

The National youth work and youth policy programme 2020–2023

Aiming to ensure a meaningful life and social inclusion for all young people

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The National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme 2020-2023.

Aiming to ensure a meaningful life and participation in society for all young people

Ministry of Education and Culture

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme (VANUPO) is a statutory, cross-sectoral programme adopted by the Finnish Government every four years. The aim of the programme is to improve the conditions young people live and grow in. One of the programme's main goals is to establish the youth policy perspective as part of public sector decision-making. VANUPO will help the effective use of resources from various sectors aimed at improving the conditions in which young people grow and live.</p> <p>The national programme includes all young people under the age of 29 as provided in the Youth Act. At the end of 2018, there were a total of 1.8 million people in this age category. However, the programme's priorities centre specifically on the core area of young people's lives meaning the development of the conditions in which young people between the ages of 12 and 25 grow and live.</p> <p>In accordance with the current Government Programme, VANUPO's main themes are the prevention of social exclusions and enhance inclusion and involvement. Social exclusion will be prevented more effectively by ensuring equal opportunities for a meaningful life for all youths. The programme includes three targets which will be used to achieve these goals: 1) Young people will have equal opportunities for a smooth everyday life – social exclusion will decrease; 2) Young people will have the means and skills for participating and influencing; 3) The safety capital of young people will grow.</p> <p>In addition to the Government's youth policy objectives and their related measures, VANUPO includes objectives for the youth sector's European and international activities and defines the priorities for the selection of Finland's national youth sector centres of excellence.</p>		
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Tiivistelmä	<p>Valtakunnallinen nuorisotyön ja –politiikan ohjelma VANUPO on lakisääteinen, valtioneuvoston nelivuotiskausittain hyväksymä poikkihallinnollinen ohjelma, jonka tavoitteena on edistää nuorten kasvu- ja elinoloja. Yksi VANUPO:n päätavoitteista on nuorisopoliittisen näkökulman juurruttaminen osaksi julkisen sektorin päätöksentekoa. VANUPO:n avulla tehostetaan nuorten kasvu- ja elinolojen parantamiseen käytettävien, eri toimialoilla olevien voimavarojen tuloksellista käyttöä.</p> <p>Valtakunnallinen ohjelma kattaa kaikki nuorisolain tarkoittamat alle 29-vuotiaat nuoret, joita oli Suomessa vuoden 2018 lopussa lähes 1,8 miljoonaa. Ohjelman painopisteet kuitenkin kohdistuvat erityisesti nuoruuden ydinalueeseen, eli noin 12-25-vuotiaiden nuorten kasvu- ja elinolojen kehittämiseen.</p> <p>Hallitusohjelman mukaisesti VANUPO:ssa on otettu pääteemoiksi nuorten syrjäytymisen ehkäisy ja osallisuuden vahvistaminen. Syrjäytymistä ehkäistään tehokkaimmin varmistamalla jokaiselle nuorelle merkityksellisen elämän edellytykset. Näitä päämääriä tavoitellaan ohjelmassa kolmen tavoitekokonaisuuden kautta: 1) Nuorella on edellytykset sujuvaan arkeen – syrjäytyminen vähenee; 2) Nuorella on keinot ja taidot osallistumiseen ja vaikuttamiseen; 3) Nuori luottaa yhteiskuntaan - yhdenvertaisuus ja turvallisuus vahvistuvat.</p> <p>Hallituksen nuorisopoliittisten tavoitteiden ja niihin liittyvien toimenpiteiden lisäksi VANUPO asettaa kansalliset tavoitteet nuorisoalan eurooppalaiselle ja kansainväliselle toiminnalle sekä määrittelee painopisteet valtakunnallisten nuorisoalan osaamiskeskuksen valinnalle.</p>	
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Referat	<p>Det riksomfattande programmet för ungdomsarbete och ungdomspolitik (RUNGPO) är ett lagstadgat sektorsövergripande program som godkänns av statsrådet för en fyraårsperiod i sänder. Syftet med programmet är att främja de ungas uppväxt- och levnadsvillkor. Ett av de huvudsakliga målen i programmet är att förankra det ungdomspolitiska perspektivet i beslutsfattandet inom den offentliga sektorn. Med hjälp av programmet effektiviseras den resultatrika användningen av resurserna inom olika sektorer för att förbättra de ungas uppväxt- och levnadsförhållanden.</p> <p>Det riksomfattande programmet omfattar alla unga under 29 år som avses i ungdomslagen och som i slutet av 2018 uppgick till närmare 1,8 miljoner personer i Finland. Prioriteringarna i programmet gäller dock i synnerhet kärnområdet för ungdomen, dvs. utveckling av uppväxt- och levnadsförhållandena för unga i åldern 12–25 år.</p> <p>I enlighet med regeringsprogrammet har förebyggande av utslagning bland unga och stärkande av delaktigheten tagits in som huvudtema i ungdomsprogrammet. Utslagning förebyggs effektivast genom att man säkerställer förutsättningarna för ett meningsfullt liv för varje ung person. Dessa mål eftersträvas genom programmets tre målhelheter: 1) Unga har förutsättningar för en smidig vardag – utslagningen minskar, 2) Unga har metoder och färdigheter för att delta och påverka, 3) Unga litar på samhället – jämlikheten och tryggheten stärks.</p> <p>Utöver regeringens ungdomspolitiska mål och åtgärder i anslutning till dem ställer programmet upp nationella mål för den europeiska och internationella verksamheten på ungdomsområdet samt fastställer prioriteringarna för valet av riksomfattande kompetenscentrum på ungdomsområdet.</p>	
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1 Introduction

The national youth work and youth policy programme (VANUPO) is a statutory cross-administrative programme adopted by the Government every four years with the aim of improving the conditions in which young people live and grow. In this programme, the Government defines its youth policy objectives and the measures for attaining them. In addition, it sets out the policies for youth work, including the priorities of national youth work centres of expertise as well as the national objectives for European and international activities in the youth field. The programme is adopted as a Government resolution.

The Youth Act (1285/2016) currently in force forms the legal basis for the National youth work and youth policy programme. The provisions on this programme laid down in section 5 of the Youth Act are supplemented by the Government Decree on Youth Work and Policy (211/2017), which entered into force on 13 April 2017. The programme's contents were also informed by the Government's policies relevant to young people. The programme for the period 2020-2023 is the second of its kind.

Pursuant to the Youth Act, **youth work** refers to supporting young people in their growth, path to independence and social inclusion, while **youth policy** refers to improving young people's living conditions as well as interaction between generations. Youth policy comprises actions targeting different age groups under 29 years.

One of the main objectives of the National youth work and youth policy programme is to mainstream the perspective of youth policy in public sector decision-making. Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government Programme, 'An inclusive and competent Finland', provides the premise and framework for the programme. The current Government Programme contains an exceptionally extensive range of youth policy themes and measures.

The National youth work and youth policy programme is the Government's instrument for implementing, and ensuring the cross-administrative implementation of, the youth policy objectives contained in the Government Programme. In particular, the National youth work and youth policy programme focuses on those objectives whose attainment will require

cross-administrative implementation. For this reason, it does not contain all the individual measures targeting young people implemented in different administrative branches.

In line with the Government Programme, the key themes of the National youth work and youth policy programme are preventing social exclusion and strengthening inclusion among young people. The most effective means for preventing social exclusion is ensuring the preconditions for a meaningful life for all young people. The programme aims to achieve these goals through three key objectives:

- Young people will have the preconditions for smoothly running daily lives – Social exclusion will be reduced
- Young people will have the means and skills for participation and exerting influence
- Young people will trust in society – Non-discrimination and security will be strengthened

1.1 Purpose and structure of the programme

The National youth work and youth policy programme VANUPO comprises three sections. Firstly, its statutory mandate is to coordinate the youth policy objectives and measures, which have been defined by the ministries with a key influence on the conditions in which young people live and grow, and through which these ministries contribute to the attainment of the objectives laid down in section 2 of the Youth Act during the programme period. Secondly, the programme sets the national objectives of European and international activities in the youth field. The third section of the programme concerns the development of youth work. It contains the policies on supporting youth work and youth activities as well as the priorities related to eligibility for government aid of youth work centres of expertise referred to in section 19 of the Youth Act. The youth work centres of expertise are the Ministry of Education and Culture's instrument for developing youth work and responding to its current needs.

When implementing the National youth work and youth policy programme, it will be important to identify and take into account numerous other programmes and cross-cutting operating policies of the Government, including the Equality Programme currently under preparation, the Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation, and the Programme to Address Reform in Child and Family Services. The consistency of the Democracy Programme and the Housing Policy Programme, which are both currently being prepared, with the National youth work and youth policy programme will also be ensured. A comprehensive summary of the programmes and operating policies that

must be taken into account when implementing the National youth work and youth policy programme was put together in form of a situational picture of the conditions in which young people live and grow. (Appendix 1: National youth work and youth policy programme 2020–2023 - Overview of young people's growth and living conditions)

The national youth work and youth policy programme concerns all young people aged under 29 as referred to in the Youth Act. However, the programme's priorities focus on improving the living conditions of the core group of young people, or those between the ages of 12 and 25. As stated in the Government Programme, a parliamentary committee will be appointed to prepare a national strategy for children during this government term. The strategy will formulate a vision for a child and family-friendly Finland that spans government terms and crosses the boundaries of administrative branches. The strategy will be based on information and research evidence, and it will promote the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Finland. The national youth work and youth policy programme and the child strategy will support and supplement one another; the national youth work and youth policy programme will have a particular focus on the period during which a young person gains independence, while the child strategy focuses on young people under the age of 18.

1.2 Preparation of the programme

In line with its mandate, the preparation of the National youth work and youth policy programme was directed by the Ministerial Working Group on Child and Youth Policy, which saw to the political steering of the programme process. The members of the Ministerial Working Group are:

Minister of Science and Culture Hanna Kosonen (chair),
 Minister of Family Affairs and Social Services Krista Kiuru,
 Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Krista Mikkonen,
 Minister of Social Affairs and Health Aino-Kaisa Pekonen, as well as
 Minister for Nordic Cooperation and Equality Thomas Blomqvist.

The National youth work and youth policy programme was prepared by a cross-administrative working group of public servants appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The working group's tasks also include monitoring the implementation of the programme throughout its period of validity.

At the time of the Government's midterm review, the ministerial working group will assess the implementation of the programme and, based on this review, issue proposals to the Government on revisions to the programme if necessary.

The preparation of the programme was launched on 19 June 2019, and a large group of representatives of authorities and NGOs took part in this event titled 'Towards a new VANUPO 2020–2023'. As part of its statutory tasks, the State Youth Council issued a statement on the issues to be included in the programme on 6 June 2019. An open Webropol survey on the content and target groups of the programme was available between 1 July and 15 August 2019. A total of 1,890 young people from 104 different locations were consulted directly during the preparation process. The young people who participated in the consultation were aged between 11 and 29. The consultations took place in schools, educational institutions and youth facilities, during recreational and NGO activities, at youth workshops, libraries, shopping centres and one-stop guidance centres (Ohjaamo service points) as well as using electronic channels. The young people who were interviewed represented speakers of 18 different mother tongues. The interviews were conducted by 120 students from the HUMAK University of Applied Sciences in September 2019.

