimination and everyday life management.

Participation is a broad concept that refers to different things in different contexts. A sense of participation is generally thought to be created through taking part and having an influence. Children and young people can experience a sense of participation and social inclusion in their communities and the Finnish society when going to school, studying, working, engaging in hobbies and having an impact on their own affairs as well as on their immediate environment or society on a larger scale. Active citizenship skills, participation and social inclusion constitute the core of policy-making as well as individual growth.

Non-discrimination refers to equality regardless of gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, conviction, opinion, disability, health, sexual orientation, sexual identity or other personal characteristics. In the development

<sup>1</sup> Youth Act (72/2006)

<sup>2</sup> SOTKANet, population data from 2010, based on the situation on 31 December 2010; the proportion of 0–28-year-olds of the entire population



programme, however, non-discrimination does not only refer to formal equality before the law. It also includes the awareness that actual equality between different groups sometimes requires different treatment. An example of this is the affirmative action towards minorities.

Addressing discrimination against children and young people is an important part of promoting non-discrimination. Discrimination against children and young people belonging to minorities represents a considerable part of all discrimination. Such minorities include immigrants as well as the Roma, the Sámi and other traditional Finnish minorities, people with disabilities and those whose sexual orientation or sexual identity differs from that of the mainstream population.

When a goal or measure in this policy programme concerns all children or young people, it also concerns those that differ from the general majority. In other words, in terms of such goals and measures, the needs of those special groups of young people must also be considered, even if this is not mentioned separately in the programme.

Everyday life management can be approached through general life management skills. The concept can be divided into external and internal life management. This development programme focuses on the former. In this programme, everyday life management means that the child or young person is capable of taking responsibility for his or her life, personal finances and emotional well-being, considering his or her development stage. In other words, education, employment, health, well-

being and financial skills are the key constituents of everyday life management. The significance of family, parents and educators must be stressed in everyday life management.

The continuum of programmes seeks to enable all children and young people, regardless of background, to reach their full potential as individuals, members of groups and citizens. Citizenship not only refers to rights and obligations, but also to civic activities and the experience of feeling part of a community. Consequently, in this programme, citizenship does not refer to formal citizenship as defined in the Nationality Act. Instead, the concept of a citizen also includes immigrant children and young people in Finland.

Equal opportunities in education and employment are also important for the future of children and young people. Young people's growth into adulthood and pathways to the future must be enhanced.

### 1.3 Horizon

The purpose of the Child and Youth Policy Programme is to strengthen a broad-based child and youth policy. The programme is accepted by the Government of Finland. For this reason, and due to the scope defined in the Youth Act and the Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy, the programme is a cross-sectoral administrative document. Because of its legislative foundation, the document is based on the Youth Act and youth administration. This strategic starting

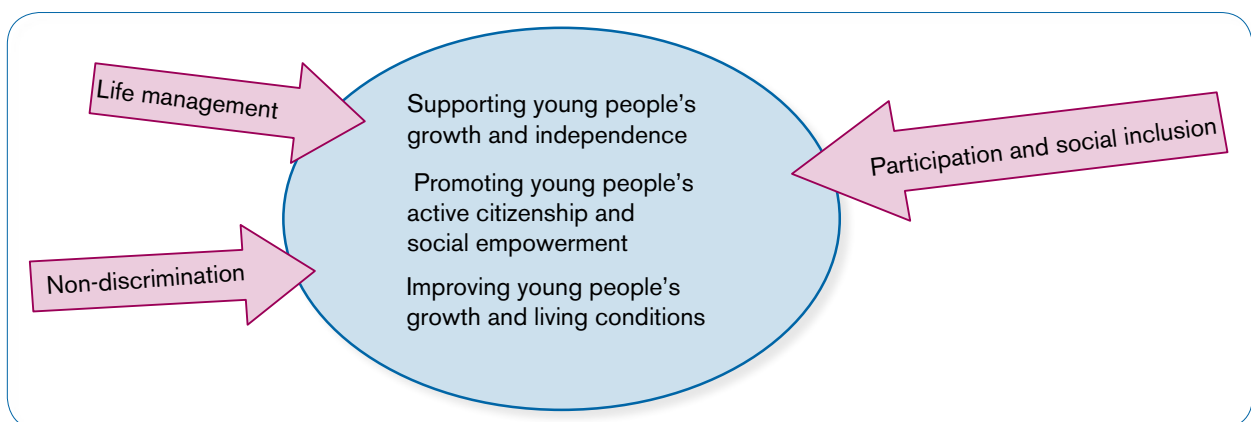


Figure 1. The three focuses of the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015

point is also acknowledged in the Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government.<sup>3</sup> Key issues related to children and young people in the Government Programme have been included and further specified in the programme.

According to the Government Programme, the Government will "carry out reforms in municipalities across the country. The aim is to create a thriving municipal structure built on economically robust municipalities." After the reforms, municipalities will be better equipped to provide and develop services, including those related to children and young people. Significant resources are targeted at children and young people through municipal services. The municipal reform may make it necessary to re-evaluate the implementation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme. In any case, it is obvious that cross-sectoral administrative co-operation, which is considered to be essential to the implementation of child and youth policy, will also play a significant role in the municipal reform.

The strategic implementation plan and priority projects of the Government Programme have also affected the preparation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme. The Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government has the following three priorities:

- I Reduction of poverty, inequality and social exclusion
- II Consolidation of public finances
- III Enhancement of sustainable economic growth, employment and competitiveness.

Of these, the first one in particular is directly related to many child and youth policy topics. The consolidation of public finances has an indirect but significant effect on the policy programme.

Poverty – especially among families with children – and social exclusion cause human suffering, health differences and inequality. The Government strives to reduce poverty and social exclusion. This requires cross-sectoral collaboration in administration and society, the enhancement of employment, working

capacity and participation as well as adequate social security. According to the Government Programme, key development needs in the reduction of poverty, inequality and social exclusion include the following:

- 1) Improving employment and maintaining adequate income security
- 2) Narrowing disparities in income levels, well-being and state of health, as well as promoting non-discrimination, which involves:
  - Reducing social exclusion and preventing social and health problems
  - Preventing intergenerational poverty and social exclusion
  - Ensuring non-discrimination and participation opportunities for citizens
  - Strengthening and reforming social and health services
  - Reducing inequalities between communities
  - Enhancing participation among young people and strengthening early childhood education.

These efforts will be coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

In terms of youth policy, one of the key guidelines in the Government Programme is the social guarantee for young people (NYT). By 2013, the Government will launch a joint project run by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to prepare and carry out the measures needed to implement the social guarantee. The social guarantee will be implemented so that each young person under 25 years of age, as well as recently graduated people under 30 years of age, will be offered a job, on-the-job training, a student place or a period in a workshop or rehabilitation within three months of unemployment. The guarantee is estimated to concern 80,000–90,000 young people.

Cross-sectoral collaboration to implement the social guarantee measure for young people began in September 2011. The NYT working group has its first deadline in the spring of 2012, when the guidelines related to the implementation of the guarantee and its impact on the state budget as well

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<sup>3</sup> The Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government, 22 June 2011

as any legislative amendments must be completed. In the Government's term of office, an additional appropriation of EUR 60 million per year will be reserved for the social guarantee. These efforts will be coordinated by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

Children and young people are considered differently in different contexts and branches of administration. The focus may be, for example, on children and young people as customers of targeted services, or on children and young people as members of groups or as citizens affecting social development. The differences between approaches may also be based on whether solutions are primarily sought through measures targeted at individuals, which are often remedial, or through preventive and socially supportive measures targeted at all children and young people. At any level of administration, however, matters pertaining to children and young people cannot be advanced without good collaboration and the inclusion and integration of different viewpoints.

In a changing society, the policy programme responds to issues that will be the key to the implementation of child and youth policy in the near future. The scope of the programme, however, expands beyond the four-year period, although the programme primarily focuses on what was anticipated during its preparation in the autumn of 2011. The present state of society and future outlooks were considered when creating the programme. The goal was to compile a realistic programme. The programme will be implemented in keeping with the Government's framework decision. The recession and pressures to reduce state spending limit the scope of solutions, but they also encourage the creation of sustainable solutions. Structural changes in municipalities and the development of regional administration are likely to present challenges to child and youth policy thinking.

## 1.4 Prioritisation in the Child and Youth Policy Programme

The Child and Youth Policy Programme is not a textbook on the many ways of making the world a better place. However, it presents many measures on different levels. Prioritisation is based on the additional value the programme creates for reaching different goals related to child and youth policy. The purpose is to focus resources on reaching goals that are otherwise likely to be overlooked.

The programme for 2012–2015 has nine strategic goals. Based on content, these goals are divided into three groups reflecting the role child and youth policy has in reaching them. In addition, the strategic goals include methodological aspects, that is, collaboration and coordination. The division into these four groups also helps prioritise the goals chosen for the Child and Youth Policy Programme. These groups are as follows:

By implementing the Child and Youth Policy Programme, it is possible to

- **develop** new depth and insight into child and youth policy by bringing together actors responsible for child and youth affairs, including children and young people themselves.
- **follow up and supervise** the municipal actors and branches of state administration that are responsible for the implementation of child and youth policies.
- **promote** goals and measures related to children and young people as an integral part of ordinary operations
- **strengthen** collaboration between administrative sectors to reach goals.

All strategic goals (from 1-9) of the programme include features from above mentioned groups.

The purpose of the division is to describe the priority of these groups as they relate to other groups or tasks. The highest priority is given to goals that can only be reached through the actions and measures set out in the programme.

This thought can be continued by stating that following up and supervising refers to goals in which other actors are already strongly involved. Promoting refers to goals in which all actors have their own responsibilities. The division of strategic goals into those to be developed, followed up and promoted can change during the programme period if there are significant changes in resources or social development, or if there are single incidents with major effects. Such changes may affect the appropriate role of child and youth policy. A change in municipal structure, for example, may change a goal from one to be followed up to one that requires development.

The three focuses of the policy programme – participation, everyday life management and communality – stated in section 1.2 can be examined from the perspectives of development, following up and promotion described above. This combination of different focuses and task-based roles can be used to describe the structure of the policy programme in greater detail. The structure of the programme also serves prioritisation of the goals. The roles and tasks related to the policy programme can be defined as follows:

Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015:

- enhances participation and social inclusion
- promotes non-discrimination
- follows up and supervises the management of everyday life

In addition, the programme strengthens co-operation as an implementation method.

One of the overarching themes is sustainable development. The promotion of sustainable development is based on a comprehensive view of economic, social and cultural as well as environmentally sound development. Ensuring the intergenerational transmission of the prerequisites for well-being and preventing intergenerational poverty are key issues in social and cultural sustainability. They also ensure actual non-discrimination of children and young people to as high a degree as possible. The Government also aims to develop Finland into the most environmentally conscious nation in the world. Broad-based environmental education serves this goal.

Another overarching theme is the realisation of human and basic rights for children and young people. Human and basic rights determined by international and national legislation concern everyone. In addition, a specific agreement protects, for example, the rights of a child in international justice concern everyone. Correspondingly, national legislation includes specific regulations that aim to ensure children's right to be heard in matters pertaining to them. Measures related to the Child and Youth Policy Programme will be implemented in a manner that considers the realisation of the rights of all children and young people who are the subjects or objects of such measures. Special attention will be paid to the realisation of the rights of children and young people belonging to minorities.

In brief:

- The Child and Youth Policy Programme aims to create more opportunities and equal opportunities for children and young people in education and employment, considering their age, and to advance active citizenship, participation and social inclusion among all children and young people.
- The programme focuses on children and young people as citizens, members of groups, members of families and individuals.
- The programme is founded on the value base of the Youth Act as well as the nature of the Youth Act as a population act, which expands the goal-setting to cover generation policy.

This programme refers to groups, percentages and age groups. Children and young people, however, hope to be seen as individuals. Young people in particular increasingly feel difficulty in affecting matters pertaining to them. The purpose of this development programme is to create a better today and an even better tomorrow for children and young people. As a respondent in the Youth Panel 2011 survey put it:

Take young people into consideration. They are the present and the future, and their opinions are important to society.

“The Programme shall contain the national objectives for youth policy and provide guidelines for youth policy programme work at the provincial and local levels. The guidelines shall concern young people’s education, employment, livelihood, health, active citizenship and social empowerment, housing, entrepreneurship, compulsory military service and non-military service, and other topical issues concerning children and young people.”

*Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy  
(103/2006)*

## 2 The Child and Youth Policy Programme in brief

The strategic goals and concerted actions of the programme

The programme enhances participation and social inclusion

### **Strategic goal 1**

**Children and young people will grow to become active citizens with a sense of shared responsibility.**

- 1.1 Children's and young people's opportunities to be heard, participate and influence
- 1.2 Education for democracy, global responsibility and environmental issues
- 1.3 Student body activities
- 1.4 Media skills and participation in the information society

### **Strategic goal 2**

**Children and young people have equal opportunities to participate in cultural, leisure and physical activities.**

- 2.1 Youth services as local services
- 2.2 Accessibility of hobbies
- 2.3 Children's and young people's own activities
- 2.4 Non-governmental organisations

### **Strategic goal 3**

**Young people find employment and their employment rate improves.**

- 3.1 Youth workshops and outreach youth work as part of the implementation of the social guarantee
- 3.2 The effects of labour market trends
- 3.3 Learning and employment pathways

The programme promotes non-discrimination

### **Strategic goal 4**

**Non-discrimination is achieved.**

- 4.1 Racism, discrimination and intolerance
- 4.2 Gender and sexual minorities and rainbow families
- 4.3. Regional equality

### **Strategic goal 5**

**Girls and boys have equal rights and opportunities.**

- 5.1 Gendered division of hobbies
- 5.2 Evaluation of gender effects in activities related to children and young people
- 5.3 Physical and mental integrity



The programme follows up and supervises the management of everyday life

**Strategic goal 6**  
**Young people have the opportunity to live autonomously.**

- 6.1 Young people's housing
- 6.2 Management of personal finances

**Strategic goal 7**  
**Regardless of social background, all children and young people have access to high-quality education.**

- 7.1 The effect of socio-economic background on participation in education
- 7.2 Counselling for students graduating from basic education
- 7.3 Student financial aid system

**Strategic goal 8**  
**Preventive measures are taken to ensure children's and young people's well-being and health.**

- 8.1 Healthy lifestyle choices
- 8.2 Pupil and student welfare
- 8.3 Bullying
- 8.4 Support for parenthood
- 8.5 Substance abuse and mental health

The programme enhances collaboration

**Strategic goal 9**  
**Matters pertaining to children, young people and families are administered with high competence and through good collaboration.**

- 9.1 Coordination of matters pertaining to children, young people and families
- 9.2 The competence of people working with children and young people

### 3 Strategic goals and implementation

The matrix under each subheading of the programme illustrates the roles of different ministries in the terms of resource guidance (RG), information guidance (IG) and legal guidance (LG). Resource guidance refers to, for example, funding and the allocation of subsidies. Information guidance refers to the spreading of good practices, for example. Legal guidance refers to, for example, legislative reforms.

