

Green and White Finland - Transition into Greener Economy and Society and Adaptation to Changing Demographics in Finland

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1 INTRODUCTION: THE CHALLENGES OF FINLAND

Finland has experienced a real roller coaster in terms of economic, employment and restructuring developments, particularly since 1990 – and continues to do so.

The structural challenges of EU – globalisation, climate change and an ageing population – are particularly pertinent for Finland. Finland is highly dependent on the global export market, making her vulnerable for global crisis. Finland's first post-war global success was built around paper-industry, which is very energy intensive, and is now facing pressures from all sides – the climate change and greening economy, changing customer values towards recycling and rising global competition from countries with huge fast-growing forest resources. Finally ageing, which is a pan-European challenge, is particularly steep in Finland, with facing two decades of one of the worst dependency rates in the world.

Finland is a small country with limited natural and manpower resources, the latter of which is exacerbated by demographics and a low level of immigration, also in future prospects. This means Finland can only take the "high road" to secure success in global competition, i.e. investing in continuous innovation and environmental and societal sustainability. The success formula becomes thus innovation in green+white innovation = sustainable competitive productivity > sustainable well-being and society. It also means that the green and white themes – technological and service innovations in energy efficiency and meeting the social and health service needs become more and more intertwined.

On this basis, the discussion in Finland, on the strategic and forecast level, and in the different levels of implementation is mostly revolving around the concepts of "sustainability" or "sustainable productivity", addressing often at the same time environmental and social sustainability.

Finnish industry has traditionally been energy intensive and concentrated around big companies, so energy issues have always been high on the industrial and political agenda. With the climate, carbon emission and sustainability pressures rising, domestically and globally, particularly the last decade has witnessed a boost in activity around innovation in sustainable production and a sustainable society in general.

In terms of energy strategies, Finland has pursued a rather unprejudiced, if not exceptional, path by increasing nuclear energy, the latest decision being a National Government proposal 6.5.2010 to build two new plants in Finland. This decision was coupled with a special "renewable energy package" emphasising use of woodchips, wind, biomass and other renewable sources of energy, plus boosting recycling and use of waste. The package was predicted to create 15 000 new jobs.

Finland is putting a lot of hope in taking a high road in innovation in all possible areas in industry and services. A lot of hope is invested in the new backbone of the economy, ICT and related industries – which, after a spectacular global success in the last decade, epitomised by Nokia – are now facing fierce global competition. Finland is looking in to new areas of success based on the high-end of know how – in biotechnology, energy production and welfare services among others.

Among the most important challenges for the Finnish economy and labour market is the imminent generation change, starting in full effect around 2005 and peaking around 2020-2030. As Finland is a low immigration country, it is likely to face severe shortages of labour in future, alongside

increasing pressure on public finances. These trends are likely to impact on local authorities most of all, as the delivery of education, social and health care services is largely in their hands.

The latest forecast of the Finnish economy and labour markets was made by the Government Institute for Economic Research, VATT. The forecast pointed out that Finland is shifting from an industrial society to a service society, and entering an era of a huge demand of labour in the social and health service sectors. The forecast predicted a need of 120 000 new workers by 2025 in these fields for Finland. Translated to big EU countries like Germany, France or UK, it would mean a demand of over a million new workers in these fields in countries of their size.

The major constraint and difficulty in adapting to these challenges lies probably in the ability of Finnish municipalities to negotiate economic pressures and expenditure and to implement relevant changes in education content and intake as well as welfare service planning and delivery. This might prove difficult because Finland has, besides an almost a world record demographic change, and major rise in social and health demand, at the same time a major restructuring process going on in the municipalities – the biggest in Finnish independence since 1917. On top of all this the municipalities themselves have an aged workforce – half of health and social work staff will be pensioned by 2020.

Local government is a very important and powerful actor in Finland, as it is in all of the Nordic countries, and what happens to local government has tremendous implications for Finland. The municipalities employ about 470.000 people (around 20% of Finnish workforce). The municipalities are responsible for social services and basic health, and through joint-municipality regional collaboration, also for special health care (and the education system with the exception of universities). Work in the municipalities – particularly in the social, health and educational sectors, are the cornerstone of women's full-time employment in Finland (90% of the staff are women), so what happens here has strategic consequences for Finland.