Consultations on the draft programme were organised between 14 October and 4 November 2019. For more information about the consultations of young people and key youth work and youth policy actors related to programme preparation as well as the results of these consultations, see Appendix 2 (Appendix 2: Consultation of young people and key actors in youth work and youth policy during the preparation of the National youth work and youth policy programme 2020-2023).

2 The Government's youth policy objectives and measures

The National youth work and youth policy programme coordinates the measures implemented by the ministries playing a key role for young people's growth and living conditions through which these ministries will contribute to attaining the objectives laid down in section 2 of the Youth Act (1285/2016) during the programme period. The purpose of the Youth Act is to 1) promote the social inclusion of young people and provide them with opportunities for exerting an influence and improve their skills and capabilities to function in society; 2) support the growth, independence and sense of community of young people and facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and adoption of skills necessary for this purpose; 3) support young people's free-time pursuits and engagement in civic society; 4) promote non-discrimination and equality among young people and the realisation of their rights; and 5) improve young people's growth and living conditions. The guiding principles for the attainment of these objectives are 1) solidarity, cultural diversity and internationality, 2) sustainable development, healthy lifestyles and respect for life and the environment; and 3) cross-sectoral cooperation.

The National youth work and youth policy programme will promote the effective use of resources available in different sectors for improving the conditions in which young people live and grow. Rather than on individual measures in specific administrative branches, the programme focuses on broad youth policy issues whose resolution requires seamless, consistent and coherent work by different branches of administration.

Taking into account the youth policy objectives and measures included in the Government Programme as well as the work carried out within the framework of the Government's other strategies and programmes, the Government has specified three sets of youth policy objectives to be implemented for 2020–2023:

- Young people will have the prerequisites for smoothly running daily lives – Social exclusion will be reduced
- Young people will have the means and skills for participation and exerting influence
- Young people will have trust in society – Non-discrimination and security will be strengthened

The implementation of the measures contained in the programme starts from Finland's status as a bilingual country. When implementing the programme, young people's different backgrounds (including ethnic origin, language, gender and functional capacity) will be addressed, and the realisation of equal opportunities for all young people will be promoted. A gender impact assessment will be carried out as part of planning the implementation of the measures.

2.1 Young people will have the prerequisites for smoothly running daily lives – Social exclusion will be reduced

The smooth running of young people's daily lives will be improved by guaranteeing access to education and employment for them, by ensuring that they have financial security and the skills to manage their finances, and by supporting their mental health. The most effective means for preventing social exclusion is ensuring the preconditions for a meaningful life for all young people.

✓ The Youth Guarantee will secure young people's access to education and employment

As stated in the Government Programme, all young people aged under 25 years of age and all graduates under 30 years of age will be guaranteed a job or work trial, traineeship, workshop, apprenticeship or rehabilitation placement no later than three months into the period of unemployment.

At one-stop guidance centres (Ohjaamo service points), in outreach youth work and youth workshop activities as well as in other services intended for young people there are many young people in challenging life situations who are lagging behind others in their capabilities for coping independently in working life; with appropriate help, however, their rehabilitation may progress rapidly, and they can find their feet. Key challenges encountered by young people include lack of self-confidence, social anxiety, loneliness, lack of prospects and unidentified learning difficulties. When prolonged, these problems may even lead to incapacity for work.

Measures:

- Within the scope of the Youth Guarantee, the services in which young people in challenging life situations are encountered will be strengthened. By developing the one-stop guidance centre services (Ohjaamo service points), opportunities for providing face-to-face support will be increased as part of the Youth Guarantee. The mainstreaming of Onni model for psychosocial support as a basic service at Ohjaamo service points will be continued.
- The Ohjaamo service point network will be developed and strengthened further.
- In the context of the Youth Guarantee, information flows between the authorities will be ensured in Government-level coordination of measures and projects. Close cooperation, in particular between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Education and Culture, will ensure the attainment of this objective.
- The need to attain the objectives of the youth guarantee will be taken into account in service structure reforms.

Target group: Young people under the age of 25 and graduates under the age of 30.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Ministry of Education and Culture

Indicators: Duration of unemployment periods of young people in the Youth Guarantee's target group. Flow to unemployment of more than three months.

 **Young people's needs, services and benefits will be identified and taken into consideration in the overhaul of social security**

The Finnish social security system consists of benefits and services that secure a livelihood for everyone. The aim of the social security reform is to guarantee predictable security for people at different life stages and when life situations change.

The key objective of the social security reform is to improve the interlinkage of benefits and services and to ensure flexible and timely access to them. Social security should support young people's inclusion, agency, functional capacity, education, training and employment as well as respond to their need to experience their lives as meaningful. One of the reform's objectives should be ensuring that as few young people as possible are forced to rely on the last-resort benefit, or social assistance, for an extended period. This reform will span two parliamentary terms.

Measures:

- When reforming social security, young people's specific needs arising from their stage of life will be addressed.
- A cross-cutting overall examination of service and benefit packages will be carried out as part of the social security reform.
- The aims of the reform also include reducing long-term reliance on social assistance among young people.
- An effort will be made to ensure young people's commitment to education, training or employment by taking into consideration any needs for special support or other special arrangements they may have.

Target group: young people under the age of 29.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health,

In cooperation with: Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, [Ministry of Finance]

Indicators: Will be determined as part of the social security reform

✓ **Young people's mental health will be supported**

The greatest share of health problems among young people are caused by mental health and substance abuse disorders. They are a significant risk factor for social exclusion and long-term unemployment. Many mental health disorders typically emerge in young people aged between 13 and 22. Three out of four mental health disorders emerge before the age of 25. It has been estimated that 20 to 25 per cent of young people have some mental health disorder. Preventive mental health and substance abuse work, recognising the early symptoms of emerging disorders as well as treating minor and moderate mental health or substance abuse problems are part of every healthcare professional's work in student healthcare. However, there are shortcomings in the availability of services and the 'culture of referral' continues, meaning that students are directed from student healthcare to some other service point. When this happens, there is a great risk of the student falling in the gap between services and not receiving the services they need. It is thus extremely important that the primary care of students with mental health disorders is organised as part of student healthcare in the municipalities and potentially the counties in the future.

The new mental health strategy emphasises the fact that the foundation of a person's mental health is built in their childhood and adolescence. The environment in which young people grow and study should support mental health and provide them with an opportunity for positive development of their psychological resources. The policies outlined in the strategy include ensuring sufficient resources for and cooperation between

professional groups at maternity and child health clinics, in pupil and student welfare (which includes school and student healthcare) as well as other primary level services for children and young people.

Measures:

- Ensuring that schools recognise needs for support related to mental health and substance abuse disorders and have the capacity to provide sufficient emergency care and possibly guide the child or young person to further treatment, enabling young people to obtain timely help for their problems without thresholds or delays
- Adopting effective methods for early intervention in young people’s mental health disorders in schools and educational institutions
- Ensuring that young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) also have access to the psychosocial and everyday support services they need close to their living and operating environment, for example by developing multiprofessional Ohjaamo service points. A follow-up project of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare will create models and recommendations for primary level mental health work and cooperation between various services for young people excluded from education, employment and training.
- Ensuring that young people whose functional capacity is diminished because of an illness have opportunities for participating in education and training as far as their resources will admit. Expanding and mainstreaming operating models that improve study and working life skills and promote participation in the world of work.
- Utilising and developing digital services and ensuring easy access to them, for example by developing cooperation between public social and health services and the third sector
- Ensuring sufficient resources for recognising substance abuse problems and for preventive substance abuse work, enabling young people to obtain adequate support and treatment for their problems at an early stage
- Improving the availability of psychotherapy or psychosocial methods (both treatment and preventive measures) in primary healthcare and pupil and student welfare. On the wider scale of the entire service system, a cooperation structure with other authorities, NGOs and other municipal sectors is needed.
- Supporting young people who are experiencing mental strain or stress in their lives. This includes young people whose parents,

guardians or close family members have illnesses, and young people in a vulnerable position or life situation.

Target group: Young people between the ages of 12 and 29.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

In cooperation with: Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, local governments, Finnish Student Health Service, NGOs

Indicators: Use of specialised psychiatric care, personnel numbers in school and student healthcare services and pupil and student welfare, the School Health Promotion study, the Finnish Student Health and Wellbeing Survey (KOTT)

✓ **After-care for young people who have been clients of child welfare services will be developed to ensure sufficient and appropriate support on their journey to adulthood**

Under the legislation in force, the purpose of after-care in child welfare services is to support a child or young person when they return home from substitute care or are becoming independent. As from 1 January 2020, a child welfare client's right to after-care will be extended from the current age of 21 until the young person turns 25. Gaining independence after substitute care is a critical phase during which young people often need holistic support. Every young person must have future prospects, a meaningful path to follow and the tools needed to make progress towards education and employment. Young people approaching adulthood should be provided with help that responds to their needs in such areas as housing, education, transitioning to working life and income. In order to find an overall solution that serves the best interests of a young person and to fight social exclusion successfully, a new form of comprehensive and coordinated cooperation between different sectors is needed, rather than fragmented services provided by different administrative branches.

Measure:

- Child welfare clients' after-care services for young people who are approaching adulthood or who have already turned 18 will be reformed in line with the Government Programme, with the aim of providing a completely new type of multidisciplinary support for reaching adulthood.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health,

In cooperation with: Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment,

Ministry of the Environment Indicators: Will be determined later.

✓ **Multi-professional cooperation and especially youth work will be strengthened in general education and vocational education and training**

The wellbeing of young people is a prerequisite for learning, while learning promotes the wellbeing of children and young people diversely. By intensifying multi-professional cooperation, schools can support young people's wellbeing, learning and school satisfaction, reinforce their positive self-image, support a sense of community in learning environments, and prevent factors leading to social exclusion in their lives.

By promoting good mental health, the resources that help young people build smoothly running daily lives and also find solutions when encountering crises and setbacks can be strengthened. Factors threatening young people's mental health and independent agency include poor self-confidence, social anxiety, loneliness, bullying, discrimination and substance abuse as well as stress related to their studies.

The proportion of people between the ages of 20 and 29 who have not completed a secondary qualification has not decreased notably in the 2000s; in 2017, their share was 16.4 per cent. Reasons for dropping out may include having selected the wrong field of study, shortcomings in guidance counselling, inadequate study skills, health-related reasons, personal difficulties, problems with motivation, lack of suitable educational opportunities, employment prospects in the chosen field, as well as entering the job market before finishing the studies. Dropping out of education and training may be a reason for social exclusion, or a consequence of the development that leads to social exclusion. Some cities have stepped up cooperation between their educational services and youth services as a possible solution to this problem. Specialised youth work carried out in educational institutions can substantially improve students' wellbeing and coping in everyday life as well as support their progress in their studies. Increased wellbeing improves student satisfaction and is apt to reduce the incidence of dropping out.