First, the roles of different ministries in the terms of resource guidance (RG), information guidance (IG) and legal guidance (LG) are illustrated in summary (see Table 1). Furthermore, matrix under each subheading of the programme illustrates the primary target groups of measures by age and gender (table 2).

Please note! To help the reader to understand how the measures are divided by age and gender, and by ministries, please see the appendix 1 and 2 at the end of the document.

Table 1. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures (summary)

	Recourse Guidance	Information Guidance	Legal Guidance
PMO		1	
MFA	3	4	
MJ		8	2
MI	1	6	
MD		10	
MF		3	
MEC	24	27	3
MAF	3	6	
MTC	1	4	
MEE	4	8	
MSAH	15	23	2
ME	3	7	

- PMO Prime Minister's Office
- MFA Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- MJ Ministry of Justice
- MI Ministry of the Interior
- MD Ministry of Defence
- MF Ministry of Finance
- MEC Ministry of Education and Culture
- MAF Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- MTC Ministry of Transport and Communications
- MEE Ministry of Employment and the Economy
- MSAH Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
- ME Ministry of the Environment

Table 2. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups (summary)

	0 - 6 yrs	7 - 12 yrs	13 - 17 yrs	18 - 24 yrs	25 - 29 yrs
Girls / Women	9	15	22	20	12
Boys / Men	8	14	24	20	15
Special- grupper	—	—	—	—	—

In the tables illustrating the targeting of measures, the age groups 13–17 and 18–24 have higher frequencies than the other age groups. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health have higher frequencies than the other ministries due to the fact that the programme is based on the Youth Act.

### Symbols used in the Child and Youth Policy Programme

Municipalities play a significant role in the implementation<sup>4</sup>.

Municipalities

Civil society and civic organisations play a significant role in the implementation.

Organisations

Young people's comments are drawn from the Youth Panel 2011 research<sup>5</sup>

## 3.1 Strategic goal 1

### Children and young people will grow to become active citizens with shared sense of responsibility.

Active citizenship and global citizenship are considered in a broad sense to include social and civic activity as well as responsible consumer citizenship, self-development, protection of human rights and non-discrimination, and environmental responsibility. Children's and young people's embracement of communality and responsibility begins with each individual's everyday decisions and activities, and expands and transforms in various social networks. Growing into global responsibility is a process that teaches us to respect diversity in a globalising world.

Children and young people can be active actors in organisations, student bodies and youth councils if their participation and influence are supported, they are treated as competent actors and their suggestions are taken seriously.

Expression of opinion and exertion of influence by unconventional means have become more common. These means include having an influence through activity groups, social media, cultural expression or lifestyle choices. It is also necessary to develop ways of acting that enhance young people's resources and abilities as well as their means and motivation to have an influence on local, national and global matters.

In 2010, Finnish Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment carried out an evaluation<sup>6</sup> of basic services provided by municipal youth departments. The results show that 70 per cent of Finnish municipalities have a youth council or an equivalent influence

<sup>4</sup> In Finland, local authorities have a broad responsibility for the provision of basic services to citizens. Local authorities have strong self-government based on local democracy and decision making, and the right to levy taxes. see <http://www.kunnat.net/fi/Sivut/default.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Youth Panel 2011 is a research made via internet by Ministry of Culture and Education and Alliance ry, in which thoughts and attitudes of young people were inquired of matters they would prefer in politics. The rapport is in Finnish in webpages [http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisopolitiikka/Kehitxmisohjelma\\_2012-2015/Liitteet/Nuorten\\_Paneeli\\_2011\\_loppuraportti.pdf](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisopolitiikka/Kehitxmisohjelma_2012-2015/Liitteet/Nuorten_Paneeli_2011_loppuraportti.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment: An evaluation of basic services provided by municipal youth departments in 2010 – Young people's opportunities to participate and be heard in municipalities.

group. The evaluation also asked young people for feedback. Their feedback indicates that the existence of an influence group is not enough to ensure actual opportunities to have an influence. Such opportunities are created by developing interaction between youth councils and municipal decision-makers.

Children and young people spend most of their time at day care, school or an educational institution. Schools and educational institutions must serve as communities where pupils or students, multi-professional staff and parents interact actively with each other and the local community. Schools and educational institutions need to see a change in their operating cultures – they need new ways of teaching and acting. High-quality student body activities contribute to a feeling of community at schools and educational institutions while also preparing pupils and students to start exerting an influence. In addition, youth work at schools facilitates the creation of new operating cultures as well as overall well-being at schools.

Broad-based literacy is a prerequisite for full participation and social inclusion in society. Literacy and writing skills are a means of learning and gathering information as well as of self-expression and cultural participation. To ensure social inclusion in the information society, it is important to enhance literacy among all children and young people, but particularly among children and young people belonging to language and cultural minorities as well as those in need of special support for various reasons. Comprehensive literacy also includes media and technology literacy. Media education enables children and young people to critically evaluate the media. They should be able to evaluate the meaning of the texts they read as is appropriate to their age. Outside of early childhood, insufficient linguistic abilities often go unrecognised. Young people should familiarise themselves with open source software and operating systems, because they offer everyone equal opportunities to participate in the information society.

## Measure 1.1 Children's and young people's opportunities to be heard, participate and influence

Table 3. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x		
Boys / Men	x	x	x		

### National implementation

Forms of activities will be developed in collaboration with children and young people to improve their opportunities to be heard, participate and influence. Young people's participation in decision-making related to society and environmental policy will be increased and enhanced (MEC, MSAH, MJ, ME).

The effects of decisions on children will be increasingly evaluated in decision-making. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will support competence development related to such evaluations (MSAH).

Each ministry will steer its branch of administration towards enabling young people to participate in various evaluations and evaluating the effects of decisions on children.

Child-friendly communication about children's rights and participation opportunities will be increased. Minority language needs will be taken into account. The national communications strategy on children's rights<sup>7</sup> will be utilised.

Information and counselling services for young people will be supported (MEC).

Organisations facilitating active citizenship among children and young people will be supported.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2010/Lapsen\\_oikeuksien\\_kansallinen\\_viestintastrategia.html](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2010/Lapsen_oikeuksien_kansallinen_viestintastrategia.html)

Table 4. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO		x	
MFA		x	
MJ		x	
MI		x	
MD		x	
MF		x	
MEC	x	x	
MAF	x	x	
MTF		x	
MEE	x	x	
MSAH	x	x	
ME		x	

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Children's and young people's ways of participating will be advanced in everyday environments in early education, at school and in educational institutions.

A feeling of community at school will be enhanced by using, for example, youth work methods and adventure education as well as support from adults whose tasks do not include evaluating the student's abilities.

The number of youth councils or equivalent influence groups will be increased, and their impact will be enhanced. The goal is to have a youth council or an equivalent influence group in operation in all municipalities. Children's and young people's participation in the evaluation and development of municipal services will be increased, along with the evaluation of the effects of decision-making on children.



*Make sure to tell people how they can have an influence. Also make sure that young people believe that they can make a difference.*

Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 1.2 Education for democracy, global responsibility and environmental issues

Table 5. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x		
Boys / Men		x	x		

### National implementation

Based on the report on the realisation of education for democracy, ways to implement it in forms suitable for schools and educational institutions will be developed.

Various methods and tools to implement education for democracy particularly in upper secondary vocational schools will be developed and distributed. Such methods and tools have been developed in projects and non-governmental organisations. They will be made more widely known and easier to use.

Pupils and students will be encouraged to participate in all aspects of the development of this education (MEC).

Decisions on the national goals for basic education and the division of time between different subjects, subject groups and guidance counselling will be made in the spring of 2012. The reform will enhance teaching in arts, crafts, physical education, environmental education and social and values education as well as collaboration between subjects.

Together with various organisations, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Board of Education will further specify the ways in which non-governmental organisations and other social movements will be given opportunities to give presentations on their operations at schools, educational institutions and libraries.

The practices of democracy education will be developed to meet the needs of youth work and workshops.

Organisations, nature and environment schools and youth organisations providing environmental education will be supported (ME), as will networking among the various actors (MEC). Organisations' development co-operation projects (MFA), as well as regional development projects promoting environmental education (ME), will be supported.

Youth centres with the task of developing adventure and experiential education as a form of youth work will be supported as youth work development centres.

Appropriations will be allocated to projects promoting co-operation between schools and non-governmental organisations, with the aim of raising children and young people to become active and responsible and global citizens who understand diversity.

Table 6. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA	x	x	
MJ		x	
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF	x	x	
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME	x	x	

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Contents and operating methods that facilitate opportunities to participate and have an influence and support the development of political and social literacy will be increased in teaching.

Education for democracy and global responsibility as well as environmental education will

be implemented in schools, educational institutions, youth work and youth workshops.

Pupils and students will be encouraged to participate in all aspects of the development of education.



### Measure 1.3 Student body activities

Table 7. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x		
Boys / Men		x	x		

### National implementation

In 2014, student bodies will be established as a permanent structure in all comprehensive schools by making the necessary amendments to the Basic Education Act. Schools and educational institutions will be supported in organising and coordinating student body activities and will benefit from the sharing of good practices and from assistance for organisations that support the work of student bodies. Projects aiming to develop student body activities will be supported.

The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Culture will participate in content development for student body activities through information and resource guidance, emphasising the inclusion of children and young people belonging to language and cultural minorities as well as children and young people with a sensory handicap.



Table 8. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	x
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Student body activities will be established as a permanent part of schools and educational institutions. These activities will be used to enhance a feeling of community and increase active citizenship among children and young people.

Opportunities to have an influence will be increased among students in upper secondary schools and vocational education.

Municipalities

Organisations

*I have participated in student body activities and seen how much they matter in everyday life at school. My comment may sound a little boring, but I would improve the status of student bodies a lot.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 1.4 Media skills and participation in the information society

Table 9. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x		
Boys / Men	x	x	x		

### National implementation

All children and young people will be ensured the basic prerequisites for participation and social inclusion in the information society.

Better use of information and communication technology will be made in education, and teachers' and students' information technology skills will be improved.

Youth work appropriations will be allocated to municipalities to establish and equip youth media centres and to launch media education projects.

Support for organisations' online media and online youth work and operations will be continued.

The development of safe online environments for children and young people will be promoted. Online youth work and other online applications will be supported to facilitate children's and young people's growth, hobbies and opportunities to have an influence (MEC, MSAH, MTC).

The role of information and communication technology will be strengthened in teaching and education.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will carry out a programme to enhance broad-based literacy and writing skills among children and young people.

Table 10. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF	x	x	
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The comprehensive network of libraries in Finland will be used to ensure equal opportunities for all in improving their literacy skills and accessing the information society.

The role of information and communication technology will be strengthened in teaching and education.

The Finnish National Board of Education's implementation plan on supporting participation through media education in educational institutions will be taken into account in teaching.

Municipalities

Organisations

*Don't be afraid to ask young people for their opinion! Young people don't necessarily have the courage to contact decision-makers, because those in power are respected a lot. We need more interaction. It works both ways!*

The Youth Panel 2011

## 3.2 Strategic goal 2

### Children and young people have equal opportunities to participate in cultural, leisure and physical activities.

At its best, children's and young people's participation and social inclusion in inspiring leisure activities builds self-confidence and supports the development of the self while also improving interaction skills and overall well-being.

The approach in youth work is prevention, and the target group consists of young people as defined in the Youth Act, that is, all people from new-borns to 28-year-olds. Often the goal is to empower children and young people as subjects – as citizens who have the right to participate, have an influence and be supported in their processes of growth. In a broad sense, preventive youth work of this type can be considered to include organisational activities, peer-to-peer activities, youth work in parishes, leisure hobbies, municipal youth work, cultural youth work and youth work at schools.

Research shows that cultural participation and inclusion, physical activity and leisure activities, as well as activities in nature increase well-being among children and young people. Children and young people should have the opportunity to build strong cultural competencies, which refer to the individual's ability to absorb, use and change culture. Creating art gives children and young people greater courage to express themselves and also strengthens their identity.

Non-discrimination in cultural, sports and leisure services as well as hobby opportunities requires accessibility for all. Accessibility presupposes, among other things, targeted communications, reasonable prices that enable participation, social inclusion and physical accessibility to hobby facilities.

The activities must be exciting in the opinion of children and young people. The facilities must be located within travelling distance for those using them, considering their age. In addition, the services or hobbies must be socially and culturally appropriate. This is particularly important, because

the needs of growing children and young people can change rapidly.

Many studies show that time spent with friends and family is highly important for young people. Generally, a high frequency of meeting friends face-to-face seems to increase their life satisfaction.<sup>8</sup>

Organisational and voluntary activities are a significant part of life in Finland: in international comparison, Finns participate very actively in voluntary activities. In recent years, however, there have been indications that young people's commitment to traditional organisational activities has decreased, particularly among those under 15 years of age. Of all young people between 10 and 29 years of age, approximately 45 per cent report that they belong to an organisation.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, young people have independently organised major cultural and computer gaming events. However, organisational activities continue to have an important role in the upbringing of children and young people, even though young people's self-motivated and independent activities outside traditional organisations are increasing.

**Measure 2.1 Youth services as local services**

Table 11. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x		
Boys / Men			x		

**National implementation**

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the development of methods to carry out youth work in public areas, such as shopping centres.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the building of youth and hobby facilities. The criteria for funding will include ensuring accessibility and taking all user groups into consideration in the construction. Support for investments in and the building of youth and hobby facilities is also conditional on the fact that young people are involved in the planning.

Table 12. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME			

**Guidelines for regional and local work**

The implementation of the municipal youth services<sup>10</sup> required by the Youth Act aims at the realisation of gender equality and language legislation. It also aims to enable young people to access such services via public transport, if needed.

In the implementation of youth services, special attention will be paid to minorities' opportunities to participate in and have an influence on the activities.



8 Youth Barometers: Leisure time – Young people's leisure activities in 2009. Finnish Youth Research Network.  
 9 Leisure time – Young people's leisure activities in 2009  
 10 Services provided in accordance with Section 7 (2) of the Youth Act.

## Measure 2.2 Accessibility of hobbies

Table 13. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x	x	
Boys / Men		x	x	x	

**Special groups:** Disadvantaged children and young people

### National implementation

Support for youth and sports organisations, as well as for children's and young people's culture, enables population groups that meet special social, economic or cultural obstacles to participate in hobbies (MEC).

Through state subsidy policies, the Ministry of Education and Culture will strengthen the operational capacity of organisations working with immigrants and facilitating their integration.

