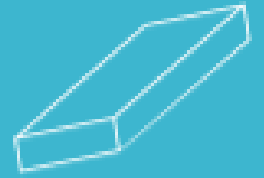


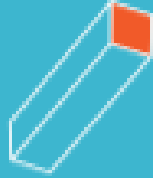


# 9

CHAPTER



# F



# N

# I

VOLUNTEERING  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
IN EUROPE

# L



# A

# N



# D

**AUTHOR**  
Anitta Raitanen,  
Kansalaisareena,  
Citizen Forum



## 1. VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPT DEFINITION

In Finland, there is a long tradition of forming associations and volunteering. "Associations have been decisive in the process of nation building which took off from a cultural awakening to create a status for the Finnish language and foster a distinct Finnish identity." (Hilger, P., 2008.)

Associations and mutual help, often organised through workers' councils, built up through volunteering. After the establishment of a state-based social security system in the 1960s, the state took over functions that earlier had been fulfilled by organisations of the informal sector. The state would guarantee better and more equitable services. The vast extension of public services until the early 1990s left little space for citizen's engagement and volunteering. The construction time of the welfare state in the 1970s was a dismal time for citizens associations. Volunteering was seen a threat to the professionalisation of care and social work. The voluntary sector was seen only filling gaps in the public services. (Ruuhonen 2003, in Hilger, P., 2008.)

This climate was hegemonic until the mid-1990s when the economic crisis changed attitudes. This crisis was the greatest watershed in recent Finnish history. Among its consequences was a reorganisation of public services, while at the same time neo-liberalist policies gained significance and competed increasingly with traditional welfare values. This period resulted in a modernisation of Finnish society that found its expression in a remarkable innovative strength. (Hilger P, 2006)

During the earlier period of welfare state expansion volunteering did not disappear, though. Associations were still growing in number and members, and even the "talkoo"-tradition of targeted mutual help to achieve a tangible goal transferred from the countryside into the cities. The role of volunteering closely related to the future of the welfare state. It first left the welfare state at large unchallenged and the sector retained only a supplementary role in the shadow of the state. Raija Julkunen, a student of the welfare state, concludes that "in the Finnish climate the associations and church are valued mainly if they help in the solving of social distress". (Julkunen 2000, in Hilger P, 2008.)

The voluntary sector in Finland is quite large and diverse with regard to its objectives and structures. It embraces everything from small associations with a few members to large, well-established, professional organisations. The voluntary sector's significance understands these days very well.

The recommendations of Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E) have had in Finland significance. The P.A.V.E recommendations promote and support volunteering as a demonstration of European values, providing a vehicle for active citizenship and contributing to economic and social-capital growth. P.A.V.E stresses the need for a partnership approach involving all stakeholders continuing to work towards an enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe.

Recognition of volunteers' individual and collective achievements are identified in P.A.V.E as essential to enabling volunteers to better apply the demonstrable skills and knowledge achieved

through volunteering in other areas of their lives and therefore further increase the impact of volunteering.

In Finland, there is no legal definition of volunteering. The most commonly used is the European Parliament's definition (2008):

- 1) Volunteering is not undertaken for financial reward, e.e.it is unpaid
- 2) It is undertaken of one's own free will
- 3) It brings benefit to a third party outside the circle of family and friends
- 4) It is open to all.

## 2. Volunteering landscape

According to a Eurobarometer survey on European Social Reality conducted in 2011, 39% of the Finnish population actively participate in voluntary work. This figure is well above the EU-28 average, 24%, and represents the third highest level of participation out of Member States. Voluntary activity is highest in the Netherlands, 57%, and second highest in Denmark, 43%. (Euroopan parlamentin erityisbarometri 75.2, 2011).

Voluntary work can be formally organised, but also unorganised. However, volunteering is not only a matter of getting people to work without pay but also brings development and/or satisfaction for the volunteers themselves. Volunteering offers a platform to express one's opinions and interests.

A survey conducted in 2015 indicated that 33% of Finnish people aged 15-79 had been involved in volunteering over the 4 weeks preceding the survey. This equates to 1,4 million people (1,5 million people in 2010). Interviewees have noted that levels of volunteering have remained relatively stable. However, growth in the number of new voluntary organisations has led to competition over volunteers. The number of volunteers has actually decreased in some organisations. (Kansalaisareena, HelsinkiMissio, Kirkkohallitus, Taloustutkimus 2015.)