Measures:

- The Ministry of Education and Culture will develop measures for reinforcing multiprofessional cooperation in general education and vocational education and training. These measures will be implemented in connection with the Government Programme's action plans on quality and equality. The measures will contribute to supporting the Government Programme's objectives of strengthening the services provided by educational institutions and student welfare services so that young people receive the support they need; to fostering educational institutions' cooperation with

- local authorities and third sector actors; and to strengthening low threshold support services for children, young people and families.
- In addition, communal school culture at educational institutions will be reinforced, and the pupils' and students' roles and opportunities to exert influence in the school community will be strengthened.
 - Within the framework of the programme for developing the quality and equality of basic education 2020–2022, the ministry will carry out a project on a multiprofessional operating model with the particular aim of strengthening youth work in schools. The project will draw on existing research, experience and knowledge related to the benefits of cooperation between youth work and schools and develop good practices in order to strengthen, disseminate and mainstream multi-professional cooperation. The project will in particular focus on youth work carried out in schools with the aim of improving young people's wellbeing, school satisfaction, educational equality and a sense of community in educational institutions and, in particular, preventing development that leads to social exclusion. The project to be carried out in vocational education and training will develop and disseminate nationally models for cooperation between youth work and educational institutions that will support student wellbeing and be suitable for different types of municipalities. Studies will be conducted to measure the effectiveness of these activities.
 - One of the project's priorities will be reaching out to and providing support for pupils with an immigrant background and their families.
 - Mental health awareness and skills will be increased in schools. Mental health skills and the development of confidence in children and young people will be strengthened by building knowledge of good practices, investing in training related to work methods that improve mental health skills, and by influencing the school culture in general education.
 - Adequate resources for mental health work in pupil and student welfare and in school and student healthcare as well as coordinated cooperation between professional groups will be ensured.

Target group: The development project is targeted at general education grades 5 to 9, with secondary school pupils aged 13 to 16 as well as young people in vocational education and training as a priority.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Education and Culture

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finnish National Agency for Education, youth sector actors, local governments, basic education providers, vocational education and training providers, and education and youth field organisations

Indicators: The impact of the measures will be monitored in connection with more extensive monitoring of a project aiming to develop quality and equality in basic education. The objective will be clarifying the goal-setting for multi-professional cooperation, clearly increasing the use of multi-professional cooperation in municipalities, and developing a monitoring system. A follow-up study will be carried out to determine the impact of the measures in vocational education and training.

✓ **Young people's capabilities for independent living will improve and the incidence of youth homelessness will decrease**

Young people are one of the target groups of a cooperation programme aiming to halve homelessness. The programme will strive to ensure that young people have access to adequate and affordable housing and the support they may need for living independently, including advice on housing-related matters. Young people need different types of housing options.

Measures:

- As stated in the Government Programme, the Ministry of the Environment will launch a new cooperation programme to halve homelessness. The plans implemented by the participating cities must address the housing situation of young people (the necessary housing units and support).
- The availability of advice and guidance related to housing will be improved. Young people will be a priority in expanding advice and guidance to cover all housing forms.
- Ohjaamo service points have worked together with the Finnish Youth Housing Association to develop advice and guidance related to housing which are intended specifically for young people. Ohjaamo service points will continue to work on young people's housing issues.
- In keeping with the Government Programme, government-subsidised production of affordable housing and, in particular, the construction of youth and student housing will be promoted. Different types of housing options must be available for young people.

Target group: young people in the 18-25 age group

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of the Environment

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, local governments

Indicators: Number of homeless young people, number of available youth and student housing units, addressing young people's needs in agreements made with the cities participating in the programme

✓ **Young people have an opportunity to participate in a hobby they enjoy**

Hobbies offer young people opportunities for social interaction, self-expression and inspiring and motivating leisure activities. Hobbies enable young people to maintain friendships, benefit from personal development, pursue their dreams and find their strengths as well as participate in meaningful and relaxing activities. A study on children's and young people's leisure activities, a school survey and the Youth Barometer survey indicate that 70 to 90 per cent of young people have at least one hobby.

Measures:

- A diverse package of measures, the Finnish model, will be implemented to support young people's participation in hobbies to guarantee opportunities for recreational activities for children and young people. Special attention will be paid to offering activities that are free of charge or affordable and to reaching those young people who have no hobbies as well as to ensuring that opportunities for recreational activities are also available during the school day. Reducing the gender bias will be emphasised as part of promoting participation in hobbies.
- A national programme based on the Valtti model, which supports special needs children's physical activity, will be implemented. The target group for this programme will be young people who are at risk of being excluded from hobbies due to such reasons as their disability, place of residence, ethnic origin or financial situation. The programme includes individual guidance on finding a suitable hobby, supported low threshold trials, and personal assistants who accompany young people during trials and when starting a new hobby.
- The implementation of the Activity Pass will be supported. The Activity Pass for young people at higher comprehensive school age allows the users to try out different recreational activities, for example a starter course in a sport or photography, and benefit

from free services, such as tickets for public transport, the cinema or events.

- A national hobby week conceived by young people will be organised in cooperation with the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the Finnish Olympic Committee and national organisations for recreational activities.
- Trials of new types of instructor-led activities will be made available in which digital media and technology will be used as a tool, content or the operating environment.

Target group: young people in the 13-25 age group

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Education and Culture

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, sport and youth organisations, arts and culture sector actors as well as local governments
Indicators: Study of young people's leisure activities, the School Survey

✓ **Getting a grip on finances through proactive financial guidance**

The indebtedness and insolvency of households have increased both in Finland and in many other EU Member States in the 2000s. The causal relationships between excessive debt and social exclusion are complex. Deprivation causes over-indebtedness, while prolonged over-indebtedness increases the risk of burnout, falling ill or social exclusion and has a negative impact on employment and participation in civic activities.

The Ministry of Justice and the National Administrative Office for Enforcement have worked together to plan and implement operating models for stakeholder cooperation that will also help young people manage their personal finances while reducing the risk of over-indebtedness. The proactive financial guidance project will run from 2019 to 2021. Young people will be reached especially by working together with social services and the Criminal Sanctions Agency. The aim of the proactive financial guidance project is to improve financial guidance given to clients by various parties.

Measures:

- The project will strengthen cross-administrative cooperation between various authorities and the third sector in the prevention of spiralling debt, develop citizens' economic knowledge and financial management skills in various age groups, and improve access to help for over-indebtedness.
- Providing the right service at the right time to the client will be emphasised in the project activities. Stakeholder cooperation will

make it possible to reach clients extensively at the national and regional level.

- Operating models will be devised and developed in active cooperation with personnel of the enforcement authorities as well as financial and debt guidance services and stakeholders. Stakeholder cooperation will be launched with social services and the Criminal Sanctions Agency. As the project progresses, this cooperation will be expanded to also include other authorities and third sector actors.
- The project will involve goal-oriented exertion of influence and share proven operating models with other actors.
- Young people will be reached especially by working together with social services and the Criminal Sanctions Agency. As the activities expand, young people under the age of 30 will also be reached through other stakeholders.

Target group: With regard to young people, the project's focus group is those aged under 29. Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Justice

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, National Administrative Office for Enforcement, Criminal Sanctions Agency, local governments and organisations. As the project progresses, cooperation will also be expanded to other stakeholders.

Indicators: Events to be organised, numbers and ages of their participants as well as their impact, feedback questionnaires.

2.2 Young people have the means and the skills for participation and exerting influence

The knowledge capital of young people will be improved through democracy and human rights education in schools and educational institutions while aiming for more broad-based participation in other opportunities to exert influence. A precondition for ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to participate and exert influence is that young people's inputs are recognised and acknowledged as part of decision-making.

✓ **Tools that will facilitate young people's civic participation will be developed**

Young people have the right to participate and be heard in matters that concern them. However, this right is not always realised in all decision-making and legislative drafting. Especially for those young people who belong to ethnic, language and cultural minorities, who are disabled or who are not in education, employment or training, civic engagement and exertion of influence are associated with challenges from the perspective of equality.

The Ministry of Justice will launch a cross-administrative national democracy programme, which will extend till 2025 and serve as an umbrella for various ministries' democracy projects. Some of the measures aiming to promote the consultation and participation of young people outlined in the democracy programme will be implemented within the framework of the National youth work and youth policy programme.

Measures:

- Opportunities for diverse and effective participation and means of direct democracy intended for young people will be actively promoted (including user democracy, citizens' panels, interviews with residents in municipalities, youth councils, online councils and participatory budgeting).
- Local and regional governments will be encouraged to take their local youth councils more extensively into account in local and regional decision-making, to develop the capacity and methods of groups of young influencers together with young people, and to offer training to influencer group members. Influencer groups will also be encouraged to broaden their participation base, providing young people in groups at risk of discrimination with better opportunities for taking part in these activities.
- Cooperation with young people, organisations that work with young people, and other key stakeholders will be relied on to determine what new tools and methods could be developed to promote the consultation of young people, how the use of existing public consultation methods and tools (including electronic democracy services) could be made more efficient, and how they could be reformed, in particular to promote the consultation of young people. The need to use plain language in systems and methods will be taken into consideration. Special attention will be focused on accessibility in the development of electronic services as well as on existing knowledge in ways in which young people wish to exert influence and the technology they prefer to use.

- Different methods for consulting young people will be tested and developed in the Government’s strategy, development and legislative projects, especially in areas that are important for young people’s future (in addition to climate, for example education and working life issues). The results of recent studies and experiments will be utilised in the consultations.
- A national training programme on civic engagement and exertion of influence intended for young people with an immigrant background will be implemented, drawing on the experiences of the Make some noise network. The aim of the training programme will be to make the voices of immigrant youths heard in society and, in particular, in decision-making and the media. On the basis of the experiences gained from the training programme, an effort will be made to model training programmes suitable for other groups of young people, such as those with disabilities or functional capacity limitations.

Target group: Focus on young people between the ages of 13 and 29. Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Justice

In cooperation with: Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), Advisory Board for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (VANE), local governments, counties and organisations.

Indicators: Will be determined later on.

✓ **Democracy and human rights education at schools and educational institutions will be enhanced**

Under the National core curricula, democracy and human rights are to be discussed not only in certain subjects but also as part of the entire school’s operating culture. Research indicates that teachers’ competence levels in human rights education vary at present. The education also relies on individual teachers being active, and it is not linked to the legal basis of human rights. Improving democracy and human rights education is of key importance for promoting the inclusion of young people, strengthening their interest in active citizenship, and supporting their communication skills in an increasingly pluralistic society.

Measures:

- The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Justice will launch a project to improve democracy and human rights education in schools and educational institutions, which will support the implementation of the Government Programme's policy on launching a cross-administrative democracy programme extending until 2025. The project will support the implementation of the curriculum in order to reinforce young people's inclusion and to mainstream good practices nationally.
- New means for supporting young people's inclusion and new approaches to supporting their sense of community will be developed in schools and educational institutions; interaction between civil society and schools and educational institutions will be strengthened; children's and young people's ability to exert influence in their local environment and more extensively in society will be supported; and their growth into active citizens will be promoted.
- Special attention must be paid to pupils' and students' equal opportunities to take part in the development of their school's or educational institution's activities, for example through pupil and student bodies.
- The teaching staff's ability to support inclusion and a sense of community as well as democracy and human rights education will be reinforced as part of the in-service training of early childhood education and care and education personnel.