The pluralism of Finnish physical activity culture, as well as the principle of mutual respect prevalent in said culture, will be utilised in the integration of immigrants.

Accessibility will be enhanced particularly in youth and leisure facilities as well as in day-care centres, schools and educational institutions.

Children's and young people's cultural competencies will be maintained and improved by increasing art and cultural heritage education; by enhancing teaching in arts, crafts and physical education through the lesson-hour distribution reform in basic education; and by improving the accessibility and diversity of basic art education.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will continue to support the development of the Aladdin's Lamp network of children's culture and, beginning in 2014, the distribution of the art education methods and expertise produced by the network. A children's culture policy programme for 2013–2017 will be prepared to enhance equal opportunities for cultural participation.

The children's and young people's physical activity programme for 2012–2015 will be used to

enhance physical activity in the operating cultures of early education units and schools, to improve the accessibility of physical activities and to create more equal hobby opportunities for all children. In addition, the programme focuses on narrowing socio-economic differences in hobbies.

Table 14. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA	x		
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME		x	

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The networking of municipal youth work with schools, educational institutions, libraries, organisations and parishes enables the creation of comprehensive local hobby opportunities for children and young people in different life situations.

School club activities, as well as morning and afternoon activities offer pupils hobby opportunities as part of the schoolday.

Municipalities

Organisations

*I would like to get more responsibility in organisations and have a say in their activities. Also, I would like to do something about young people's well-being and lack of exercise. For example, I could start a sports club for younger schoolchildren and organise other activities for older kids and those in upper secondary school.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 2.3 Children's and young people's own activities

Table 15. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x		
Boys / Men		x	x		

### National implementation

Together with other actors, the Ministry of Education and Culture will develop measures that increase understanding of children and young people spending time and engaging in activities in public areas.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the building of local exercise facilities.

Young people's opportunities to participate in art activities will be supported in accordance with individual backgrounds and abilities. The applied use of art and culture will be enhanced in social empowerment and the prevention of social exclusion among young people.

The organisation of young people's own online activities will be supported. The opportunities offered by the Internet for promoting young people's own activities will be utilised.

Various ministries and other actors will increase communication to children and young people about how they can engage in their own activities as well as voluntary and civic activities by making use of public premises, for example.

Table 16. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA		x	
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF		x	
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH		x	
ME		x	

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Youth facilities will be used to support young people's own activities and to increase their participation and social inclusion in the planning, implementation and evaluation of activities.

On the local level, collaboration between property owners (municipalities, parishes, associations, companies) will be increased so as to make use of their facilities in children's and young people's leisure activities.



*I would like to have special areas around the town for art outdoors, for graffiti as well as more traditional art. People would have something nice to look at in towns and cities, and young activists and artists would have a legitimate channel for expressing their opinions and displaying their art.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 2.4 Non-governmental organisations

Table 17. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups.

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x	x	x
Boys / Men	x	x	x	x	x

### National implementation

The status and operating conditions of children's and young people's culture will be enhanced. Through state subsidies, the Ministry of Education and Culture will support cultural, sports and youth organisations as well as other organisations carrying out youth work. Moreover, through the youth guidance and service network, the ministry will support children's and young people's leisure activities.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will support and guide organisations and associations in targeting their operations at the most disadvantaged people and groups in particular.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will support children's and young people's growth into international responsibility.

Public premises will be opened for civic activities. Special attention will be paid to local activities in disadvantage areas and neighbourhoods.

Finland will promote and seek to clarify the role of non-profit organisations in EU co-operation.

The impact of the European Union's value-added tax reform, which is being prepared by the EU Commission, on the operating conditions of non-governmental organisations will be followed up. Collaboration between the sports and youth sectors will be enhanced in the evaluation and further processing of the effects of the reform, if implemented.

Organisations will be guided to pay attention to how young people from different backgrounds can run for and be selected as decision-makers in organisations. Organisations will be supported in reaching this goal through subsidy policies.

Third-sector organisations will be encouraged to develop welfare services.

Better opportunities will be created for non-governmental organisations to give presentations on their activities in schools and educational institutions.

Table 18. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA	x	x	
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF	x	x	
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Co-operation between schools and the cultural, sports and youth sectors will be increased.

Public premises will be opened for civic activities.



*In organisations, you can express yourself and accomplish greater things than you could on your own. Being and acting in a position of trust feels really good and builds your self-confidence.*

The Youth Panel 2011



## Strategic goal 3

### Young people find employment and their employment rate improves.

Nearly 60,000 young people (out of 1,890,195)<sup>11</sup> were outside the labour market and the education system in 2008. Exclusion and unemployment are at least partly transmitted from one generation to the next. Among immigrants and young people with immigrant backgrounds, the risk of exclusion is many times higher than that of other young people. Among young people who have only completed basic education, exclusion from the labour market and education is more common than unemployment. Of the excluded and unemployed young people who at the age of 25 have not completed or are not pursuing a qualification after basic education, 90 per cent appear to never attend post-basic education.<sup>12</sup>

Changes in young people's employment rates can be used to illustrate the ease or difficulty of labour market entry. Young people's unemployment rates best illustrate the difficulty of employment among young people who have already entered the labour market.

Unemployment is affected by the economy more among young people than it is among other population groups. The negative effects of unemployment are considered to be particularly detrimental to young people.<sup>13</sup> An unemployment period of more than three months has been proven to increase the risk of long-term unemployment and that of being excluded from working life.

Problems related to working capacity and ability to function in everyday life constitutes a significant obstacle to finding employment. Moreover, in terms of guidance and resources, rehabilitation for unemployed young people fails to meet needs. Young people who have no real opportunities to find employment in the open labour market should be offered an access to working life through alternative ways.

Employability and employment will be improved as part of the social guarantee for young people. It is essential, however, that young people are not used as free or underpaid labour. The social guarantee must become a positive opportunity, and young people must have the right to refuse a student place, training opportunity or job for personal reasons.

*There is a lot of talk about employment, but there aren't enough jobs for young people – not even close. New jobs and new kinds of job opportunities should be created in all fields.*

The Youth Panel 2011

### Measure 3.1 Youth workshops and outreach youth work as part of the implementation of the social guarantee

Table 19. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	
Boys / Men			x	x	x

### National implementation

From the beginning of 2013, the Government will implement the social guarantee so that each young person younger than 25 years, and each recent graduate under 30 years of age, will be offered work, a traineeship, or a study, workshop or labour market rehabilitation place, within three months of becoming unemployed.

The implementation of the social guarantee requires concerted measures in different branches of administration. These will be prepared in a working group supervised by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

11 By SOTKANet Statistics and Indicator Bank, the total number of young people (of 0-29 years old) in 2008 was 1 890 195.

12 Young people outside the labour market and studies. MEE Publications 12/2011.

13 Memorandum on young people's attitudes and values related to working life and on measures to increase employment among young people, 2009. Advisory Council for Youth Affairs, publication 42/Finnish Youth Research Network, publication 100.

The social guarantee models will be made familiar to young people, their parents and those working with young people.

The social guarantee will be implemented in collaboration with young people. Special attention will be paid to participation opportunities for young people who do not use traditional methods of participation.

Resources will be allocated to youth workshops and outreach youth work as well as the expansion of their activities.

Ministries will guide municipalities to engage in multi-professional co-operation in accordance with the Youth Act to improve the mutual operation and impact of services targeted at young people.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will establish a working group to evaluate the need to reform the labour market inclusion practices described in the Social Welfare Act, the Act on Special Care for Mentally Handicapped Persons, the Act on Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Act on Rehabilitative Work Experience from the perspectives of legislation and operational content development. The working group will consist of representatives of different branches of administration (such as the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Education and Culture), labour market organisations and other stakeholders.

It will be ensured that those studying in educational institutions in the fields of youth work and social care will be familiarised with outreach youth work and youth workshops.

Table 20. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE	x	x	
MSAH	x	x	x
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Multi-professional low-threshold services will be developed for young people, and resources will be allocated to these services.

Municipalities

*Of course, I would like to have an influence on young people's employment in the future, so that they wouldn't need to worry so much about finding a job.*

The Youth Panel 2011

### Measure 3.2 Effects of labour market trends

Table 21. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x	x	x
Boys / Men			x	x	x

### National implementation

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will launch an analysis and development project on the effects of labour market trends. The project will study trends and structural changes in business and the labour market and evaluate their effects on various forms of work and ways of using labour as well as on working time issues.

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will be responsible for supervising the project so that special attention will be paid to young employees and students. The Ministry of Education and Culture will contribute to the project from the perspectives of long-term evaluation of competency needs, gender equality, social sustainability and mobility, to name a few examples.

Table 22. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC		x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE		x	
MSAH		x	
ME			

*It's good that young people are heard. But it's also good to remember that they have opinions about things outside their daily lives. Remember to listen to young people also in the future, in matters in which they are experts: young people's employment, education, health care, and so on.*

The Youth Panel

### Measure 3.3 Learning and employment pathways

Table 23. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	
Boys / Men				x	x

### National implementation

Through legislation, guidance and funding, the Ministry of Education and Culture will promote the recognition and acknowledgment of non- and informal learning in all education. The implementation of competency-based definition of degrees and other qualifications will also be facilitated.

Opportunities to create flexible learning pathways and complete parts of degrees will be improved. Opportunities for supported apprenticeship training will be enhanced.

Entrepreneurship among educated young people will be advanced through business incubators and accelerators. Young people's and students' own entrepreneurship societies will be involved in the planning and development of education and entrepreneurial activities.

New good practices and operating models introduced on the local level will be adopted nationally.

Table 24. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	x
MAF			
MTF			
MEE	x	x	
MSAH		x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Co-operation between youth workshops and outreach youth work will be enhanced in the development of low-threshold services.

Co-operation with providers of education and other youth services will be increased in outreach youth work.

Co-operation with employers and providers of education will be increased in youth workshop activities.

Co-operation between additional basic education, preparatory vocational education and training, youth workshops and outreach youth work will be enhanced and the division of work will be specified in more detail to effectively support the transition to further education.

Municipalities

## 3.4 Strategic goal 4

### Non-discrimination is achieved.

Children and young people in general do not always have the same influence opportunities or skills that older generations have. This strategic goal, however, focuses on the special groups that are minorities among children and young people.

There is always a risk that non-discrimination is not being realised among young people, particularly among immigrants, the Roma people, the Sámi indigenous people, disabled children and young people, children of rainbow families and children belonging to sexual and gender minorities. The accessibility of services (e.g. education, employment and housing as well as help and support related to these) is of primary importance to children and young people who need positive discrimination or special support from time to time for various reasons. Multiple discrimination – that is, the problems of minorities among minorities – is also apparent among children and young people. Examples of this include the difficulty disabled young people experience in securing training placements.

Participation in day care and pre-primary education is important for the development, school readiness and integration of children with immigrant backgrounds. Integration plans made for young immigrants can facilitate the integration of young people themselves as well as their families. Integration is also supported by civic activity among young people with immigrant backgrounds as well as by youth activities targeted at young immigrants to prevent discrimination and social exclusion and to support social empowerment. The threshold to participate in youth organisations and children's organisations must be lowered for those belonging to minorities.

Many young people belonging to sexual or gender minorities suffer from a lack of psychosocial support. The taboo nature of the issue in the family endangers the well-being of these children and young people, as does parents' openly negative attitudes. Experiences and fear of discrimination affect children's and young people's education and drop-out rates as well as well-being at school and

work. The situation of children belonging to sexual and gender minorities or rainbow families varies partly by region.

Disabled children and young people must have opportunities equal to those of others to participate and be active in all areas of life. This must be ensured by providing sufficient services and support measures that also take physical accessibility and the accessibility of communication into consideration. Disabled children and young people often have poor opportunities to fulfil their potential in terms of talent and ability.

Regional differences are still large in many respects. The availability of services and the location of educational institutions as well as employment are typical examples of children's and young people's issues that vary greatly by place of residence.

Demographic changes create pressures to reduce the number of student places in upper secondary education. There are already differences in regional coverage, particularly in upper secondary vocational education. Nevertheless, access to education must be improved in areas with large numbers of young people. There are regional differences within towns and other large areas as well.

### Measure 4.1 Racism, discrimination and intolerance

Table 25. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x	x	
Boys / Men	x	x	x	x	

#### National implementation

A new non-discrimination act will be enacted. Its preparation will include the perspectives of children and young people (MJ).

The integration of immigrant children and youth, as well children and young people with immigrant backgrounds, will be supported.

Through subsidy policies, the Ministry of Education and Culture will guide youth organisations, youth service organisations and other organisations carrying out youth work in operating in accordance with the values of the Youth Act.

The prevention of direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, bullying and hate crimes based on different grounds – such as functional capacity, religion or conviction, ethnic or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression – will be enhanced through the Internal Security Programme, for example.

Victim assistance will be improved, and authorities will be made more easily accessible to children and young people. Low-threshold services will be provided for children and young people who have experienced or are in danger of experiencing discrimination and racism.

In different ethnic groups, the attitudes of children and young people towards those belonging to other groups will be studied (MI).

Table 26. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	x
MI	x	x	
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF		x	
MEE			
MSAH		x	
ME			

#### Guidelines for regional and local work

Education in mutual respect will be increased in day care and schools.

In schools and educational institutions, children's and young people's awareness of different religions,

philosophies of life, cultures and conventions will be increased.

Low-threshold services will be provided for children and young people who have experienced or are in danger of experiencing discrimination and racism.



*Unfortunately, some people are clueless about human rights. Racism and negative attitudes towards immigrants worry me. Attitudes in Finland are way too strict. This is something I definitely want to change in the future, through my work or voluntary activities. I also want to improve the situations of sexual minorities and disabled people.*

The Youth Panel 2011

### Measure 4.2 Gender and sexual minorities and rainbow families

Table 27. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x	x	x
Boys / Men			x	x	x

#### National implementation

More research information will be produced on children and young people belonging to sexual and gender minorities and rainbow families. The recognition of risks caused by gender normative and heteronormative structures will be improved (MSAH, MEC).

Together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Education and Culture will develop competence and practices related to these issues in the third sector.

Table 28. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME			



### Measure 4.3 Regional equality

Table 29. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x	x	x
Boys / Men			x	x	x

#### National implementation

The educational equality programme seeks to reduce regional differences in comprehensive schools by half (MEC).

Students will be empowered to participate and to be heard in the development of the network of educational institutions, and in the possible reduction of the number of educational institutions (age groups 13–17 and 18–24).

Various electronic systems, such as online youth work, will be developed. Electronic study-guidance services will be developed as part of the Finnish National Board of Education's online services for learners (MEC).



Children's and young people's regional equality must be improved as part of the municipal reform.