The time spent in volunteering is growing. It was 18 hours a month 2002, 13 hours per four weeks in 2010 and 18 hours per four weeks in 2015. (Ibid; Yeung, A.B 2002).

Research in 2015 indicated that 69% (62% in 2002) of volunteers were involved in an organised form of volunteering, such as carrying out voluntary work for a voluntary association or organisation. The rest carried out voluntary activities in an informal sphere. In 2015, 16% had done both equally. (Ibid.)

In 2015, there was a difference between the amount of volunteering carried out by men and women in Finland: 40% of women and 32% of men had participated in volunteering during the four weeks preceding the survey. Among volunteers, it is nowadays men, who generally spend slightly more time volunteering: around 19 hours in four weeks, as opposed to the around 18 hours spent volunteering by women. (Ibid.)

There are signs that many young people have less possibility in carrying out to voluntary activities. Young people are still very interested in voluntary work, but their engagement in voluntary work is decreasing: In 2010, 26% of young people aged 15-24 were engaged in voluntary work, whereas in 2015, the percentage was 19%. (Kansalaisareena, HelsinkiMissio, Kirkkohallitus, Taloustutkimus, 2015).

In 2015, individuals who had only completed primary education spent the least amount of time on voluntary activities (15 hours in four weeks), while those with vocational education spent the most (22 hours) (ibid).

In 2015, the higher the incomes people had, the more likely they participated in voluntary activities (ibid).

Volunteers in Finland are active in a wide variety of sectors ranging from sports and animal welfare to environmental conservation and voluntary activities relating to the armed forces (In Finland, military service is compulsory, but voluntary reservist organisations are an important part of Finnish national defense). The most popular sector nowadays is sports (26% of volunteers), closely followed by seniors (25%), children and young people (25%), community activities (16%), culture (12%) and social and health care (9%). There have been changes from the year 2002. In 2002, the portion of sports was 30%, health care 25% and children and young people 22%. In 2015, the time spent on volunteering was highest in the sector of children and young people. (Ibid; Yeung, A.B 2002.)

### History and contextual background

The first "organised" forms of voluntary engagement in Finland is seen in the 1840s, with women from higher classes in society grouping together to help those less fortunate than themselves and to redistribute social rights and responsibilities. One of the first major popular movements to arise in Finland was the gymnastics and sports movement; indeed, the first Finnish athletic club founded in 1856. During the 1880s, civic activities among rural young adults began to develop along with workers' educational activities and the trade union movement. By the turn of the century, youth societies had the largest memberships of civic organisations in Finland, although they overtook in the early twentieth century by a surge in the memberships of cooperatives and workers' associations. The 1880s also saw the rise of the women's movement, religious organisations and home district associations. During the early 1900s the development of a Finnish civil society slowed down significantly as a result of internal and external pressures. However, in the 1970s, there was still a strong tendency towards social organisational work and many political parties, trade unions and youth organisations became increasingly active. Moreover, the role of civic organisations began to take over from popular movements; there was a strong development of organisational structures and support mechanisms; and the number of voluntary associations continued to grow. (Hilger, P, 2006; Hilger, P, 2008)

A significant change in attitudes came with the economic crisis that took place in the early-mid 1990s. Public services were reorganised and there was a rise in neo-liberalist policies that competed with traditional welfare values. A significant increase in voluntary organisations seen in social and health service fields as budget cuts led to increased responsibilities for municipalities. (Ibid.)

Voluntary work in Finland based on membership. In fact, around 75-80% of Finns are members of a voluntary organisation(s) in their lifetime, and many individuals hold membership of several different organisations over the course of their lifetime. Helander and Laaksonen (1999) estimated that the average Finn is a member of three different organisations. This means that a significant part of voluntary work performed within the framework of an organisation. Nevertheless, *talkoot* (working together for a common goal in a specific time), together with other informal forms of volunteering, such as neighbourly help, have been and continue to be widespread.

The number of voluntary organisations is continuously growing. Growth in the number of new voluntary organisations has led to a feeling of competition over volunteers amongst organisations. This has left some stakeholders believing that the number of volunteers has actually decreased. Members of local voluntary organisations are getting older (especially in the countryside) and there are concerns around the future of voluntary organisations. There are no signs of a lower level of engagement in volunteering, or less interest. Younger generations speak more openly about what they want to achieve with their voluntary engagement and volunteers are more likely to switch from one voluntary organisation to another. There is also more interest in project-based volunteering and pop-up volunteering.