Target group: Focus is on upper comprehensive school pupils and secondary level students

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Education and Culture

In cooperation with: Ministry of Justice, Finnish National Agency for Education, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, local governments, civil society, schools, educational institutions, Regional State Administrative Agencies as well as student bodies.

Indicators: Will be determined later on.

✓ Young people's voices will be heard in the climate change debate

It is estimated that one out of four Finns actively feel concerned over climate change, and young people are the age group experiencing the greatest level of concern. It is important that climate anxiety is channelled into activities aiming to mitigate climate change, rather than causing despondency. The central government must support young people's opportunities to participate in the debate on climate change and in the planning and implementation of climate change mitigation actions. These activities must be supported nationally as well as at the level of cities and municipalities, and they must concern topics that are relevant to young people.

Measures:

- In particular, young people's opportunities to participate in the preparation and implementation of the climate policy planning system referred to in the Climate Act will be promoted. The planning system will pay particular attention to young people's viewpoint (including consumption, the transport sector).
- As the Climate Act reform is being drafted, new tools for consultation specifically intended for young people will be piloted.
- The provision of correct climate information will be stepped up. As part of the Municipal Climate Solutions programme, the planning of a materials package on operating models for climate change mitigation and adaptation in municipalities will be launched. Young people will be taken into consideration as a specific group in its procurement.
- In 2020, proposals on reducing the carbon footprint, especially those put forward by young people, will be promoted on the Kokeilun paikka ("Place to Experiment") platform funded by the Ministry of the Environment.
- Young people's representation in the Global Roundtable on Climate Change will be secured. The idea behind the Roundtable is to ensure society's broad-based involvement in climate actions and the commitment of various stakeholders in society to shared climate targets. The Global Roundtable on Climate Change provides stakeholders with a channel for taking part in national preparation of climate actions.
- Dialogue will be supported with those working with young people on how young people's agency in climate matters can be promoted and reinforced through existing participation mechanisms, including municipal youth and education services and the web service nuortenideat.fi.

- Possibilities for emission-free mobility, such as walking and cycling, will be supported and promoted among young people. The coordination of transport and land use, sustainable urban planning and servification of transport will be promoted, especially in urban subregions (for example, through the MAL agreements between the central government and municipalities on land use, housing and transport).
- The entire educational system and, in particular, the possibilities provided by curricula and qualification requirements, will be used to guarantee each learner of any age up-to-date and justified information on climate change and its impacts. Teachers will be offered in-service training on this topic area.
- Education providers will be encouraged to follow the principles of sustainable development and set an example for how educational institutions can take ecological, economic and social sustainability perspectives into account in their continuous operation. Good practices related to sustainable development will be shared nationally.

Target group: Children and young people from early childhood education and care age to 29 years
Coordinating ministry: Ministry of the Environment

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture, agencies and, in particular, Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency and Finnish Transport and Communications Agency, local governments and Finnish National Agency for Education

Indicators: Including in the Youth Barometer questions about climate anxiety and the ways in which young people feel they are involved in climate policy. Monitoring of indicators that measure increases in walking and cycling. Monitoring the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development's indicator for young people's faith in the future.

2.3 Young people will have trust in society – Non-discrimination and security will be strengthened

A precondition for a meaningful life is that young people have trust in society and their own future. Security will be improved by such means as promoting the equality of young people, strengthening young people's social competence, sense of community and inclusion as well as improving young people's capabilities for taking action in situations that involve discrimination. By intervening in bullying, we can provide every young person with the opportunity to grow up in peace. Young people's trust and sense of security can be built by developing children's and young people's interaction and emotional skills, through structures that support non-discrimination and equality, and through cooperation between different actors.

✓ Improving young people's interpersonal and interaction skills and intervening in bullying

Young people's interpersonal and interaction skills lay the foundation on which mutual trust, a sense of community and a sense of security are built. Mutual trust between people is also a prerequisite for trust in institutions. The development of interpersonal and interaction skills already begins in early childhood, and for this reason they must be supported at all levels of education from early childhood education and care to higher education.

Assessment of gender and equality impacts help recognise and eliminate discriminatory structures and select effective measures for promoting non-discrimination. Equality and sex education must be stepped up, ensuring that all young people recognise their and other people's right to physical integrity. Schools and educational institutions as well as other actors must work together.

Bullying at school or in leisure time is part of daily life for thousands of children and young people. For quite some time, efforts have been made to intervene in bullying at schools and educational institutions through various programmes and action plans (including The KiVa School antibullying project). After school and the Internet, hobbies are the third most common environment in which young people experience bullying. Children and young people in minority groups experience bullying considerably more often than others.


Measures:

- The action plan against bullying and loneliness to be drawn up in accordance with the Government Programme will take into account the bullying experienced by young people in different environments
- A communal operating culture at educational institutions will be reinforced, and competence related to a sense of community and interpersonal and interaction skills will be strengthened among school and educational institution staff, pupils and students
- Bullying in leisure time will be intervened in through cooperation between young people, NGOs and actors responsible for municipal leisure time activities
- In measures to tackle bullying, special attention will be focused on protecting young people in minority groups and of different genders from bullying
- In line with the Government Programme, steps will be taken to improve sex education in order to support young people's physical integrity and to advance their emotional skills.

Target group: Focus on young people in the 12–25 age group
Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Education and Culture

In cooperation with: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finnish National Agency for Education, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, local governments, NGOs, schools, educational institutions, Regional State Administrative Agencies

Indicators: School Health Promotion study, Study of young people's leisure activities

 **Discriminatory structures will be identified, and young people's ability to take action in situations in which they experience discrimination will be increased**

Studies indicate that particular groups of young people experiencing discrimination are the Roma, those with an immigrant background or disabilities as well as members of sexual or gender minorities. Roma youths encounter prejudice and discrimination in many areas of life. Examples of this include bullying at school, difficulties in finding traineeships places and jobs as well as harassment and hate speech in different daily situations. In the light of the most recent research and experience, discrimination in the field of sports and physical activity hampers the participation and attachment to sports clubs of young people who belong to a minority group.

Together with NGOs, the Ministry of Justice has been running a campaign titled Discrimination-free Zone for the last ten years. While equality and non-discrimination

plans have been introduced to prevent discrimination in the youth field, their concrete impacts are difficult to measure. Particularly active work to implement the campaign is carried out in the youth work sector and in educational institutions. The Ministry of Justice's objective is to continue maintaining and developing the campaign, thus providing concrete tools for non-discrimination work among young people. In the sports and physical activity sector, the campaign has so far been implemented mainly in sports federations and sports and exercise facilities. The objective is to expand the campaign to the club level, in particular. Among other things, the campaign can help promote non-discrimination and safety in youth and sports facilities.

Tackling the discrimination targeted at Roma youths in numerous different ways is important. It is also important for Roma youths to recognise situations in which they are discriminated against and to be aware of the existing legal remedies so that they have the ability to report these situations and receive the support they need. A key objective is to eliminate discriminatory structures, practices and culture. Responsibility for this rests above all with those who work with young people and, for example, with schools and educational institutions. The objectives of the measures also include increasing Roma youths' capabilities for taking action to promote non-discrimination.

Measures:

- The Discrimination-free Zone campaign will run in the youth field in 2020–2021 and in the sports and physical activity sector in 2022–2023. It will include targeted communication and materials for actors in the youth field and the sports and physical activity sector, organise training events as well as collect ideas for promoting non-discrimination.
- In 2020, four to six regional training workshops will be organised for Roma youths, the purpose of which will be to increase their awareness of their rights as well as improve their capabilities for acting in situations involving discrimination and promoting non-discrimination. These measures are associated with a more extensive project implemented by the Ministry of Justice as part of Finland's National Roma Policy Programme (ROMPO II). They also include other regional events (for example, training/information events for municipal personnel). The results and materials produced by the workshops as well as the good practices identified in them will be disseminated nationally. Experts by experience will be utilised in the planning of the measures and project implementation. On the basis of experiences gained from each measure, an effort will be made to produce a model which can be used to train other young people at risk of discrimination. During

workshops, young people will be asked to share their experiences of discrimination and to suggest measures for preventing it.

- The youth field's equality and non-discrimination plans as well as the measures and objectives for the prevention of discrimination set out in them will be examined. Based on observations, supplementing measures will be taken.

Target group: young people in the age group 12 to 29 Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Justice

In cooperation with: Ministry of Education and Culture and the campaign network, National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Office of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and regional Roma advisory boards.

Indicators: Quantitative indicators: 1) number of new youth work actors and sports clubs to join the campaign, 2) number of different communication measures, 3) number of persons reached, and 4) number of people who participated in training events/workshops. Feedback from the target group of the campaign and workshops as a qualitative indicator. As part of the feedback questionnaire, participants will be asked if they felt they had gained more information and urged to assess if this information will affect their actions.

✓ **Multi-professional cooperation aiming to improve the wellbeing of young people who engage in criminal activity as a symptom of their problems and to prevent juvenile delinquency will be strengthened**

A precondition for preventing crime and social exclusion is cooperation between numerous administrative branches in ministries and at the local level. As stated in the Government Programme, offenders will be referred to health and social services and crime-prevention rehabilitation programmes. Young people who commit offences as a symptom of their problems are at a great risk of exclusion. The Government Programme allocates to the Ministry of Justice funds for a three-year project aiming to support them and to find means which will allow them to acquire interaction and life management skills as well as to promote their attachment to education and working life.

The aim of multi-professional Anchor work is to promote the wellbeing of children and young people and to prevent crime. Anchor work is carried out in various parts of the country with good results. The challenge is that the Anchor services are not yet equally available across the country for all children and young people who commit offences as a symptom of their problems. The Handbook on Anchor work describes the principles, implementation, multi-professional cooperation, organisation and launch as well as the assessment and development of Anchor work.

Violent extremism and the activities of violent extremist movements have increased and become more visible over the past few years. Joining these groups poses an enormous risk for a young people in terms of their health, wellbeing and future. It will exclude them from society in a way that will make it difficult for them to return. Violent extremist groups tend to recruit young people. One of the target groups of Anchor work are young people who turn to violent radicalisation as a symptom of their problems and who need multidisciplinary professional cooperation in order to break free from the influence of radical groups. In cases of violent radicalisation, Anchor services are also available for people over the age of 18.

Measures:

- The operating model for young people acting out by means of criminal activities (Ministry of Justice 2019) supports young people who are suspected of several serious offences and where the authority or other actor who has encountered the young person has felt a particular concern over his or her substance abuse or other risks of social exclusion.
- Ways of obtaining feedback from young people who act out by committing offences and who have been sentenced for offences will be developed and piloted, and their opportunities for participating in the development of services intended for them will be increased. Services will be developed on the basis of their feedback with the aim of supporting their attachment to community, life management and non-discrimination.
- When planning a sentence to imprisonment or community service, the young person's ability to participate and be consulted when preparing the plan for the sanction period will be ensured.
- Multi-professional Anchor work targets children and youths under the age of 18 who commit offences or are at risk of radicalisation as a symptom of their problems. The implementation and development of Anchor work in the manner described in the Handbook on Anchor work will be ensured across the country. The Anchor team's services are also available for persons aged 18 or over if this is expected to be helpful.
- The Ministry of the Interior will establish a national coordination group for the prevention of accidents as part of the rescue services, which will be tasked to reinforce young people's inclusion in their local communities and their sense of community while supporting the learning of practical skills.