Table 30. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF		x	
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

In accordance with the Youth Act, students will be heard in the development of the network of educational institutions and in the possible reduction of the number of educational institutions.

Young people's opportunities to participate in apprenticeship training will be improved, particularly in sparsely populated areas.

Children, young people and families with children must receive the help they need in time, regardless of place of residence. Effective support measures – such as home care services for families with children, preventive family work and help from designated support persons and families – must be available before a family becomes a client of child welfare services (age groups 18–25 and 25–29).

Co-operation between different actors will be increased to assure all children and young people the opportunity to have a hobby, regardless of place of residence.

Municipalities

Organisations

*It's difficult to name just one thing that I would like to change if I had the power. I would probably start with issues that have to do with equality and social policy.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## 3.5 Strategic goal 5

### Girls and boys have equal rights and opportunities.

Gender equality is a core value in Finland, enacted in the constitution and, in more detail, in the Equality Act. Legislation differentiates between gender equality and other forms of non-discrimination.

The Government Programme advances gender equality in many ways. Among other goals, it aims to reduce gender differences in learning results, participation in education and completion of education; to promote reconciliation of work and family life; and to systematically advance gender equality in basic education.

In the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015, each range of measures separately discusses whether the measures are directed at girls and women or boys and men in particular. Gender matters in many respects. Gender awareness should be increased in supporting the growth of children and young people, and the differences in opportunities between genders should be narrowed.

The promotion of equality must begin with early education. Gender and gender-related assumptions, expectations and ideas affect people's actions and choices. Children and young people are no exception in this respect – quite the contrary. For this reason, ensuring that leisure activities – in addition to the education system – take individual talent and tendencies into account requires viewing things through the lens of gender.

## Measure 5.1 Gendered division of hobbies

Table 31. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x		
Boys / Men					

### National implementation

In providing public funding for hobbies that interest girls more than boys or vice versa, attention must be paid to equal distribution of subsidies (MEC).

This is achieved, for example, by consulting Sport and equality 2011 – Current state and changes of gender equality in Finland, a report containing comprehensive information on the situations of girls and boys. The Ministry of Education and Culture will ensure that special attention is paid to the realisation of girls' hobby opportunities in the implementation.

Beginning in 2012, equality will be included in the criteria for granting subsidies for health-enhancing physical activities as well as children's and young people's physical activities (MEC).

Table 32. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME			

## Guidelines for regional and local work

In providing public funding for hobbies that interest girls more than boys or vice versa, attention must be paid to equal distribution of subsidies (MEC).



## Measure 5.2 Evaluation of gender effects in activities related to children and young people

Table 33. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x	x	
Boys / Men		x	x	x	

**Special groups:** Different genders

### National implementation

Gender effects will be evaluated in legislative measures and other projects, such as educational reforms. Information guidance will be used to influence organisations, municipalities and other actors in society.

Table 34. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC		x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH		x	
ME			

## Measure 5.3 Physical and mental integrity

Table 35. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x	x	
Boys / Men		x	x	x	

**Special groups:** Different genders

### National implementation and guidelines for regional and local work

Children's and young people's right to physical and mental integrity will be ensured by promoting their own awareness of this right, for example.

Table 36. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI		x	
MD		x	
MF			
MEC		x	
MAF			
MTF		x	
MEE			
MSAH		x	
ME			

## 3.6 Strategic goal 6

### Young people have the opportunity to live independently.

Gaining independence is part of youth, as is mobility in the education and labour markets. Education and employment opportunities determine where young people live. For a long time now, young people have been over-represented in waiting lists for rental housing. In recent years, young people's living space has decreased while that of the rest of the population has increased.

Because of their low income levels, young people are in a worse position in the housing market than other population groups. There is the risk that a growing number of young people will only be able to dream of a rental apartment because of the high cost, especially in the capital region. Precarious employment can make it more difficult to rent a home, not to mention buying one.

On average, Finns move away from parental home at the age of 19 – girls a little earlier than boys. There are regional differences: young people in Southern Finland move away from home later than average and those in Eastern Finland earlier than average.<sup>14</sup> Overall, approximately 10,000 young people aged between 16 and 18 live in halls of residence at educational institutions. In European comparison, the age of moving away from home is very low.

In addition to residential construction, systematic multi-professional support is needed for young people who are in danger of being evicted or becoming homeless for a prolonged period of time. Young people who have grown up in care or move away from home at a very young age also need support in independent living.

With independence, the sudden responsibility for personal finances may cause young people problems that have a long-term effect on their lives. In proportion to the total population, the highest numbers of payment defaults were recorded for young people between 25 and 29 years of age in early 2011. More than 12 per cent of people in this

14 Looking for a home – housing for young people. The Finnish Environment 1/2011.

age group have a payment default entry. Of those with a payment default entry, 63 per cent are men.<sup>15</sup> The problems seem to be caused by payday loans and instalment plans in particular.

The Consumer Agency has a key role in bringing together and coordinating the different actors.

### Measure 6.1 Young people's housing

Table 37. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	x
Boys / Men				x	x

#### National implementation

The living conditions of young people who have recently become independent will be improved by ensuring sufficient investment subsidies, which at minimum means maintaining the present level. The focus will be on preventing homelessness and social exclusion and enhancing social empowerment among young people (ME).

The availability of student housing will be improved, starting with the locations with the worst situations (ME, MEC).

The implementation of the housing programme for mentally disabled persons, especially young people, will be continued and accelerated (ME, MSAH).

Supported living and social housing management<sup>16</sup> will be developed for young people, and sufficient services will be ensured.

In halls of residence at educational institutions, attention will be paid to safety, the creation of pleasant living environments and the development of leisure activities and other guidance needed by young people (MEC, ME).

Table 38. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC			
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME	x	x	

#### Guidelines for regional and local work

The significance of prompt tenancy deposit decisions will be stressed in improving homeless young people's access to rental housing.

Through co-operation between various actors, attention will be paid to the development of leisure activities and other guidance needed by young people living in residence halls at educational institutions.



*Students should have enough money to have a normal life. Now we get 420 euros or even less per month. How can we possibly pay the rent, pay our bills and buy food? Even unemployed people get more money. Is that fair?*

The Youth Panel 2011

<sup>15</sup> Suomen Asiakastieto. Statistics and press releases. www.asiakastieto.fi

<sup>16</sup> Social housing management aims to prevent problems related to housing (e.g. everyday life management) and improve living conditions.

## Measure 6.2 Management of personal finances

Table 39. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	
Boys / Men			x	x	x

### National implementation

In teaching and education, more attention will be given to providing students with personal financial management skills. Young people's personal financial management skills will be improved, for example, through co-operation between the Consumer Agency, organisations and parishes as well as business and industry (MEE, MEC, Consumer Agency).

The long-term financial effects of agreements and loans, particularly payday loans, will be emphasised. Social lending will be developed as a means to manage unexpected financial problems.

Legislation related to payday loans will be made more stringent (MJ).

More measures will be taken to postpone the age at which young people start gambling, to prevent detrimental effects of gambling and to increase support for people with a gambling problem (MSAH, MEC).

Table 40. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	x
MI			
MD		x	
MF		x	
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE	x	x	
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

Attention will be paid to financial and debt counselling as part of multi-professional municipal co-operation networks.



## 3.7 Strategic goal 7

**Regardless of background, all children and young people have access to quality education.**

The Government Programme states that “everyone deserves a fair start and genuine, equal opportunities in life”. In education, equal opportunities are realised when everyone, regardless of background, has the opportunity to seek education and background does not predict participation in education or learning results.

Differentiation in education begins early – differences in backgrounds and learning results can be seen even in basic education. Many studies show that young people from families in the highest socio-economic classes achieve better learning results than young people in lower socio-economic classes.

Employment based on interests facilitates life management, while a lack of such employment has an adverse effect. Providing appropriate student counselling and study guidance and finding relevant further education are the key issues in this respect. Changes in working life and in the need for labour in different sectors, present challenges.

### Measure 7.1 The effect of socio-economic background on participation in education

Table 41. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x		x		
Boys / Men	x		x		

**Special Groups:** Children whose parents have a low level of education

#### National implementation

An action programme for educational equality will be prepared and launched in accordance with the Ministry of Education’s development plan for education and research for 2011–2016. The action programme aims to significantly reduce gender differences in education and competence. The goal is also to reduce the effect of socio-economic background on participation in education and to improve participation in education among disadvantaged groups. The programme will enhance each individual’s opportunities for learning and the development of creativity, competence and talent. It seeks to narrow the differences in learning results between schools and educational institutions.

Table 42. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME			

#### Guidelines for regional and local work

In early education, attention will be paid to recognising disabilities and disturbances in development and to reducing their detrimental effects by enhancing timely support.

Municipalities

*Dear decision-makers: when you deal with matters related to children and young people, it is very important that you don't try to save as much as you can in the services we need, such as education. Cuts in education, especially in basic education, have life-long effects on students.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 7.2 Counselling for students graduating from basic education

Table 43. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women					
Boys / Men			x		

**Special groups:** Immigrants, boys

### National implementation

The Ministry of Education and Culture will encourage organisations and municipalities to collaborate in supporting the education of children and young people belonging to language and other minorities. Those carrying out such activities will be supported.

The goal is to use various technical systems to enable easy following up of young people's placement in education after comprehensive school and later as well, particularly if their upper secondary education is discontinued.

Table 44. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE		x	
MSAH		x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

In comprehensive school, student counselling has an important role in guiding young people into upper secondary education. Relevant information, counselling and guidance will be ensured for young people without student places.

Every municipality will have a multi-professional co-operation network to ensure that the system also supports young people during the transition from basic to upper secondary education. Co-operation will be improved between basic and upper secondary education and municipal youth work, including information and counselling services for young people. Support in the transitional phase will also be offered through youth workshops and various measures specific to each municipality, such as additional basic education and the Job Start programme for young people.

Municipalities

*I wish that all young people could continue their studies after basic education and that everyone could find a job.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 7.3 Student financial aid system

Table 45. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x	x	x
Boys / Men			x	x	x

### National implementation

In accordance with the Government Programme, student financial aid will be tied to the cost-of-living index on 1 September 2014.

The structural shortcomings in the student financial aid system will be remedied in collaboration



with student organisations. The shortcomings related to student financial aid for upper secondary students will also be remedied. The situation of students with families will be examined.

Education preparing immigrants for upper secondary school will be included in the student financial aid system at the beginning of 2014.

Table 46. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	x
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH			
ME			

### 3.8 Strategic goal 8

#### Preventive measures are taken to ensure children's and young people's well-being and health

The majority of school-aged children are in good health and also feel well, as do the majority of young people in education.

There are, however, many problems and disturbances in children's and young people's health habits and life management: obesity, sleep deprivation, mental symptoms (depression in particular), smoking, substance abuse and insufficient physical activity. Some of the problems clearly reflect differences in gender as well as socio-economic or educational background.<sup>17</sup> In addition,

the increased occurrence of substance abuse and mental problems among parents poses a threat to children's and young people's health and safe development. Differences in health and well-being are largely created in childhood. Preventing poverty plays an important role in promoting health.

In promoting health, extensive preventive action is important, meaning that the measures are targeted at an entire age group or specific risk groups before the first concerns or symptoms arise. This highlights the significance of opportunities provided by diverse youth work, physical activity and cultural work and activities. Physical activity in nature will be promoted, as research has proven this to be health-enhancing. Self-motivated physical activity among children and young people has been seen to decrease in recent years.<sup>18</sup> Keeping the need for corrective measures as low as possible can be regarded as an appropriate goal.

Low-threshold services are also essential. If and when children and young people need help, they must be able to find it quickly. Services for children, young people and families should constitute a systematic and continuous range of operations that enables participation. The purpose of services is to guide young people back to education and employment pathways as quickly as possible.

Cycles of bullying must be broken. In addition to addressing visible cases of bullying, this includes preventing bullying and comprehensively changing the entire organisation's or community's structures as well as its management methods and operating methods. There are various methods for preventing bullying and increasing mutual respect: peer mediation, peer student activities and the KiVa anti-bullying programme for schools can be used. Reports of online bullying continue to increase. It is important that the zero tolerance approach continues seamlessly between day care, schools, educational institutions, higher education, working life and hobbies.

Parents have the basic responsibility in upbringing, and they must be supported in their task

<sup>17</sup> Making Children and Young People Healthy and Well. Proposals for measures by the Advisory Board on the Health and Welfare of Children and Young People. Reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2010:26.

<sup>18</sup> [http://slu-fi-bin.directo.fi/@Bin/c0559e943f21d4fe6741dfe3a9adbd36/1319548745/application/pdf/3244994/Liikuntatutkimus\\_nuoret\\_2009\\_2010.pdf](http://slu-fi-bin.directo.fi/@Bin/c0559e943f21d4fe6741dfe3a9adbd36/1319548745/application/pdf/3244994/Liikuntatutkimus_nuoret_2009_2010.pdf)

in various ways. Early education prepares children to become members of communities. Success or failure in early education is later reflected in comprehensive school, youth work, upper-secondary school and beyond. Corrective measures usually require significant resources.

Family is the most important community for growing children and young people. Many other factors – such as housing, day care and school – also contribute to a safe, high-quality environment to grow up. With age, children’s and young people’s own groups and communities begin to increasingly affect the direction of their growth. These include not only friends, but also hobbies and media. In other words, creating a safe environment to grow up requires more than the services provided to a single family. Communitality is strengthened through collaboration between various actors and sectors.

Family centres promote the health and well-being of families as well as early intervention and problem prevention. Family centres are based on collaboration between families and professionals, bringing together local actors and resources. In addition to municipal services, a family centre’s network can include parishes, organisations, volunteers and representatives of the private sector. These multi-actor networks combine the skills and expertise of municipal child and family services, organisations, parishes and other actors.<sup>19</sup>

**Measure 8.1 Healthy lifestyle choices**

Table 47. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x	x	x
Boys / Men	x	x	x	x	x

**National implementation**

The Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will support sports, youth and other organisations in enhancing healthy lifestyle choices – including nutrition, sobriety and physical activity – among children and young people.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the building and renovation of high-quality sports facilities intended for large user groups. Their accessibility will be enhanced through information guidance during construction and renovation and by providing training related to accessibility.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support schools in guiding students to adopt healthy and active lifestyles in accordance with the School in Motion and the Safety in School Sports operating models.

Parents and families will be supported in adopting active lifestyles and healthy eating habits (MEC, MSAH, MAF).

The Finnish Defence Forces will affect lifestyle choices and, consequently, life management among conscripts (MD).

Table 48. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF	x	x	
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME		x	

**Guidelines for regional and local work**

Physical activity and nutritional education will be increased in early education, schools and educational institutions.