### 3. Legal framework for volunteering and its implementation

There is no specific legal framework for volunteering in Finland. A number of laws regulate volunteering, including:

- *Associations Act 395/2017 (894/2002) (Yhdistyslaki)*
- *Co-operatives Act 421/2013 (Osuuskuntalaki)*
- *Foundations Act 487/2015 (Säätiölaki)*
- *Accounting Act 1620/2015 (300/1998) (Kirjanpitolaki)*
- *Lotteries Act 1286/2016 (Arpajaislaki)*
- *Youth Act 1285/2016 (Nuorisolaki)*
- *Sports Act 390/2015 (Liikuntalaki)*
- *Occupational Safety and Health Act (23 Aug 2002/738)*
- *Act on Rescue Services 379/2011 (Pelastuslaki)*
- *Money Collection Act 255/31.3.2006 (Rahankeräyslaki)*

Finnish volunteers do not have a specific legal status.

Everyone can volunteer, but unemployed people should inform the Public Employment Service about their voluntary engagements as voluntary work should not prevent them from taking up work or labour market training if such opportunities are available. Many stakeholders have highlighted the ambiguity of the Unemployment Security Act (Työttömyysturvalaki 30.12.2002/1290) in relation to volunteering as one of the barriers related to the development of volunteering. Some have claimed that the rules should be clearer in this regard.

There are also some implications in terms of taxation for voluntary organisations if skilled healthcare professionals, such as doctors, volunteer their time to carry out activities related to their profession. Volunteers can get reimbursement for the expenses of volunteering. The arrangements concerning reimbursements depend on the rules and practices of each sector and/or individual organisation. Tax rules are unclear and not the same to all, depending for example on the type of organisation arranging the voluntary work.

The Ministry of Finance appointed a working group in 2015 to examine legislative development needs and the clarification of guidelines for voluntary work, as well as the coordination responsibilities of ministries with regard to the preparation of legislation concerning voluntary activities and the creation of general conditions for voluntary activities. (Ministry of Finance, 2015.)

In the course of their investigation, the working group found that many of the problems perceived as obstacles to voluntary work caused by a lack of information. Communications by the authorities do not always reach citizens who are considering engaging in voluntary work.

In order to clarify the situation, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for the coordination of voluntary work. There is a website to the guidelines concerning voluntary activities for organisations and volunteers in clear language coming.

More communication needs on the right of unemployed persons to work as volunteers without losing their unemployment allowance as well as the insurances, liabilities and privacy protection issues relevant to voluntary work. The working group proposes that the tax instructions concerning voluntary work improved and the tax treatment of foundations and associations investigated in line with the tax policy outlines of the Government Programme. (Ibid.)

In connection with the reform of patient insurance legislation, the liability and status of volunteers in the provision of healthcare services and in health-related tasks need to clarify, said the group. In the view of the working group, a joint grant application system needs for non-governmental organisations. The preferred option would be to integrate this into the Government's common case management system. Advice on joint grants and for application needs. (Ibid.)

The permit and notification procedure for event organisers should simplify by centralising all government and municipal permit matters related to event organisation in one place. In certain cases, the permit procedure could be relaxed. The reform of the Money Collection Act should continue on basis of the preparations made during the previous parliamentary term. The objective should be a lighter and faster procedure. For organisations already receiving discretionary government transfers, the information provided by the organisations when applying for government transfers would use in granting money collection permits. (Ibid.)

The recognition of the skills and competences acquired through voluntary work should improve in the educational system, and cooperation between schools and organisations should increase. (Ibid.)

## 4. Structure of the non-profit sector involved in volunteering

There is debate about which organisational types can function as voluntary organisations. Voluntary organisations can also be involved in the delivery of public services. Nowadays, it is very important that organisations separate their civic activity and voluntary work from the delivery of public services.

There are no exact figures available on the number of voluntary organisations, but there is information on the number of the main type of voluntary organisations, namely associations. Although Finland is relatively small, there is a high density of voluntary organisations. There were 143 000 registered associations in 2016 (versus 127.000 in 2007, although only around 67.000 of those were active in 2007 and about half of the registered associations were active in 2016). In addition, there were around 30.000 unregistered voluntary associations, citizen groups and networks in 2006. (Based on information from the National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland - Patentti ja rekisterihallitus; Harju, A, 2006, Finnish Civil Society, KVS Foundation).