Target group: Young people under the age of 18. No maximum age in cases involving violent radicalisation.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior

Cooperation partners: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Education and Culture, Criminal Sanctions Agency and Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. Social welfare and health care services responsible for regional and local services, the police, education providers and youth services.

Indicators: Number of Anchor notifications, number of clients, number of Anchor visits, age distribution of clients, repeat offenders/first-time offenders, professional teams in Anchor groups, staff numbers and the working hours used on the activities.

✓ **Coordinating ways to prevent child and youth grooming on social media.**

Persuading a minor to participate in sexual acts is an offence. Grooming is an established term used to describe an activity where an adult proposes interaction with sexual intent to a minor. This offence often involves manipulation; for example, the offender attempts to obtain videos recorded by a minor, which are used to coerce the child into performing sexual acts with the adult against their will. It is important to lower young people's threshold for reporting grooming attempts.

Measures:

- An inter-ministerial coordination project will be set up to prevent the grooming of young people in social media. Its measures will include improving young people's and guardians' digital skills and understanding of the digital environment, using media education to build knowledge, and developing concrete practices which can be used to guide and teach young people, their guardians and those who work with young people about how to operate in the multimedia world with greater safety, awareness and knowledge of their rights.
- The measures of different administrative branches will be coordinated in order to identify long-term and effective operating models and to support the appropriate targeting of Government appropriations.
- Guidance on information exchanges in cases of grooming will be offered to actors in various administrative branches.

Target group: The development project is intended for basic education grades 5 to 9, with emphasis on secondary school pupils aged 13 to 16.

Coordinating ministry: Ministry of Education and Culture, in cooperation with: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finnish National Agency for Education and NGOs

Indicators: School Health Promotion study

3 Finland's objectives in international and European cooperation in the youth field

Pursuant to the Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy 211/2017, the National youth work and youth policy programme sets the national objectives for European and international activities in the youth field (section 2). These objectives are implemented in EU cooperation as well as when Finland participates in collaboration carried out within the framework of the Council of Europe, other international organisations and Nordic collaboration structures.

The objectives set for the current period of the National youth work and youth policy programme are as follows:

The status of youth work will be reinforced

Finland will work actively to implement the Council conclusions on education and training of youth workers adopted by the Council of the European Union in November 2019 [Council 22 November]. Finland will strive to strengthen the shared understanding between the Member States on youth worker education and training of a high quality and their objectives as well as further the development of flexible, practice-based operating models meeting national needs in the education and training of youth workers. Finland will act with initiative to promote the launch of a peer learning project on the education and training of youth workers within the framework of the Partnership Agreement between the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

Finland will participate actively in the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019–2027) and be responsible for carrying out a European peer learning project on digital youth work.

To reinforce the status of youth work, Finland will share information and experiences on effective practices and implementation methods of youth research. Finland will strive to increase awareness of youth work outside the youth field.

Finland will promote competence exchanges related to media education in European and international cooperation, among other things in the context of the implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

Young people's awareness of their rights will be increased

Young people play a key role in the development of democracy and human rights in Europe. Finland will strive to increase young people's awareness of their rights through international cooperation.

Young people's opportunities for participating in decision-making that concerns them in different areas will be promoted

Finland will promote extensively young people's opportunities for participating in decision-making that concerns them in different areas of civic life, including education and employment policy, climate change mitigation, and personal safety and physical integrity. Their opportunities for exerting influence will be supported at both the international and the national level, paying particular attention to young people who are in a vulnerable position.

Inclusion will be supported in the implementation of youth programmes

Young people's mobility within the EU and in third countries will be promoted through projects of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Finland will strive to strengthen the perspective of inclusion in the implementation of mobility programmes for young people. The objective during the new programme period will be that the programmes intended for young people will reach new target groups better, including young people belonging to different cultural minorities or with disabilities, young people of different genders and, for example, those who live outside growth centres. Programme participants will be encouraged to use inclusion support where applicable.

Young people's climate change mitigation activities will be supported

The Flash Eurobarometer survey of 2019 indicates that 67% of young people find actions against climate change and environmental protection as the European Union's most important objectives. Finland will strive to strengthen the role of youth work and cross-administrative cooperation in supporting young people in issues related to climate change. The objectives include making this a priority theme in the youth field during both Finland's forthcoming Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers and Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council.

4 Policies on supporting youth work and activities as well as priorities regarding the eligibility for discretionary government transfers of youth work centres of expertise

Youth work and youth activities are supported from the Ministry of Education and Culture's youth work appropriations. These transfers can only be used to support activities that implement the objectives and premises set out in section 2 of the Youth Act. In the allocation of the transfers, sustainable development, gender equality and non-discrimination are mainstreamed. Positive discrimination can be applied where necessary to those in a more vulnerable position. These government transfers are discretionary.

The Ministry of Education and Culture's performance management interest varies in different application rounds for discretionary government transfers. In the case of general aid for youth field actors, the Ministry of Education and Culture does not, as a rule, control the content of the activities for which the subsidy is granted. Discretionary subsidies are intended for supporting the beneficiaries' general operating capabilities and content-related objectives selected independently by the beneficiary. On the other hand, special project grants are more important as a policy instrument of the Ministry of Education and Culture. For the special grants, objectives deriving from youth work and youth policy are

set by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Their de facto steering impact depends on the application round. Transfers for national youth work centres of expertise are subject to the strongest steering influence.

Under the Youth Act (1285/2016), a national youth work centre of expertise refers to an entity that seeks to develop and promote competence and expertise in youth-related

issues on a nationwide basis. A centre of expertise may also be established as a contract-based consortium of two or more entities. The task of youth work centres of expertise is to develop and promote basic and specialist competence by providing, bringing together or utilising expert and other services or by disseminating information about young people, youth work and youth policy.

Under section 4 of the Youth Act, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the overall administration, coordination and development of the national youth policy and youth work, and for the creation of favourable conditions for the pursuit of the policy in the central government. Responsibility for local administrative duties in respect of youth work and policy rests with the regional state administrative agencies. When performing these duties, the state shall, as appropriate, engage in cooperation with municipalities, youth organisations, other entities and the young people themselves.

The centres of expertise are an instrument for developing youth work used by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The priorities of their activities respond to current needs of youth work, regarding which the Ministry of Education and Culture has a performance management interest. As the centres of expertise only operate in the youth work sector, their tasks cannot be directly derived from the youth policy objectives and measures of the national youth work and youth policy programme. The centres of expertise produce and provide information needed by the Ministry of Education and Culture and support the ministry in its steering by information and development activities. In addition, the centres of expertise provide training and support for youth field actors across the country.

Pursuant to the Youth Act, the Ministry of Education and Culture approves a centre of expertise as eligible for discretionary government transfers for a fixed period. As the priorities of the centre of expertise activities are determined in the national youth work and youth policy programme, this period is tied to the programme period. The eligibility period of a centre of expertise may deviate from the programme's period of validity during the transitional period between two programmes to ensure streamlined operation and the high quality of the centres' work as a whole.

The eligibility for, and granting of, government transfers to a youth work centre of expertise are discretionary. Once the national youth work and youth policy programme has been adopted, the Ministry of Education and Culture accepts applications for eligibility for discretionary government transfers to the centres of expertise. In this context, the specific needs to which the centres of expertise respond are formulated based on programme priorities. The applications are assessed on the basis of the criteria laid down in the Youth Act and the Government Decree on Youth Work and Youth Policy.

The Ministry of Education and Culture agrees with eligible centres of expertise on their more detailed tasks, for which it will grant a discretionary government transfer. The priorities of the centres of expertise are thus indicative and reflect the current development needs of youth work. The needs to which a centre of expertise applying for eligibility responds through its action plan are finalised on the basis of the priorities. The plans attached to the application lay the foundation for the negotiations on the actual tasks of the centres of expertise.

In order to develop and promote competence and expertise related to the youth field through the centre of expertise activities during this programme period, a clearer division of responsibilities, more effective coordination, and structural centralisation of the activities to fewer units will be required. The centres of expertise will be formed based on the priorities. They may be consortia consisting of several actors.

Six priorities for promoting young people's meaningful life and inclusion in society will be specified for the centre of expertise activities. In order to determine the priorities, the current development needs of youth work in which the Ministry of Education and Culture has a performance management interest as the ministry responsible for the general steering, coordination and development of youth work in central government have been identified. This means that without the centre of expertise activities, they would not necessarily be realised in the manner the ministry would prefer, if at all. In addition to the content-related priorities of the centres of expertise, youth work involves a great deal of other important development activities over which the ministry can exercise management by resources through other government transfers.

Within each priority, gender equality, non-discrimination and bilingualism must be mainstreamed in all centre of expertise activities. Bilingualism will have a prominent role in the centre of expertise activities in order to strengthen the development of Swedish-language youth work and to realise Swedish-speaking young people's right to youth work services in this respect. The centre of expertise developing youth work carried out in schools and educational institutions will be tasked with the coordination of youth work among Swedish-speaking young people between various centres of expertise. The party responsible for the coordination of centre of expertise activities focusing on Swedish-speaking young people must have experience in providing Swedish-language youth services.

The priorities of centre of expertise activities are the following:

- **Youth work in municipalities**

Youth work is a statutory basic service provided by local governments. It supports young people's growth and agency through spontaneous and guided activities. Youth work is increasingly carried out 'without

walls', or without relying on a specific operating environment and in cooperation with various types of partners. Its approaches and cooperation networks as well as the skills required in the work have been developed both inclusively and separately for each area and work form. The key challenges of local youth work are associated with its quality assurance, demonstration of its operational effectiveness, and its recognisability. Spreading awareness of and mainstreaming good practices as well as developing and using information produced on youth work must be continued. Strengthening the role of youth work as part of the work aiming to improve young people's welfare in municipalities is important. In the development of the various work methods, forms and areas of youth work (youth information and counselling work, promotion of young people's mental health, prevention of substance abuse, gender-sensitive youth work as well as youth work among Swedish-speaking young people), the aim must be at closer cooperation. Cooperation with various local actors (associations, parishes) should also be stepped up.

- **Situational picture and impact of organisations operating in the youth field**

NGOs are significant actors in the field of youth work in addition to or in cooperation with local governments, either in contract-based or operative collaboration. Traditional civil engagement channelled through associations is undergoing a transition as informal activities become more widespread and content is influenced by outsourced service activities. NGOs offer channels for participating and exerting influence as well as opportunities for recreational activities for young people. Their information production concerning youth work and activities should be developed further in order to bring the big picture of service provision in the youth field into a sharper focus. While young people's civic engagement has positive impacts on their growth and on democracy, NGOs' competence related to impact assessment and research evidence underpinning it are needed to verify these positive impacts. More information is needed about the impacts of the changing operating environment on youth work and activities in NGOs and about the means by which young people can be reached in this changing operating environment. While taking part in NGO activities, young people acquire skills that they can benefit from in their studies or in working life. It is thus important to strengthen NGOs' cooperation with educational institutions and working life and to systematise the recognition and acknowledgement of these skills.