19 The Social Gateway: <http://www.sosiaaliporatti.fi/Page/fca86985-c592-4f7c-b400-4df97a8c9ccd.aspx>

The importance of food quality, locally produced food and sustainable food production will be stressed in the provision of meals in day care, schools and educational institutions. Children and young people will be increasingly heard in matters related to school meals.



*If I could, I would ban at least some of the additives that are put in our food. We should eat real food, not "food products". It's also a good thing to favour locally produced food.*

The Youth Panel 2011

### Measure 8.2 Pupil and student welfare

Table 49. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women			x	x	x
Boys / Men			x	x	x

**Special groups:** Regional equality, boys in upper secondary vocational education

#### National implementation

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will collaborate in developing multi-professional pupil and student welfare. Differences between regions and municipalities in student welfare will be narrowed.

Special attention will be paid to the development of health and welfare services for students in upper secondary education and polytechnics.

Table 50. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

#### Guidelines for regional and local work

The importance of multi-professional student welfare teams will be stressed in the promotion of health, well-being and safety in local communities. These teams will be encouraged to collaborate with pupils and students.

Services will be increased in preventive work and the promotion of students' overall well-being. Sufficient availability of services provided by school nurses, psychologists and social workers will be ensured.

Pupil and student welfare will be developed and evaluated in collaboration with children and young people.



*I would hire a school nurse for our school.*

The Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 8.3 Bullying

Table 51. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x	x	
Boys / Men	x	x	x	x	

**Special groups:** Sexual and gender minorities, disabled people, immigrants

### National implementation

Methods of preventing bullying in higher education will be developed and adopted (MEC).

Special attention will be paid to racial discrimination and bullying.

The Ministry of Education and Culture will ensure that training for those working with children and young people includes content on equality, non-discrimination and human rights.

The Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of the Interior will stress the importance of preventing bullying to those providing hobby activities for children and young people.

Bullying in social media will be addressed through online youth work and the Virtual Community Police Team (MEC, MI).

Table 52. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI		x	
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF		x	
MTF			
MEE		x	
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The role of early education units, schools and educational institutions as developers of children's and young people's emotional and social skills will be strengthened. Participation and communality among children and young people will be supported. Special attention will be paid to racial discrimination and bullying. Co-operation between home and school as well as day care will be increased in preventing and addressing bullying.

Municipalities

Organisations

*I would like to be able to do something about bullying. I guess it's impossible to stop it completely, but the victims should be helped more and the bullies should be reminded of the damage they are doing.*

Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 8.4 Support for parenthood

Table 53. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	x
Boys / Men				x	x

**Special groups:** Multicultural families, immigrants, disabled people, rainbow families, single-parent families

### National implementation

Family centre operations will be expanded through co-operation between families, municipalities, organisations and other actors (MSAH, MEC).

Home care services and low-threshold services for families with children will be developed and increased, as will preventive work in child welfare. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will be responsible for this as part of normal information and resource guidance and through the Slot Machine Association's (RAY) support for the National Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care (Kaste) and organisations.

Parents will be offered more opportunities to opt for shorter working hours and part-time employment (MSAH, MEE).

Table 54. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI			
MD			
MF			
MEC		x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE		x	
MSAH	x	x	
ME			

## Guidelines for regional and local work

Educational partnership – that is, co-operation between parents and professional educators in day care and schools – will be strengthened in supporting children and young people. Co-operation between home and school will be enhanced.

Municipalities

*Family means everything to me. I don't know what I would do if my family weren't there to support me. Family. People who accept you just the way you are. People who you want to make proud and who love you no matter what.*

Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 8.5 Substance abuse and mental health

Table 55. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women		x	x	x	x
Boys / Men		x	x	x	x

**Special groups:** Boys in upper secondary vocational education

### National implementation

The Ministry of Education and Culture will support substance-free hobbies that build a sense of community among children and young people. Such hobbies will be supported through cultural, sports and youth organisations, for example. Resources will be allocated to substance abuse work and its development as a form of youth work. Information about successful development work will be disseminated, which will advance encourage the adoption of good practices and methods.

Preventive mental health work will be developed and supported by using youth work methods in many ways, for example (MSAH, MEC).

Groups at risk of substance abuse – young men in particular – will be offered substance-free alternatives (MSAH, MEC).

Measures will be enhanced to protect children and young people from the detrimental effects of alcohol, smoking, drugs and gambling. The advertising of alcohol will be limited by prohibiting advertising targeted at children and young people as well as advertising that portrays alcohol as a means of social and sexual success. Advertising times on television and radio will be reviewed (MSAH, MTC).

The detrimental effects of parents' substance abuse on children will be prevented and reduced. Attention will also be paid to maintaining parents' mental health (MSAH).

Support for children will be enhanced in situations where parents have substance abuse or mental health problems. Parents' admission to treatment will be ensured. Special attention will be paid to ensuring professionals' ability to meet a child or young person whose parent has problems with health and is in treatment.

Co-operation between authorities will be enhanced in preventing substance abuse (MSAH, MI, MD, MEC).

Table 56. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ			
MI		x	
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH	x	x	x
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The availability and accessibility of mental health and substance abuse services and low-threshold services in particular will be ensured.

Support for children will be enhanced in situations where parents have substance abuse or mental health problems. Parents' admission to treatment will be ensured. Attention will be paid to the early recognition of eating disorders in schools and hobby organisations. The availability of support services will be ensured, as will guidance on using such services.



### 3.9 Strategic goal 9

#### Matters pertaining to children, young people and families are administrated with high competence and through good collaboration.

Overall, children's and young people's well-being requires multi-professional examination and work, especially on the local level. In such cases, co-operation is essential in the preparation, planning, steering and evaluation of operations. Operational processes must increasingly be examined comprehensively, ensuring that the different parts work successfully together. Multi-professional co-operation ensures the availability, sufficiency, high quality and compatibility of services. The managers of different sectors usually have the right and obligation to reorganise operations.

Adults working with children and young people are facing new challenges in terms of competence. Children's and young people's living conditions and environments are changing constantly. This requires of those working with children and young people sensitivity to new phenomena in everyday life and an ability to respond to changing needs.

Regionally, in Finland, the professionals who work among children and young people have not have received enough training in issues related to sexual orientation and gender diversity. Reports reveal that

public services in Finland currently provide very little support to parents in rainbow families.

The Child and Youth Policy Programme also includes many strategic goals or ranges of measures that require a new type of competence. The ability to engage in multi-professional collaboration is the key issue. The forms of work used must be genuinely respectful of and attentive to children, young people and families. This requires of those working in customer service as well as in management level knowledge of different processes and an ability to combine them.

### Measure 9.1 Coordination of matters pertaining to children, young people and families

Table 57. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women	x	x	x	x	x
Boys / Men	x	x	x	x	x

### National implementation

Municipalities will be guided into making plans concerning actions to promote the well-being of children and young people in accordance with Section 12 of the Child Welfare Act. In compliance with Section 4 of the Youth Act, these plans must also cover youth policy programme work at the municipal level and must take into account the report on health and well-being described in the Health Care Act. To ensure the plans promote the well-being of children and young people, municipalities will be guided into studying children's and young people's opinions on their own well-being and the services they use. Furthermore, municipalities will be guided into using these plans as a tool (MSAH, MEC).

On a proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Government will appoint a steering

group to supervise the implementation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme. The steering group will consist of representatives of the following ministries and related branches of administration: MEC, MSAH, MJ, MEE, MI, ME, MD and MF as well as NIHW and NBE. The expertise of the National Institute for Health and Welfare will be utilised in coordination and development.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will clarify the roles of advisory boards dealing with matters related to children.

In particular, collaboration with the Child and Youth Policy Programme and the sub-programme concerning children, young people and families within the National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care for 2012–2015 (Kaste II) will be utilised (MEC, MSAH).

Table 58. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	
MI		x	
MD		x	
MF		x	
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE		x	
MSAH	x	x	
ME		x	

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The work of local authorities' youth guidance and service networks described in the Youth Act will be promoted, as will the work of the advisory groups described in the Child Welfare Act, along with collaboration between these groups.





*Well, I hope you will make good decisions and I also hope you would try and walk a mile in the shoes of the people whose lives you are dealing with.*

Youth Panel 2011

## Measure 9.2 The competence of people working with children and young people

Table 59. The measures are primarily targeted at the following groups

	0-6 yrs	7-12 yrs	13-17 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-29 yrs
Girls / Women				x	x
Boys / Men				x	x

### National implementation

Key themes in additional and continuing education for those working with children and young people include themes such as interaction skills, children and young people's opportunities to participate and have an influence on their matters, non-discrimination and equality, early recognition of mental disorders, as well as themes of sustainable development, and education for democracy and global responsibility.

In addition, abilities required for the changing operating environment must be brought up to date. Such abilities are related to information technology, for example.

In the degree structure reform in vocational education for professionals working with children and young people, it must be ensured that children's and young people's participation, opportunities to have an influence, and education for democracy, as well as non-discrimination and equality education, are taken into account.

The recognition of the risk of being subjected to honour-related violence and forced marriages will be enhanced. Training will be targeted at authorities and early intervention models will be developed.

Table 60. The ministries have the following roles in targeting the measures

	RG	IG	LG
PMO			
MFA			
MJ		x	
MI			
MD		x	
MF			
MEC	x	x	
MAF			
MTF			
MEE			
MSAH		x	
ME			

### Guidelines for regional and local work

The competence of people working with children and young people will be improved to meet the diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and families and to recognise the risks to which children and young people are subjected.

Municipalities

*I would like to be able to get inside people's heads and replace all the negativity, racism or bad feelings with positive things. Making a difference requires teamwork, which is difficult if no one else is interested.*

Youth Panel 2011

## 4 Relation to other programmes

The Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy defines the Child and Youth Policy Programme as a broad-based programme. Among other things, this means that the programme shares areas of interest with other programmes, plans and strategies. This section outlines the relation of child and youth policy to other governmental programmes and the equivalent.

The preparation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015 included discussions and co-operation especially with people who contributed to the National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care (Kaste). In addition, the draft versions of the Child and Youth Policy Programme were discussed in conjunction with the development plan for education and research for 2011–2016 at the Ministry of Education and Culture. Common implementation methods have been created for the Child and Youth Policy Programme and the programmes mentioned above.

The following is a list of programmes that clearly support or include a child or youth policy perspective:

- Housing Policy Action Programme, in progress. In accordance with the Government Programme, the purpose of the action programme is to prevent homelessness and social exclusion among young people. The Ministry of the Environment supervises the programme.
- Internal Security Programme (third), in preparation, expected to be completed in May 2012. Key goals include the prevention of social exclusion and social disintegration. The Ministry of the Interior supervises the preparation process and the programme. One of the focuses is improving young people's safety.
- Security Programme for Cities and Towns. The goal is for Finland to be the safest country in Europe in 2015. Key operational policies include improving children's and young people's safety. The Ministry of the Interior supervises the programme.
- The implementation of the Roma Policy Programme (ROMPO) will be started. Special measures will be targeted at improving employment and the level of education among Roma people, at solving housing problems and at facilitating participation among Roma children, young people and families.
- Sámi Language Revitalisation Programme. Measures concerning children and young people will be implemented.
- National Integration Programme, in preparation. The goals include enhancing non-discrimination and ensuring active participation among immigrants in Finland.

- Conscription will be developed in accordance with the report of the Finnish Conscription working group. The Ministry of Defence supervises the process.
- Policy Programme for Children's and Young People's Culture for 2013–2017. The Ministry of Education and Culture supervises the programme. The goal is to promote equal opportunities for cultural participation.
- The goals of Finland's Disability Policy Programme (VAMPO) for 2010–2015 include ensuring equal opportunities for disabled children and young people to participate and have an influence.
- Among other goals, the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality aims to decrease gender wage differentials, to reduce segregation in schools and to promote reconciliation between work and family life.
- The preparation of a cross-sectoral action programme for reducing social exclusion, poverty and health problems will be started. This broad-based programme must pay special attention to intergenerational justice.
- European Structural Fund Programmes for the period 2007–2013 facilitate the implementation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme. An impact should also be made on European Structural Fund Programmes for the period beginning in 2014.
- Action Programme for Health-Enhancing Physical Activity. In late 2011, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appointed a cross-sectoral steering group for health-enhancing physical activity. The steering group will prepare an action programme that addresses, among other things, physical activity among children and young people.

At their best, municipal plans concerning actions to promote the well-being of children and young people meet the requirements set for local applications in the Youth Act and the Child Welfare Act. As these plans call for multi-professional cooperation and extensive preparation, they offer municipalities an opportunity to evaluate and create well-being in collaboration with local actors, including organisations. For this reason, the plans also include preventive measures targeted at entire age groups or specific risk groups. Moreover, they can cover a comprehensive array of matters related to children's and young people's well-being, from child welfare measures to basic art education and cultural education, for example.

## 5 General grounds for the programme

### 5.1 Regulatory basis

#### 5.1.1 National regulations

In accordance with Section 4 of the Youth Act, the Government of Finland adopts a youth policy development programme every four years. The programme accepted in 2007 was called the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2007–2011, as it also included goals and measures related to children's growth.

The purpose of the Youth Act is to support the growth and independence of young people, promote their active citizenship and social empowerment, and improve their growth and living conditions. The starting points for reaching this goal are communality, solidarity, equity and equality, multiculturalism and internationalism, healthy lifestyles, and respect for life and the environment. The Child and Youth Policy Programme shares this value base.

In accordance with the Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy (1003/2006), the youth policy development programme referred to in Section 4 of the Youth Act will be prepared by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of the Environment and, if necessary, other ministries concerned with youth affairs. In the programme, aspects related to children will be considered particularly from the perspective of growth.

#### 5.1.2 Key international commitments, strategies and action programmes in the youth sector

Child and youth policy in Finland is guided by international conventions and recommendations (United Nations, Council of Europe) and political co-operation (European Union). International policy strategies and action programmes related to children and young people are also important.

#### United Nations (UN)

The UN General Assembly accepted the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>20</sup> in November 1989. The Convention and its Optional Protocols provide a normative framework for national action programmes concerning children and young people (under 18 years of age). The core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to

<sup>20</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=68142>

prioritising the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; respect for the views of the child; and the right to participate in decision-making that affects the child and his or her surroundings.

In terms of the Child and Youth Policy Programme, key elements in the Convention include Article 12, which concerns children's and young people's right to be heard in decision-making pertaining to them. Overall, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the recommendations and concerns of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the implementation of the Convention in Finland, are also integral to the foundation of the development programme.

Adopted in 2000, the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY) (A/RES/50/81<sup>21</sup>) is the most important youth policy document of the UN. It provides an action policy framework and practical guidelines for the development of national youth policies. The WPAY identifies ten priority areas: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, the environment, drug abuse, youth delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, and the full and effective participation in the life of society and in decision-making.