The majority of voluntary organisations are active at the local level; in 2006, only 1000 were national organisations and a further 3000 were district/regional organisations. Most voluntary organisations operate in the culture and sports sectors (ibid).

ASSOCIATIONS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS	
15.2.2016	
Sector	Number of organisations
Culture	17 300
Sports	13 700
Business and Professional Associations, Unions	12 300
Recreation	8 900
Social- and Health	6100
Political	4 600
National defense and international relationships	2 200
Religious and philanthropic	1 300



Other	6000

(Source: Based on information from the National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland in article <http://suomifinland100.fi/yhdistykset-suomen-voimavara/> )

### A detailed description of organisations in Finland

- *Sports and exercise clubs*  
Most sports activities take place in sports clubs and there is a trend towards an increasing number of clubs connected to one specific sport.
- *Cultural associations*  
There has been an increase in the number of cultural associations and, like sports clubs, many are focused on one particular theme (i.e. different art forms, the preservation of the local community, promoting multicultural dialogue etc.).
- *Leisure and hobby organisations*  
These cover a wide range of different activities and act as a common platform through which individuals can meet like-minded people and demonstrate their skills (i.e. pet associations, dance associations, car and boat clubs, etc.).
- *Social and health associations*  
These often relate to their members' interests offering peer support and professional help (i.e. the Finnish Red Cross, associations for people with disabilities, child welfare organisations, etc.).
- *Youth organisations and student societies*  
Youth work is a core element of Finnish not-for-profit sector activity.
- *Political organisations*  
Political parties in Finland have local organisations in villages, municipalities and districts. Some also have women's organisations or federations, as well as child and youth organisations and educational and cultural associations.
- *Trade unions*  
Over the past few decades, there has been a reduction in interest in trade union activities. Most occupations represent by trade unions.
- *Economic and industrial associations*  
Most medium and large enterprises belong to a national confederation and smaller companies/entrepreneurs have their own interest groups.
- *Advisor organisations*  
These have a long history in Finland, especially in rural areas.



- *Religious and ideological associations*  
Different religious groups have associations, but their membership is relatively small.
- *Pedagogical, scientific and study organisations*  
Scientific organisations, teachers' organisations, study organisations and the support groups of educational institutions
- *Ecological associations*  
These have appeared relatively recently and cover a wide range of different areas (i.e. animal welfare, nature conservation, bird watching, etc.).
- *Pensioner and veteran organisations*  
Many veteran organisations date back to involvement in the Second World War and their membership numbers are decreasing. Pensioner organisations are growing rapidly as the population in Finland ages.
- *Village and local organisations*  
In recent years, these organisations have been focusing on supporting local development with the help of funding granted by the state and the EU.
- *National defence and peace organisations*  
These organisations are typically male-dominated and interest in voluntary national defense has grown over recent years. There has also been an increased participation of women. (In Finland, military service is still compulsory and people are interested in continuing their involvement on a voluntary basis). Peace organisations have relatively low levels of membership.
- *Friendship societies, ethnic organisations and development cooperation organisations*  
Friendship societies often bring together people from different countries and cultures (i.e. League of Finnish American Societies, Finland-Russia Society, and the Finnish-Arab Friendship Society). Their aims are to foster good relations, disseminate information and organise cultural events, trips and language courses.
- *Service organisations*  
Lions Clubs and Rotary Clubs are throughout Finland. They focus on charitable work and providing aid through either financial support or on voluntary work.

## 5. Other Stakeholders

There are a number of government bodies supporting volunteering as part of their responsibilities in Finland, mainly by funding third sector organisations. These public bodies include:

- *Ministry of Education (voluntary activities related to youth, culture and sports sectors)*
- *Ministry of Justice (regulations and coordination in volunteering, leading the inter-ministerial, multi-agency working group on civil society and volunteering, Advisory Board for the Civil Society Policy)*

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (international development, volunteering abroad, especially in third world countries)
- Ministry of Interior (volunteering in rescue services)
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (volunteering in social and health sectors)
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (issues related to rural development)
- Ministry of Finance (taxation issues)
- Ministry of Employment and the Economy (employment programmes from which voluntary organisations can benefit, e.g. labour market subsidy programmes for the unemployed).

The most important ministries with competences in volunteering are maybe the Ministry of Justice (regulations and coordination), Ministry of Education (grants to sports and culture) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (grants to the social and health sectors).