In 1990, Finland had the highest early retirement rate of all the Nordic countries with an employment rate as low as 47% for men aged 55-65, and the imminent generation change with the big post-war generations being pensioned. To reverse this trend the government and the social partners agreed on a five-year national strategy, the Age Programme, launched in 1998, which aimed at changing the attitudes of all stakeholders towards ageing population by turning it into an asset for society by maintaining their health status and working capacity, improving work environment, promoting partial retirement through employment subsidies and helping older unemployed back to work. This was the first major "wake-up call" on the age and white-job issue. Since then the challenge has become all the more pressing.

2 THE RESPONSE IN FINLAND

Finland is thus responding – to simplify matters – to three strategic drivers: high dependency of global markets, a shift to sustainable energy and society and a world record demographic challenge in terms of aging. Finland's response has been, understood in a broad way, to invest in a national system of innovation¹ and a high level of cooperation among stakeholders and actors aiming to develop sustainable productivity.

¹ http://www.research.fi/Suomen_innovaatiojarjestelma2 (In Finnish)

Figure 1: Strategic drivers as a backdrop to ‘green and white’ challenges in Finland

Strategic driver	Consequence for Finland	Responses in Finland
High global export dependence	Vulnerability to the global crisis and delays in recovery	Strong emphasis on continuous innovation and sustainable productivity; High level of cooperation among stakeholders Prudence in public economy
Need to shift from energy-intensive to knowledge intensive production; need to secure sustainable energy production	Restructuring of industry, particularly paper industry; Need to develop knowledge-intensive production and services	A “two prong” response: building nuclear plants and increasing resource efficiency and production of renewable energy
Very aged demographic structure, one of world’s worst dependency rates, low immigration	Limited workforce, imminent shortage of labour, need to prolong working careers; need to secure services in social and health care	Rising pension age; Age Programme; investment in quality and well-being of working life and careers; restructuring of municipalities Arnkil 2010

There is broad political consensus about the need to take the high road against the global challenges – i.e. with limited resources the only possibility is to make innovations that are environmentally and socially sustainable and to have good cooperation networks.

So in general terms, one can say that Finnish politics, strategies and activities addressing the “green and white” challenges are highly consensual. This does not mean that there are not tensions, contradictions and even paradoxes. One only needs to point to a recent example: Finland decides to build more nuclear power – clearly swimming against a global tide – with the argument of producing clean energy – and all this with the green party in government! Nevertheless, Finland has been very active in looking for technical solutions and good practices to promote the transition to a greener economy.

A broad consensus prevails also on the urgency to address the white challenge. The National Age Programme, launched in 1998, was a “first-step” success in many ways, and was also reviewed in the EU Peer review². Since then the road has been rougher. A recent attempt to move forward in this issue was only partly successful. The National Government and social partners agreed in 2009 on preparations for extending working life careers and rising pension age from 63 to 65. Two committees were set, the so-called Rantala-committee addressing pension age and Ahtela-committee making mostly suggestions on the quality of working life (enhancing workability, occupational health, early interventions in disabilities, but also transitions in and accessibility of education). Both committees were due in January 2010 with their proposals.

² www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu/peer-reviews

The Rantala committee failed to reach unanimous recommendations, and was discontinued. The Ahtela committee was more successful and submitted its proposal 1.2.2010, and got a mildly positive, but mixed reception. An OECD assessment³, commissioned by the National Government, was mildly positive, indicating that the proposals made sense, but were insufficient. ETLA, the Research Institute of Finnish Economy⁴, also criticized the proposal for being vague. With these rather inconclusive results, the National Government proposed to continue on a tripartite basis to continue finding solutions to prolonging working-life careers and rise the pension age. But with the new parliamentary elections approaching, this tough bundle will be left for the new Government to tackle.

In the present turbulent global era it is difficult to make judgements about the adequacy of the Finnish response to the green and white challenges. With this reservation, one can still say that Finland is in some respects rather well prepared to address the strategic challenges. Besides a long tradition of quite consensual, multi-party and coalition government politics, Finland also has in place a broad and well-developed set of strategies, foresight methods and networks, open forums for debate and discussion addressing the green and white challenges. Finland has so far been able to steer clear of the worst consequences of the 2008 global economic crisis on the basis of rather prudent economic and investment politics, and there is also a good degree of awareness and activity addressing these challenges. So overall, Finland is clearly very active – whether that will be enough remains to be seen.

