

- 'PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES IN FINLAND: LEGISLATION, IMPLEMENTATION, STATISTICS & CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE -							
<u>Organisation / Country:</u>	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health & National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland						
<u>Website:</u>	National Institute for Health and Welfare: Here Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: Here						
<u>Contact this email for further information:</u>	policy@esn-ey.org						
<u>Summary:</u>	<p>Disability Policy Background The policy background is formed by a multi-level system of international, European, and national frameworks.</p> <table> <tr> <td>European and international frameworks</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 • The EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 </td></tr> <tr> <td>National frameworks</td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finnish Disability Policy Programme 2010-2015 • The Finnish Constitution • The Disability Act 1988/2009 • The Act on Special Care for persons with Intellectual Disabilities (1977) • The Act on Interpretation Services for Persons with Disabilities (2010) <p>Services provided under the three Acts aim to support independent living in the community and functional capacity of the individuals. They are entirely free for the care recipients.</p> </td></tr> <tr> <td>Local framework s</td><td>Local authorities are important providers of social services and support programmes. Local authorities also purchase services from independent providers and NGOs to complement public services.</td></tr> </table>	European and international frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 • The EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 	National frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finnish Disability Policy Programme 2010-2015 • The Finnish Constitution • The Disability Act 1988/2009 • The Act on Special Care for persons with Intellectual Disabilities (1977) • The Act on Interpretation Services for Persons with Disabilities (2010) <p>Services provided under the three Acts aim to support independent living in the community and functional capacity of the individuals. They are entirely free for the care recipients.</p>	Local framework s	Local authorities are important providers of social services and support programmes. Local authorities also purchase services from independent providers and NGOs to complement public services.
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	<p>Persons with severe disability are entitled to specific services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • household services, • personal assistance services (PAS), • mobility support also for outdoor activities and leisure, • relevant devices, equipment, and refurbishment at home to enable independent living, <p>Persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing or with speech disability can receive interpretation services. This service has been run by the Social Insurance institution of Finland since September 2010.</p> <p>In 2009, the new version of the Disability Act has introduced new components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • right to personal assistance with specific eligibility criteria, • needs assessment involving the care recipient within seven days after the first contact with social workers which involve the care recipient, • right to a personalised intervention plan describing the situation and the needs of the care recipient and suggesting services to support him/her. <p>Personal assistance services are delivered under the Disability Act and refer to formal help and support provided to people with severe disabilities to assist them in tasks essential for daily living at home ((un-)dressing, cooking, eating, cleaning, personal care, etc.) and education, leisure (mobility support for social participation and interactions). The aim of personal assistance services is to ensure service users' choice and control depending on their needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of assistance should the user receive? • When, where, and how to receive personal assistance services? • Whom to hire? <p>People with severe disabilities are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with long-term or progressing disability or illness, • People who need the assistance of someone to do tasks as described above. <p>The need for assistance should not be primarily on the basis of an illness or a functional limitation related to ageing.</p> <p>Three options in using the scheme exist:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The employer model (64 percent) where the care recipient employs the personal assistant directly. Costs in that case are covered by local authorities.
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	<p>2. The Voucher model (3 percent) where care recipient receives vouchers to buy assistance services. Vouchers are provided by local authorities and should be enough to meet all needs.</p> <p>3. The Assistance service (24 percent): the local authority provides this service or purchases it from a private providers*.</p> <p>The other options refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combination of the three previous options (5 percent), ▪ Local authority in collaboration or not with others deliver services (4 percent). <p>Needs assessment should be carried out in such a way that the personal assistance services enable the service users to live with in dignity and should meet their needs.</p> <p>Data (for 2014):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of people using personal assistance services: 17,356 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Care recipients aged 0 to 17: 1,203 (6.9 percent) ▪ Care recipients aged 18 to 64: 11,035 (63.6 percent) ▪ Care recipients over 65 years old: 5,118 (29.5 percent) • Average cost per service user per year (in the six biggest Finnish cities): EUR 12,300
<u>Issues:</u>	<p>Certain issues are still to be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and guidance tools need to be established, • Care and supervision while supporting self-determination, • Entitlement to PAS regardless of the nature of the disability, • Different ways to organise assistance depending on the chosen type of provision option. For instance, if the PA is purchased from private providers, there is a need to assess if the care recipients' needs and expectations are fully taken into consideration. • Individual budget for daytime activities
<u>Resources:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities cover the cost of PAS.
<u>Objectives:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing people with disabilities to live and function on an equal footing with other people
<u>Outcomes:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving sense of self-determination • Ensuring equal opportunities • Enhancing user choice and control
<u>Evaluation:</u>	<p>In 2013, the Ministry for Social Affairs and Health created a working group to review the legislation for Finnish disability service. The aim is to merge the Disability Act with the Act on Special Care for persons with Intellectual</p>

	Disabilities in one single piece of legislation that would safeguard services promoting self-determination and equal opportunities for people with disabilities.
<u>Resources:</u>	<p>Source: National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), 2014. <i>Services for People with Disabilities 2013. Report on Questionnaire for Municipalities</i>, Statistical Report 15/2014. Available here.</p> <p>More information: Disability services according to people's needs</p>