

National Strategy Report on Social Protection

AND SOCIAL INCLUSION 2008-2011

ISSN 1236-2115

ISBN 978-952-00-2674-5 (PDF)

Helsinki 2008

DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Publisher Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland		Date 15 September 2008	
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		Commissioned by Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	
		Date of appointing the organ	
Title of publication National Strategy Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008–2010			
Summary The European Union Member States prepare national reports for the promotion of social inclusion in 2008–2010. The national strategy reports are a part of the EU open method of coordination. They are compiled in accordance with the guidelines the Social Protection Committee issued in February 2008. The report should be submitted by 15 September 2008. A similar report has been drawn up in 2006 and a concise version in 2001 and 2003. In addition to the key messages and the situation assessment described in the introduction, the report has three separate sections. These sections present the strategy report on social inclusion, the pension strategy report and the report on strategies for health care and long-term care. The report ends with a relatively extensive set of appendices with information on social development indicators agreed within the EU as well as some of the tables and figures of the report. The structures and contents of the reports have been harmonised. The objective is thus to make it easier to monitor and assess the social and health policy measures adopted by the Member States. The intensity and contents of activities remains the responsibility of the Member States. The harmonised reporting supports cooperation and mutual understanding between the Member States. The social protection systems vary greatly in details. The organisation and financing of social security benefits and services fall under Member State competence. Cooperation between the Member States aims at reinforcing coordination and promoting the EU social dimension. Social policy objectives are a part of the Lisbon Strategy and contribute to the realisation of the Lisbon goals. The report has been compiled at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and experts in other administrative sectors have taken part in the process. The report has been discussed in the EU Sub-Committees under the Committee for EU Affairs. A consultation process with non-governmental social welfare and health organisations and Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the representatives of the largest municipalities was arranged during the compilation of the report. The national pension report has been drawn up in a cooperation group with representatives from insurance institutions and social partners. The report highlights as good national practices the following: (1) cross-sectoral welfare policy programme on children and youth in the City of Turku (social inclusion project), (2) Kaiku services by the Treasury (project on pensions), and (3) coordination measures carried out in the City of Tampere for health promotion. The key messages of the report can be summarised as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general overview of the social situation is positive. • Low income and problem prevention pose challenges to the strengthening of social inclusion. • The growth pressure of pension expenditure is under control – small pensions pose a challenge. • Diminishing health differences is the most important health policy challenge. 			
Key words health policy, pensions policy, poverty, public health, social exclusion, social protection			
Other information Internet: www.stm.fi/english			
Title and number of series Reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2008:39		ISSN 1236-2115	ISBN 978-952-00-2674-5 (PDF)
Number of pages 140	Language Finnish	Price	Publicity Public
Distributor/Orders		Financier Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	

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