On this basis, this review of the transition into greener economy and society and adaptation to changing demographics in Finland is in the following divided into two main categories:

- Strategies, foresights and policies on green and white sustainability
- Examples of key networks, platforms and good practices promoting green and white sustainability

3 STRATEGIES, FORESIGHTS AND POLICIES ON GREEN SUSTAINABILITY

National Government Programme

The National Government Programme⁵ makes special mention of a need of balance between man and nature, climate change and globalisation, and on this basis a special climate and energy strategy was devised. The programme also contains several aspects addressing the ageing challenges ranging from renewal of pension policies to securing social-and health services.

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development

The National Strategy for sustainable development, "Towards sustainable choices. A nationally and globally sustainable Finland" addresses both the green and white challenges.⁶

³ www.government.fi/ajankohtaista/tiedotteet/tiedote/en.jsp?oid=289590

⁴ www.etla.fi/

⁵ <http://www.vn.fi/toiminta/politiikkaohjelmat/en.jsp>

⁶ <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=9732&lan=en>

The strategy was adopted in June 2006 by the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development. In December 2006 the strategy was adopted also by the Council of State. The starting point of the strategy was to combine the sustainable use, management and protection of natural capital with citizens' well-being as well as to ensure the integrity of the society so that the result would be a competent Finland that utilizes its strengths in a sustainable manner. In order to ensure the horizontal scope and extensive treatment of the strategy a broad-based multi-stakeholder Sustainable Development Strategy Group was established in 2005.

National Government Foresight Report: Towards a thriving low-carbon Finland

The Government adopted in October 2009 the Foresight Report on Long-term Climate and Energy Policy. Setting a target to reduce Finland's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80 per cent from the 1990 level by 2050 as part of an international effort, the report marks out the road to a low-carbon Finland in 2050.⁷

In the Climate and Energy Strategy adopted in the autumn of 2008, the Government gave an outline of its climate and energy policy focusing on the years up to 2020. The strategy put forward concrete measures for Finland to achieve the EU's climate and energy objectives. In its discussion of climate and energy policy beyond 2020 and outlining of paths towards a sustainable level of emissions over the long term, the foresight report supplements and supports the work carried out as part of the strategy.

Renewable Energy Package

Ministerial working group on climate and energy politics agreed 20 April 2010 on a package of renewable energy⁸. This is in response to the EU-requirement of raising the share of renewable energy by 38 terawatts (38% of energy consumption) by 2020 in Finland. The package contains measures to increase use of forest- (bio/woodchip), wind, biogas and heat pumps. With the measures CO2 emissions would decrease by 7 million tons by 20120.

The government estimate is that all this would create 15 000 new 'green' jobs and also promote the development of Finland as a forerunner of sustainable energy know-how.

Natural Resource Strategy for Finland

Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund⁹, which is an independent public fund under the supervision of the Finnish Parliament promotes the welfare of Finnish society, has devised a natural resource strategy for Finland, "Using Natural Resource Intelligently".¹⁰

Finnish Economy as Material Flows

The Finnish Environmental Institute made 2006 – 2009 an analysis on the life-cycle environmental impacts of Finnish material flows by economic branches and products internally and externally.¹¹

⁷ <http://www.vnk.fi/hankkeet/tulevaisuusselonteko/en.jsp>

⁸ http://www.tem.fi/?s=2471&89519_m=98836 (In Finnish)

⁹ http://www.sitra.fi/fi/Innovaatiotoiminta/kansallinen_luonnonvarastrategia/materiaaleja/materiaaleja.htm

¹⁰ www.sitra.fi/.../A%20Natural%20Resource%20Strategy%20for%20Finland.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=334358&lan=FI> (in Finnish)

Sustainable Public Procurement

The public sector is pioneering sustainable procurement in Finland. The value of public procurement in Finland is EUR 27 billion per year. This means that public actors have good reason to make procurements that will help to mitigate climate change, reduce the amount of waste and prevent pollution of the environment. The Finnish Government recently passed a resolution that encourages all public actors to adopt sustainable procurement – the central government, regional governments and the municipal sector.¹²