- **Social inclusion and exertion of influence**

Section 24 of the Youth Act obligates authorities to offer and organise opportunities for young people to participate and exert an influence in the processing of issues related to local, regional and nationwide youth work and policies, or otherwise ensure that they are consulted in said contexts. Promoting young people's inclusion is a cross-cutting theme in youth work. Youth work approaches the enforcement of section 24 of the Youth Act from the perspective of promoting democracy education and increasing awareness of young people's inclusion : dialogue between young people and the authorities must be broadened and deepened. To achieve this, digital tools and the quality criteria for inclusion should be developed further, awareness of them should be raised, and their deployment should be supported, taking into consideration equal opportunities for young people belonging to different groups. Experiences of inclusion in society are linked to preventing young people's radicalisation and violent extremism. In youth work, an effort has been made to prevent them by means of in-service training activities and multi-professional cooperation. The phenomenon is also linked to the promotion of internal security. More information is needed on young people's involvement in extremist movements.

- **Targeted youth work**

Youth workshop activities and youth outreach work combine to form a package in which young people are provided with individual guidance to improve their life management skills and agency and helped to move forward in life. This work is extensive, and both qualitative and quantitative data on it are available. It is supported through government transfers granted directly to the organisers but also to advocacy and development activities. Current development needs in this area are associated with cooperation between youth workshop activities and educational institutions, new forms of cooperation (including cooperation with Ohjaamo service points and social work), and the Time out activities related to youth outreach work. In addition, it will be necessary to examine the regional equality of youth workshop activities and youth outreach services. The importance of multi-professional cooperation in preventing substance abuse and social exclusion among young people as well as supporting their mental health is emphasised in development activities.

- **Digital youth work**

Digital youth work has evolved from the tradition of carrying out youth work wherever young people are found. While digitalisation is relevant to the operating environment, it also provides content and an instrument for youth work and activities. As long as technology continues to develop, digital youth work will be in a state of flux. Although this aspect is addressed better than before in youth work education and training, the need for additional training and support in the planning of youth work and activities is considerable and continuous, both in municipalities and NGOs. Digitalisation is a cross-cutting feature in all youth work and activities, but due to the need for additional training and support, digital youth work should be viewed as a separate area of development for the time being. Mainstreaming digitalisation as part of the permanent structures of youth work and in the daily work of all those involved in it is one of the key future challenges. The risks of digital media, the most topical one of which is grooming, will be emphasised as a special issue.

- **Youth work in schools and educational institutions**

Youth work reaches the greatest part of its target group when carried out in cooperation with schools and educational institutions. Youth work provides appropriate support that meets young people's needs, improves pupils' and students' school satisfaction, and can be used to intervene in bullying in schools and educational institutions. This cooperation should be modelled, reinforced and developed in different areas (such as in improving young people's holistic wellbeing and supporting their mental health and in secondary level dorm services). Schools and educational institutions also have an important role in promoting equal opportunities for taking part in hobbies by providing a setting for recreational activities during the school day and at other times. Youth work carried out in schools and educational institutions facilitates young people's smooth transition from one level of education to another as well as closer cooperation between schools and educational institutions on the one hand, and between leisure time activities organised by municipal youth work and NGOs providing content for recreational activities on the other.

APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL YOUTH WORK AND YOUTH POLICY PROGRAMME 2020–2023 - Situational picture of the conditions in which young people live and grow

This situational picture draws on the descriptions of the conditions in which young people live and grow contained in Prime Minister Marin's (previously Prime Minister Rinne's) Government Programme, *'Inclusive and competent Finland'*. One of the Government Programme's main objectives is to guarantee the right to a viable environment and sustainable economy for the young generations. The situational picture is based on indicators of young people's wellbeing maintained by the State Youth Council, which have been supported by other research and statistical data, such as the results of the School Health Promotion study and the Youth Barometer.

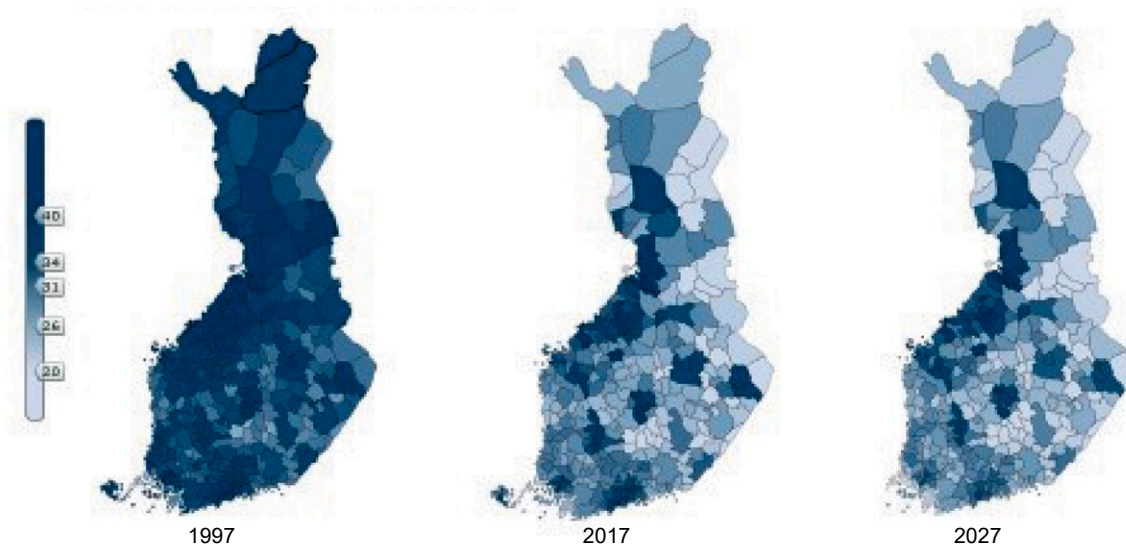
Young people as a population group

In 2018, there were nearly 1.8 million young people under the age of 29 in Finland. Some 870,000 of them are between the ages of 12 and 25. Young people account for 32 per cent of the entire population. Around 10 to 15 per cent of young people have a disability or some other impediment that limits their activities. According to the population estimate, the number of people between the ages of 0 and 28 in Finland will have decreased to 1.6 million in 2029.

The birth rate is currently at a record low and population growth is mainly driven by immigration. Over the past 15 years, Finland has become an increasingly multicultural society. In 2018, some 137,000 people aged between 5 and 29 spoke a language other than Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue. The increase in the number of young people with an immigrant background is expected to continue. According to the most recent population estimate by Statistics Finland, in 15 years there will be no regions in Finland where the birth rate exceeds the mortality rate if the birth rate remains at the current level. Based on present development, Finland's population will begin to decline in 2031. In 2050, Finland's population would be roughly 100,000 persons less than at present.

Over the past twenty years, migration within Finland has led to a concentration of young people in growth centres and a drop in their numbers in rural areas. University cities are examples of areas that draw young people. Immigration contributes to increasing the number of young people in cities.

The percentage of youth under 29 year old in municipality populations in 1997-2027



Source: Statistics Finland

According to the Government Programme, older people are worried about the availability and quality of services and how they will be able to cope. Young people are worried about the conditions for life on earth as the climate is changing, but also about their opportunities for education, training and employment amid growing uncertainty in the labour market.

The share of young people in municipalities has a profound effect on the provision of services intended for young people by both the public sector and civil society.

Education and employment

Basic education is offered to all children and young people in Finland, regardless of their social status, gender, place of residence, economic situation, language or cultural background and ethnic origin at nearly 2,300 comprehensive schools. Finnish pupils and students often fare better in international comparisons of learning outcomes than pupils and students in other countries. However, there is still room for improvement in young people's school satisfaction. According to the 2019 School Health Promotion study, students at vocational institutions displayed the highest level of school satisfaction, with 81.5 per cent reporting that they liked attending school a lot or very much. Of grade 8 and 9 pupils in comprehensive school, 60 per cent enjoyed going to school to a moderate extent or very much.

The factors and mechanisms that influence motivation for learning and school satisfaction vary greatly for different age groups and different stages of school. Over the past few years a positive trend, albeit still rather moderate, has been registered in many of the factors that influence the school conditions and attitudes toward schools of Finnish young people. School satisfaction has increased, pupils' confidence in their competence has improved, they experience schools as safer than before, teacher-pupil relationships have improved, and support received from parents is experienced as more positive than previously.

The number of children and young people receiving special needs support is indicative of the need for such support but also the offer of services. In 2018, the share of pupils who received special needs support was 8.1 per cent. This figure has decreased since certain amendments to the Basic Education Act entered into force in 2011. Of those receiving special needs support, 11.2 per cent were boys and 7.9 per cent girls. The proportion of pupils receiving the new, more effective support form has grown year to year, in keeping with the principle of early support.

The proportion of 20 to 24-year-olds with no secondary qualification is large but shrinking slowly: in 2014, it was 17.8 per cent while in 2017, it was 16.7 per cent. Young people who only have a basic education qualification, are not in employment and have not taken part in further education or training (NEET) accounted for 11.8 of all young people.

According to a report titled 'Investing in Youth' published by the OECD in spring 2019, Finland's educational system is continuously among the best in the OECD countries. Even so, the ineffectiveness of the employment and social policy prevents a large number of young people from transitioning smoothly to the labour market. The youth employment rate is slightly above the OECD average, but clearly weaker than in the other Nordic countries. Youth employment is only slowly recovering from the numerous problems that have rocked Finland's economy over the past few decades. Young people with a low level of competence often experience particular difficulties in the Finnish labour market, whereas there is a great demand for highly skilled workers and a constant shortage of workers in roles requiring a high skills level. Nearly a half of all young people not in education, employment or training have not completed a secondary qualification. According to the report, young people's successful participation in the labour market is not only important with regard to their personal financial prospects and wellbeing but also with regard to general economic growth and social sense of belonging.

The change in the labour market over the past few years has made it more difficult for young people to integrate in it. On the other hand, the unemployment rate of people aged under 25 has decreased. In 2018,

there were an average of 33,316 unemployed job seekers under the age of 25 on the measurement day each month. In 2019, they averaged 30,941 (January–September).

A decline in economic growth, structural changes, the increasing skills requirements in the labour market and tougher competition have slowed down the decline of youth unemployment and hampered attachment to work. Approximately one half of students worked in 2019.

The demand for labour force with a low level of education and the number of jobs for people with a basic education have decreased continuously. Numerous bottlenecks still remain, especially in the employment of people in a vulnerable labour market position, such as young people with disabilities, immigrants and NEET youth. A report produced by the Social Insurance Institution, for example, notes that young people with disabilities must continuously provide proof for the service system of being sufficiently disabled to access the services to which they are entitled in order to support their employment. On the other hand, they must be able to prove to employers that their functional capacity is good enough for them to be productive employees. The risk of foreign-language young people being excluded from education and employment is many times higher than that of young people who speak Finnish and Swedish.