In 2007, the UN General Assembly accepted a supplement to the WPAY (A/RES/62/126<sup>22</sup>), which expanded the programme to cover five new priority areas: globalisation, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and intergenerational issues. Among other recommendations, the WPAY urges governments

to formulate and adopt an integrated national youth policy and to establish national coordinating mechanisms.

Adopted in 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration<sup>23</sup> is a political commitment that focuses on the inequality and profound development problems prevailing in the world. It also serves as a foundation for the UN's action policy for development and the promotion of sustainability. The objective is to meet the development targets, also known as Millennium Development Goals, MDG,<sup>24</sup> by 2015. Among other things, the Millennium Declaration calls for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as its Optional Protocols.

Other significant human rights agreements related to child and youth policy include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Moreover, many other conventions that Finland has joined within the UN include provisions that are important in terms of young people's rights and living conditions.<sup>25</sup>

### **Council of Europe (CoE)**

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)<sup>26</sup> prescribes civil and political rights and obligations. The rights of a child are not mentioned separately in the ECHR, but it is also applied to children.

21 World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond WPAY (A/RES/50/81)

<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/50/a50r081.htm>

22 Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth (A/RES/62/126)

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/471/33/PDF/N0747133.pdf?OpenElement/HUOM+LINKKI+EI+TOIMI+vaikka+korjattu!>

23 United Nations Millennium Declaration: <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

24 UN Millennium Development Goals: <http://www.formin.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=15321&contentlan=1&culture=fi-fi>

25 Other UN conventions:

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: <http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67747>

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:

<http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67713>

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: <http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67689>

26 ECHR <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=005&CL=ENG>

The European Social Charter (ESC)<sup>27</sup> was accepted in 1961 and revised in 1996. It complements the European Convention on Human Rights by ensuring social and economic human rights. In the revised ESP, Article 7 (The right of children and young persons to protection) and Article 17 (The right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection) are essential in terms of children and young people. Finland adopted the ESP in 2002. Moreover, many other conventions of the Council of Europe concern children's rights.

In the Warsaw Declaration, issued in 2005, the heads of state and government of the member states of the Council of Europe proclaimed their commitment to eradicating violence against women and children, including domestic violence. Furthermore, in the Warsaw Action Plan, it was decided that a child rights perspective would be implemented throughout the activities of the Council of Europe. As a result, the "Building a Europe for and with children" programme for 2006–2011 was launched to promote children's rights and to protect children from violence.

In November 2008, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers accepted Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe,<sup>28</sup> which aims to provide young people with equal opportunities and experience that enable them to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies so as to play a full part in all aspects of society. The youth policy of the Council of Europe is founded on human rights, democracy and diversity as well as social participation among young people.

The Council of Europe has given many recommendations on youth policy, participation, mobility, youth research and informal learning.<sup>29</sup> The Council of Europe's new recommendation on youth information stresses the importance of young people having access to complete, objective,

understandable and reliable information on all of their questions based on their specific needs.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is preparing a recommendation on young people's rights, "Towards a European framework convention on youth rights", Recommendation 1978 (2011).<sup>30</sup> The focuses of the recommendation include young people's right to education, employment, housing of an adequate standard, a healthy environment, participation, culture, sports and non-discrimination.

### 5.1.3 Grounds for children's and young people's opportunities to participate and be heard

The Youth Act prescribes young people's right to be heard in matters concerning them and to be given opportunities to take part in the handling of matters concerning local and regional youth work and youth policy. In addition to Section 14 of the Constitution of Finland, young people's participation rights and opportunities are prescribed by many other laws, such as Section 27 of the Local Government Act (365/1995), Section 47 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998), the General Upper Secondary Schools Act (629/1998) and the Vocational Education and Training Act (630/1998). According to Section 5 of the Child Welfare Act (417/2007), "children's right to obtain information in a child welfare case affecting them, and the opportunity for them to present a view on the case, must be safeguarded for the child in a manner in keeping with their age and level of development". The implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has also been taken into account in the following laws: the Act on the Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992), the Act on the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients (812/2000), the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003), the Language Act (423/2003) and the Sámi Language Act (1086/2003).

27 ESP <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=66806>

28 Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue\\_No13/N13\\_Resolution\\_23\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue_No13/N13_Resolution_23_en.pdf)

29 [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/IG\\_Coop/CDEJ\\_documents\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/IG_Coop/CDEJ_documents_en.asp)

30 Towards a European framework: [http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingDetails\\_E.asp?ATID=11357](http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingDetails_E.asp?ATID=11357)

## 5.2 The Child and Youth Policy Programme as part of the Government Programme

According to the Government Programme,<sup>31</sup> Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government "aims to achieve a caring and successful Finland. Finland will be developed as a Nordic welfare state and a society that not only looks after its own citizens, but also bears its international responsibilities, as part of the Nordic region, Europe and the world".

A strategic implementation plan has been prepared for the Government Programme. It has the following three focuses:

- I Reduction of poverty, inequality and social exclusion
- II Consolidation of public finances
- III Enhancement of sustainable economic growth, employment and competitiveness.

The Government holds an annual strategy session to evaluate the achievement of the goals of the Government Programme. In a strategy session, the Government can comment on the realisation of the Government Programme and, if necessary, prioritise or re-target its measures. In accordance with the Government Programme, funding provided in line with the European Union's regional and structural policies will be used to prevent social exclusion.

An increase of EUR 60 million per year is allocated to measures promoting youth employment. These include measures such as youth workshop activities and outreach youth work.

The Government's guiding principle is non-discrimination: "In Finland, everyone is equal irrespective of their gender, age, ethnic origin, language, religion, convictions, opinions, health, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor." In the spirit of this principle, the Government will, among other things, "secure the general prerequisites for the rule of law". Democracy will be consolidated by promoting civic participation and respect for human rights.

The first focus area of the strategic implementation plan is particularly important in terms of child and youth policy. The Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2012–2015 includes many related goals. Most of the goals in the programme are directly based on the Government Programme. However, the Child and Youth Policy Programme defines measures in more pragmatic terms and specifies target groups and responsibilities in more detail than the Government Programme.

## 5.3 Links to the Ministry of Education and Culture Strategy 2020

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture's strategy,<sup>32</sup> the desired state for Finland in 2020 is to be "in the vanguard of knowledge, participation and creativity". The Ministry has four strategic programmes. These programmes, as well as their strategic backgrounds and goals essentially related to child and youth policy, are explained in brief below:

**Power of Education and Culture:** Future general education will highlight global and environmental responsibility; an understanding of culture and related knowledge, values and ethic; life management skills; individual health and welfare behaviour; social and communication skills; management of the information glut and learning skills; media literacy; and technological competencies. As the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the future knowledge and creativity base, it will see to the continued attractiveness of education and culture.

**Competitiveness:** The Ministry of Education and Culture identifies and anticipates changes in the occupational and industrial structures, influences them and focuses on competence-building and ensuring access to a competent workforce. The employment rate is high and work and entrepreneurship are highly valued.

31 Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government, 22 June 2011 <http://www.vn.fi/hallitus/hallitusohjelma/pdf332889/fi.pdf>

32 Ministry of Education and Culture Strategy 2020. MEC Publications 2010:6.

[http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2010/strategia\\_2020.html](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2010/strategia_2020.html)



### **Successful Regions and Living Environments:**

Finland is vigorous and progressive. The Ministry of Education and Culture enriches people's quality of life and their opportunities for a stimulating, empowering and experiential living environment.

**Inclusion and Communality:** The Ministry of Education and Culture is an expert agency in regard of civil society. The Ministry recognises the changing forms of communality, enhances the operational prerequisites of immediate communities and reforms its procedures accordingly. The Ministry strengthens capacity for renewal in its sector and supports civil society. The level of education and rate of activity and engagement among young people with immigrant backgrounds is equal to that of the mainstream population. The Ministry contributes to the activities of multicultural, tolerant and encouraging communities. Citizens have equal opportunities for personal development and active citizenship. The Ministry of Education and Culture prevents exclusion and hereditary exclusion, with a focus on children and young people.

## **5.4 EU youth policy priorities**

The Government Programme stresses the significance of the European Union as a natural political community for Finland as well as Finland's role as a dynamic and proactive Member State of the European Union.

### **Europe 2020**

In June 2010, the European Council accepted the Europe 2020 economic and employment strategy, which aims at smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The national goals for Finland to achieve by 2020 include raising the employment rate of people aged between 20 and 64 to 78 per cent, raising the proportion of people having completed tertiary education to 42 per cent and reducing the proportion of early school leavers to 8 per cent.

The Europe 2020 strategy includes the Youth on the Move flagship initiative, which aims to improve the quality of education and teaching and to enhance the mobility of students and trainees. Further goals include increasing employment among young people by enhancing the recognition of informal and everyday learning. In terms of children and young people, other significant flagship initiatives include the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (employment and education) and the European Platform against Poverty (prevention of social exclusion).

Finland's national goals exceed those of the EU in scope. In achieving the goals, young people who have only completed basic education and who are outside working life represent a particularly challenging group. The goal is to guarantee all young people a place of study and employment through outreach youth work, youth workshop activities, cross-sectoral co-operation between authorities and other measures that improve life management.<sup>33</sup>

### **Renewed framework for European co-operation in the youth field (2010–2018)**

According to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, "Union action shall be aimed at ... encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe".

EU co-operation in the youth sector is based on the Council Resolution (2009/C 311/01) on a renewed framework for European co-operation in the youth field for 2010–2018.<sup>34</sup> The purpose is to promote gender equality and combat all forms of discrimination; to pay particular attention to young people who, for different reasons, may have fewer opportunities; and to recognise all young people as a resource to society.

The overall objectives of EU co-operation are:

- to create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market
- to promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.

<sup>33</sup> Europe 2020 Strategy – Finland's Draft National Programme, Spring 2011 34

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:311:0001:0001:FI:PDF>

<sup>34</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:311:0001:0001:FI:PDF>

Achieving the two overall objectives implies a dual approach that involves the development and promotion of both (1) specific initiatives in the youth field and (2) mainstreaming initiatives, that is, initiatives to enable a cross-sectoral approach where due account is taken of youth issues in other policy fields that have a significant impact on the lives of young people. The most important policy fields are:

- Education and training
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Health and well-being
- Participation
- Voluntary activities
- Social inclusion
- Youth and the world
- Creativity and culture.

Youth policy should be based on evidence (research information) which results must be evaluated continuously. The triennial EU Youth Report will be used as an instrument of evaluation. The next report will be published in 2012. The Commission staff working document on EU indicators in the field of youth presents 40 indicators, which cover all policy areas in the framework of EU co-operation. These indicators will be compiled in a sub-section of the Eurostat website.<sup>35</sup>

The open method of coordination will be used and national measures will be carried out to achieve the European goals. The implementation of the open method of coordination involves, for example, mutual learning and mutual indicators.

The framework for co-operation also calls attention to the economic and social significance of youth work (education of youth workers, mobility, services).

The Council Resolution invites its Member States to adopt national measures that contribute to achieving the overall objectives outlined in the renewed framework. In Finland, the Child and Youth Policy Programme implements the goals of EU youth policy at the national level.

## 5.5 The Child and Youth Policy Programme implements EU youth strategy

The links between the strategic goals of the Child and Youth Policy Programme and the EU Youth Strategy can be described as follows:

- **Education and training**
  - 7. Educational equality is achieved.
  - 5. The gender perspective and the promotion of equality are realised in all work with children and young people.
- **Employment and entrepreneurship**
  - 3. The social guarantee for young people is realised so that young people find employment and their employment rate improves.
    - **Health and well-being**
      - 8. Preventive measures are taken to ensure children's and young people's well-being and health.
- **Participation**
  - 1. Children and young people will grow to become active citizens with shared sense of responsibility.
  - 2. Children and young people have equal opportunities to participate in cultural, physical and leisure activities.
- **Voluntary activities**
  - 2. Children and young people have equal opportunities to participate in cultural, physical and leisure activity.
- **Social inclusion**
  - 1. Children and young people will grow to become active citizens with shared sense of responsibility.
  - 3. The social guarantee for young people is realised so that young people find employment and their employment rate improves.
  - 4. Non-discrimination is achieved.
  - 6. Young people have access to forms of housing that support their autonomy, and young people have the opportunity to become financially independent.

<sup>35</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment\\_social\\_policy\\_equality/youth\\_policy/dashboard\\_youth](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/youth_policy/dashboard_youth)

- Youth and the world
  - 1. Children and young people will grow to become active citizens with shared sense of responsibility.
- Creativity and culture.
  - 2. Children and young people have equal opportunities to participate in cultural, physical and leisure activity.

In addition, the guiding principles mentioned in the EU Youth Strategy largely correspond to strategic goal 9 of the Child and Youth Policy Programme: matters related to children, young people and families are handled with competence and through good collaboration.

## 5.6 Links between child and youth policy

Section 2 of the Youth Act defines young people as people under 29 years of age. In other words, the Youth Act concerns all children and young people under 29 years of age. In everyday language, the term “young people” often refers to teenagers, that is, those aged between 13 and 19. Young people aged 12 or under 12 years of age are usually called children, although the term “preteen” is also used. “Young adults” are clearly placed at the other end of the age spectrum. The age of 18 is regarded as the absolute end of childhood. Many laws prescribe it as the age of majority. Internationally, it is prescribed as such by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There is no generally accepted and equally clear age-based definition of youth. Youth is associated more with a phase of life and the related course of life, in which age is not the most important definer.

Simplified, the field of child and youth policy can be seen as being constituted by overlapping policy fields that relate to age.

The purpose of the Child Welfare Act (417/2007) is to “protect children’s rights to a safe growth environment, balanced and well-rounded development and special protection”. Its core principles include preventive child welfare and early intervention.

According to Section 3a of the Child Welfare Act, preventive child welfare is used to “promote and safeguard the growth, development and wellbeing of children and to support parenting”. Moreover, preventive child welfare includes “support and special support provided in the context of for instance education, youth work, day care, prenatal and child health clinic services and other social and health care services”. Multi-professionalco-operation between different actors is important.