### Advisory Board for the Civil Society Policy

The significance of volunteering for many different sectors is widely recognised by different stakeholders in Finland. In 2007, the Finnish government set up the Advisory Board for the Civil Society Policy to enhance cooperation between civil society and public administration. The Advisory Board set on its third four-year term in February 2017, and its current mandate lasts until 2021.

The Advisory Board consists of representatives from different ministries, business lobbying organisations, the Association of Local and Regional Authorities in Finland, NGOs and voluntary sector as well as the academia. Experts have highlighted the importance and the uniqueness of the Advisory Board, in that it brings together so many different stakeholders from public and third sector to work closely together to tackle problems that hinder the work of the third and fourth sector.

The two previous Advisory Boards have been exploring the different ways in which the work of NGOs and voluntary sector could be easier, and looking at how to overcome the barriers in their activities. This has included, for example, a clarification of the administrative challenges that have arisen from the EU regulation, exploring the ways of solving problems related to taxation, and looking at the impact of public procurement procedures as regards to the working preconditions of the NGOs. The Advisory Board has also taken part in recent ministerial working groups, which were set to map out the challenges of volunteering.

On 2017–2021 the Advisory Board is continuing the work done by the two previous Advisory Boards. The Advisory Board aims especially at responding to the social and structural changes, which affect the independent and autonomous role of the civil society at the local and global level. The Advisory Board also follows closely the implementation of the National Democracy Policy Programme (2017–2019), which contains measures as regards to bettering the regulatory and operative framework of NGOs and volunteering. (Wakeham-Hartonen, Maria, 2017.)

### The Support Group on Volunteering in the Finnish Parliament

Kansalaisareena - The Citizen Forum ry facilitates [the Support Group on Volunteering in the Finnish Parliament](#). The Support Group was set up for the first time in 2009. The goals have been

in line with the goals in P.A.V.E. The members of the Group are from all parties in the Finnish Parliament.

### Municipalities

The role of municipalities in relation to volunteering is four-dimensional. Municipalities offer facilities, sometimes free of charge, sometimes at a discounted rate, for the use of voluntary organisations. For example, in the sports sector, about three-quarters of facilities of sports run by municipalities. Municipalities also support the voluntary movement by playing an important role in the development and delivery of training for many people involved in volunteering. Municipalities are also becoming increasingly important partners for many voluntary organisations in services. Local organisations' grants often come from municipalities.

### Other organisations

Most organisations that promote volunteering are sectoral organisations carrying out promotional and developmental work related to volunteering among their other activities.

Some of the most important types of organisations that are involved in the promotion of volunteering and exchange of information in the field of volunteering include the following organisations and networks:

*Kansalaisareena - The Citizen Forum ry* is a national development and information centre for voluntary actors in Finland. It promotes active citizenship and voluntary activity, and acts for volunteers, voluntary organisations and professionals working in the field of volunteering. It works with all levels: at grassroots level with voluntary organisations, groups and professionals in voluntary work; with development projects and networks, with community centres, with researches, universities and other educational institutions, with municipalities, ministries and Parliament, with church, financial contributors, media, NGOs in Europe etc.

The *Educational Association Citizen's Forum Kansalaisfoorumi* promotes and develops Finnish civil society.

Many organisations offer *volunteer brokerage services*: see for example [www.vapaaehtoistyö.fi](http://www.vapaaehtoistyö.fi), [www.toimeksi.fi](http://www.toimeksi.fi). In addition to their other activities, they aim to unite voluntary organisations looking for volunteers and people who wish to volunteer.

The *Finnish Youth Cooperation Allianssi* is a key player in the youth sector and works with voluntary youth organisations to promote and facilitate volunteering in the youth sector. Youth Academy (*Nuorten Akatemia*) is another nationwide organisation supporting voluntary organisations and voluntary activities in the youth sector.

The Finnish Society for Social Welfare and Health *SOSTE* ([www.soste.fi](http://www.soste.fi)) operates in the field of social and health care as an umbrella organisation. The members of SOSTE are national organisations.

The *Evangelic-Lutheran church* plays an important role in Finnish society, both as a civil activity forum and an organiser of services, including voluntary activities.