Over the past few years, young people have grown more interested in becoming entrepreneurs. The change in the percentage of young people who are interested in entrepreneurship could reflect the fluctuating and uncertain labour market situation. On the other hand, the change could be about a broader understanding of entrepreneurial activity, which may have been promoted by student-led entrepreneurial communities and development in entrepreneurship education.

As stated in the Government Programme, all young people aged under 25 years of age and all graduates under 30 years of age will be guaranteed a job or work trial, traineeship, workshop, apprenticeship or rehabilitation placement no later than three months into the period of unemployment. The Government will promote the Youth Guarantee based on expert work. Ohjaamo services and youth workshop activities will be consolidated

Health, housing and income

Studies show that the majority of Finnish young people have a good level of health and wellbeing. According to the 2019 School Health Promotion study, approx. 79 per cent of grade 8 and 9 pupils, 79 per cent of upper secondary school students, and 77 per cent of students at vocational institutions felt their health was good.

While young people have started drinking less in the 2000s, a large number of them still binge drink. Binge drinking is the most common among students in vocational education and training institutions: 27 per cent of them said they binge drink once a month, whereas this figure was 18 per cent for upper secondary school students and 10 per cent for grade 8 and 9 pupils. Binge drinking is more common among boys than girls.

The levels of experimentation with drugs among young people have varied during the 2000s, and the situation of each age group is different. According to the 2019 School Health Promotion study, 8.6 per cent of pupils in grades 8 and 9, 13.8 per cent of first and second year students in upper secondary school,

and 20 per cent of first and second year students in vocational education and training have tried marijuana or cannabis at least once in their lives.

Meanwhile, problems with children's and young people's ability to cope and mental health have increased at an alarming rate. In the 2010s, the proportion of young people between the ages of 15 and 29 entitled to specially reimbursed pharmaceuticals for the treatment of a psychosis or other acute mental health disorders has remained around one per cent of the age group, which means around 9,000 young people. The number of people between the ages of 16 and 24 granted rehabilitation services for mental health and/or behavioural disorders has increased substantially in the 2010s.

Under a pledge contained in the Government Programme, we will lower the threshold for mental health services for children and young people and improve the timing and availability of services within the scope of basic-level health and social services. We will reinforce the links between mental health services and existing services for children and families and other service structures. We will secure preventive substance abuse services for minors in both regional and linguistic terms. We will step up cooperation across administrative branches and ensure free flow of information.

The results of the LIITU 2018 study, which examines the physical activity of children and young people, are positive but give food for thought. There has been a positive trend in the number of young people who reported that they engage in physical activity in accordance with recommendations: 38 per cent of young people aged between 9 and 15 accumulated the recommended amount of physical activity, whereas in 2016, this figure was 32 per cent. On the other hand, accelerometer results showed no change in the share of children and young people who had reached the recommended level of physical activity between 2016 and 2018, taking into account the different age group and gender distributions of the participants.

Finnish young people move out of their childhood homes at a very young age compared to their peers in other European countries. Living alone has increased among young people over the past twenty years, and they typically live in rented housing. The tightening of the real estate market in the Helsinki metropolitan area and other growth centres as well as the increased unemployment affect young people's possibilities of finding affordable housing.

In 2018, there were a total of 1,001 homeless young people under the age of 25 in Finland, and slightly less than one out of five of them were affected by long-term homeless. The homeless numbers in Helsinki for 2018 are not comparable to the previous year due to a change in the statistical method. In other parts of the country, the number of young homeless people decreased by 93 persons compared to the previous year.

The Government Programme pledges that we will increase the volume of youth and student housing construction and raise the lowest support category of the ARA investment grant for housing for special groups from 10 per cent to 15 per cent.

Some 250,000 Finns rely on basic social security as a form of income. Approx. one half of them are under the age of 30. Social assistance is the last resort in social security. In 2018, a total of some 78,000 young people in Finland were social assistance recipients. The number of social assistance recipients between the ages of 18 and 24 started declining in 2018, both for those who relied on long-term and short-term social assistance. This is predominantly due to a change in the way benefits are granted, or a wider introduction of the general housing allowance and changes to student financial aid. Poverty among young people is also more severe than among the rest of the population; in other words, their income is further from the low income minimum than that of others with low incomes.

The study grant and state guarantee for a student loan together with the housing allowance secure the basic income of students. An evaluation of the adequacy of basic social security in 2015–2019 (THL 6/2019) indicates that student financial aid together with a student loan are sufficient to cover reasonable minimum consumption. The report finds that the reform of student financial aid carried out in 2018, as a result of which the loan plays a larger role in a student's income, either increased a student's income significantly or decreased it considerably, depending on whether the student loan was taken into consideration in the evaluation. As from 2017, childless student households have been covered by the general housing allowance rather than receiving a housing supplement, which has somewhat increased housing support for student households and secured a round-the-year housing allowance for students, whereas the housing supplement was only granted for study months. The utilisation rate of student financial aid has decreased in the 2010s due to more stringent needs-based assessments.

According to the Government Programme, study grants will be tied to the cost-of-living index, which will secure the purchasing power of the grant in the future. In order to improve the income of students with children, the study grant's provider supplement will be increased (EUR 25/month).

Almost 23 per cent of young people between the ages of 18 and 29 had payment default entries. There has been a slight decline in the payment default entries of people under the age of 20. In other age groups, the number of people with payment default entries has either remained the same or increased slightly. In addition to so-called quickie loans, the payment default entries of young people result from other consumer loans, telephone bills, online purchases or unpaid rents. Private individuals under the age of 24 applied for debt arrangement a total of 412 times in the period

2014–2018. Young adults and people with low incomes have the poorest understanding of financial matters, and unemployed people and those on low incomes display the highest number of problems in their financial behaviour. Studies show that a young age, a low income and a low level of education increase the risk of indebtedness and over-indebtedness.

The Government Programme states that social inequality affects people in many ways. It is manifested in poverty and prolonged need for social assistance. Inequality is also reflected in the differences in health and social inclusion between population groups and in the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training. We will examine the reasons for having to depend on social assistance, especially among young people, and find ways to address the issue.

A young person's personal integrity and safety

According to the 2019 School Health Promotion study, 7 per cent of grade 4 and 5 pupils in comprehensive school reported that they had been bullied at school at least once a week. This experience was shared by 6 per cent of grade 8 and 9 pupils, 1 per cent of general upper secondary school students and 4 per cent of those studying for a vocational qualification. According to a survey conducted by the Finnish Student Health Service, around 5 per cent of university and university of applied sciences students felt they had been bullied by other students, while more than 6 per cent felt they had been bullied by staff. It is more common for women to be targeted by bullying than men.

The younger age groups are more likely to both resort to violence and be victims of violence. The age group most likely to use and become victims of violence are young people aged between 18 and 20. In 2017, young people under the age of 15 committed 3 per cent, and 15 to 17-year-olds 5 per cent, of all offences for which a sentence is

imposed under the Criminal Code of Finland (KRIMO 2018, rikollisuustilannekatsaus 2017). According to Ristikari et al. (2018), 5.2 per cent of girls and 19.5 per cent of boys born in 1997 had either been sentenced or issued with a penal order by the time they turned 18, or by the end of 2015. In an operating model proposed by a development cooperation group of the Ministry of Justice, it was estimated that there were approx. 7,000 young people who were acting out by means of criminal activity.

According to statistics maintained by the police, the majority of perpetrators and victims of violent crime are male, whereas according to victim surveys, an equal number of men and women are victims of violent crime. Violent crime is closely linked to social exclusion. Risk factors for violent crime include homelessness, a low level of education, a low professional status, a small income and being single. While there also is a close link between drinking and assaults, after peaking at the end of the 1990s, the number of assaults perpetrated while under the influence of alcohol has decreased.

The risk posed by violent extremist movements and mentality has become a topic of public discussion in Finland in recent years. Travelling to conflict zones to commit violent acts justified by religious views, violent racist movements and such offences as school shootings have created a need for broad-scoped preventive measures also in Finland.

Traffic accidents are the most common cause of death among young people aged between 15 and 29. The number of young people who lose their lives in traffic accidents has decreased over the past few decades. In part, this is due to better compliance with speed limits as well as increased seatbelt and helmet use. However, a young driver's risk of a road death is more than three times the risk faced by the rest of the population. Compared to older drivers, young people underestimate the risks and have less driving experience. Drivers aged between 18 to 19 who have recently received their driving licences are by far the largest risk group in drink driving. More than one out of three people who lose their lives or are injured in accidents caused by drink driving are aged between 15 to 24.

The Government Programme states that every child and young person has the right to physical integrity. The Government will strengthen sex education and prepare an action plan against bullying and loneliness.

Young people's influence, inclusion and hobbies

Pursuant to the Local Government Act, which entered into force in 2015, the local executive in every municipality must set up a youth council or a similar group through which young people can exert influence, and provide the prerequisites for its activities. According to the most recent Youth Councils Report, there are currently 290 youth

councils in the municipalities of Mainland Finland; in other words, only five municipalities do not have a youth council yet.

The Youth Act, which entered into force at the beginning of 2017, imposes on the authorities a relatively broad obligation to provide young people referred to in the Act with an opportunity to participate and exert an influence. Section 24 of the Act contains provisions on the local and central government authorities' obligation to offer and organise opportunities for young people to be involved and exert an influence in the processing of issues related to local, regional and nationwide youth work and policies or otherwise ensure that they are consulted in said contexts.

Section 47a of the Basic Education Act, which was added to the Act in 2013, represents an effort to improve the participation and consultation of comprehensive school pupils. Under this section, the education provider must take action to see to it that the pupils have an opportunity to put forward their opinion about matters relating to the operation of their school or other operational unit which concern the pupils collectively. Each school must have a student body made up of its pupils.

According to the 2018 Youth Barometer, young people have grown more interested in politics and their trust in the effectiveness of democracy has increased. In particular, participation in political activities by those under the age of 20 has become more common. Voting and standing for election were considered the most effective means of exerting influence by young people. However, their interest in politics and trust in representative democracy are not always realised in the form of participation and being active. The most important reasons for not exerting an influence reported in the Youth Barometer were lack of time and difficulties in finding means of exerting influence that were personally meaningful for the respondents.

The proportion of young people in central government decision-making has grown when measured as the number of young Members of Parliament. In the parliamentary elections of 2019, eight Members of Parliament under the age of 30 were elected into office, while in 2007, this figure was as low as two. In the parliamentary elections of 2019, young people's voter turnout grew slightly compared to the elections in 2015. Those aged between 18 and 24 were the group which increased its turnout the most (8.2 percentage points). Even so, young people were far less active as voters than older age groups: approx. 55 per cent of those aged between 18 to 24 cast their votes, whereas this figure was more than 82 per cent for people over the age of 71.

Young people's trust in politicians has eroded. According to the Youth Barometer, around one out of three young people find politicians untrustworthy. A similar proportion of young people feel that politicians only care about issues that affect rich and powerful

citizens. Although they do not trust politicians, young people have confidence in the institutions of representative democracy, including Parliament and the president.