## 5.7 The continuum of youth policy programmes

The previous programme was called the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2007–2011, as it also included goals and measures related to children’s growth. The programme was prepared in

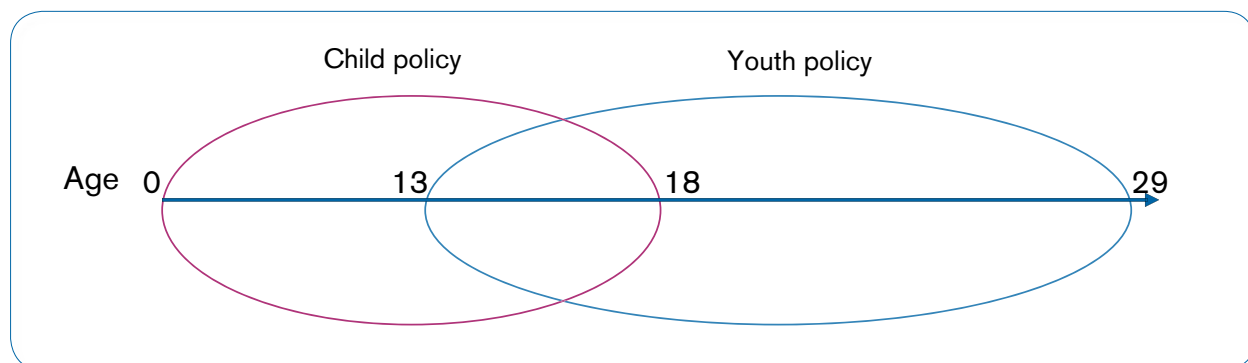


Figure 2. Links between child and youth policy

accordance with the Youth Act and was adopted by the Government on 13 December 2007.<sup>36</sup>

The programme included sections on nine policy areas, which were supported by a chapter on the following up and information needs of the development programme. The programme addressed the following policy areas:

- Diversity and equality
- Creative Finland
- Digital generation
- Towards comprehensive participation and communality
- Providing support for families
- Early intervention and support for special groups
- Helping all young people get into education or employment
- Promotion of health and narrowing gaps in health and well-being
- Housing and community planning.

The Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2007–2011 provoked discussion on important new issues relating to young people. Interest in young people's living conditions increased clearly during the programme period. Stronger networking in state administration created new links between different actors. Overall, the programme enhanced the broad-based development of children's and young people's living conditions on a large scale.<sup>37</sup>

Between 2007 and 2011, the Government's policy programme for the well-being of children, youth and families significantly advanced the implementation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme as well as ministries' commitment to matters related to children and young people. Multi-professional management and cross-sectoral co-operation at the governmental level are key aspects in the new programme period.

Consultative steering – the method used in the preparation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme – elicited a great deal of positive feedback, especially from researchers and those working in organisations. The new programme was also prepared in a process of open elaboration.

The previous programme received good feedback for its comprehensive scope. According to the negative feedback, however, the goals were not prioritised and some of the measures were unclear as to who was responsible for the implementation. The programme included a total of 40 goals and approximately 300 measures to reach the goals. Moreover, following up proved to be difficult because of the scope of the programme and also because the information gathered on the municipal level was not specific enough for the programme. In addition, the programme did not differentiate between age groups, male or female citizens or other groups associated with sensitive issues.

The recession progressed quite rapidly in 2008 and later. Unemployment among young people required special measures, which were not taken sufficiently into consideration in the programme. The new programme has built-in specification mechanisms.

After the amendment of the Youth Act, multi-professional co-operation has gained momentum in municipalities. The following up of the process must continue, and it is important to invest in changing attitudes and adopting new operating methods. Children and young people must not be ignored, and their views must not be overlooked.

Multi-professional cross-sectoral co-operation is important in promoting overall well-being and securing sufficient resources for the public sector. According to the evaluation of the programme for 2007–2011, progress has been made in this respect, but much remains to be done in terms of genuine and goal-focused co-operation and coordination.

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<sup>36</sup>The Finnish Government's Child and Youth Policy Programme 2007–2011. Publications of the Ministry of Education, 2008:21. [www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut)

<sup>37</sup> Report on the implementation of the development programme for child and youth policy 2007–2011. Publications of the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs, No. 44.

## 6 Information about children and young people and their hopes

### 6.1 Children's and young people's voices in directing the programme

The preparation of the development programme began with an online survey in May 2011: more than 800 young people aged between 13 and 20 responded to the Youth Panel 2011. The following were identified as strong themes in the responses: friends, the well-being of loved ones, the opportunity to have a say in matters related to young people's own lives, health, and home and family. The results of the survey indicated that young people would like to participate more actively in decision-making in society, take responsibility and collaborate with decision-makers. Social issues that presently provoke discussions among young people include employment, income and education as well as tolerance and equality.<sup>38</sup>

Since 1994, a Youth Barometer study has been carried out annually to examine attitudes and expectations among young people aged between 15 and 29. Between 2005 and 2010, many attitudes have changed considerably and become more critical in many respects. A smaller proportion of young people than before would regard it as a positive development if more foreigners came to Finland.

Fewer young people than before feel that cultural tolerance has increased in recent years, and more young people feel that racism has increased among young Finns. Young people strongly believe in education and the opportunities it provides for them to enter the labour market. According to the most recent Youth Barometer studies, young people have a strong work ethic, but not many are planning to become entrepreneurs in the future.<sup>39</sup>

In 2010, approximately 100 young people from around the country participated in the Finnish National Youth Convention. The participants discussed decision-making concerning young people and prepared proposals for action for decision-makers. The following issues were emphasised in the declaration of the 2010 Finnish National Youth Convention: young people's rights and position in the labour market, participation, mental health and social exclusion. The participants stated that study counselling should be enhanced, especially during transitional phases between different levels of education. Better care should be taken of young people who do not manage to attain a student place. Ensuring sufficient personnel for pupil and student welfare was also considered to be important. Moreover, the participants opined that the voting

<sup>38</sup> Report of Youth Panel 2011: [http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisopolitiikka/Kehittxmisohjelma\\_2012-2015/Liitteet/Nuorten\\_Paneeli\\_2011\\_Loppuraportti.pdf](http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisopolitiikka/Kehittxmisohjelma_2012-2015/Liitteet/Nuorten_Paneeli_2011_Loppuraportti.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> All Youth Barometer studies are available at [http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisoasiain\\_neuvottelukunta/julkaisut/?lang=fi](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/nuorisoasiain_neuvottelukunta/julkaisut/?lang=fi)

age should be lowered to 16 years in local elections. They were worried about mental problems among young people and the alcohol and drug culture in Finland. Proposed solutions included, among others, meaningful hobbies and preventive measures. The Finnish National Youth Convention was organised by the Finnish Youth Cooperation (Allianssi) and the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs (Nuora).

The Union of Youth Councils in Finland (Nuva) carried out an evaluation of the Child and Youth Policy Programme for 2007–2011 in its regional branches in the spring of 2011. Proposals for further development for the following programme period were made in conjunction with the evaluation. According to the Union of Youth Councils, young people do not have equal opportunities to affect decision-making in matters concerning them, and the present system does not encourage the hearing of young people. More attention should be paid to whether young people are heard effectively and not just to the number of influence groups.<sup>40</sup>

Representatives of the Finnish Children's Parliament were heard as part of the preparation process for Finland's periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The representatives thought that children should be more involved in decision-making and should be offered the opportunity to have regular meetings with decision-makers. Moreover, they thought that all schools should have a student body in operation, and children's opinions should also be taken better into account in the leisure time hobbies and activities. Children find the state of health care in schools to be alarming, and school nurses have insufficient availability in many schools. Children stressed the

importance of tolerating diversity and prohibiting all discrimination.

## 6.2 Statistical data and research results

At the end of 2010, the number of people aged 28 or below in Finland was 1,825,661, representing more than one-third of the population. The number of people aged between 15 and 28 was 937,984.<sup>41</sup> The demographic dependency ratio – that is, the number of people aged 14 or under and people aged 65 and over per 100 people of working age – was 51.6 at the end of 2010.<sup>42</sup> The ratio is projected to be 60.4 in 2016 and 79.1 in 2060.<sup>43</sup>

In Finland, an exceptionally high proportion of students work while studying. Employment during studies decreased slightly in 2009 from the previous year. Still, 55 per cent of students were employed during their studies. Employment during studies was most widespread among university students, of whom 60 per cent had an employment contract.<sup>44</sup>

Several indicators show that life goes well for children and young people in Finland. The majority of young people report that they are happy with their life. More than 80 per cent of young people feel that they are in good health. However, one-fifth of young people are worse off than before. Poverty accumulates and problems increase in many ways.<sup>45</sup>

In 2008, more than 40,000 young people aged between 15 and 20 were outside the labour market and the education system. More than 80 per cent of excluded or unemployed young people never complete a qualification beyond basic education. More and more young people are on disability pension because of mental problems, particularly depression.<sup>46</sup>

40 Union of Youth Councils in Finland: <http://www.nuva.fi/Liitto/tabid/871/language/fi-FI/Default.aspx>

41 Statistics Finland: [http://pxweb2.stat.fi/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=050\\_vaerak\\_tau\\_104\\_fi&path=../DATABASE/STATFIN/VRM/VAERAK/&lang=3&multilang=fi](http://pxweb2.stat.fi/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=050_vaerak_tau_104_fi&path=../DATABASE/STATFIN/VRM/VAERAK/&lang=3&multilang=fi)

42 Statistics Finland: [http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2010/vaerak\\_2010\\_2011-03-18\\_tau\\_002\\_fi.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2010/vaerak_2010_2011-03-18_tau_002_fi.html)

43 Statistics Finland: [http://www.stat.fi/til/vaenn/2009/vaenn\\_2009\\_2009-09-30\\_fi.pdf](http://www.stat.fi/til/vaenn/2009/vaenn_2009_2009-09-30_fi.pdf)

44 Statistics Finland: [http://www.stat.fi/til/opty/2009/opty\\_2009\\_2011-03-15\\_tie\\_001\\_fi.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/opty/2009/opty_2009_2011-03-15_tie_001_fi.html)

45 Consensus statement of the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim and the Academy of Finland, 2010: <http://www.duodecim.fi/konsensus>

46 Young people outside the labour market and studies: [http://www.tem.fi/files/29457/TEM\\_12\\_2011\\_netti.pdf](http://www.tem.fi/files/29457/TEM_12_2011_netti.pdf)

At the end of August 2011, unemployed jobseekers under 25 years of age numbered 30,300, representing a decrease of 3,700 from August of the previous year. A total of 8,300 of those under 20 years of age were unemployed.<sup>47</sup> At the beginning of 2011, the unemployment rate of young people aged between 15 and 24 was 19.1. The overall unemployment rate was 8.2.<sup>48</sup>

Immediate continuation of studies was more difficult in 2009 than in the previous year for those who completed the 9th grade of comprehensive school as well as those who passed the matriculation examination. More than 8 per cent of the former and 60 per cent of the latter failed to secure a place for further studies.<sup>49</sup>

Finnish families are diverse. Of all families in Finland, approximately 1 per cent are multicultural families, 5 per cent are bicultural families, 1 per cent are families that have lost a child, 2 per cent are families of young widows or widowers, 15 per cent are involuntarily childless families, 1 per cent are foster care families, 2 per cent are rainbow families, 3 per cent are families with two or more children born at the same time, 15 per cent are reconstituted families, and 20 per cent are single-parent families.<sup>50</sup>

A total of 10,003 children were in custody in 2010. The number of urgent cases was 3,432. The total number of children in custody decreased by 2 per cent from the previous year, but the number of urgent cases increased by 21 per cent.

A total of 17,064 children and young people were placed outside the home in 2010, representing a decrease of a little over 1 per cent from the previous year. In 2009, the total number of children and young people placed outside the home decreased for the first time since the annual compilation of national child welfare data began in 1991.

Half of the children in custody were placed in families, of which 11 per cent were families of relatives or other kin. Boys outnumbered girls among those placed outside the home. In 16 municipalities, no children were placed outside the home.

In 2010, there were more than 78,500 children and young people as clients in child welfare and receiving support in community care. This is 11 per cent more than in the previous year.<sup>51</sup>

According to studies, parents' poverty exposes children to problems and ill health. Later problems – such as being taken into custody, mental health problems, criminality, lack of education and income problems – escalate with parents' income problems. Teen pregnancies and cases of chlamydia also escalate with parents' income problems. Education, especially that of mothers, seems to protect children from problems and ill health.

Research shows that young people find leisure activities especially meaningful when the activities are self-motivated and experimental. Friends are important, both face-to-face and online.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, municipal and governmental services have become more irrelevant in the everyday lives and leisure time of young people, and the services do not necessarily meet young people's needs. Gender, ethnic background, social class and place of residence affect young people's participation opportunities and the ways in which young people spend their free time. Moreover, young people's free time is not detached from social structures and inequalities – on the contrary, it is created by the same global, public and private actors as well as those in civic society that shape working life and education, for example.<sup>53</sup>

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47 Employment Bulletin: <http://www.tem.fi/files/30785/ELO11.pdf>

48 Labour force survey 2011: [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/2011/01/tyti\\_2011\\_01\\_2011-02-22\\_fi.pdf](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/tyti/2011/01/tyti_2011_01_2011-02-22_fi.pdf)

49 Entrance to education 2009: [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/khak/2009/khak\\_2009\\_2010-12-09\\_fi.pdf](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/khak/2009/khak_2009_2010-12-09_fi.pdf)

50 <http://www.monimuotoisetperheet.fi/image/verkosto.html>

51 NIHW: Child welfare 2010: [http://www.stakes.fi/tilastot/tilastotiedotteet/2011/Tr29\\_11.pdf](http://www.stakes.fi/tilastot/tilastotiedotteet/2011/Tr29_11.pdf)

52 Given, Taken and Self-Made – The Leisure Time of Young People in Contemporary Finland. The Finnish Youth Research Network/The Finnish Youth Research Society, publications 112. Helsinki 2011.

53 The Finnish Youth Research Network and the Finnish Youth Research Society: <http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi>



### 6.3 Children's and young people's opportunities to have an influence

In 2010, the Council of Europe carried out a policy review of child and youth participation in Finland,<sup>54</sup> evaluating their opportunities to participate and be heard in accordance with Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 of the Convention states that “States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.” Furthermore, “the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body.”

According to the evaluation, the strengths of the Finnish participation system include a clear public responsibility for ensuring access to participation. In Finland, child and youth participation, including direct and representative forms of involvement, usually takes place in formal structures (youth councils, student bodies, children's parliaments), and there is an extensive range of legislation on the subject. The evaluation also states that more bottom-up approaches to participation should be encouraged in Finland in addition to the existing participation structures.

The international review team paid attention to the following shortcomings in the Finnish systems of participation and hearing systems:

- Laws and regulations ensuring that children receive the appropriate information to allow them to take decisions and express their views do not exist as such. However, the National Youth Information Co-ordination and Development Centre follows the Council of Europe's recommendations in its activities.
- Evaluating the implementation of legislative instruments needs to be carried out more consistently and regularly.