Finnish sports organisations and federations are in charge of organising the voluntary activities related to sports. The *Finnish Olympic Committee (Suomen Olympiakomitea)* is the umbrella organisation. One of its aim is to support volunteering-based, non-profit civic activity in sports. Its member organisations and federations, in turn, bring together and provide support for grassroots level sports clubs. These are heavily dominated by volunteers (the majority of all volunteers in the sports sector are active in sports clubs).

The *Service Centre for Development Cooperation (Kehitysyhteistyön palvelukeskus KEPA)* is an umbrella organisation for Finnish NGOs involved in development or other global issues.

Kansalaisareena - Citizen Forum ry is a member of CEV, the European Volunteer Centre. The youth, health and sports federations are also members of the relevant European umbrella organisations.

Some companies support voluntary organisations - mostly through sponsorships and financial support. Few are directly involved in volunteering activities, although there is a growing tendency for companies to formulate policies on volunteering, for example "corporate volunteering" or "employee volunteering", through their general policy on Corporate Social Responsibility.

## 6. Funding Opportunities

In Finland, both local and national funding are available.

Very important contributor is the gaming organization Veikkaus, which has monopoly over the Finnish gaming market.

The new Veikkaus started at the beginning of 2017, as the gambling operators Fintoto, Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) and Veikkaus merged into one.

Grants allocation based on the law. Gaming revenue distributed as grants by

- *The Ministry of Education and Culture*
- *The Funding Centre for Social and Health Organisations STEA, which works under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health*
- *The State Treasury*
- *The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry*

This monopoly situation is the backbone of the Finnish voluntary sector as it ensures a sustainable form of funding for the sector. Voluntary organisations are very contingent on public funding. A large part of the Finnish voluntary work based on these grants.

Allocation of money for causes (Veikkaus 2017):

Art	233 M€
Sports	148 M€
Science	103 M€
Child, youth and family work organisations	100 M€
War veterans	100 M€
Sickness and disability organisations	91 M€
Mental Health, Abuse and addiction	50 M€
Organisations for general health and welfare	50M€
Equestrian sports and horse breeding	40 M€
Organisations operating in multiple fields	28 M€
Organisations for the elderly	23 M€
Family and relatives' organisations	12 M€
Volunteering organisations for rescue work	3 M€
Promoting employment	3 M€

There is no national budget allocation to volunteering as such, but the public sector supports voluntary organisations, for example by enabling activities of national federations and umbrella organisations. The state funding provided for many voluntary organisations and federations come from the proceeds of the gaming industry, as regulated by the Lotteries Act 1286/2016. Only a small percentage of the funding of the voluntary sector comes from budgetary funds; most funds come from the gaming industry, which is why Finnish actors feel strongly about the need for member states to be able to decide on their own policy. The Finnish voluntary movement would suffer significantly if the gaming industry in Finland was open to competition. The level of funding for the voluntary sector would reduce and thereby weaken the volunteering infrastructure in the country as a whole. A significant form of public support is the tax-free nature of volunteer work. Non-profit organisations do not need to pay taxes on the income gained through fundraising, donations, membership fees and suchlike, provided that no one receives direct personal benefit from it but all funds are used for 'common good' - to support the activities of the entire club or team.

The sources of funding for Finnish voluntary organisations are:

- *Membership fees*
- *Fundraising*
- *Donations*
- *Benefits in-kind (e.g. use of facilities for free of charge, voluntary workforce)*

- *Income from service provision*
- *Selling of products*
- *Income from advertisements (e.g. in magazines of voluntary organisations)*
- *Agreements with private companies*
- *Funding through national gaming organisation (Veikkaus)*
- *Grants from local and national authorities*
- *European Union (EU) funds*
- *Project funding*
- *Capital income (e.g. rent income, etc).*

Often, the most important sources of funding include self-financing (e.g. membership fees and fundraising), donations and service delivery and public funding. However, sectoral differences are apparent in the funding sources of voluntary organisations. For example, membership fees are crucial for voluntary social and health organisations, while sports organisations benefit more from private sponsorship than most other voluntary organisations. Religious organisations tend to benefit from private donations. Voluntary youth organisations funded by state subsidies (28%), EU funds, foundations and other ministries (19%), and private sources such as membership fees, donations and fundraising (53%) (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Overall, Finnish voluntary organisations are more dependent on self-financing than their counterparts in many other European countries; the proportion of state funding is relatively low. Self-financing emphasises the central role of members and enhances the autonomy of the sector.