New Wellsprings of Vitality in Finland after the Crisis

The Finnish Innovation Fund, SITRA's new book, *New Wellsprings for a Vital Future after the Crisis in Finland*, addresses both the green and white challenges and a way forward for the future.¹³

4 EXAMPLES OF KEY ACTORS, NETWORKS, PLATFORMS AND GOOD PRACTICES PROMOTING GREEN SUSTAINABILITY

FINNISH NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (FNCSO)

The key hub for sustainable development, both green and white is the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (FNCSO), which was established in 1993 and has continued to operate through several changes of government.¹⁴ Finland's sustainable development policy is based on institutional learning and broad participation where various societal actors take part in the definition and implementation of sustainable development.

Over the past decade, the FNCSO has provided a permanent focal point for sustainable development issues in Finland, enabling the process of integrating continual sustainable development. The composition of the FNCSO is broad. It was chaired by the Prime Ministers - four altogether - for 14 years, until April 2007. The Commission is now chaired by the Minister of Employment from the Ministry of Employment and Economy, with the vice-chair, Minister of the Environment. Four other Ministers from the Government as well as representatives from all spheres of the Finnish society are members of the Commission. The Parliament, public administration including local authorities, business and industry, labour unions, NGOs, various interest groups, the media and churches are all invited to give their input in guiding Finland into a sustainable path. Finland's two official languages Finnish and Swedish have also been taken into account in the representation, as well as the Finnish indigenous people Sami.

The FNCSO acts as a forum where different stakeholders can present their ideas, goals and programmes and engage in a broad debate about sustainability. The Commission has introduced and debated many highly topical themes, acted as an interpreter between national and international sustainable development trends and supported the work carried out by various actors. The Commission has played an active role in the preparation, endorsement and approval of different strategies, programmes and processes for sustainable development, including the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of June 2006. Finnish municipalities are also

¹² <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=319422&lan=EN>

¹³ <http://www.sitra.fi/en/>

¹⁴ <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=4412&lan=en>

active in promoting sustainable development. In 2007, two thirds of the Finnish municipalities had either established or were in the process of establishing their own local agenda 21.

Government foresight network

Government Foresight Network is an inter-ministerial forum for cooperation and exchange of information in issues relating to the anticipation of the future.¹⁵

Anticipation of the future refers to a systematic and inclusive process involving the collection, assessment and analysis of information. It also includes outlining projections and visions for the future in the medium and long term.

All ministries are involved in anticipation activities relevant to their appropriate administrative sector. Anticipation activities undertaken by the ministries serve the strategic planning and direction of the administrative sector as well as the Government's decision-making. The Government Foresight Network is a forum for discussing the results of the anticipation work carried out in the administrative sectors.

Appointed by the Prime Minister's Office, the Network's term lasts until the end of the Government's term of office. The Network includes members from all ministries, and its presidency rotates among the ministries.

National Foresight Network

The National Foresight Network, an open network, brings together Finnish foresight experts and decision-makers.¹⁶ The challenges that Finland faces are taken under discussion and subjected to closer examination, promoting innovation activities that provide the necessary answers to the challenges. The goal of the cooperation is to promote the long-term perspective in Finnish decision-making and to improve the society's ability for a controlled structural renewal.

The National Foresight Network has two primary modes of operation:

1. subject matter experts and policymakers gather together in thematic groups to identify and closely examine change drivers that are relevant for Finland
2. the Foresight.fi website, launched in December 2008, aggregates together foresight insights and relevant information from Finland and abroad

In addition an expert group was assembled to continue mapping changes in the well-being of Finnish citizens.

Leading Finnish foresight experts, decision-makers from the public and private sectors, representatives from the research community, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are invited to join the thematic groups. The workshops draw up a summary of their work, which defines the key challenges and opportunities as well as identifies practical measures to answer them. The Foresight.fi website makes the results available to all interested parties. In addition, the results are communicated directly to the relevant decision-makers. In this way, the National Foresight Network intermediates between foresight professionals and Finnish decision-makers.