From the perspective of non-discrimination, the challenge is that the same, active young people benefit from many of the factors of social inclusion. In addition, young people's participation is polarised: some young people strive to exert influence through methods that require less commitment, including their purchase decisions. A smaller proportion participates actively in NGOs, for example, and aim to influence policy or society through them.

The voter turnout is also affected by young people's level of education, immigrant background and gender. Up to 89 per cent of young people with a Master's degree voted in parliamentary elections. On average, only 32 per cent of young people with a foreign background voted. The voter turnout of women between the ages of 18 and 24 was more than 10 per cent higher than this rate for men in the same age group.

Since the early 2010s, efforts have been made to develop ways of participation in direct democracy. Young people, in particular, have adopted these means of participation. The Citizen's Initiative has now been in use during two government terms. According to parliamentary election studies, a significant majority of Finns believe that the Citizen's Initiative has promoted the effectiveness of democracy in Finland. In 2015, less than one out of three respondents agreed completely, while approx. 48% agreed partly. In 2019, these proportions had fallen slightly: around one out of five agreed completely, while 44 per cent agreed partly. The Citizen's Initiative has also increased people's interest in civic engagement.

There were no changes in the proportion of young people who belong to youth organisations between 1998 and 2018. According to the 2019 Young people's leisure activities study, slightly less than one half of young people aged between 10 to 29 were members of an organisation, club, society or similar. These figures were more or less the same for girls and boys. The most active age group is the 10 to 14 year-olds, 72% of whom belonged to an organisation or similar. However, when examining the extent to which young people are actively involved in organisations, it should be realised that young people in sport clubs, for example, do not necessarily see themselves as belonging to an organisation.

The experience that pupils have of their opinions being considered at school has improved somewhat over the past few years. According to the School Health Promotion study of 2019, 27 per cent of grade 8 and 9 pupils in comprehensive school and nearly one half of first and second year students in general upper secondary schools and

vocational institutions felt that the opinions of learners were taken into account well or fairly well in the development of school work.

The Government Programme pledges to launch a cross-administrative democracy programme extending until 2025. One of the key priorities and objectives of the democracy programme will be to develop school teaching and other school practices.

The programme will also aim to support children's and young people's ability to have a say in their local environment and society, to improve the social inclusion of those who feel they are outsiders, to secure the autonomy and operating conditions of civil society organisations, and to strengthen local democracy.

The Government also plans to foster cooperation between civil society organisations and schools, pledging to enhance democracy and human rights education and inclusivity at schools and to facilitate the student union and student association activities.

A hobby is an enjoyable activity which offers a way to maintain friendships or develop yourself and follow your dreams. A hobby plays an important role in strengthening a child's or young person's identity and promoting their wellbeing and participation, and it can protect them from loneliness and exclusion. Municipalities, the third sector and companies are important providers of recreational activity services. The central government provides substantial support for recreational activities, but the funding and policies are fragmented over different administrative branches. According to the Young people's leisure activities study of 2018, 89 per cent of young people have a hobby.

The proportion of children and young people involved in hobbies has grown since the beginning of the decade. Their immediate living environment and the family's income affect their participation in hobbies. For example, only 80% of children and young people in families that have to save on expenses were involved in a hobby. Young people who have children, are unemployed, or have no qualifications following basic education are less likely than others to have a hobby. When children and young people were asked why they did not have a hobby, the most common reasons were challenges in time use, the price of a hobby, functional limitations and bullying.

APPENDIX 2: Consultation of young people and key stakeholders in youth work and youth policy during the preparation of the national youth work and youth policy programme 2020-2023

Section 5 of the Youth Act (1285/2019) states that young people and key actors engaged in youth work and policy are to be consulted in the course of the preparation of the national youth work and youth policy programme.

Launch of programme preparation and the State Youth Council's statement

The preparation of the programme was launched on 19 June 2019, and a large group of representatives of authorities and NGOs took part in this event titled 'Towards a new VANUPO 2020–2023'. Participants at the event voiced their proposals and preferences concerning the programme's content. Link to a video recording of the event:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhklIcFZ_o&feature=youtu.be

As part of its statutory tasks, the State Youth Council issued a statement on the issues to be included in the programme on 6 June 2019. For the full statement of the State Youth Council, visit: <https://tietoanuo-rista.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/VANUPO-lausunto.pdf>

Consultation of young people

A total of 1,890 young people from 104 different locations were consulted during the preparation of the national youth work and youth policy programme 2020-2023. The young people who participated in the consultation were between the ages of 11 and 29, and they were heard in schools, educational institutions and youth facilities, during recreational and NGO activities, at youth workshops, libraries, shopping centres and Ohjaamo service points as well using electronic channels. The young people who were interviewed represented speakers of 18 different mother tongues. The interviews were conducted by 120 Bachelor of Humanities in Adventure and Outdoor Education students from the HUMAK University of Applied Sciences in September 2019.

Theme cards were utilised in the interviews with young people. These cards reflected the topics and objectives related to young people and the conditions in which they live and grow contained in Prime Minister Marin's (previously Prime Minister Rinne's) Government Programme. The cards translated the terms and concepts of the Government Programme into issues relevant to young people's daily lives and activities.

Each young person chose the theme or themes they wished to talk about and on which they wished to express their opinions in the interview. The themes included digital media, mental wellbeing, housing and the living environment, inequality, future prospects, increasing the age of compulsory education, hobbies, sustainable development and climate change. The themes on which the largest number of young people wished to give their opinions were hobbies, alcohol and drugs, gaming, mental health, young people's daily lives, bullying, and sustainable development and climate change. The concepts of democracy and participation sparked the least discussion among young people, but when the same ideas were expressed in terms of 'exerting influence and having your opinion heard', the concepts were understood better.

Of the young people who were interviewed, 41 per cent spoke about hobbies, and this was the most popular theme over all. Hobbies offered young people friends, physical activity, team spirit, togetherness, career opportunities, social skills as well as enjoyment and something to do. In their feedback, the interviewees stressed that all young people should have possibilities for having hobbies, and that far too often lack of money and the high expense of a hobby prevent a young person from taking part. As other obstacles that might prevent young people from taking part in a hobby, the respondents listed lack of time due to long school days and/or commutes, long distances to recreational facilities and no transport, having a job, being busy, age restrictions applied to hobbies as well as the difficulty of joining hobby groups in which you have not been involved from childhood. Young people also said that the same amount of opportunities for hobbies were not offered in all municipalities. Young people said that they would like more dedicated youth facilities, especially for making music to prevent their band practices from disturbing the neighbours, and that designated parks and areas could be reserved for young people, similarly to the playgrounds for children.

Many young people felt that gaming was a meaningful activity and that it developed various skills, including language skills and strategic thinking. Digital games are one form of spending time together with and meeting friends. Gaming is the third most common topic about which young people wished to talk and had positive things to say.

Young people noted that alcohol and drugs are everywhere and easily available. They said they would like more education about alcohol and drugs, rather than scaremongering about addiction, and they would also like their parents and others close to them to set a good example in this respect. Young people feel that schools and educational institutions are places where education about substance abuse would best reach all young people and the topic could be discussed more openly 'without stigmatisation'.

Messages from young people emphasised that immediate intervention is needed in bullying. The bully or bullies must be given sanctions without delay, and the victim must also receive help immediately. Young people felt that bullies got off too lightly compared to their victims, and that far too often the bully is given a reprimand without any other consequences. Young people noted that moving from one school to another would not necessarily produce the desired result, as bullies often stick together in groups, and the bullying does not stop when one of the bullies is removed as the rest of the group will go on. Changing schools may work in larger cities, but in sparsely populated areas, another school may be too far away, which makes the transfer impossible.

Young people additionally pointed out that in the case of online bullying, the bully or bullies are difficult to identify as they can operate anonymously. They also reported being bullied at workplaces. Young people feel that some of their older colleagues mock them and that speaking with a supervisor about bullying is difficult as they fear that this would result in an escalation of the workplace bullying. They expect adults to intervene quickly when they observe bullying or when a young person tells them about bullying.

Young people would like to see improvements in services put in place to respond to social exclusion among young people and to improve their mental wellbeing. Young people are concerned over these issues and expect immediate improvements. As one possible solution, they find low threshold services which could provide help faster and more directly.

Climate issues and climate anxiety were mentioned often in the interviews. Young people wish to take action and find solutions to sustainable development and climate change issues. Young people consider what each individual can do in their daily lives but also contemplate structural methods for halting climate change.

A summary of the interviews with young people was submitted to Minister of Science and Culture Hanna Kosonen on Wednesday

25 September 2019. Link to a video compilation of feedback from young people, edited and published by students from the HUMAK Turku campus: https://youtu.be/fGky3vIFV_4

Survey for young people, youth workers and policy-makers concerning the national youth work and youth policy programme 2020-2023

A national Webropol survey was carried out between 25 June and 15 August 2019. A total of 150 people responded to it. The respondents included NGOs, local governments, private individuals as well as companies and other organisations, of which the three first groups provided the most responses.

Respondents were asked about their opinions on limiting the national youth work and youth policy programme's target group by age:

- the minimum age limits proposed varied between the ages of 0 and 16, and the median was 12 years;
- the maximum age limits proposed varied between the ages of 15 and 28, and the median was 27.5 years.

Respondents were asked to select three subject areas that should be included in the programme and rank them in an order of importance. The following subject areas received the most support: 1) Participation interpreted in a broad sense, active citizenship; 2) Adequate mental health services and prevention of mental health issues as well as education related to these areas, preventing exclusion and reducing bullying; as well as 3) Equal and fair opportunities to participate in hobbies. Other subject areas that were highlighted include equality, non-discrimination, internationality, climate issues and multi-professional cooperation between local governments.

Consultation on the draft programme

A consultation on the draft programme was organised between 14 October and 4 November using the lausuntopalvelu.fi web service. A total of 111 statements were submitted on the draft programme by the deadline.

The greatest number of statements was submitted by NGOs and foundations, while there were also some agencies among the respondents (including Regional State Administrative Agencies, the National Audiovisual Institute, the Finnish National Agency for Education and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare), local governments and the State Youth Council.

The statements highlighted themes which the respondents wished to have more visibility in the programme. These themes included non-discrimination as a cross-cutting theme/a separate objective, preventive substance abuse services and substance abuse education, work focusing on gambling harms as well as the funding of Ohjaamo services and the determination of its coordination responsibilities. As a result of this consultation round, some of these themes were made more visible in the final programme.

Some respondents felt that the objective of preventing social exclusion set for the programme in the Government Programme was not visible enough in the draft. Others felt that strengthening everyday life management would promote the prevention of social exclusion. When prevention of exclusion is verbalised as a smoothly running daily life rather than only focusing on more targeted work, preventive work becomes more

prominent in the programme and can be seen as something that concerns all young people.

Some respondents felt that the draft programme was too incoherent due to the diverging scales and scopes of the draft's objectives, target groups and impacts. Based on the feedback, some of the objectives in the draft were compiled into larger entities in the final programme.

To see all the statements submitted on the programme, visit: <https://www.lausuntopalvelu.fi/FI/Proposal/Participation?proposalId=3d71440e-e1d8-4947-a0dd-a978e7fc2e2d>



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