## 7. Regular and systematic research

The work of the Working Group investigating the development of the coordination and general conditions of voluntary work in 2015 (Ministry of Finance publications 39/2015) was an important step to look at the whole picture of volunteering. There is very little research on volunteering in Finland. Only a few doctoral studies and diploma works. More research needs.

## 8. Ethics and quality standards for volunteering

There are no universal ethical codes or quality standards systems applicable to the voluntary sector in Finland. Nowadays, there is training in volunteering management in the Humak University of Applied Sciences. Sectoral ethical codes and quality standards systems exist. Discussion on the rights to people with special needs to voluntary work is growing. It includes, for example, refugees and migrants, people with intellectual disabilities, visual impairments etc.

## 9. Awareness of volunteering opportunities

The problem in Finland is that we have many portals matching potential volunteers and voluntary opportunities. Often portals are local. There are also many national portals including for example [vapaaehtoistyö.fi](http://vapaaehtoistyö.fi), [toimeksi.fi](http://toimeksi.fi), [hiiop100.fi](http://hiiop100.fi), [muutamaata.fi](http://muutamaata.fi), etc. Too few people know about them.

The Finnish government wants to increase young people's knowledge of volunteering. The Child and Youth Policy Programmes highlight the importance of integrating an element of



volunteering into secondary level education in Finland. The Programmes stressed the significance of understanding the importance of volunteering from a young age. Now, volunteering is included in curriculums of institutions of learning at secondary level. There is also discussion on Service Learning in higher education and on open badges for adult educators.

## 10. Additional country specificities

### National action plan for democracy policy 2017-2019

In the Government Report on Democracy Policy submitted to the Parliament in 2014, the Government pledged to prepare a national action plan on promoting democracy in Finland at the beginning of the following government term. The action plan for democracy policy, covering the years 2017-2019, adopted as a government resolution on 16 February 2017. The objective of the action plan is to respond to challenges related to democracy and to promote and find concrete expressions for the citizens' possibilities of participating and exerting influence in compliance with section 14(4) of the Constitution.

The priority areas of the action plan are equal possibilities for and new modes of participation, municipal and regional democracy, open governance and consultation, operating conditions of NGO and voluntary activities, democracy education as well as the societal operating environment and discussion climate.

Developing and coordinating operational conditions of voluntary activities

The Government set up a horizontal Democracy Network in 2016 to coordinate at governmental level the development and enhancement of the operational conditions of voluntary activities. One of the objectives of the network is to promote access to information and regulations concerning voluntary activities.

One of the key objectives defined in the Strategic Programme of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government is to facilitate people's everyday lives and voluntary activities by deregulation, the reduction of the administrative burden and improvements to permit processes. Key projects for the Government term 2015-2019 aim for instance to improve legal provisions. The goal is regulation that is enabling, deregulation and the reduction of the administrative burden. Regulation simplification and deregulation has been coordinated through a cross-sectoral executive group. The Ministry of Justice coordinates a cross-sectoral working group, which has tackled questions concerning voluntary activities and civil society. The goal is to identify and revise regulations and permit processes in order to facilitate voluntary activities. (Liisa Männistö, 2017.)

## 11. Recommendations

Challenges in Finland include for example:

- *Permanent funding for the national multi-sectoral volunteer centre*
- *Permanent funding for local volunteer centres*
- *Civic activity funding at the local level in the municipalities and in the new region province counties (2020)*
- *Clarification of rules, laws, acts and instructions concerning volunteering, especially concerning volunteering of unemployed people and reimbursements in volunteering in public organisations*



- *Enlargement of the national volunteering development network to all areas*
- *Raising interesting volunteering themes as a common discussion and enabling thematic cooperation*
- *Service Learning to the higher education*
- *Enabling the establishment of a nation-wide internet-based search tool for finding suitable voluntary work (and its social marketing)*
- *Research the significance of volunteering infrastructure in society*
- *Developing quality standards and certification system for regional volunteer centres in Finland*
- *Developing peer support and voluntary work at volunteer centres*
- *Developing quality standards and certification systems for voluntary work and peer support offered at volunteer centres*
- *Developing models and establishing guidance for NGO's and public and private organisations about employer supported volunteering*
- *The Law on Volunteering.*