¹⁵ <http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/toiminta/ennakointiverkosto/en.jsp>

¹⁶ <http://www.foresight.fi/info-in-english/>

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the Municipalities

The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities represents the towns and municipalities of Finland. The Association and the municipalities have been for a long time active on the strategic and practical level in environmental matters. In the latest Association strategy, the climate change is one of the 7 focus points.¹⁷ Many big cities, like Tampere, in Finland have been particularly active in environmental issues. The municipal sector has great responsibility for mitigating climate change. Energy production and saving, and infrastructure and transport are areas where local authorities can significantly help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2005, around 15 per cent of the electricity demand in Finland was produced centrally by municipal power plants. The municipal share of district heating production was approximately 80 per cent and the yearly carbon dioxide emissions from the energy production of the twelve largest cities made up 15 per cent of the total emissions in Finland.

In its new publication “Local Authorities and Climate Change”, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities emphasises the key role of local authorities in mitigating and adapting to climate change, and introduces some of the good practices that have been established throughout Finland. The publication looks at local authorities as energy producers and consumers, the principle of sustainable procurement and ways to limit urban sprawl and traffic growth.

The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities has, together with several Finnish local authorities, launched a national “Cities for Climate Protection” campaign. It promotes renewable energy and energy saving schemes, and development in the field of waste management. Many local authorities are also participating in various national and/or EU research projects on preparing for and adapting to climate change.

Promoting Innovation Towards a Greener and Sustainable Society

The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES), operating as an agency of the Ministry of Employment and Economy, is the most important publicly funded expert organisation for financing research, development and innovation in Finland, and it has a broad set of programmes addressing the green and white sustainability issues, such as BioRefie on biomass refinement, Symbio on biotechnology, Finnwell on health care productivity, Groove on renewable energy, Innovations in Social and Health Care and Sustainable Communities.¹⁸ TEKES has three new programmes in preparation, one of which is called Low Carbon Economy.¹⁹

Promoting Energy Efficiency

Motiva Ltd is a state owned expert company promoting efficient and sustainable use of energy and materials. Its services are utilised by the public administration, businesses, communities, and consumers. Motiva provides services in marketing of Energy Efficiency Agreements, support and monitoring of implementation, development of energy audit and analysis activity, increasing the use of renewable energy, promoting of material efficiency, publicising energy and material efficiency, influencing attitudes and consumer habits, monitoring and impacts assessment.²⁰

¹⁷ http://www.kunnat.net/k_perussivu.asp?path=1;55264;122868;147048

¹⁸ <http://www.tekes.fi/en/community/Ongoing%20programmes/554/Ongoing%20programmes/1425>

¹⁹ <http://www.tekes.fi/en/community/Programmes%20in%20preparation/961/Programmes%20in%20preparation/2023>

²⁰ http://www.motiva.fi/en/areas_of_operation/

Compilation of Best Practices in Finland in Green Sustainability

On the Ministry of Environment web-pages there is a compilation of best practices in Finland on addressing the green challenge.²¹

Promoting Practical Green Innovation

One hub for the carbon neutral community and company development is Devoi Ltd. Devoi Ltd offers business and executives a forum, where, by working together, new tools and visions for meeting the future better prepared, are created. Devoi Ltd's projects also offer companies opportunities to create new business.²²

Amaze Your Community® is one of Devoi projects. Amaze Your Community is a forum created by open-minded executives, where corporate social responsibility becomes part of a company's strategy. Amaze Your Community members have created this unique forum, where companies' social responsibility and needs of the community meet in a mutually beneficial way. The Carbon Neutral Municipalities, CANEMU (acronym HINKU in Finnish) project is one of Amaze Your Community's first projects, in which five Finnish municipalities have committed to significantly cut down their carbon emissions in the coming years.²³

This ground-breaking project involves the municipalities of Mynämäki, Uusikaupunki, Kuhmoinen, Padasjoki and Parikkala. In the city of Uusikaupunki alone, it is estimated that as many as one hundred new jobs have been created and several hundred more are expected in just a few years.

The project aims at greenhouse gas emission reductions both in the near future (2-5 years) and in the longer term (6-20 years). Commitment of the municipal authorities, local businesses and residents to emission reductions is essential to success. Researchers, experts, businesses, politicians and local residents will together devise and tailor solutions that can reduce emissions, especially related to housing, transportation and foodstuffs. All the municipalities will strive to increase their use of renewable energy and improve their material and energy efficiency.