- The methods of participation are too selective and are not open to all children and young people.
- The involvement of disadvantaged children and young people is not provided for in legislation or in selection processes for formal child and youth participatory structures.
- To ensure children with special needs and multicultural young people are more involved, they must be better informed about participation opportunities, and participation has to be adapted to their needs.
- Participation should be encouraged by involving children and young people in the planning of participation processes.
- Training on participation and children's rights should be organised for adults working with children and young people as well as for children and young people themselves.
- There is a need to have compulsory school councils at all levels of education, and their role and objectives should be laid down by law.
- More efforts need to be made to involve children below the age of 13 in local decision-making processes.

54 [http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/participation/PolicyReview\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/participation/PolicyReview_en.pdf)

## 7 Implementation resources

As described in the introduction, key issues related to children and young people in the Government Programme have been included and further specified in the Child and Youth Policy Programme. For this reason, the allocation of resources in state administration is based on the annual state budget. However, the programme is also an obligation: the premise is that the goals of the programme will be realised. The programme was structured to further specify the Government Programme, which presupposes that the financial resources for the realisation of the programme already exist.

Typically, the measures are funded from the annual budgets of ministries and different branches of administration. In addition, the Youth Policy Division of the Ministry of Education and Culture is intended to allocate separate funding for projects that support the programme. The programme also discusses how some of its ranges of measures will affect the subsidy policy.

The links between different programmes do not result in additional funding, but efforts to reach common goals will mean that the limited resources are better used.

In addition, various programmes – such as the Finland’s Slot Machine Association’s new funding programme Emma & Elias, which will be launched at the beginning of 2012 and will highlight every child’s right to a safe childhood – can provide resources for various actors.

Opportunities offered by the European Structural Funds will also be utilised in achieving child and youth policy goals. The preparation of the programme involved seeking to make an impact on the goals of the European Structural Funds for the programme period.

## 8 Following up and evaluation of the programme

According to the Youth Act, the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs annually reviews the implementation of the youth policy development programme. A comprehensive in-depth evaluation of the previous programme proved to be challenging because of the scope of the programme. Experiences from the previous programme period have been taken into consideration in preparing the programme for 2012–2015.

Special attention has been paid to two aspects:

- Child and Youth Policy programmes should be seen as a continuum, in which past and future programmes create a development span. Different phases will naturally have different focuses: each programme is a product of its time. Current focuses include linking the programme more closely to the Government Programme and making it more concise. These are strongly related to the implementation and evaluation of the previous programme.
- The evaluation of the programme should be linked more closely to the preparation of the new programme. The annual evaluations performed by the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs should be structured so that they can be used in the preparation of the next programme period. Because the Government Programme is monitored closely through a separate process and the Child

and Youth Policy Programme implements the Government Programme as it relates to children and young people, the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs can perform a less detailed evaluation in the first years of the Government term. The evaluations could be utilised particularly in the preparation of the state budget. In the final year of the programme period, the evaluation should focus on the topics of the next programme.

The Advisory Council for Youth Affairs could therefore fulfil its obligation to evaluate the programme in accordance with the diagram below. The diagram illustrates the interrelationship between the annual evaluations and the preparation of the programme periods.

In 2012, 2013 and 2014, the Advisory Council for Youth Affairs will prepare the evaluation in a manner that facilitates making an impact on the state budget for the following year. For this reason, the evaluation should be performed between late spring and early autumn each year.

The evaluation of the entire programme period should be completed in early 2015, which would allow it to be used in government negotiations. The evaluation will have direct influences on the new development programme in terms of the preparation process as well as content.

The indicators used in the monitoring of the

final version of the Child and Youth Programme, which will be adopted by the Government, will be completed in early 2012. These indicators will be used throughout the programme period. The indicators will be included as links in the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture, making the monitoring process open and public.

The following resources will be used in selecting the indicators:

- The Commission staff document on EU indicators in the field of youth (see 5.4: EU youth policy priorities)
- the proposition for children's welfare indicators<sup>55</sup>
- the proposition for young people's welfare indicators<sup>56</sup>
- the indicators of the Findicator service<sup>57</sup>.

The intention is to use results of the indicator monitoring in making national and international comparisons in terms of development.

For years now, the Youth Barometer Studies have shown that social exclusion, for example, is related to problems experienced in friendships and other factors related to a feeling of community in everyday life. Such factors are poorly covered by official indicators and statistical structures. Therefore, the development programme will also be monitored using qualitative research.

The strengths of the Finnish youth policy field include the way in which researchers and research information are integrated into policy processes. As one of the Ministry of Education and Culture's youth work services and development centres, the Finnish Youth Research Network has a natural role in the monitoring of the programme. Other actors and networks may also contribute to research. A monitoring and evaluation plan will be prepared separately.

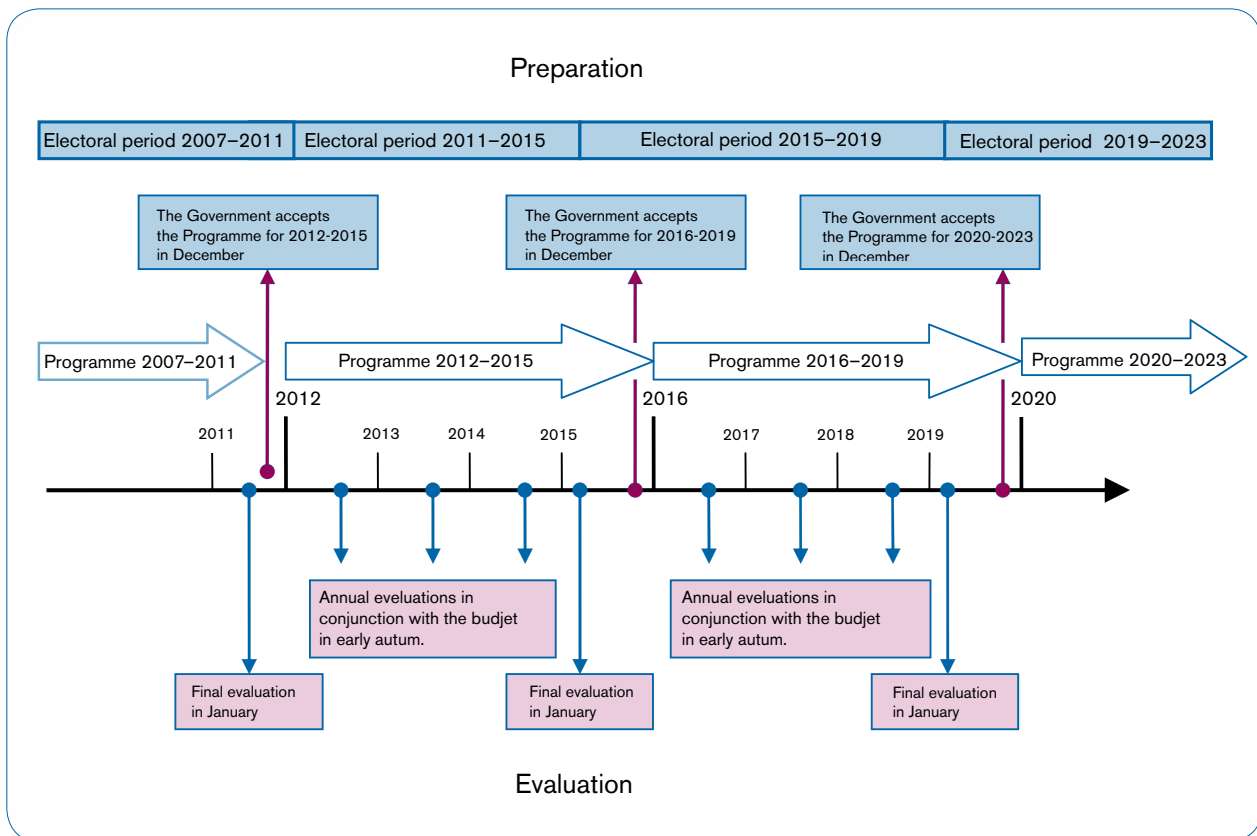


Figure 3. The preparation process of the Child and Youth Policy Programme.

55 Reports of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2011:3

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56 National indicators of young people's and young adults' living conditions and well-being, 9 June 2010

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Population by age (single year) and gender by region 1980–2010 [http://pxweb2.stat.fi/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=050\\_vaerak\\_tau\\_104\\_fi&path=./DATABASE/STATFIN/VRM/VAERAK/&lang=3&multilang=fi](http://pxweb2.stat.fi/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=050_vaerak_tau_104_fi&path=./DATABASE/STATFIN/VRM/VAERAK/&lang=3&multilang=fi)

Demographic dependency ratio by region 1980–2010 [http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2010/vaerak\\_2010\\_2011-03-18\\_tau\\_002\\_fi.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2010/vaerak_2010_2011-03-18_tau_002_fi.html)

### Other sources of information

Finnish Youth Research Society and Finnish Youth Research Network <http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/>

The Diverse Families network consists of organisations: <http://www.monimuotoisetperheet.fi/image/verkosto.html>

The Social Gateway <http://www.sosiaaliportti.fi/Page/fca86985-c592-4f7c-b400-4df97a8c9ccd.aspx>

Suomen Asiakastieto. Statistics and press releases. <http://www.asiakastieto.fi>

Union of Youth Councils in Finland <http://www.nuva.fi/Liitto/tabid/871/language/fi-FI/Default.aspx>

SOTKANet Statistics and Indicator Bank. National Institute for Health and Welfare. <http://uusi.sotkanet.fi/portal/page/portal/etusivu>

### Europe

Dashboard of indicators on youth  
European Commission > Eurostat > Employment and social policy, equality > Youth policy - The EU Youth strategy 2010–2018 > Dashboard of indicators on youth  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment\\_social\\_policy\\_equality/youth\\_policy/dashboard\\_youth](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/employment_social_policy_equality/youth_policy/dashboard_youth)

- Europe 2020 Strategy – Finland's Draft National Programme, Spring 2011  
[http://www.vm.fi/vm/fi/04\\_julkaisut\\_ja\\_asiakirjat/01\\_julkaisut/02\\_taloudelliset\\_katsaukset/20110406Europa/Eurooppa\\_2020\\_SUOMI.pdf](http://www.vm.fi/vm/fi/04_julkaisut_ja_asiakirjat/01_julkaisut/02_taloudelliset_katsaukset/20110406Europa/Eurooppa_2020_SUOMI.pdf)
- Child and youth participation in Finland: A Council of Europe policy review (2010)  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/participation/PolicyReview\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/participation/PolicyReview_en.pdf)
- ECHR – Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms  
<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=005&CL=ENG>
- ESC – the revised European Social Charter  
<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=66806>
- Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010–2018) (2009/C 311/01)  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:311:0001:0001:FI:PDF>
- Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe.  
 Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 25 November 2008. [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue\\_No13/N13\\_Resolution\\_23\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue_No13/N13_Resolution_23_en.pdf)
- Towards a European framework  
[http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingDetails\\_E.asp?ATID=11357](http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingDetails_E.asp?ATID=11357)

## United Nations

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
<http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67713>
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment  
<http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67689>
- Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth (A/RES/62/126)  
<http://www.unyouth.com/index.php/youth-programm-wpay>
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
<http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=67747>
- World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond WPAY (A/RES/50/81)  
<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/50/a50r081.htm>

- United Nations Millennium Declaration  
<http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>  
<http://www.formin.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=15321&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI>
- The concluding observations of the 57th session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning Finland's fourth periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child  
<http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=82628&GUID={08815486-C2F7-4348-A1DC-0985FA9542EC}>
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child  
<http://www.formin.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=68142>



**Appendix 1.**

**The divisions of measures by age and gender in the Child and Youth Policy Program.**

	0–6 yrs	7–12 yrs	13–17 yrs	18–24 yrs	25–29 yrs
Girls / Women	9	15	22	20	12
Boys / Men	8	14	24	20	15

Girls / Women					Boys / Men				
0–6 yrs	7–12 yrs	13–17 yrs	18–24 yrs	25–29 yrs	0–6 yrs	7–12 yrs	13–17 yrs	18–24 yrs	25–29 yrs
1.1	1.1	1.1	2.2	2.4	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.2	2.4
1.4	1.2	1.2	2.4	3.2	1.4	1.2	1.2	2.4	3.1
2.4	1.3	1.3	3.1	4.2	2.4	1.3	1.3	3.1	3.2
4.1	1.4	1.4	3.2	4.3	4.1	1.4	1.4	3.2	3.3
5.1	2.2	2.1	3.3	6.1	7.1	2.2	2.1	3.3	4.2
7.1	2.3	2.2	4.1	7.3	8.1	2.3	2.2	4.1	4.3
8.1	2.4	2.3	4.2	8.1	8.3	2.4	2.3	4.2	6.1
8.3	4.1	2.4	4.3	8.2	9.1	4.1	2.4	4.3	6.2
9.1	5.1	3.2	5.2	8.4		5.2	3.1	5.2	7.3
	5.2	4.1	5.3	8.5		5.3	3.2	5.3	8.1
	5.3	4.2	6.1	9.1		8.1	4.1	6.1	8.2
	8.1	4.3	6.2	9.2		8.3	4.2	6.2	8.4
	8.3	5.1	7.3			8.5	4.3	7.3	8.5
	8.5	5.2	8.1			9.1	5.2	8.1	9.1
	9.1	5.3	8.2				5.3	8.2	9.2
		7.1	8.3				6.2	8.3	
		7.3	8.4				7.1	8.4	
		8.1	8.5				7.2	8.5	
		8.2	9.1				7.3	9.1	
		8.3	9.2				8.1	9.2	
		8.5							
		9.1							

## Appendix 2.

**The divisions of measures in Child and Youth Policy Programme (resource guidance, information guidance and legal guidance) between the ministries.**

	RG	IG	LG
<b>PMO</b>		1.1	
<b>MFA</b>	1.2, 2.2, 2.4	1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 2.4	
<b>MJ</b>		1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.1, 5.2, 6.2, 9.1, 9.2	4.1, 6.2
<b>MI</b>	4.1	1.1, 4.1, 5.3, 8.3, 8.5, 9.1	
<b>MD</b>		1.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.3, 6.2, 8.1, 8.3, 8.5, 9.1, 9.2	
<b>MF</b>		1.1, 4.3, 6.2, 9.1	
<b>MEC</b>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 9.1, 9.2	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.1, 9.2	1.3, 3.3, 7.3
<b>MAF</b>	1.2, 2.4, 8.1	1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 2.4, 8.1, 8.3	
<b>MTC</b>	1.4	1.1, 1.4, 4.1, 5.3	
<b>MEE</b>	1.1, 3.1, 3.3, 6.2	1.1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 6.2, 7.2, 8.3, 8.4, 9.1	
<b>MSAH</b>	1.1, 1.4, 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3, 6.1, 6.2, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.1	1.1, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 9.1, 9.2	3.1, 8.5
<b>ME</b>	1.2, 6.1	1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 6.1, 8.1, 9.1	



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