## Resources

- European Parliament (2011). Special Eurobarometer, 75.2. *Voluntary work*, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04\\_07/SA\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04_07/SA_en.pdf)
- Euroopan Parlamentti (2011). Euroopan parlamentin erityisbarometri 75.2. Vapaaehtoistyö: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04\\_07/eb%2075\\_2\\_%20synthese%20analytique%20benevolat\\_fi.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04_07/eb%2075_2_%20synthese%20analytique%20benevolat_fi.pdf) )
- Europe Engage (2016). Developing a culture of civic engagement through Service Learning within higher education in Europe. Quality standards for Service Learning activities. <https://europeengagedotorg.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/1-quality-standarsee.pdf>
- European Volunteer Centre (2015-2017) [www.cev.be](http://www.cev.be); *CEV Policy Statements on Volunteering Issues in Europe*; <http://www.cev.be/uploads/2016/11/CEVPolicyStatementsonVolunteeringIssuesinEurope-3.pdf>
- Guidelines for institutionalization of Service Learning (2017)*. Henrietta Grönlund & Aura Nortomaa, University of Helsinki, with the Europe Engage team representing 12 European universities, <https://europeengagedotorg.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/guidelines-euengage-2.pdf>
- Hilger, P. (2006) *Beyond Organised Civil Society: Definitions and Discourses of Civic Engagement*, in: Hisayo Katsui and Ricard G. Wamai (eds), *Civil Society Reconsidered: A Critical Look at NGOs in Development Practice*, Helsinki: Institute for Development Studies.
- Hilger, P. (2008). *A Case of Human Service Dominance: volunteer centres in Finland*. Paper prepared for the 'Volunteering Infrastructure and Civil Society' Conference, Aalsmeer, the Netherlands, 24-25 April 2008. [http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hilger/downloads/pdf/Hilger\\_Volunteer\\_centres\\_in\\_Finland080616.pdf](http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hilger/downloads/pdf/Hilger_Volunteer_centres_in_Finland080616.pdf)
- Kansalaisareena (2017) [www.kansalaisareena.fi](http://www.kansalaisareena.fi)
- Kansalaisareena, Helsinki Missio, Kirkkohallitus ja Taloustutkimus (2015). *Vapaaehtoistyö Suomessa 2010 ja 2015*. Voluntary work in Finland 2010 and 2015, [http://www.kansalaisareena.fi/Vapaaehtoistyö\\_Suomessa\\_2010ja2015.pdf](http://www.kansalaisareena.fi/Vapaaehtoistyö_Suomessa_2010ja2015.pdf)
- Marjovuori, Ari (2014): *Vapaaehtoistyön ytimessä. Järjestömuotoinen vapaaehtoistyö sosiaalisten representaatioiden näkökulmasta*. Doctoral thesis, Helsingin yliopisto, sosiaalitieteiden laitos. [https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/44979/marjovuori\\_v%C3%A4it%C3%B6skirja.pdf](https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/44979/marjovuori_v%C3%A4it%C3%B6skirja.pdf)
- Ministry of Finance publications 39/2015. *Vapaaehtoistyö, talkootyö, naapuriapu - kaikki käy: Vapaaehtoistoiminnan koordinaatiota ja toimintaedellytysten kehittämistä selvittävän työryhmän loppuraportti*. <http://www.kansalaisareena.fi/vapaaehtoistyonraportti.pdf>
- Männistö, Liisa (2017). *National action plan for democracy policy 2017 - 2018*, Ministry of Justice (working paper)
- National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland (2016), in article <http://suomifinland100.fi/yhdistykset-suomen-voimavara/> )
- Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe P.A.V.E* (EYV 2011). Working towards a true legacy for EYV 2011
- Raitanen, Anitta & Wikström, Jatta (2012). *Volunteering Infrastructure in Finland*, in: *Volunteering Infrastructure in Europe*. [http://www.alliance-network.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/CEV\\_Volunteering-infrastructure.pdf](http://www.alliance-network.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/CEV_Volunteering-infrastructure.pdf)
- Ruohonen, Marita (2003). *Järjestöt vapaaehtoistoiminnan areenoina*.

Veikkaus <https://www.veikkaus.fi/fi/yritys?lang=en> ; Faktakortti yrityksille. Tarja Nissi 12.5.2017:

Veikkaus - For common good

Wakeham-Hartonen, Maria (2017). Advisory Board for the Civil Society Policy, Ministry of Justice (working paper)

Yeung, A. B. (2002). *Vapaaehtoistoiminta osana kansalaisyhteiskuntaa - ihanteita vai todellisuutta?*

Youth Partnership (2009). *Voluntary activities, Finland.*