Corporate responsibility promoted by the Confederation of Finnish Industries

The Confederation of Finnish Industries has compiled a review of Corporate Responsibility of Finnish Business addressing in many ways both green and white sustainability.²⁴

5 STRATEGIES, FORESIGHTS AND POLICIES ON WHITE SUSTAINABILITY

The National Government Programme

The National Government Programme²⁵ contains several aspects addressing the ageing challenges ranging from renewal of pension policies to securing social-and health services.

²¹ <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=79126&lan=en>

²² http://www.devoi.fi/index.php?node_id=15187

²³ <http://www.environment.fi/default.asp?contentid=357297&lan=EN>

²⁴ http://www.ek.fi/www/fi/haku/google_haku.php?we_lv_search_0=corporate+responsibility&Haku=hae

²⁵ <http://www.vn.fi/toiminta/politiikkaohjelmat/en.jsp>

Latest Labour Market Forecast in Finland Revealing a Huge White Challenge

The latest forecast of the Finnish economy and labour markets was made by the Government Institute for Economic Research, VATT²⁶ in March 2010 for the first time with the so called Applied General Equilibrium model (AGE), in the VATT application called VATTAGE.²⁷

The forecast pointed out that Finland is shifting from an industrial society to a service society, and entering an era of a huge demand of labour in the social and health service sectors. The forecast predicted a need of 120 000 new workers by 2025.²⁸ This does not mean industry would play an insignificant role in the society – to the contrary, since Finland is highly dependent on exports – but in terms of employment, jobs and skills the emphasis is shifting to services, understood in a broad way.

Making the basic calculation with the VATTAGE-forecast is just the first step towards translating this into employment and educational strategies and measures, both on the central-ministerial and regional-local level. This work has just started, and this is also preparing the key strategies for the next national Government term (Parliamentary elections are held in the spring 2011).

The present plan for education in the social and health area is based on the mid-range plan, 'KESU', of the Ministry of Education and it is now due to a renewal based on the process started with the VATTAGE-forecast.²⁹ The challenges of adult education have been addressed in the Working Paper on 'Renewal of Adult Education', by the Ministry of Education.³⁰

The major constraint and difficulty in adapting to these challenges lies probably in the ability of Finnish municipalities to negotiate economic pressures and expenditure and to implement relevant changes in education content and intake as well as welfare service planning and delivery. This might prove difficult because Finland has, besides an almost a world record demographic change, and major rise in social and health demand, at the same time a major restructuring process going on in the municipalities – the biggest in Finnish independence since 1917.

Local government is a very important and powerful actor Finland, as it is in all of the Nordic countries, and what happens to local government has tremendous implications for Finland. The municipalities are responsible for social services and basic health, and through joint-municipality regional collaboration, also for special health care (and the education system with the exception of universities). Work in the municipalities – particularly in the social, health and educational sectors, are the cornerstone of women's full-time employment in Finland, so what happens here has strategic consequences for Finland.

It will be impossible for Finland, and especially the municipalities, to completely fill the gap of 120 000 new employees to health services by 2025. It would mean hogging up two whole young age cohorts, which now are around 67 000 – and leaving all the other sectors without.

The response must be in innovations and rising productivity in social and health services. This means more emphasis on open and integrated care, making it possible for elderly to stay longer in their homes with new technical and social care innovations and seamless service chains. It also means new cooperation and use of resources between the public, private and third sector.

So far careers in social work, health and education – the key jobs in the municipalities addressing the white challenge – have enjoyed popularity among the young generations as a career choice,

²⁶ <http://www.vatt.fi/en/>

²⁷ http://www.vatt.fi/site/en/publications/latestPublications/publication/Publication_1345_id/832

²⁸ http://www.vatt.fi/julkaisut/uusimmatJulkaisut/julkaisu/Publication_6093_id/855

²⁹ http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/koulutuspolitiikka/asiakirjat/kesu_2012_fi.pdf

³⁰ http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2008/Akku_johtoryhman_valiraportti.html

and no really serious recruitment problems have been faced until now. But the scene is rapidly changing. The health sector is already experiencing shortage of labour in doctors, nurses and various help staff. Attention to this has been paid by various measures, like devising an Action Plan to Increase Attractiveness and Effectiveness of Care Professions³¹ and the Ministry of Employment and Economy HYVÄ-programme (see below).

National Development Plan for Social and Health Services, KASTE

The Kaste programme³² is the national development plan for social and health services, which covers the period 2008-2011. The main aims of the programme are based on the long-term strategic objectives for the social and health administrative sector. The aims are that:

- municipal inhabitants' social inclusion will increase and levels of social exclusion will be reduced
- the municipal inhabitants' wellbeing and health will increase, inequalities in wellbeing and health diminish, and
- the quality, effectiveness and availability of services for the municipal inhabitants will improve and regional inequalities will be reduced.

The aim is to achieve the objectives of the programme by prevention and early intervention by ensuring the sufficiency of staff and strengthening skills, and by social and health care services functioning as an integral whole and using effective models of operation.

Strategy of the Ministry of Employment and Economy addressing the development of the Welfare Sector

The Ministry of Employment and Economy has outlined a strategy, 'HYVÄ' (literally 'GOOD') and measures to meet the employment needs of the social and health sectors by increasing cooperation of job centres, regions, education, adult training, business and others and increasing employment training in health professions.³³

The national strategy for sustainable development

The National Strategy for sustainable development, mentioned in the Green strategies above, called 'Towards Sustainable Choices' addresses both the green and white challenges.³⁴

Extending working life careers, promoting well-being at work and rising the pension age

The National Age Programme, a cross-ministerial joint-effort, launched in 1998, was a "first-step" success in addressing the work-career and pensions dimension of the 'white challenge'. It was also reviewed in the EU Peer review³⁵. The programme aimed at raising the actual retirement age (which at the time was around 58) by putting emphasis on the quality of working life, age management, battling age discrimination, disseminating good practice and generally rising awareness of the 'age issue'. The actual average pension age rose to near 60 and awareness of the age issue, need of good age management and well-being at work increased, according to

³¹ <http://groups.stakes.fi/KHS/FI/hoitotyto.htm>

³² http://www.stm.fi/en/strategies_and_programmes/kaste

³³ http://www.tem.fi/files/25854/Strategian_toimeenpano_Laiho.pdf

³⁴

<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=319422&lan=EN>

³⁵ www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu/peer-reviews

independent evaluations. These results cannot be attributed to the Age Programme alone, but it was deemed to have had a positive effect.

The role of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, one of the leading of its kind in the world, was particularly seminal here.³⁶ The themes of the Age Programme are still highly relevant. In order to address the 'white challenge' Finland needs to address not only the social and health services and professions, but also the totality of the quality of working life, to make it more attractive and sustainable, making it possible for people to stay longer in work. But the road to address these issues has been rougher since the Age programme.

A recent attempt to move forward in this issue was only partly successful. The National Government and social partners agreed in 2009 on preparations for extending working life careers and rising pension age from 63 to 65. Two committees were set, the so-called Rantala-committee addressing pension age and Ahtela-committee making mostly suggestions on the quality of working life (enhancing workability, occupational health, early interventions in disabilities, but also transitions in and accessibility of education). Both committees were due in January 2010 with their proposals.

The Rantala committee failed to reach unanimous recommendations, and was discontinued. The Ahtela committee was more successful and submitted its proposal 1.2.2010, and got a mildly positive, but mixed reception. An OECD assessment³⁷, commissioned by the National Government, was mildly positive, indicating that the proposals made sense, but were insufficient. ETLA, the Research Institute of Finnish Economy³⁸, also criticized the proposal for being vague. With these rather inconclusive results, the National Government proposed to continue on a tripartite basis to continue finding solutions to prolonging working-life careers and rise the pension age. But with the new parliamentary elections approaching, this tough bundle will be left for the new Government to tackle.

6 KEY ACTORS, NETWORKS, PLATFORMS AND GOOD PRACTICES PROMOTING WHITE SUSTAINABILITY

Government Foresight Network

Government Foresight Network is an interministerial forum for cooperation and exchange of information in issues relating to the anticipation of the future, and it is a key network in making preparations addressing the 'white challenge'.³⁹

Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development

The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (FNCSd) is one of the key networks promoting also 'white sustainability'.⁴⁰

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the Municipalities

The PARAS-programme, and its evaluation via the ARTTU-evaluation programme constitute one of the key ways of addressing the white challenge.⁴¹ PARAS is a joint effort of central government

³⁶ <http://www.ttl.fi/en/Pages/default.aspx>

³⁷ www.government.fi/ajankohtaista/tiedotteet/tiedote/en.jsp?oid=289590

³⁸ www.etla.fi/

³⁹ <http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/toiminta/ennakointiverkosto/en.jsp>

⁴⁰ <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=4412&lan=en>

and the municipalities to address the economic and societal challenges of local government. The first challenge was to strengthen the economic viability of local government by reducing the number of municipalities through amalgamations from 450 to 340. The second challenge, which addresses particularly the 'white challenge' is a renewal of municipal service production and recruitment via service innovations, decoupling of the service chain and increasing outsourcing and collaboration.

Forum of Well-Being at Work

An important network concerning well-being at work and quality of working life is built around the Forum of Well-Being at Work, run by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.⁴²

Promoting Innovation in Welfare

As it was pointed out above, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (TEKES), operating as an agency of the Ministry of Employment and Economy has a broad set of programmes addressing also white sustainability issues, Finnwell on health care productivity, Innovations in Social and Health Care and Sustainable Communities in particular.⁴³

Internet Platform for Social and Health Innovation ('Innokylä')

An innovation exchange platform on social and health work is under development in cooperation between the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the Association of Local Authorities, The National Institute for Health and Welfare, the Finnish Funding Agency for technology and Innovation, and others.⁴⁴

The mass of information and data on Finnish health and social policy is to be put to smart use, under this new service innovation project. The aim is to make data and information more easily accessed and used. The project will amass information online to help inform the public debate on social and health policy and practice. This is to be done using online facilities. These involve a 'Service Scale' to make information available, and a virtual community for creating, assessing and using operational models. The community comprises a number of hands-on activities, including an innovation bank, college, and library. An innovation clinic will enable different actors to develop in unison new kinds of service. There will be 'innovation markets' at social and health sector events, which will present the *Innokylä* (literally 'Innovation village') concept and its services.

Innovation Centre for Independent Coping

Innovation Centre for Independent Coping, ISAK, is a network promoting innovation, research, services, products and jobs aiming at supporting independent coping in the welfare business and services.⁴⁵

⁴¹ http://www.kunnat.net/k_peruslistasivu.asp?path=1;161;279;280;60954;60958;144815

⁴² <http://www.stm.fi/tyosuojelu/tyohyvinvointi/foorumi> (in Finnish)

⁴³ <http://www.tekes.fi/en/community/Ongoing%20programmes/554/Ongoing%20programmes/1425>

⁴⁴ http://www.kunnat.net/k_perussivu.asp?path=1;29;348;31540;148166;151185 and <http://www.stm.fi/en/focus/article/view/1437146>

⁴⁵ <http://www.isak.fi/index2.html>

Active Life Village

Active Life Village is a centre of welfare competence with the goal of promoting the creation and commercialisation of competitive innovations together with users. The non-profit Active Life Village Ltd functions as a catalyst for welfare service innovations, and provides companies with an inspirational environment, development activities and business support.⁴⁶

Users, subscribers, different types of experts and researchers work in collaboration in the environment of Active Life Village. Partners include service and technology companies in the field of welfare, public and third sector organisations and other customers. Cooperation takes place with elderly persons, people of working age, families, children and young people. Innovations assist in encouraging people to take responsibility for their own welfare.

Innovations developed at Active Life Village are aimed at promoting people's well-being. With the support of partners, they are further developed into cost-effective solutions, which are beneficial for the whole society. The solutions that are developed establish a firm foundation for business operations in the field and for developing the entire service system. At Active Life Village, ideas do not remain at a developmental phase.

Good Practices in TYKES-programme

TYKES is a Workplace Development Programme of the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, TEKES. TYKES finances expert input into organisational development with a special interest to promote sustainable productivity at workplaces. In the case bank of TYKES there are several examples of good practice addressing the age issue, age management and quality of work.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ http://www.activelifevillage.fi/en/?option=com_content&view=article&id=41&Itemid=17

⁴⁷ http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/02_tyosuhteet_ja_lait/0181_sosvastuu/04_hyvatkaytannot/index.jsp (in Finnish)